A History of Delhi Under the Later Mughuls

PERCIVAL SPEAR

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PREFACE

This book is a study of Delhi and its adjacent territory during the late Mughul and early British periods. It covers the period from the emergence of the 'Kingdon of Delhi' with the recession of both Afghans and Marathas after the battle of Panipat in 1761, until the Mutiny in 1857.

The first section of the book is a sketch of the Kingdom of Delhi until the British conquest in 1803, special attention being paid to the period 1782–8 when the kingdom passed from a precarious independence to Maratha control. While secondary authorities have been largely used for this period, the object being to analyse and co-ordinate already available material, original sources have been used for the vital years 1782–88.

The second part of the book consists of a series of studies of the Delhi city and Territory under British administration from 1803–57. This part falls into three sections. The first deals with the relations of the British with the Mughul emperors or 'Kings of Delhi' and the internal life of the Mughul family. The second is a study of the British administration of the Delhi Territory and specially of the 'Metcalfe system'. This has been dealt with by Kaye and Thompson in their lives of Charles Metcalfe, but from a different point of view. The third deals with a number of separate topics—British life in Delhi, the Colebrooke case, the Fraser murder and finally the Mutiny and its aftermath in Delhi mainly from the Indian point of view.

The second and third sections of this book are based on original sources. These materials, both manuscript and printed, are drawn from the official records, Parliamentary papers, diaries and memoirs, and private papers to which I have been fortunate to be given access. A substantial proportion, though not of course all these materials, have been used for the first time.

The first purpose of this study is to help in the clarification of north Indian history during the period 1760–1800 by obtaining a clear picture of the Delhi kingdom, its extent, its resources, its degree of independence and the cause of its fall. After 1800 the book seeks to clarify British policy towards the Mughuls and estimate the degree of both its expediency and success. On the British side it seeks to discover the special features of Charles Metcalfe's 'Delhi System' and its relation to the problem of village autonomy under British administration, and the nature of the administrative abuses which persisted in India after the Cornwallis reforms. The life of the British in up-country India during the first half of the nineteenth century is then described. The study is completed by the drawing of pictures of Delhi during and immediately after the Mutiny as seen principally through Indian eyes.

References to authorities are given serially chapter by chapter at the end of the text. A general note on authorities for each chapter, a bibliography and a glossary of Indian terms used will also be found at the end.

A word should be added on the transliteration of Indian names. In general the Hunterian system has been followed as modified in the later volumes of the *Cambridge History of India*. The letter 'q' has been used for ق and in the spelling of place-names the usage of the *Imperial Gazetteer* has been generally followed. Diacritical marks have been generally omitted. But to avoid confusion to those not acquainted with India the traditional spelling has been retained in the case of well-known places. Thus Delhi itself is preferred to the Urdu *Dehli* or the Hindu *Dilli* (beloved of Charles Metcalfe); *Mirat* appears in its familiar guise of Meerut and Cawnpore instead of the correct *Kanpur*.

This book owes much to many people. First, as in duty bound, I would express my gratitude to the Trustees of the Leverhulme Research Trust, whose award of a Fellowship provided the leisure which made this work possible. Next, I would record my grateful thanks to those in charge of various record offices whose help was invaluable as their kindness and courtesy were unfailing. They are Dr H. N. Randle and the late W. F. Ottewill of the India Office Library, Dr S. N. Sen, lately Director of the National Archives of India, and his colleagues, the late Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdul Ali, Keeper of the Indian Imperial Records, the late H. L. O. Garrett, Keeper of the Punjab Records, and two Chief Commissioners of Delhi, Sir Evan Jenkins and Mr A. V. Askwith, C.I.E. For access to and the use of private papers I am indebted to Mrs Hardcastle and Miss Clive Bayley (Metcalfe Family Papers), the late Duke of Portland, through the late Philip Morrell (the Lord William Bentinck Papers), and the Master of Trinity (the early Trevelyan Papers). To the late Edward Thompson and the late Sir Frank Noyce I owe much; without the encouragement of the first this book might never have been begun and without the insistence of the latter it might never have been finished. I owe valuable suggestions to Dr R. B. Whitehead and also to Dr I. H Qureshi, Mr Guy Wint, Mr J. F. Bruce, and Mr H. G. Rawlinson. Most of all my thanks are due to my wife whose assistance in many ways has been invaluable throughout.

T. G. P. S.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Two hundred years ago Delhi had been a great and imperial city for a century, with anything between one and two million inhabitants. It was the largest and most renowned city, not only of India, but of all the East from Constantinople to Canton. Its Court was brilliant, its mosques and colleges numerous, and its literary and artistic fame as high as its political renown. Within fifty years its provinces vanished, its wealth was plundered, its Emperor was blinded, and the city shrank to be a provincial capital of less than two hundred thousand people. The greatness of the change is not appreciated because the magnitude of Mughul Delhi is not realized. The main steps in the decline, the sacks of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, the civil wars of the 'omrahs' or nobles, the atrocities of Ghulam Qadir Khan, are well known. But the drama which accompanied these events, the ebb and flow of changing fortune, the alternating hopes and deepening gloom, are too often disregarded in the facile terms 'decadence', 'effete glory' and 'inevitable decline'. Because Delhi is great now, with its new-planned capital city, it is forgotten that it was ever great before; because the disorders which now occur are within the city itself the days are forgotten when every village was a walled fortress, when no one could travel without an escort, and when robbers picked off unwary travellers from behind the walls of decaying monuments. The Mutiny is commonly the only dramatic event connected with the history of Delhi; to the *Delhi-wallah* it is an isolated catastrophe not comparable to the disasters of the previous century.

It is the purpose of this study to trace the history of Delhi from the time that it ceased to be the capital of Mughul India until it became a completely British city after the Mutiny in 1858. The first date may be conveniently fixed in 1761 when the tides of Afghans and Marathas had swept over the Empire to meet, in a titanic shock, on the fatal field of Panipat, and thereafter in receding to leave that troubled turmoil of rival chiefs and shadowy sovereignties which is known as the Great Anarchy. From 1738, the year of the first Maratha excursion to the environs of Delhi, the tale of the Empire's dying throes has been told with masterly clarity by Sir Jadunath Sarkar up to 1772. But thereafter comes a gap. Interest has been concentrated more upon the fortunes of picturesque personalities than the fate of the people and the imperial district. The fortunes of the adventurer George Thomas, of the brigand Ghulam Qadir, of the Frenchman de Boigne, of the Christian Princess Samru, have been more attractive subjects than the citizens of Delhi, tossed about by every wind of fortune, or the peasants of the districts, sheltering behind the mud walls of their villages, or fleeing to the stony hills. But though society seemed decadent, politics rotten, and rival chieftains fierce and unscrupulous, there was method in the political madness of the day. In order to follow the ever-changing situation, something should first be said of the underlying political factors which governed the Delhi situation.

No city east of Constantinople has so attracted the possessors of or the aspirants to power. This is because Delhi, in relation to the rest of India, occupies a position of fundamental strategic importance. Situated on the Doab, the alluvial plain of the Ganges and the Jumna, it stands in the centre of a corridor which connects the Punjab and the north-west with the rest of India. To the north, the corridor narrows and runs north-west, bounded on the one side by the mighty Himalayas, and on the other by the Rajputana desert. There is no natural obstacle before the Indus is reached; the mountains beyond are of little value for defence because the Afghan passes descend steeply on the Indian side but only gently on the Afghan. The neighbours of India are for ever looking down on the plains of India; India is for ever looking up to the forbidding mountain ranges. The only way to make these passes safe is to control both sides, as the Mughuls did from the time of Akbar to that of Muhammad Shah, and as the British Government did on a restricted scale. But this involves the occupation of the Afghan plateau, the rigours of whose climate Indian troops from the plains have never been willing to endure for long.

The invader from the north-west must always follow the Punjab corridor until he reaches the Jumna and the neighbourhood of Delhi. Arrived at Delhi the whole of India lies open before him. To the south-east the thousand miles of the flat Gangetic plain invites him through rich cornlands to the richer rice-fields of Bengal. The master of Delhi is the potential master of Hindustan and, since the wealth of India is to be found in Hindustan, its master is the potential master of the whole peninsula. To the south runs the route to the rich lands of Malwa and central India and on to the Deccan. To the south-west the route skirts Rajputana to the indigo and rice-fields of Gujarat. Ajmer, which is the key of Rajputana, is within easy reach of Delhi, and there is no natural obstacle on the main routes until the river Narbada and the Vindhya mountains are reached. Therefore every ambitious power from the north, seeking the control of the country, and every Indian power aspiring to empire, has sought to possess Delhi as the key of Hindustan. These strategical facts are recognized in Hindu tradition, which has an underlying faith in the fundamental political as well as the cultural unity of India. The unity of the country, however frequently broken, is as natural an Indian conception as the balance of power, however often threatened, is a constant European conception of politics.

In the eighteenth century, the power which had for two centuries controlled Delhi and India rapidly decayed, and immediately the winds of war began blowing to fill in the political depression thus created. There were two candidates for empire, the Afghans in the north, who had become independent of Persia at the death of Nadir Shah, and the Marathas in the south. The Afghans under Ahmad Shah Abdali had warlike vigour and the financial sinews of war, but lacked political cohesion. Their once promising Indian empire degenerated into a series of blindings and betrayals. The Marathas possessed military skill and political finesse, but, based on the comparatively infertile Deccan, which had been further impoverished by years of Mughul warfare, they lacked the necessary resources for a continued effort. The result was that when these two powers met in apparently decisive combat at Panipat, the one thing which can with certainty be said of that famous carnage was that it was not decisive. Within a few years the Marathas, who were beaten, had returned to Hindustan, and the Afghans, who were victorious, had disappeared permanently from India. It did not even decide negatively that the Marathas should not enjoy the Empire of India, for twenty years later the Empire was again within their grasp with no one in the north to stop them. Later developments made it clear that even had the Marathas won Panipat, they would not long have held the Empire, and this for two reasons. First, they lacked the necessary resources in men and money, and secondly their own internal jealousies and dissensions were too great. What Panipat really did was to reveal, as in a lightning flash, the political bankruptcy of the Afghan chiefs and the material poverty of the Marathas. The fact that it took the Marathas ten years to recover from the blow is evidence not so much of the severity of the defeat, as of their lack of reserves.

Who then was to fill the void created by the retirement of the contending armies? To the north, in the Punjab, the Sikhs ventured down from the hills into which they had been driven by Bahadur Shah and Farrukhsiyar fifty years before; in petty conflicts with village *zamindars*, local Muslim chiefs, and each other, they gradually spread over the country and sorted themselves out into twelve *misls* or loose confederacies. To the west, the Rajput chiefs, faint from interminable Maratha depredations, enjoyed a brief respite which their political incapacity prevented them from using effectively. To the south, central India and Malwa as far as the river Chambal gradually fell into the hands of the Maratha chiefs Madho Rao Sindia and Tukaji Holkar. In theory merely officers of the Peshwa, their families were both destined to become independent, but their progress was hindered by their mutual jealousies. To the south-east lay the province of Oudh, whose hereditary governor was the able and ambitious Shuja-ud-daula. He was shortly to become Vazir of the Empire—the ejection from which office of his father, Safdar Jang, in 1754 was one of the immediate causes of the collapse of the Empire. Due east of Delhi, sandwiched between the Ganges and the hills of Kumaun, lay the district of Rohilkhand, once part of Oudh. It had been occupied about 1740 by the Rohilla tribe of Afghans, who had been driven by Nadir Shah before him into India. As turbulent and enterprising as any of their race, they also proved to be a disintegrating factor throughout this period.

This completes the circle of powers around Delhi and leaves only the imperial district still to be considered. It was roughly a rectangular wedge of territory about 250 miles from north to south and 100 miles broad. The river Jumna was its axis; Delhi and Agra were its two chief cities. To the east it stretched towards the Ganges, on the south it was bounded by the Chambal, but except for the mountains to the north of Ambala and the desert to the west, it had no real natural frontiers. This region was nominally subject to the direct rule of the Emperor, but was in practice parcelled out amongst a number of chiefs, who were supposed to hold their lands as assignments for the upkeep of troops. The peasants of this tract were predominantly the Hindu Jats. They were sturdy countrymen who, though normally peaceful, would pay no more revenue than could be extracted by force, and by means of mud walls turned their villages into fortresses which could only be reduced by artillery. To the south at Bharatpur, they found a leader in Suraj Mal, who plundered Delhi in 1764, and founded a permanent power which became the modern Bharatpur State. In Mewat, on the western borders of this tract, amidst sandy plains and low rocky hills, lived the Muslim Meos and the Hindu Gujars. They were both nomadic in their habits and plundering in their tastes, and they could be relied upon to appear whenever the hand of authority was weakened. To the north-west hovered bands of plundering Sikhs, the nuclei of what later became the Patiala and other Phulkian states. When it is added that the Emperor himself was absent from Delhi, being a semi-fugitive in Oudh, the political picture of the Delhi district is complete.

Amidst this scene of destructive conflict and discordant ambition nature pursued her perennial round of winter sunshine and cold, of burning May heat and blinding dust, and of refreshing but wayward July and August rains. If anything the climate was more severe than it is now, for there were then few irrigated tracts to push back the encroaching sands, and in consequence more severe dust storms, and the heat for the same reason was probably greater. Men roasted in their tents in summer with the thermometer at 110° F. and travelled on January nights muffled up in Persian shawls and with Mughul fur caps round their ears. Should the rains fail, as happened every few years, there was nothing for the peasant to do but to fold his hands, to murmur of destiny, and to wait for the slow-reaching hand of death. The men of the great plains, ever in the grip of natural forces too vast for any attempt at control, have much the same instinctive belief in the higher power, much the same mixture of tenacity and resignation, as the men of the sea. No one any longer during those years thought of improvement or progress; to stay as they were even seemed beyond their reach. The general thought was 'sauve qui peut'; each chief with his men, each soldier of fortune with his horse and his sword, each villager with his *lathi* and his mud 'ramparts' for himself. They described these days, both then and later, as the 'Time of Troubles'.

The traveller who traversed these regions in the sixties of the eighteenth century would find a very different scene to that which meets our eyes to-day. The absence of irrigation to the south, and its breakdown to the north of Delhi rendered large tracts, specially on the western side of the Jumna, barren and uncultivable. The general insecurity kept much of the good land desolate. He would find the villages surrounded with mud walls, or else sheltered, as often near Delhi, within some ruined *sarai* or fort. He would notice few villages situated near the main roads for fear of being plundered. He would travel with an escort and would shelter each night within some walled enclosure. On approaching Delhi, he would observe not only the deserted tombs and ruined gardens which are to be seen to-day, but also miles of decaying suburbs, the relics of older Delhis, which had been abandoned during the troubles of the mid-century. There would not of course be the same degree of ruin or desolation everywhere. Now at Delhi, now at Meerut or Agra or elsewhere a strong ruler would enforce order, and establish security for a few miles around. But everywhere he went he would see men armed, with shield and sword, with musket or with a stout wooden *lathi* or stave. In those days only the strong man armed could guard his goods, and then only until a stronger than he should come.

The first political problem of the Delhi territory, or kingdom as it is now convenient to call it, was its relations with the surrounding powers. They were all greedy and predatory but all suffered from a greater or less degree of disorganization. The Sikhs at this time were no more than plundering robber bands, and any strong power could have controlled them. The

Rajputs had organized states, the nearest to Delhi being Jaipur, but they were exhausted, slow moving and politically inept. The Marathas to the south were still recovering from Panipat, and were divided amongst themselves. But potentially they were by far the most formidable. The Rohillas were stronger than the Sikhs, and as enterprising, but just as disunited. Oudh was well organized but was too much occupied trying to recover Bengal and warding off the Marathas, to control the Rohillas or to interfere in Delhi. It was the desire of each of these to control Delhi, but each had a deep distrust of all the others. The obvious policy for any Delhi ruler was therefore to play off these powers against each other, and thereby gradually to strengthen the centre itself. Steadily pursued over a course of years this policy might have built up a compact kingdom from the Ganges to the Sutlej, and from the Chambal to the Himalayas.

Internally the chief problem of the ruler of Delhi territories was his relations with the subordinate chiefs; these men were the successors of the *mansabdars* of the early Empire, who were graded in regular ranks, were paid regular salaries, and who formed the combined military and civil services of the Empire. In the time of Akbar they were paid in cash from the imperial treasury. In the seventeenth century they were given assignments on the land revenue, in place of cash. This land was said to be 'in *jagir*' and *jaidad* land. In return for appropriating the revenue of these districts, the *jagirdars* were bound to furnish a fixed number of troops for the imperial army. But in addition to the lands allotted to the support of these aristocratic imperial officers and their troops, there was always a large area of *khalsa* or imperial territory, from which the land revenue was collected by imperial officers and paid direct into the imperial treasury. In Akbar's time these collectors were styled *karoris*, and even the provincial governors or *subadars* were not allowed to retain this revenue in their own hands. From the fund thus created, Akbar maintained the whole imperial service and the machinery of empire. Later emperors, while they assigned lands for the support of the officers, still maintained from the revenue of the *khalsa* lands their great court, all directly paid imperial officials, and also a small but efficient standing army. This consisted of cavalry and matchlockmen, and its kernel was the imperial park of artillery without which no great fortress could be forcibly reduced. The Mughul train of artillery, in maintaining internal security, had something of the potency of the Tudor monopoly of gunpowder. The artillerymen were generously paid, Europeans were freely engaged at high rates, and even supplied with servants so that they should be relieved of all labour save that of aiming the guns. Manucci, who started his Indian career in the service of Dara Shukoh, describes the Mughul artillery in its heyday; it was Aurangzeb's severity in compelling the European gunners to load as well as aim their guns which helped him to decide upon medicine as an alternative profession. In the eighteenth century, as the Empire weakened, the governors of the more distant provinces, like Bengal and the Deccan, retained their own provincial revenues, merely sending an annual tribute to the capital. There were still left the nearer provinces, from which an Emperor, if capable, could have maintained an adequate army. But from the time of Muhammad Shah this condition was lacking and from the time of Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739 there was not even an able or disinterested minister to govern for him. Less and less land was available to provide for the various chiefs, and the *khalsa* territory steadily contracted. By the time at which our study commences there was only the land in the immediate vicinity of Delhi, and that was only sufficient to maintain the Court and the numerous imperial family on a moderate scale. The Emperor depended almost entirely upon the loyalty of the surrounding chiefs, and had hardly any troops which he could call his own. If he could dominate the chiefs he could still the enemy at the gate; otherwise he was a puppet amidst warring factions, dependent even for his personal safety upon the still lingering respect for the Mughul family and the imperial name. The control of these chiefs was therefore the major problem of each minister, and it is not surprising to find that some of them, remembering Akbar's system of cash payments, should seek to revive it. It is still less surprising that the remedy should prove too drastic for the patient it sought to reanimate.

There was another factor which exercised an uncertain influence upon the kaleidoscopic politics of Delhi—the magic of the imperial name. Those who took the imperial claims at their face value and those who regarded the imperial Court as a mere puppet show, alike erred. The truth lay somewhere between the two, though no one then and certainly no one since has known at exactly what point between the two the truth was to be found. Perhaps only Shah Alam himself, and not even he for long, believed the former interpretation. The British were prone to the latter mistake. But that it was a mistake was shown by the eagerness with which so realistic a man as Madho Rao Sindia sought the cloak of imperial authority for his acts, or a prince like the Nizam solemnly sought confirmation of his accession from Delhi as late as 1803. The truth was as nearly expressed as possible by Major Browne when he wrote, 'I take the Shah's name to be of as much importance as an Act of Parliament in England if supported by as strong a force'. The Emperor's was the ultimate legal authority in India, and there was for his authority something of the reverence and spirit of acceptance which exists in Britain for Parliament. Warren Hastings with his policy of outward deference to the Emperor, was wiser in his generation than Lord Hastings and his successors. The intangible but not negligible authority of the imperial name explains the constant efforts of rival politicians to get the imperial sanction for their acts, and if possible to keep the imperial person in their camps.

There is one other point which deserves a word of explanation. It is the relation of military operations to revenue collections. The land-tax being the principal source of revenue, its collection was the only means of obtaining power, and it followed that the only method of maintaining troops was to control land. So it frequently happened that military operations were conducted with a bewildering vacillation suggestive of military imbecility. The explanation was usually not strategic advantage, but financial necessity. To seize the enemy's revenue, or to protect one's own, was one of the most important movements of war. The seasons also played their part, for it was only after the harvests of March and September that the revenue could be collected or seized. Many otherwise obscure evolutions become clear when it is remembered that most Indian troops were chronically in arrears of pay, and though wonderfully long-suffering by modern standards, had a habit of mutinying at awkward moments and imprisoning their commanders until something was handed out to them. In India the village was the source which supplied pay to the troops, and the fortress the refuge when the troops mutinied or deserted.

The 'Time of Troubles' is dubbed a degenerate age. But it is a mistake to suppose that the public stage was filled by weak-kneed or effeminate triflers. These are the by-products of prosperity and power. With few exceptions the actors were vigorous and hardy, brave and warlike. There were brilliant feats of arms, there was stolid endurance and desperate courage. There was energy in abundance, and indeed rather too much of it than too little. It was not a case of anaemic courtiers falling before the onset of northern vigour, but rather of sword clashing upon sword, of fierce men giving and receiving stroke for stroke. An historical parallel is not so much to be found in the languor of fifth-century Italy as in the anarchy of King Stephen's reign, when each baron sought independence in his adulterine castle, and men said openly that 'God and His Saints slept'. In India it resembled the period of discord preceding Muhammad of Ghor's invasion of Hindustan, or the troubled years between Firuz Shah's death and the coming of Timur, when men also said that God was angry with the people of Hindustan. In historical sequence the typical degenerate flourishes at the end of a period of prosperity, and it is to him that the weakening of authority, social and political, is due. The generation of Mughul lordlings who were routed at Talkatora by the Marathas in 1738, and of the magnate who had his feet basted when he became entangled in a thatched roof in trying to escape from the Jama Masjid during the shoe-sellers' riot of 1729, had vanished before the troubles of the mid-century.[1]

An Emperor Honorius, a Muhammad Shah *Rangila*, a Louis XV, with his 'après moi le déluge', are typical figures. But when the winds blow and the rains descend, and the house of empire falls. such men vanish in a night. Then comes the age of iron, when each struggles for power trusting in his own right arm. Thus it comes about that individual degeneracy, though the prelude, is not the accompaniment of social collapse, and the ages of social and political decay are commonly periods of exceptional energy and activity.

The symptoms of social collapse are progressive declines in standards of conduct, public and private, and the superiority of centrifugal over centripetal forces. When respect for law and authority declines, the devil of force leaps into its place as the only possible substitute, and in the struggles that ensue every standard of conduct and decency is progressively discarded. Men begin by being realists and end by being satanists. Sometimes synthesis takes place from within; sometimes it is imposed from without. If the original breakdown of authority is caused by a ferment of ideas, a genuine revolution like the French may result. If it is simply due to the decrepitude of authority the solution is the substitution of a fresh authority, but whether that substitute is external or internal depends upon local circumstances.

Northern India had passed through the period of moral bankruptcy and personal imbecility during the reigns of Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah. The fashionable coxcombs and the accomplished procrastinators who passed for statesmen had then their day. By 1760 the situation had developed into a struggle for power between the component fragments of the Empire. The struggle was waged with an increasing lack of scruple which is found in many similar historical situations, and resembled the decline in political morality of fifteenth-century Europe with the decay of the Papal moral authority. The degeneracy of Hindustan during the second half of the eighteenth century was social and financial rather than individual. Individual quality was often high, but men lacked a guiding star of conduct, a motive for ambition other than naked power. Pursuit of power meant war, and war meant destruction of the villages who provided the revenue. So society revolved in a vicious circle of impoverishment, each effort for supremacy straining its resources more profoundly, and each failure making social recovery more difficult. A gauge of this process is the comparison of the forces engaged before Nadir Shah's invasion and after. In 1739 Muhammad Shah accompanied 80,000 troops with a camp of nearly a million souls to Karnal; in 1754 two large armies under Safdar Jang and Ghazi-ud-din contended for the Vazirat between Delhi and Firuzabad; in 1782 Najaf Khan, at the height of his power, could command not more than 60,000 troops and pay still less; in the 1780's Sindia's disciplined force amounted to two brigades of about 20,000 men in all and in 1803 the Maratha troops opposing the British at Delhi numbered in all about 19,000.[2]

The story of Delhi during these years is not one of weaklings or mountebanks, creeping amidst deceit and subterfuge, but of strong men lusting for power. It is a story of men throwing away successively in the heat of that passion everything that could make that power worth having, and mutually squandering the resources for which they were all contending. The nemesis of these men was the nemesis not of weakness but of strength unallied to principle, not of idealism but of power politics.

CHAPTER II

THE KINGDOM OF DELHI

The Mughul Empire as an imperial *raj* may be said to have ended in the troubles of the years 1759–61. The Maratha wars of the thirties undermined the imperial structure but did not overthrow it; Nadir Shah's invasion was a great blow but the Empire survived it. The Mughuls even registered their last great victory in 1748 at Sirhind over the Afghans. It was only from 1752 that the dry rot within had so eaten away the strength of the Government that it was incapable of withstanding the next shock from without. The civil war between the rival Vazirs Safdar Jang of Oudh and Ghazi-ud-din, Imad-ul-Mulk in 1753, when the two cities of Delhi were held by the rival factions and fighting went on in the space between them and through the suburbs for six months, paralysed the Empire for defence by alienating irrevocably its chief supporters. Imad-ul-Mulk, the victorious minister, was a youth of seventeen. He was the grandson of Asaf Jah, once Vazir of the Empire and the first Nizam of Hyderabad. He united the talents of a Pitt to the morals of a Medici, an intellect of brilliance with the rashness and ruthlessness of youth. He is thus described by Sir Jadunath Sarkar:[1]

> Imad-ul-mulk's father was Ghazi-ud-din Khan Firuz Jung, the eldest son of the Nizam Asaf Jah. An extremely reserved and godly man, Firuz Jung spent his days in the company of theologians and his nights in vigil, and ordered the life of his household with the strict rod of a puritan....Born at Narwar in June 1737, Imad was brought up by his pious father with incredible strictness; he spent his days exclusively with tutors and mullahs and the Muslim Sabbath with eunuchs, being never allowed to mix with boys of his own age or to attend any performance by dancing girls, though this was the universal amusement of all classes in that age and almost a matter of course at every social gathering. The result was that his intellect passed through a forced precocious flowering. He mastered several languages, including Turkish, and learned to write with neatness the seven different styles of Arabic penmanship. As a scholar he was versed in many branches of knowledge and was

a poet of some note in his time. His intellectual attainments however, did not weaken his power of action. Unlike his passive retiring father, he was brave in battle, enterprising in action, and a born leader of men in a degree surprising in a lad not yet out of his teens. But all these splendid gifts were vitiated by an utter lack of the moral sense, a boundless ambition, a shameless greed of money, and a ferocious cruelty of disposition that made him one of the monsters of Delhi history.

Under Imad-ul-Mulk's headstrong and erratic guidance, the Empire rushed to its final dissolution. Two military tidal waves, the Afghan and the Maratha, met in the Delhi plains and in the shock of collision the Mughul imperial power, as distinct from its name and moral authority, disappeared for ever. Two years of marching and counter-marching, of plunder and devastation culminated in the battle of Panipat, and during all this time the Mughul power, which began by calling in one power to offset the other, appeared as either a helpless spectator or a subordinate ally. The Emperor Alamgir II, who affected the culture and austerity of Aurangzeb without possessing his vigour or shrewdness, was murdered in 1759 by Imad-ul-Mulk, who thenceforth sank into obscurity. Jean Law thus described him in his later days:[2]

> I have not seen in his conduct anything but much deception and a cruelty that revolts. He has almost always a rosary in his hand, but his devotion is nothing but hypocrisy. He caused to be inhumanly massacred those in whom he appeared to have the greatest confidence and to whom he was actually indebted for his elevation.

The Emperor's heir, Mirza Abdullah, Ali Gauhar, anticipated a similar fate by flight in 1758 and proclaimed himself Emperor under the title of Shah Alam at Ghotauli in Behar, when under the protection of Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh.[3] Thus began in exile a reign which was to last forty-seven years, was exceeded in length only by those of Akbar and Aurangzeb, and was throughout marked by misfortune, frustration and tragedy. The imperial title had been saved but the imperial power was gone.

With the retirement of both Afghans and Marathas after Panipat the way was opened for a revival of local power in Delhi. It is convenient to call this revived but reduced Mughul power the kingdom of Delhi, to distinguish it from the pre-

Panipat imperial Government which had continued to exercise some sort of authority over parts of northern India until the last Afghan invasion. The Delhi kingdom lasted in some sort until the blinding of Shah Alam in 1788. The situation of the Emperor may be compared to that of the first Capetian kings of France, who exercised sovereignty only over the royal demesne round Paris while claiming titular authority over the whole of France. The difference lay in the contrast between the character of early Capetians and later Mughuls. In those twenty-seven years the Delhi Kingdom underwent a number of vicissitudes. The first period is associated with the name of Najib-ud-daula. He was a Rohilla Afghan and soldier of fortune who in 1753 was granted *jagirs* in the upper Doab for aiding Imad-ul-Mulk. In the fashion of the times he extended his power by seizing many villages in the Saharanpur and Meerut districts. In late 1756 he failed to give help to the Vazir against Ahmad Shah Abdali, and early the next year changed sides and joined his fellow Afghan. He protected the Abdali's left flank in his southern expedition by moving down the east bank of the Jumna and similarly covered the Afghan retirement. On Ahmad Shah's retreat from India in April 1757 he was left in charge of Delhi and the Emperor. But Imad-ul-Mulk had also been restored to the Vazirat and at once proceeded to pay off old scores. A plan for ousting Najib from Delhi was concocted between Imad and the Marathas in violation of his obligations to Ahmad Shah, and Najib found himself besieged in July. Enraged by Imad's treachery, Najib completed the breach between them by taking vengeance on Imad's wives and daughters who were within reach in the Delhi family mansion. In September Najib was compelled to evacuate Delhi and retired to his estates whence he appealed to Ahmad Shah to return. During the Panipat campaign he again acted as an Afghan auxiliary. An inveterate enemy of the Marathas on account of their ravaging of Rohilkhand, he persuaded Ahmad Shah to fight at Panipat when the latter was inclined to make terms.[4] On his final retirement from India in March 1761 Ahmad Shah recognized Shah Alam as Emperor, Imad-ul-Mulk as Vazir and Najib as *Mir Bakshi* or Paymaster.[5] But the hope that these three would work together was vain. Between Najib Khan and Imad-ul-Mulk lay the memory of repeated betrayals and the violation of Imad's household, the worst of all crimes in Indian eyes; between Shah Alam and Imad-ul-Mulk lay the blood of the murdered Alamgir. Najib Khan used this situation to seize power for himself in Delhi. He persuaded the queen-mother and heir apparent, in the absence of Shah Alam who was still in Behar, that Imad-ul-Mulk's return would mean the setting aside of Shah Alam's branch of the Mughul family in favour of some other prince like Shah Jahan III, whom he had set up for nine months after the murder of Alamgir. While Imad-ul-Mulk, after receiving the Vazir's robes of office from Najib's agent, was delaying at Mathura in order to assemble the Jat troops of his supporter Raja Suraj Mal of Bharatpur, Najib Khan entered Delhi on 7 April 1761, at the heir apparent's invitation, the two seated on the same elephant. Najib was confirmed as *Mir Bakshi* and appointed *Faujdar* (governor) of the Delhi district and *Mukhtar* (regent) of the imperial Government, and this arrangement was confirmed by Shah Alam.

Circumstances combined with Najib's great ability enabled him to remain the undefeated though not unchallenged master of Delhi during the next nine years. The great tidal waves of power which had swamped Imad-ul-Mulk and the imperial Government had both receded for a time and the local powers were sufficiently divided by mutual jealousies and sufficiently limited in resources to enable a resolute leader to hold his own against them. But while Najib Khan could maintain himself, he was never strong enough to overcome his rivals, so that his rule was no more than a brilliant feat of poise and balance between contending forces. As soon as his subtle and masterful mind was withdrawn a fresh turn was given to the political kaleidoscope. The two tidal waves were the Afghans and Marathas. The former, in spite of brief reappearances by Ahmad Shah in the Punjab, were never to return; the latter, broken temporarily by the losses of Panipat and the dissensions which followed, disappeared from Hindustan for ten years. In the void thus left, the two principal powers were the Jats of Bharatpur under their leader Suraj Mal, and the Sikhs of the Punjab. Suraj Mal had avoided entanglement in the Afghan-Maratha contest and had a large army and a full treasury. He was strategically placed between the two imperial cities of Delhi and Agra and could appeal to Jat sentiment in the Jumna Doab and the south-east Punjab. The Sikhs were active, numerous and implacable, but they had as yet found no great leader to unite their numerous war bands and suffered from a racial division between the *Phulkian* or Cis-Sutlej and the *Manjha* or Trans-Sutlej groups. Beyond, in an outer circle, lay the Rajput states to the west and the dominions of Shuja-ud-daula in Oudh to the east. The Rajput princes were themselves divided and exhausted by Maratha forays and displayed no aggressive spirit. Shuja-ud-daula was restless and ambitious, but he also had his preoccupations further east.

Najib-ud-daula[8] had behind him his own Rohillas of the Saharanpur district. They were reliable and valiant, but limited in numbers. He could also appeal to the Muslim chiefs of the Delhi region, fearful alike of Sikhs, Jats and Marathas. He had the moral support of Ahmad Shah, a formidable name throughout this decade. He had also the legal benefit of imperial appointment. But tribalism, sectarianism and personal jealousies came in to undermine a superficial Muslim unity. The Rohillas despised the less enterprising Indian Muslim and the local Muslims feared Afghan ill-faith and ruthlessness. The Mughul or Turkish element could not credit any good thing coming from Afghanistan. The Sunni-Shia difference sowed distrust between Shia Lucknow with its Persian traditions and Sunni Afghanistan. Shuja-ud-daula could not forget that his father had been Vazir of the Empire whose capital Najib-ud-daula ruled.

In these circumstances and with these difficulties it is not surprising that Najib's achievement, for all his ability, was negative rather than positive. He was not strong enough to crush the Jats, and could barely defend Delhi against Suraj Mal's successor Jawahir Singh in 1765. The Jat power thereafter declined in typical dissensions, but Najib's energies were fully occupied in holding at bay the Sikh war bands. His friendship with the young Patiala state enabled him to repulse without crushing them. He could get no help from Shuja-ud-daula who was at the same time too busy to attempt any offensive action. In 1768 he retired in broken health to his stronghold of Najibabad and died there in October 1770, leaving his power to his young son Zabita Khan.

Najib's death coincided with a revival of Maratha power, and brought matters to a crisis for Shah Alam. Najib's last act had been to collaborate with Malhar Rao Holkar in defeating the Jats. If Shah Alam continued in Allahabad, the chances were that Delhi would fall either to the belligerent Sikhs or to the revivified Marathas. There was a large supply of Mughul princes available in the Fort whom the Sikhs would not hesitate to exploit, and while the Marathas, with their love of precedent and established tradition, might be more tender to existing authority, the net result would be the same. Shah Alam would be condemned to perpetual pensionhood either at Allahabad at the hands of Shuja-ud-daula or the Company, or at Delhi at the hands of the Marathas or the Sikhs. He had therefore to face the dilemma of moving to Delhi with all the risks involved or of continued residence in Allahabad with probable extinction as a serious political factor. The risks involved were very serious. In Delhi there was only a set of chiefs, with little real stake in the country and divided by personal and tribal ambitions and feuds. He would therefore need some support there, and the only support forthcoming was from the Marathas. It was true that the Marathas were not what they were before Panipat, in unity any more than in numbers. But they were the traditional subverters of the Empire of a century's standing; even if they were willing to protect the Emperor, they would not willingly restore his power. Departure from Allahabad would alienate Shuja-ud-daula who feared any restoration of imperial authority without his help and whose meditated destruction of the Rohillas might be jeopardized by imperial interference from the rear. The Emperor was a 'pawn' whom nobody wanted to lose but no one was willing to 'queen'. The English Company, again, would be offended by his departure because, while they were not ready to restore him themselves to Delhi, they were unwilling that anyone else should, and in particular the Marathas. They had promised to escort the Emperor to Delhi from 1761 onwards; a pledge always to be honoured 'after the rains'.[7] English disapproval might be particularly expensive because they were paying regularly a stipend or tribute of twenty-six *lakhs* a year.[8] These objections explain why British commentators have generally deprecated the step, attributing it to Shah Alam's lack of political acumen and archaic Mughul affection for a shattered and exposed capital. All these objections were valid in themselves, but, from Shah Alam's point of view, they could not weigh against the still greater objection of staying where he was. It was a case of placing the undoubted hazards of departure against the certain result of further delay—permanent confirmation of the pensionary status. The journey to Delhi was Shah Alam's last chance of independence; Shah Alam knew it, and it cannot be denied, in the light of the next twelve years' history, that the move was justified. Shah Alam made a correct decision in a desperate situation, the only decision which a man of spirit could make.

The machinery of return was first to allow the Marathas to reoccupy Delhi in Shah Alam's name. This preserved the city pending his return. Next came the treaty which regulated the conditions of return, and finally the return itself. The treaty,[9] agreed to on 15 February 1771, stipulated that the Marathas should escort the Emperor to Delhi within two months, and should hand over the Fort to his agent when ten out of a total of forty *lakhs* had been paid over to them. In return Shah Alam would cede the districts of Kora and Allahabad, would pay those ten *lakhs* in twenty days, would give revenue assignments worth fifteen *lakhs* (including Meerut), and clear the balance of fifteen *lakhs* in seven months. The Marathas actually evacuated the Delhi Fort on 2 August, and Shah Alam, after vain attempts to deter him by the Court party which preferred the secure fleshpots of Allahabad to the dangerous and uncomfortable dignity of Delhi, entered the capital on 6 January 1772.

For the next ten years the dominant figure in Delhi was Mirza Najaf Khan, Zulfiqar-ud-daula.[10] Najaf Khan was a Persian, whose mother belonged to the royal Safavi house. As such he was imprisoned by the usurper Nadir Shah; in 1746 he was released at the instance of the Mughul ambassador, Mirza Mir Hasan (brother of Safdar Jang), proceeded to India and entered the service of the Oudh Nawabs. Falling under the displeasure of Shuja-ud-daula, he took service in 1762 with Mir Kasim, the Nawab of Bengal. He shared his master's defeat at the hands of the Company in the next year, but remained faithful to him until his fortunes were finally shattered at the battle of Baksar in 1764. He then retired to Bundelkhand until he was called to Allahabad by Shah Alam in the next year. From that time until his death in 1782 he was the Emperor's chief support. As skilful a soldier and as subtle a diplomatist as Najib-ud-daula, he lacked the Afghan's craft and cruelty and possessed instead the traditional Persian intelligence, polish and charm. All accounts agree that in him the Empire might under more fortunate stars have found its deliverer.

Najaf Khan had still to reckon with the Sikhs in the north, though Najib's hammerings had made them less formidable than before. To the north-west Zabita Khan's Rohillas were aloof and distrustful, but unable by themselves to threaten Delhi. The Jats to the south were still a power to be reckoned with, but were no longer so powerful as in the days of Suraj Mal. Between Delhi and Shuja-ud-daula lay the Rohillas of Rampur who for the moment balanced each other. There remained the Marathas. No longer a single aggressive state as in the days before Panipat, they constituted a power factor which fluctuated with the political changes in the Deccan. The Marathas had barely begun to reassert themselves in Hindustan before they were checked again by the fresh dissensions which followed the death of the Peshwa Madho Rao I in 1772, and led on to the first Maratha conflict with the British in 1775. As a result Mirza Najaf Khan was threatened by no overwhelming power during his ten years of ascendancy, and was able to show what could still be done by a skilful and enterprising minister. The Jats were defeated and Agra was recovered in 1774. He next co-operated with Shuja-ud-daula and the British in the destruction of the Rohillas (Hastings' Rohilla war) but broke with Shuja on his refusal to hand over his share of the plunder. But Shuja-ud-daula died the next year and his successor Asaf-ud-daula was no threat to anyone except the famous Begams of Oudh. The Sikhs were next defeated, and it seemed for a moment that the Mughul power might extend once more beyond the Sutlej. But before any further advance could be made Mirza Najaf Khan died in April 1782.

The death of Mirza Najaf Khan opens the last phase of the independent Kingdom of Delhi. At the time it seemed that the Mughul power was stronger than at any time since the civil war of 1753 between Imad-ul-Mulk and Safdar Jang. Broadly speaking, the minister controlled the whole tract of country from the Chambal to the Sutlej. Sikhs, Jats and Rohillas were broken, and Rajput Jaipur was respectful. The Afghan menace had disappeared and Asaf-ud-daula lay inert. The Marathas were at a distance, and the Company, whose capture of Gwalior in 1781 caused Najaf Khan uneasiness, was preoccupied with Maratha and Mysore wars. John Bristow, Resident at Lucknow, estimated in 1781 that Najaf's force comprised thirty battalions of disciplined sepoys, 73,000 cavalry and infantry, and 5000 rocket-men together with 3000 mounted and 400 unmounted guns.[11] Hyder Ali of Mysore, through an agent, was seeking a grant of the Deccan or Hyderabad provinces at the price of twelve *lakhs* a year tribute, which the Nizam's agent was countering with competitive offers. The weakness of the position lay in the fact that the whole edifice of power depended upon the personality of a single man, and upon an unstable economic position. The core of Najaf's power consisted of the disciplined sepoys and rocket-men, and these he found great difficulty in paying. The 73,000 infantry and cavalry were supplied by dependent chiefs for whose support lands were assigned. Shah Alam was therefore like a medieval king who might at any moment be faced with a coalition of discontented lords. The economic weakness was shortly to be accentuated by the desolating famine which afflicted the whole Delhi territory in 1782, and swept away something like a third to a half of the rural population.[12]

Mirza Najaf Khan had no male heir and was succeeded by Afrasiab Khan through the influence of the Mirza's sister.[13] A letter from Bristow gives a picture of the position of the various chiefs during this summer.[14] Afrasiab Khan himself held the fortress of Aligarh and the district of Koel with other possessions in *jagir*. He had a personal revenue of twenty-five *lakhs* and an army of 25,000 men. He was the only chief who balanced his budget, but had no reputation as a soldier. The Gosains of Firuzabad had 7000 to 8000 troops with a revenue of eight *lakhs* but they were shortly dispossessed by Muhammad Beg Hamdani who had married a daughter of Mirza Najaf Khan. Muhammad Beg himself held Agra and Dholpur and controlled an army of 30,000 men. He was reputed to be the strongest of the chiefs. Mirza Shafi Khan held the Meerut district with an army of 20,000 men and a revenue of twenty *lakhs*. He was respected for his high spirit and courage and had recently dispossessed Najaf Quli Khan who had controlled about 5000 men. The sister of Mirza Najaf Khan, who had married Safdar Jang's brother and whose son had been murdered by Shuja-ud-daula, was also much respected. She and Muhammad Beg Hamdani were supporters of Mirza Shafi. There were in addition many lesser chiefs, each with his own forces and territories; one of these was the Begam Samru of Sardhana. Finally, there was Shah Alam himself.

Shah Alam had no *jagirs* in direct control and depended upon the various chiefs. Najaf Khan's system had been to parcel out the imperial territory among the various chiefs and then to control them in the Emperor's name with his own forces. This was possible, as in feudal Europe, so long as the leader possessed a forceful personality and occupied the energies of the nobles in external activities. It would have been possible for Shah Alam to have continued the same policy without an intermediate mayor of the palace if he had possessed sufficient vigour. But he was no longer the man who had cut his way out of his Delhi mansion and conducted a series of campaigns in eastern India with borrowed troops. Nor was he the man who had taken the brave if hazardous decision to march to Delhi in 1771. He was now in his sixty-third year and though he retained his physical vigour till a much later date, he was an old man by Indian standards. The cares of empire had worn out two vigorous and brilliant men, and Shah Alam, if he had once been a competent and courageous, had never been a great man. The position and the task was now too much for him and his course henceforward was one of vacillation punctuated by alternate lamentation and resignation to the will of God. He therefore looked for another Mirza Najaf Khan, but no one with either his ability or his single-mindedness was available. All the chiefs were adventurers with little stake in the country, greedy of power and bereft of any nationalist feeling. Respect for a dynasty had replaced loyalty to a person.

The next few years therefore saw a series of attempts by the various chiefs to seize the supreme power and exercise it in Shah Alam's name. None had the time or ability to consolidate themselves before being overthrown. No one ventured to displace Shah Alam, though it was considered by Mirza Shafi, because the imperial name remained an important though intangible political asset.[15] Each one, in the effort to retain his power, looked outside for help. One possible source was the English Company, now emerging with greatly enhanced prestige from the Maratha and Mysore wars. The other was Madho Rao Sindia, the Maratha chief who was now rapidly developing his power in Central India and looking northwards to Hindustan. Here it is convenient to trace the steps by which the chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves, made fruitless advances to the British power in Calcutta, then called in Sindia and finally passed under his control. They can be followed in a series of the Bengal secret consultations preserved in the Commonwealth Relations Office, and in the published papers of the Poona Residency correspondence.[16] Our most important informant is Major James Browne, who was deputed to Delhi by the Calcutta Council in the summer of 1782.[17] His despatch was caused by government fears of Sindia's encroachment consequent upon the death of Mirza Najaf Khan and the unsettled state of affairs at Delhi. His main object was therefore to counteract the influence of Sindia. He was to encourage the Emperor to ask for troops for his protection, provided that arrangements could be made for paying them, but he was to refuse tribute from Bengal or the recession of Kora and Allahabad. He was also to collect any evidence of other agents at work. Browne reached Delhi early in 1783, after being delayed for some time at Farrukhabad.

Afrasiab Khan did not hold power for long. In the autumn of 1782 he was ousted by Mirza Shafi, who seized Delhi with the approval of Shah Alam and was appointed *Mir Bakshi* and *Amir-ul-Umara*.[18] Mirza Shafi soon fell out with his supporter Muhammad Beg Hamdani and then made an approach to Sindia. But this negotiation lapsed when a reconciliation took place and Major Browne had to explain to the Court the movement of British troops to the frontier at Anupshuhr.[19] Browne had recommended this to encourage the Delhi chiefs against the Sikhs and perhaps also against Sindia.[20] Shah Alam consulted an astrologer who replied that 'the English would come into the Province perfectly obedient to his authority, and behave well, but that some contention would be the result'.[21]

After holding power for barely a year Mirza Shafi was assassinated by Muhammad Beg Hamdani and his nephew Agha Ismail. The two rode their elephants on either side of Shafi in friendly talk, and then despatched him. Afrasiab Khan then came back to power.[22] Shah Alam and his minister Majid-ud-daula now approached the Company for assistance.[23] Hastings was inclined to agree, but the Council would not follow his lead. Stables was against sending any aid while Macpherson (Hastings's temporary successor) advocated friendly relations without present aid, except through the Nawab Vazir. The issue was reopened by Major Browne in a letter dated 30 December 1783.[24] Browne proposed that six battalions with artillery and a siege train should be lent to Shah Alam and placed under his personal control. It was to be paid from the *jagir* of Lutf Ali Khan which had been resumed by the Nawab Vazir for misconduct. But again the Council was unwilling to act. In February 1784 Afrasiab Khan, getting no reply, reopened negotiations with Sindia and reached an agreement. In April the situation was complicated by the flight of Shah Alam's eldest son, Prince Muhammad Bakht, from Delhi. This was caused partly by jealousy of the second son, Prince Jivan Bakht (later Akbar Shah II), and partly by the hope of securing assistance from Hastings. Browne followed the Prince from Delhi to confer with Hastings at Lucknow, and in July returned with the offer of a very cautious treaty. It was accepted by Afrasiab Khan but rejected by Shah Alam. At this juncture Sindia's agent persuaded Afrasiab to call in Sindia for help against Muhammad Beg Hamdani. In November Sindia was preparing to attack Muhammad Beg on payment of ten *lakhs* of rupees, when Afrasiab Khan was assassinated by an emissary of Zain-ul-Abdin Khan, the brother of the late Mirza Shafi. Sindia's moment had come. Sindia appointed his agent Himmat Bahadur deputy for Afrasiab's infant son, and subdued Muhammad Beg at Agra. Shah Alam joined his camp at Agra and Sindia's triumph was completed by the appointment of the infant Peshwa as the *Vakil-i-mutlaq* (Regent of the Empire) and of himself as the Regent's deputy.[25]

The conduct of Hastings, which precipitated Shah Alam's surrender to Sindia, would seem to require some explanation. His instructions to Browne certainly suggested that he was prepared to help the Emperor with arms. If this policy had been pursued with vigour in 1783 it is possible that he could have maintained his independence. The six battalions might have become the nucleus of a subsidiary force such as had already been imposed upon the Nawab Vazir of Oudh, and such as Wellesley later developed into a regular system. North India might never have fallen under Sindia's domination, the campaign of Lord Lake might never have been necessary and the Company might have eventually ruled India as the imperial Regent instead of as an independent alien power. Thus a vista of interesting possibilities is opened out with their consequences for the whole character of the British power in India. The evidence suggests that Hastings looked favourably on the idea in principle, and would have liked to carry it out if it had been possible.[26] What then caused him to change his mind?

Hastings was above all a realist, and never engaged in enterprises beyond his strength. It was clear that Sindia's power was steadily increasing, though the great accession it was to receive with the addition of de Boigne's disciplined battalions was not yet obvious. Even without them, it would before long have been necessary to send a larger force than six battalions to Shah Alam and to supply a stronger hand than that of Majid-ud-daula. The great relative distance of Delhi from Bengal made the proposition much less feasible than in the case of Oudh. Further, Hastings, just emerging from the exhausting Maratha-Mysore war, was in no condition to undertake further commitments. Finally, he knew that any such enterprise was likely to need prolonged and firm support, while he himself was already contemplating retirement to England. To undertake fresh commitments in Delhi would be to offer another target for the criticism of undue interference in Indian affairs. As it was, Burke did his best to exploit the tentative moves actually made.

To these realistic and prudential motives may be added Hastings's judgement of Sindia. His distrust of Sindia as a belligerent in the Maratha war decreased as soon as the war was over. An independent Sindia would weaken the whole Maratha confederacy. Sindia's difficulties with Jats, Rajputs, Mughuls and Rohillas would divert him from adventure elsewhere and particularly from Oudh. His hostility to the Rana of Gohad, to whom Hastings had a rooted aversion, was also a point in Sindia's favour.[27] Hastings therefore inclined to the view that Sindia's control of Delhi, which was the logical consequence of failing to succour Shah Alam, might in the immediate future be both less costly and less dangerous than full-scale intervention. In reply to Major Browne's arguments in favour of an alliance with the Mughuls, Hastings wrote to the Council in 1784:[28]

> Much has been said of Sindhia's duplicity and falsehood, and inference from thence been drawn of his future dangerous designs against the English and their ally the Nawab of Oudh. Sindhia does not at least deserve this character from us. In all his transactions with the English, I believe I might say in all the transactions that have come to our knowledge, he has shown an uncommon degree of steadiness and sincerity.

If Sindia was no longer regarded as a danger to the Company or Oudh, a comparison with the local Delhi chiefs tilted the balance still more strongly in his favour. Firm rule of the Delhi territory was far better than the prevailing anarchy and a much better safeguard against the Sikhs or a possible renewed Afghan invasion. Browne was sent to Delhi at a time when Hastings was distrustful of Sindia. From that time Hastings tended to lose his distrust while Browne's, perhaps through closer knowledge and certainly through greater sympathy with the imperial Court, grew greater. Hence arose the not uncommon position of an agent finding his advocacy of a policy he has been instructed to implement rejected, because his superior has reconsidered the policy in the meantime.

From 1785 onwards Delhi was an appanage of Sindia's power. Shah Alam was first a dependent and then a pensionary. The intrigues and conflicts which still went on represented no longer the attempts of chiefs to seize supreme power or reintegrate the kingdom of Delhi, but mere lawless efforts to assert a temporary local independence or to gain advantages from the ruling power. They can all be related to the actions of Sindia and as such have no special significance in themselves. The one event which stands out is the outrage of Ghulam Qadir when he captured Delhi and blinded Shah Alam. Even that event is of personal and tragic rather than political interest; it had no permanent effect on the distribution of power.

Sindia had established himself in Agra and Delhi and secured his personal ascendancy by his appointment as deputy Regent of the Empire. But he had still to assert his power over the component factions of the Delhi region. Muhammad Beg Hamdani of Agra was defeated and so was Jahangir Khan of Aligarh, the successor of Afrasiab, but there remained Ghulam Qadir, the Rohilla, the grandson of Najib-ud-daula, who controlled the Saharanpur district. There were also the Jats, the Rajputs of Jaipur, and the Sikhs, who were exacting *takhi*, the Sikh equivalent of *chauth*, from the Delhi territories. In the summer of 1787 Sindia sustained a severe blow in his campaign against the Jaipur Raja at Lalsont when most of his battalions of infantry and a large part of his artillery deserted to the Rajputs. Financial embarrassment, which was largely responsible for the defection, prevented a rapid recovery. As so often in eighteenth-century India, an adventurer had overplayed his financial hand. This provided an opportunity for Ghulam Qadir who occupied Delhi in the autumn and worked with Ismail Beg, the nephew and successor of Muhammad Beg Hamdani. Ismail besieged Agra and joined forces with Ghulam to defeat a Jat and Maratha force near Bharatpur in April 1788. But two months later Ismail was decisively defeated near Agra by Sindia's French general, de Boigne. It was want of money which led Ghulam Qadir and the fugitive Ismail to Delhi in July and the failure to find it, combined with Afghan vengefulness, which precipitated the crime. Shah Alam was first deposed on 31 July because his correspondence with Sindia and frantic appeals for help had been discovered. He was blinded ten days later in a fit of senseless passion because the expected treasure had not been discovered in the palace. The tumult and humiliation which preceded the deposition were recorded in the Delhi newspapers,[29] and the blinding was thus described by Jonathan Scott in a letter to Hastings:[30]

> I have a dreadful account of the unfortunate fate of Shaw Aulum and his family. The poor old king had his eyes put out, wanted common necessaries and was often beaten by the abominable Golaum Khadir who made the young Princes sing for his amusement, calling them ATOMNY BATCHES [*sic*] and other vile names.

The women of the Harem were stripped, beaten and numbers died from hunger. Several threw themselves over the Ramparts of the Palace and were drowned in the Jumna. The floors of every apartment in the Citadel were dug up, every article seized, even to the Pots of the Kitchens. The new King Bedar Shaw was not allowed a change of raiment and was obliged to beg for a rupee to buy a meal off Golaum Khadir who refused to see him, when His Majesty went on foot to beg an interview. The Old Queens of Mahummud Shaw, Sahibeh Nihal and Mallekeh Zummaneh, the latter the daughter of Feroksere who had seen Dhely in its utmost splendour before the invasion of Nadir Shaw, were forced from their houses and confined in one of the Bastions with Khanauts only for shelter for some days. Their property was seized, and the floors even of their apartments dug up. Shaw Aulum was seven days without any food but coarse bread and water. Upon the approach of the Mahrattas Golaum Khadir evacuated Dhely carrying with him nineteen of Shaw Aulum's sons and the poor aged Empress Mallekeh Zummaneh to his camp, threatening to murder them, but some days after, having a quarrel with his king Bedar Shah, who had displeased him by going into the Bazar to fly a kite, he deposed him and proclaimed Akbar Shaw, the favourite son of Shaw Aulum. The old man was so delighted with this that he refused to accept the throne again or to nominate another successor, saying he had obtained his wish and since Akbar was king, he forgave Golaum Khadir his Rebellion and every other cruelty and insult. The Maharattas refused acknowledging Akber Shaw and were trying to prevail on Shaw Aulum to appoint a successor but in vain, when my newspaper came away bearing date Nov. 7 [1788].

Mirza Ismail soon fell out with Ghulam Qadir. They both, said the local newspapers, possessed impetuous tempers. Ghulam was soon compelled to evacuate Delhi to meet the Marathas in the Doab. Ismail deserted him and Ghulam was defeated near Meerut in December, captured and executed on 3 March 1789. Though violence and treachery marked the age, horror at this crime against an aged and defenceless man, the recognized Emperor for nearly thirty years, did more to undo Ghulam's power than any other single factor.

By the normal rules of royalty Shah Alam's blindness should have disqualified him for restoration. This was one of the regular methods, in India as in Afghanistan and the Middle East generally, as well as in the Byzantine Empire, used to disqualify competitors for power. But Shah Alam had three

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points in his favour. They were the prestige acquired by nearly thirty years' unchallenged possession of the imperial throne, the particularly barbaric circumstances of his misfortune, and the lack of serious competitors. His eldest son, who had displayed a degree of talent very similar to his own when a young man, was dead, and his second son, Mirza Akbar, was worthy rather than capable. Bidar Bakht, whom Ghulam Qadir had first raised to the throne, was a cipher who had been displaced by Ghulam because he went into the bazaar to fly a kite.[31] In restoring Shah Alam Sindia would be paying characteristic deference to legal authority, assuring himself of a docile figurehead no longer able to indulge in serious intrigues, and incidentally saving the expense involved in maintaining the court of a king with all his faculties.[32] Some attempt was at first made to persuade Shah Alam to abdicate on the ground that it was necessary for the Emperor to be in Sindia's camp to give sanction to his measures and that this was not possible in the case of Shah Alam.[33] But this was not pressed in the face of Shah Alam's opposition and British reluctance, the hazard of a change being evidently greater than the inconvenience of imperial absenteeism from Sindia's camp. Shah Alam, wrote Palmer to Hastings, 'was as tenacious of royalty as if it was attended with all the power and renown of Acbar and Aurangzeb'.[34]

Sindia actually allotted, according to Palmer,[35] six *lakhs* of rupees a year for Shah Alam's household and personal expenses. Complaints soon appeared of the King's indigence and lack of proper attention. It was said that only Rs. 17,000 a month was actually paid for his personal allowance, which may be compared with the Rs. 60,000 a month given by the British into the private hands of the Emperor.[36] In June 1789 Palmer wrote:[37]

> It is very discreditable to Sindia to leave the Shah and his family so long without any settled provision, or any person in proper authority to transact the cash business of the Durbar and city. You can hardly imagine how indigent and degrading the king's position is.

And he followed this up a year later by telling Hastings that Shah Alam was kept in indigence and insignificance.[38] Palmer considered the Empire at an end and thought that the Company should throw off its nominal dependence either by purchase, which could be done 'for a trifle' or 'by a manly disavowal of further dependence'.[39]

> The House of Timur [he wrote] is fallen never to rise again. From the disposition of all the living family, their restoration to authority is impracticable, though it may be to the interest of some power to assert their right of Dominion and support the pageantry of their Sovereign rule. They are treated by Sindia with humanity and respect, and in truth this is as much as their Talents and their Virtues entitle them to.[40]

Shah Alam, now in his seventies, remained surprisingly vigorous and continued his fondness for royalty. A traveller like Twining[41] confirmed the letters of Palmer and the report of Francklin who visited Delhi in 1793–4.[42] Delhi was now within Sindia's power system. Its extent is indicated by the following passage of a letter from C. W. Malet, the Resident at Poona, to the Directors:[43]

> Mahadjee Sindhia who is attended here [Poona] by about 8000 horse, foot and artillery, has an army, commanded by Jivvaji Baxy, employed in taking every possible advantage of the disputed succession to the Rajaship of Marwar, vacated by the death of the late Raja Bijay Sing. An army, employed under Ambajee is settling the country of Mewar in Mahadjee Sindhia's character of Diwan, which office was lately conferred on him by the Rana of Udipore. An army under Gopal Bhow, is lately employed against Holkar, but now ordered towards Bundelcand, for the purpose of collecting the tributes of the Rajas of that quarter, and for embarrassing (it is conjectured) Aly Bahadur's measures; a force, under Behroo Pant Tattya, in the quarter of Panipat; another under Bappoo Malhar, in the quarter of Saharanpore; another in the quarter of Hariana, under Appa Khande. Beside which Mr De Boigne is employed with part of one of his two brigades, in settling his jageer of 35 lacks of Rupees per annum, situated partly in Mewat, and partly in the Doab. Mr De Boigne's whole party, I am informed, consists of two regular brigades, constructed on the plan of ours in Bengal, but with a larger proportion of cavalry and artillery, and a large body of Rohilla irregulars to act as light infantry. To these two, I understand, a third has been lately added, on local principles, called *sebandi*, meant for the service and defence of his jageer.

The mainspring of this system was the disciplined corps of the French adventurer, de Boigne, whose headquarters were at Aligarh. It was this body which enabled Sindia's young son Daulat Rao to succeed peacefully in 1794, and which, under de Boigne's successor Perron, firmly held these territories until

Wellesley's war in 1803, and it was the defection of its leaders which paved the way for Lord Lake's success. De Boigne's career has been often described,[44] but an idea of his power can be obtained from a description of his forces in 1793 forwarded by Malet to the Court.[45] He had then two brigades of infantry of ten battalions each and comprising about 12,000 men, 100 field pieces of artillery served by nearly 3000 men in all, a great park of artillery served by 1000 men, and 800 regular cavalry. In addition there were 200 irregular cavalry attached to each brigade for reconnoitring, etc., 1000 Rohillas to save the regulars from patrol duties and small actions, and 400 Miwatis to defend foragers, woodcutters and other camp-followers. This made a total of about 15,000 disciplined men and over 4000 auxiliaries.[46] The Mughul kingdom of Delhi had become the French principality of Aligarh.

CHAPTER III

THE MUGHULS AND THE BRITISH

The expected Maratha war broke out in 1803, and it at once brought into question the position of Shah Alam. He was the nominal suzerain of both the contending parties, for the British held Bengal by the grant of the *Diwani* in 1765, and Sindia was his *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* or imperial Regent. One of the declared objects of Lord Wellesley was to seize Delhi and the Jumna Doab, and 'the possession of the nominal authority of the Mughul', so that Shah Alam could not evade the issue if he would. Officially, of course, he sided with his Regent and treated the Company as a rebellious vassal. But privately his feelings were otherwise.. It has been too easily assumed that Shah Alam inevitably preferred the British to the Marathas or the French. But this was by no means the whole truth. Towards both Marathas and British he had substantial obligations, and against both substantial grievances. If the British had provided an asylum for seven years at Allahabad, the Marathas had rescued him from the clutches of Ghulam Qadir and restored him to his throne. If the Marathas were mean and disrespectful in their personal attitude, the British had foiled at Baksar his youthful attempt to reassert the imperial authority; they had peremptorily withheld the Bengal tribute promised by the treaty of 1765, and had repeatedly refused military and financial aid to him at Delhi. Cornwallis had refused to move against Ghulam Qadir.[1] Their ally, the Nawab-Vazir of Oudh, had failed to pay a table allowance for some years, an omission which a man in Shah Alam's position was specially likely to resent. The current Indian opinion of the British would not cause him to distinguish between Maratha and British courtesy.[2] If Shah Alam could have chosen for himself he would probably have preferred the French officers, his immediate masters, to either the Marathas or the British. They possessed a proverbial courtesy and geniality in India superior to either of the others; they mixed more freely with the people than the British, and were less rapacious than the Marathas. Their love of power was doubtless no less than either, but their numbers were fewer; they had no French troops with which to found their own *raj*. They worked entirely through Indian instruments, and though they were doubtless masterful, they were fundamentally agents rather than independent rulers. Stories of the rising French star in the West were too vague to weigh in the scale of the Delhi Court against the known powers of both British and Marathas.

So Shah Alam may have argued in the secrecy of his private apartments, but his was not a free choice. The French themselves were agents of Sindia.

Knowing as we do the relative strength of Marathas and British, it is clear that the real interest of the Mughul dynasty lay in a Maratha victory. A loosely knit confederacy, rent with personal jealousies and internal dissensions, was a more hopeful master than an organized and disciplined government, supported from an unknown and apparently inexhaustible reservoir of power overseas. Maratha government always provided a hope of ultimate restoration of authority; at any time another Mirza Najaf Khan might arise to turn the Marathas against themselves. Disputed successions, sudden death and personal rivalries gave the Court a golden thread of hope which ran through all their life of subterfuge and humiliation. But the Company Bahadur had no disputed successions, its discipline neutralized personal rivalries, and its impersonal nature removed that saving grace of tyranny—the possibility of removal by assassination.

On the other hand Shah Alam was far from comfortable under Maratha tutelage, and age and infirmity are apt to value immediate comfort and respect before distant future advantages. But there was no clear and obvious preference, and to assume, as British contemporaries did, that Shah Alam was praying for deliverance and the sound of British guns, is to look at the situation through British instead of through Mughul eyes. For Shah Alam the choice was at best one between two evils, with the hope that the triumphant party would prove the lesser of the two.

In the circumstances Shah Alam had only one course of action. It was to ensure himself against the future by negotiating with both parties at once. His ministers, through long practice, were adepts at this game. Thus his secret appeals to the British must be regarded in just the same light as his official support of Sindia—as moves in the policy of reinsurance whatever the outcome of events. The Mughul policy was to retain the nominal sovereignty of India by the utmost complaisance to the actual possessors of power. Behind this apparent pusillanimity lay the hope that the wheel of fortune might yet turn to make possible the reunion of actual to nominal authority. The Marathas, as we know, accepted this position, because it gave them the cloak of the imperial name. They accepted, too, the limitation involved in this policy, the maintenance of the Imperial Court at Delhi, and formal submission to the Emperor's authority. They did it grudgingly, at the minimum of expense both of money and courtesy. But the British position was different, and herein lay the seed of all the disputes with the Mughuls for the next fifty years. Lord Wellesley desired to possess 'the name and authority of the Mughuls' for just the same reason as the Marathas. But he had not the slightest intention of making any show of submission to the Emperor. He would appear not as his minister but as his protector, not as his agent, but as his overlord. He would deliver Shah Alam from Maratha discourtesy but not from oppression; for Maratha oppression he would substitute a British usurpation. Shah Alam was to be not a puppet but a pensionary. This fundamental change of attitude was to be gilded by offers of larger allowances and regular payments, and by personal deference to the imperial family in Delhi.

It must not be thought that Shah Alam and his advisers were unaware of the probable British attitude. For it had indeed been made clear over many years by a succession of British rulers. His own claim to effective rule in Bengal and Behar had been repelled by force and he had actually already been treated as a pensioner for seven years in Allahabad. Warren Hastings in 1773 pointedly disavowed the Mughul authority[3] and Cornwallis had refused to a Mughul envoy the superior status he claimed. That each side had their own conception of the relations which should subsist between them, and that each was determined to uphold it, is shown by the very beginning of the sequel. Wellesley's object was to secure the prestige of the Mughul name without any admission of its superior authority; Shah Alam's to maintain the imperial pretensions at the cost of any conceivable practical concessions.

Lord Wellesley's agent was the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Lake, and his agent in Delhi was the Sayyid Rezzi Khan.[4] During July and August Shah Alam's letters wavered between appeals for help and complaints of his treatment by the British as the fortunes of war ebbed and flowed. On 27 July 1803 Wellesley in a personal letter assured Shah Alam:[5]

> If your Majesty should be disposed to accept the Asylum which... I have directed the Commander-in-Chief to offer...Your Majesty may be assured that every demonstration of Respect and every degree of attention which can contribute to the ease and comfort of your Majesty and the Royal Family will be manifested on the part of the British Government, and that adequate Provision will be made on the part of the British Government for the support of your Majesty your family and household.

At the same time Lake was instructed to show to His Majesty 'every demonstration of reverence, respect and attention and every degree of regard for the comfort of His Majesty and the Royal Family consistent with the security of their Persons'. Shah Alam was to be overwhelmed with kindness, it would seem. But the next paragraph showed the bent of Wellesley's mind. Shah Alam and the heir apparent Akbar were to be urged to reside at Monghyr in Bengal. 'Every argument' was to be used but no force.[6] Lake in forwarding Wellesley's letter went beyond his superior's intentions and unintentionally played into Shah Alam's hands. He wrote to Shah Alam:[7] 'I am cordially disposed to render your Majesty every demonstration of my *loyalty* [my italics] and attachment and I consider it to be a distinguished honour, as it is a peculiar privilege, to execute your Majesty's commands.' This was a point for Shah Alam, for Lake had done just what Wellesley had wished to avoid—assumed the tone of a subject instead of that of a friendly protector.

The battle of Delhi was fought on 11 September 1803. Shah Alam, who on 29 August had asked for British help, and on 1 September, under French dictation, had announced he would take the field against the British 'whose invariable custom it is in whatever country they are allowed to reside under fixed stipulations, speedily to seize upon that country',[8] immediately welcomed the English as deliverers. Lake was admitted in audience on 16 September.

This welcome was nothing more than a formal recognition of an accomplished fact. In the moves on each side may be seen the rival interpretations of the situation which fifty years of diplomacy never finally reconciled. Wellesley emphasized his position by calling the victory 'the happy instrument of your Majesty's restoration to a state of dignity and tranquillity *under the power of* the British Crown.[9] In his letters to the Secret Committee[10] he quoted Shah Alam's request to avail himself of the 'protection of the British government' both on 29 August and 11 September. Shah Alam on his side was no less clear. His letter of 29 August asking for protection used the expression 'that hereafter there be no want of obedience or cause of dissatisfaction to me.[11] On 21 September he conferred upon Lake a high title in the Empire, the highest being already given to Sindia.[12] As in the case of Sindia this was not merely an honorary title, but also an office of state, and was in strict accord with the usual Mughul practice of legalizing the *de facto* power for the time being by the grant of *de jure* offices. In the same way the Nawab of Oudh had been made Vazir of the Empire, and Sindia the Regent. Clearly Shah Alam intended to cover the English with the Mughul ceremonial mantle as far as he could.

No sooner had Shah Alam welcomed Lake into Delhi than an incident occurred which revealed this issue in still sharper relief. The French commandant of the Palace, M. Drugeon, had lodged nearly five and a half *lakhs* of rupees with the imperial treasurer, Shah Nawaz Khan, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the British. Sindia's army was scattered, the Emperor was under British control, and Lake was enjoined to give 'every demonstration of reverence, respect and attention' to Shah Alam. Further the Shah was known to be in straitened circumstances. He regarded the money as his, as in law it undoubtedly was, Sindia being his minister. Nevertheless Lake insisted on seizing it for the Government, as not being intended to relieve the royal necessities. To submit to this would have been to admit Wellesley's pensionary thesis. To Shah Alam the British must have seemed no more than Marathas writ large, but his diplomacy rose to the occasion. He offered the money as an imperial donation to the army. Wellesley excused his general, but he saw his mistake and ordered the refund of the money.[13]

These early exchanges are of vital importance because they show that the two parties differed profoundly about the nature of their relationships from the very beginning. The pensionary and the ministerial theses are here set out, and neither side ever actually abandoned them. Was the Emperor to be a Mikado to the Company's Shogunate, or was he to be merely a crowned stipendiary? Neither side perhaps fully understood the outlook of the other, but neither could complain that the other had concealed his claims. It was a conflict, not merely of political views, but of fundamental political outlook and tradition. The British with their practical minds could never understand the existence of dignity without power, of nominal authority unbacked by force. For them such a thing could be no more than a vain pageant, a figment of the imagination. They could not realize that in politics imagination conjures with memory no less than with hope, and that for all its baseless fabric men are largely ruled by it. To the Indian political consciousness, on the other hand, such a situation seemed more normal than otherwise. Overlapping jurisdictions and competing political claims, privileges and exemptions, anomalies and survivals were the breath of the Indian politician's nostrils. To everything, as in the European Middle Ages, there was an exception, and the exceptions were more numerous than the examples. Not even salaries were openly reduced; instead the same nominal sum was paid for a less number of months. Here we meet, as so often in British-Indian relations, the confusion caused by the difficulty of understanding the modes of thought peculiar to an alien tradition and civilization.

We now pass to the application of the Company's policy. Wellesley postponed the detailed settlement of the imperial establishment but he made it clear that the reduction in Shah Alam's status was to be accompanied by every attention to his material comfort and to his personal dignity. The Mughuls were no longer to count in Indian politics, but their political feelings would be dulled by the opiates of comfort and respect. This policy involved two issues, the question of finance or the royal stipend and the question of etiquette or honour. Each must be taken in turn. The first question was provisionally settled by Lake and Ochterlony in 1803 and confirmed by a letter from Wellesley in 1805. The King's allowance had at first been fixed at thirteen *lakhs* by Sindia in 1789, but it had dwindled in later years until his personal allowance was no more than Rs. 17,000 per month, while the whole allowance for the royal household, including the palace guards, was not more than Rs. 45,000 per month.[14] In place of this Shah Alam's personal allowance was fixed at Rs. 60,000 per month, and the whole grant at eleven and a half *lakhs* a year.

This money was to be raised from the revenue of land west of the Jumna known as the Assigned Territory. While the receipts from this tract were less than the sum guaranteed, the amount was to be supplemented from government funds. In the event of any surplus above the stipulated sum in the future, it would by implication accrue to the royal treasury. The lands assigned were the *mahāls* west of the Jumna, 'situate between the west and north of Mauza Kabilpore'. Their management was to be in the hands of the Resident and the expense of administration was to be borne by the Company. The receipts were to be checked by two royal *mutasaddis* who would attend the *Cutcherry* and note the receipts. Two courts were to be established, one revenue and one criminal, and in the latter Muslim law was to be administered. A *Qazi* and a *Mufti* were to be appointed to these courts. Punishment of death or mutilation decreed by these courts was to be submitted to the King by the Resident for confirmation.[15]

Within the walls of the Red Fort[16] the King retained his ruling powers. The inhabitants of the Fort *bazar* were his direct subjects, and the members of the imperial family or *salatin* who lived within, enjoyed diplomatic immunity. The etiquette of the Court was maintained, the sonorous titles and language of the Great Mughuls continued, and the Resident attended the Durbar in the *Diwan-i-Khas* regularly as a suitor. He dismounted like any other courtier at the *Naqar Khana*, and was conducted on foot through the *Lal Purdah* to the imperial presence where he stood respectfully like the rest. If throughout India the Mughul was henceforth to be regarded as a pensioner, within the palace walls he was still to enjoy the powers and dignities of a sovereign.

This settlement was not ungenerous. Indeed it may be said to have gone as far as it was possible to go within the limits of the pensionary policy. On the financial side indeed it was not as large as it appeared, for it must be remembered that Shah Alam had not only to provide for his immediate family, but also for the whole tribe of *salatin* or royal collaterals, who resided in the Fort as virtual prisoners, depending entirely on the Emperor for support and clinging to their royal privileges as tenaciously as Shah Alam himself cherished his imperial pretensions. In 1836, 795 *salatin* were receiving stipends of some sort.[17] There was, in addition, the upkeep of the palace buildings. Nevertheless, the amount given was not a final figure, and distinct hopes were held out that it would be increased as the condition of the country improved. For Shah Alam it was sufficient; with his simple personal wants he could not only pay his way but actually save. On his death it was found that he had accumulated five *lakhs* in the Treasury in addition to the five and a half *lakhs* returned by Wellesley.[18] In these conditions the sightless old monarch, who as a boy had seen Nadir Shah ride into Delhi, who already was a fugitive when Afghan and Maratha clashed at Panipat, who had fought the English at Baksar, negotiated with Clive at Allahabad and defied Warren Hastings by his flight, dreamed away the last few years of his stormy life. With his death began a new and final chapter of Mughul history.

The further history of the royal stipend may here be summarized. It is needless to say that the Mughuls never professed to be satisfied with what they received and never ceased to dip the hand of hope into the treasury of demand. Shah Alam himself commenced the process, although, as we have seen, he was actually saving at the time.[19] He replied to Wellesley's letter of 1805 with a complaint that the provision was too small, but was soothed by the assurance that the sum was based upon war-time exigencies and might soon be increased. The accession of a younger man to the throne in 1806 and one possessing all his faculties meant an increase of expense. There were, moreover, the ever clamant demands of the *salatin*. Ochterlony had hoped to increase the annual allotment to fifteen *lakhs* but Akbar Shah seized upon the provisional figure mentioned by Wellesley at the very beginning and demanded thirty *lakhs*. In 1809 the stipend was increased to a total of twelve *lakhs*, but the King was still dissatisfied because this was still far short of the total of fifteen *lakhs* proposed by Wellesley in 1805 as soon as circumstances permitted. In 1827 Akbar reopened the question with a Paper of Requests based upon the original settlement. This new campaign culminated in the mission of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to England as the royal envoy, and his appeal direct to the Company.[20] Ram Mohan Roy offered to commute all claims for an annual stipend of thirty *lakhs*. The Court eventually agreed to sanction a total of fifteen on those conditions. Akbar at first refused this offer on the advice of the Raja, who presumably hoped for better terms, but later[21] he agreed. But this increase was never actually paid at all. There were at first long discussions over the distribution of the proposed increase, which amounted to Rs. 25,000 a month. The King's personal allowance, and the repairs to the palace were the chief subjects of dispute. In a family of so many hundreds all bristling with vanity, these things were no easy matter. Akbar Shah himself had thirteen brothers and fourteen sisters, and fourteen sons and daughters. Eventually he declined the proffered increase altogether[22] because none of it was to go to himself. Akbar died soon after and his son Bahadur Shah reopened the question. He also refused the proffered increase because he would not abandon all possible claims.[23] In 1843 Bahadur Shah reopened negotiations once more, and strengthened his claim by reporting a debt of nine *lakhs*. Neither side was this time so inclined to insist upon irksome conditions, but once more a hitch occurred. The agent insisted upon an inquiry into the debts, to which the King objected. The inquiry was suspended in deference to the King's 'strong wishes', and with it went all hope of the increase. The exasperated agent, Thomas Metcalfe, wrote that the King's physician, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan (whom we shall meet again), 'was the root of all evil', while the King complained that it was not the inquiry that he objected to, but Metcalfe's mode of 'detailed inquisition'. Enveloped in this cloud of mutual recrimination, the question was referred back to England once more, and there slumbered peacefully in a Leadenhall Street pigeon-hole.

While Shah Alam lived there was a general desire to spare him all unnecessary pain. The courtly Ochterlony was succeeded by the equally considerate Seton and for a few months the old king enjoyed the respect to which his age entitled him.

Shah Alam died on 19 November 1806 and was succeeded by his eldest surviving (second) son Akbar, who was proclaimed as Akbar II. By European rules the heir would have been Mirza Khanim Bakht, son of the eldest son, Mirza Jahandar Shah, who had fled from Delhi, as his father had done before him, to escape a hostile faction. Jahandar was a hopeful prince, who for a time had acted as his father's Vazir, but he had no real chance to show his mettle. He took refuge in the Company's territories and died at Benares in 1788. Khanim's claim was rejected by the Government on the Muslim legal ground that a grandson could not claim his grandfather's inheritance if his father was already dead. There was also the fact that Akbar had been recognized as the *Vali-ahad* or heir apparent in his father's lifetime. The final reason was the Timurid custom of choosing any one of the royal sons as the prospective successor to the throne. The eldest son had no more than the first claim to consideration while the unsuccessful candidates had the option of rebellion.[24] Akbar succeeded quietly to the throne in spite of some grumbling by his next brother, Mirza Izzat Baksh, and a new chapter begins.

Akbar II was a very different man from his father. He lacked Shah Alam's literary distinction while sharing his indecision of character. He was poorly endowed in mind and leaned much upon his women who became during his reign the real directors of policy. The chief of these were Qudsia Begam, the King's mother, Mumtaz Mahal, his favourite wife, and Daulat-un-Nissa Begam, his paternal aunt. These ladies attended his conferences with the Resident, seated behind a curtain. They took an active part in the conversations, the Qudsia Begam leading; 'the King himself', wrote Holford, 'taking little part in the conversation, but occasionally explaining or confirming such of their observations as had reference to his own feelings or wishes'.[25]

Mumtaz Mahal had a young son Mirza Jahangir, Akbar's third son, and she inevitably wished him to be named heir apparent. The British, on the other hand, regarded the eldest son, Mirza Abul Zafar, as the obvious choice. This provided the necessary setting for the reassertion of the theoretical Mughul supremacy which Shah Alam had tried to maintain and which the British were determined not to admit. It was an ancient Mughul right to nominate the successor, but a pensionary would have to defer to the wishes of the protecting power. The Princesses saw the issue more clearly than the King himself, and lost no time in taking action.

Akbar at first requested the recognition of his right to nominate his successor. When the Government declined to pass over the claims of the eldest son, Abul Zafar, the King accused him of having seduced one of the King's own wives in the time of Shah Alam. The Resident was nonplussed by 'the delicate nature of this accusation', but eventually suggested a mode of inquiry. This did not suit the King. He suddenly discovered that Abul Zafar was anxious to renounce his claim. The Prince was duly interviewed, confirmed the renunciation, and then sent a private note to say that his consent was given under pressure. Following up this stroke, the King boldly announced a date for Mirza Jahangir's installation and wrote to the Governor-General in 'language more suitable to the former situation and power of the Mughuls than to the present dependent condition of the House of Timur'. In other words, he called the Governor-General 'his favoured son and servant', just as other emperors had done before him. Thus the King or rather the Princesses, put to the test not only their own conception of the Mughul position but also Wellesley's policy of maintaining the traditional forms of reverence.

Lord Minto promptly refused to recognize Mirza Jahangir and forbade the Resident to attend his installation. He declined to receive further letters in the tone of the former one and ordered Seton to convey to his majesty a 'full and explicit declaration' of the 'nature and principles' of their relationship. The Resident in transmitting these orders had something to say about petticoat government and Akbar seemed to acquiesce. But the Princesses were not yet defeated. Soon there followed a proposal that Akbar should proceed to Agra to be enthroned in the twin capital. Shah Haji was sent to Calcutta to invest the Governor-General with a *khillat* or dress of honour—another mark of Mughul legal sovereignty. Lord Minto, anxious to follow Wellesley's line as far as possible, agreed to receive it in private as a mark of personal friendship. But on his arrival Shah Haji announced his mission publicly and gave out that this would be followed by similar missions to the chiefs of the country. Minto then refused to receive direct communication from the King, but allowed Shah Haji to remain as the Mughul envoy. Undaunted, Shah Haji reopened the question of Mirza Jahangir and argued that the King had the right to appoint his own executor, who according to Timurid custom, would be also the heir apparent. When this failed to impress Calcutta, Jahangir was invested with the honour of the *Aftabgir*[20] customarily considered an appanage of the heir apparent. This too failed, and with it may be said to end the Mughul attempt to reassert their legal supremacy. The Princesses fixed the blame for this failure upon the machinations of the amiable Seton, and their next move was to endeavour to remove him. Since the Government would not receive a further embassy, an envoy, one Raja Babu Pran Krishen, was sent without the Resident's knowledge to Calcutta. He was to proceed to Britain as the Mughul ambassador to the King if necessary. Pran Krishen was publicly deprived of his seal, and his letters were returned to Charles Metcalfe, Seton's successor, who confronted the King with the proof of deceit. The manœuvre of course was only in accord with the usual court practice of playing off one functionary against another. The only moral they were likely to draw from the incident was that their diplomatic skill was not the equal of British cunning. A final effort was made by Qudsia Begum in 1812. She and Mirza Jahangir went to Lucknow by subterfuge and tried to obtain the Nawab Vazir's help. This time the King's personal increase of allowance was stopped until he 'used all the requisite forms of contrition'

This series of intrigues is important because it resulted in the public definition of the British attitude to the Mughul family. While always avowed in official writings, it had only been hitherto implicit in official communications with the Mughuls themselves. Lord Minto rightly felt 'that the views of Akbar were directed to the gradual recovery and exercise of the imperial authority instead of being confined to the enjoyment of the imperial rank and title under the protection of the Company'. His policy was therefore not only to repress the demands based on the assumption of Mughul sovereignty, but to define clearly the British attitude to the Mughul dynasty. His action was a continuation of Wellesley's policy, and its distinctive feature was its candid exposition to the Mughuls themselves. In his minute of 6 January 1809 he defined the British attitude as 'a complimentary recognition of a nominal sovereignty'. In other words the Mughuls were to be regarded as kings in their palace and as mediatized princes outside. At the same time he recommended increases in the royal stipend in fulfilment of Wellesley's pledges. The Directors confirmed this policy in a despatch two years later.[27]

> We conceive that our power in India is at this day of a character too substantial to require that we should resort to the hazardous expedient of endeavouring to add to its stability by borrowing from the King of Delhi any portion of authority which we are competent to exercise in our own name. True policy prescribes that we should rest satisfied with the degree of respect, submission and attachment which our strength and skill in arms, our wisdom and beneficence in governing may procure for us. Our pre-eminence over the Native states in these qualities is, we trust, sufficiently conspicuous and acknowledged. If therefore it is unnecessary to derive from the King of Delhi any additional title to the Allegiance of our Indian subjects, we cannot be disposed to permit any attempts on his part to withdraw their obedience from their superiors, and to convert this nominal into a real supremacy. The course which appears to us the most proper to be pursued, and which has in fact been hitherto pursued with respect to His Majesty the King of Delhi, is to leave his authority in the state in which we found it, and to afford the Royal Family the means of subsistence, not merely in a state of comfort, but of decent splendour not unsuitable to the descendants of a fallen but illustrious House, to whose power we have in a great measure succeeded.

The reference to 'leaving the King's authority in the state in which we found it' is of course a mistake. The Company had raised his material condition and depressed his sovereign status. Their mistake lay in supposing that the King's legal sovereignty had never been recognized by the Marathas, not in believing that the Company continued to recognize it. In this they had been misled by Wellesley's despatches which represented Shah Alam as accepting protection 'under the British Crown', whereas, as we know, Shah Alam was accepting the 'friendship' of 'a favoured son'. Their own position was clear enough and was clearly expressed in Minto's phrase, 'the complimentary recognition of a nominal sovereignty'.

We may now sum up this first and most important phase in the relations of Mughuls and the Company. In 1803 Wellesley and Shah Alam played for position, both quite aware of each other's claims, but each too anxious for the other's co-operation to risk a breach by too much insistence. Until Shah Alam's death the issue remained undecided by mutual consent. Akbar or his ladies maintained Shah Alam's point of view with such vigour that the Company on its side had publicly to define the position assumed by Wellesley. If breach there was between the British as vassals and the Mughuls as rulers it should be dated from Minto's minute and the despatch of 1811 rather than from any later time. Yet this itself was not so much a breach as a declaration of a previous breach, for no treaties had been signed in 1803, and no definite promises given. The real legal breach of obedience is to be found much earlier, in Warren Hastings's refusal to continue the Bengal tribute in 1773. From 1803 to 1811 the Company gave public notice of intended continuance of contumacy, and the later breaches of etiquette were (again, legally speaking) the logical result of their pre-existing rebellion.

The next few years revealed some of the practical difficulties in applying the policy of honour within, and disregard without, the Mughul palace. Minto had settled the first of these vexing questions when he repelled Shah Haji's attempt to confer upon him a *khillat* and publicly deprived Pran Krishen of his seal. The Mughul might not treat the Governor-General as a subject in Calcutta; but what was to happen when the Governor-General visited the Mughul in his palace? The question arose when Lord Hastings proceeded up-country to direct operations in the Gurkha war. Akbar insisted that Hastings should appear as a subject and present the usual *nazrs*. Hastings refused to come except on a footing of equality and the proposed interview fell through. Two years later, with what he considered was a masterly policy of sowing dissension, Hastings encouraged the Vazir of Oudh to call himself king. I doubt if this can strictly be called a breach of the Wellesley policy, but it embittered the Mughuls and did neither the British nor Oudh any lasting good. But Akbar pondered upon it in his ample leisure. When Lord Amherst visited Delhi in 1826 he admitted him to audience on the terms he had refused to Lord Hastings. The etiquette was minutely regulated by Sir Charles Metcalfe, then Resident for the second time. It was designed to acknowledge Akbar's superior rank without admitting any trace of vassalage. Amherst sat at right angles to the throne (all others standing). No *nazrs* (or tokens of submission) were presented. The King then gave a string of pearls and led Amherst to the door of the private apartments. On the King's return visit to the Residency, the same procedure was adopted, the Governor-General this time giving the present. This visit set the precedent for all future governor-generals as that of Lord Combermere at the same time did for all future commanders-in-chief.[28]

Akbar himself was bitterly disappointed by the results of this meeting. As he had connected the independence of Oudh with his refusal to meet Lord Hastings, he hoped that his complaisance to Amherst would bear fruit in an increase of his stipend.[29] But his demands were rejected and in addition an alteration was made in the *alqāb*[30] which he regarded as a further derogation of dignity. Concession having proved as useless as resistance, he refused to meet Bentinck in 1831. It would seem that the resources of Indian diplomacy were at an end. But there was one possibility left, an appeal over the head of the Indian Government to the authorities in Britain itself. This was the genesis of the last important action of the Mughul dynasty. The celebrated Bengali reformer, Ram Mohan Roy, was known to be planning a visit to England, 'that land of liberty'. He agreed to act for the King, was appointed Mughul envoy to the Court of St James, and given the title of Raja. In February 1829 he announced his mission to Government and forwarded a copy of his proposed memorial.[31] The Government were far from pleased and at first nonplussed by this new move. The Resident was first ordered 'to intimate to His Majesty the *surprise* with which we had perused it, and more especially our *astonishment* at the unmeasured and unfounded accusation it advances against the Hon. Company of having violated its engagements with the Royal Family'. The Resident was ordered not to furnish copies of official correspondence which had already been promised. They showed their displeasure with Ram Mohan Roy by their refusal to recognize his nomination by the King and a refusal to recognize his new title. The one action was a clear violation of the spirit of their existing relations with the Mughuls, the other of their own regulations, by which the King was free to confer titles on his own servants.[32] But the King, encouraged no doubt by Ram Mohan Roy, was undaunted and the mission went forward. The Government saw the impossibility of preventing it and gradually recovered its temper. Bentinck furnished Ram Mohan Roy with a sheaf of introductions and the Raja on his side[33] announced that he would not appear publicly as the Mughul envoy, though he hoped to be no less useful to Akbar Shah. On his arrival he was at once confronted with the eternal duality of British affairs. The Court of Directors was implacably hostile and would neither see him nor hear him on official business. The Government, on the other hand, represented by Charles Grant at the Board of Control, was friendly. They recognized his title and his mission; they received his memorial and presented him to King William IV. Ram Mohan Roy became a lion of the London season and his passion for reform found free play in the Reform controversy just then raging. But the Directors stood sourly aloof, and could find little to praise even personally. The Secretary, Peter Auber, acknowledged that he was 'a mild, well-meaning man of extraordinary acquirements for a Hindoo', but added that he was 'not of much strength of mind'. More fair-minded than the rest, however, he admitted that he had at least made out a case for consideration.[34] Ravenshaw wrote that he was disappointed in his first impression and later 'he is a curiosity, certainly, but seems to me very much bewildered, and blackey like, generally to agree with the last speaker'.[35] Stuart Wortley thought he had been made a tool by the Unitarians. Later Auber himself complained of his duplicity and cunning.[36] It is clear, on the other hand, that Charles Grant was very favourably impressed.

Ram Mohan Roy's memorial was a very able document.[37] His case was based upon the settlement with Lord Lake in 1803–4. It was easy to show that the provisions for royal association with the administration of the city and the reserved territory had not been observed, and that a promise of increased stipend had been given. A more debatable point was that the gross and not the net revenue from the assigned districts was due to the King. Metcalfe argued the latter, but Article II of Lord Lake's agreement supported the former interpretation. It was also easy to show that the revenues had increased far beyond the existing stipend of twelve *lakhs*. But the important point for us is Ram Mohan Roy's proposal for settling the question. After stating various claims he offered a compromise. Either the King should assume 'all the trouble and outlay attending the Government, police and cultivation of the territory in question', or the Government should pay a fixed sum in settlement of all claims. 'In the latter case the present gross annual revenues would form the proper standard, and if they do not fall short of thirty *lakhs*, I hereby offer to commute all my claims under the Articles of convention for that yearly stipend.'[38]

Here was a chance of settling all the Mughul claims once and for all. Just what were the claims under the convention? Ram Mohan Roy (in Article II) had already recognized Minto's declaration about a 'complimentary recognition of a nominal sovereignty' and had argued that such a declaration was no reason for not keeping engagements already entered into. 'What king or subject will avow such a principle except in India, or to the injured and unhappy House of Timur?' But that engagement contained features which suggested the Mughul view of sovereignty which Minto had denied. The royal *mutasaddis*, the royal courts, the royal *qazi* and *mufti*, the royal assent to executions, all pointed in this direction. Ram Mohan Roy's offer was in effect a subtle and far-reaching alternative, backed by the argument most likely to convince the British—an appeal to the principle of public good faith. The Government might hand over the assigned territory to the Mughuls which would imply a reversal of Minto's and the Directors' dictum, or they might clarify the position once and for all at the expense of more than doubling the stipend. Ram Mohan Roy can hardly have expected the former alternative, and he must therefore have hoped for the latter. The first proposal satisfied Akbar Shah, the second, he hoped, would satisfy the British. It is clear that Ram Mohan Roy accepted the Minto declaration and with it the pensionary thesis of the Mughul position. He hoped to obtain financial satisfaction by using the last legal levers which Lake's generosity and diplomatic inexperience had left in his hands. Ram Mohan Roy saw no place for the Mughul dynasty in the new India of which he was the first prophet, and such an attitude was in logical accord with his whole public outlook. On the Government side there was much to be said for thus settling the matter. The King of Delhi would henceforth be a pensionary by his own consent and all real basis would be finally removed in India for the lingering belief in Mughul sovereignty. From being an opinion which might one day lead to action, it would sink to the level of an archaic sentiment. That such an opinion still existed is shown by the fact that the Nizam of Hyderabad had only just written to Delhi announcing his accession, had sent the customary *nazrs*—a sign of dependence—and had asked for his father's title. This had been duly disapproved and the two Residents who transmitted the letters rebuked.[39]

The home authorities saw the advantage of a settlement of all claims. For them it now became a question of how cheaply it could be done. Were the claims of Delhi worth eighteen more *lakhs* a year? The Directors thought they were not worth more than three. Ram Mohan Roy advised against an acceptance of this, hoping for better terms.[40] Ram Mohan Roy soon died and was followed by Akbar four years later. After further negotiation the new King Bahadur Shah again refused to give up all his claims on these terms.[41] The remaining stipendiary wrangles have already been described and it need only now be noted that since the increase was never actually paid, the claims were never actually abandoned. The British doctrine of nominal sovereignty remained as before as the substantive position, but it continued to be a unilateral declaration, instead of being based, as with a little finesse it now might well have been, upon the declared consent of the Mughul himself.

We may pause to note a change of sentiment in the British attitude towards the Mughuls which now became visible and which paved the way for the next step in their relations. In the later eighteenth century, the general tone was one of interest in the dynasty and sympathy with its fallen fortunes. The wave of Anglo-Indian scholarship which marked the closing years of the century was necessarily much concerned, on its Persian side, with the Mughul dynasty. To penetrate to Delhi was something of an adventure, to visit the Mughul a romantic experience. In Najaf Khan's time Delhi was still a piece to be reckoned with on the political chessboard, after Ghulam Qadir's crime, Shah Alam became the embodiment of the fallen monarch of Eastern story. His literary distinction, his dignity and his penury, all added to the attraction of the theme. The romantic fashion of musing on fallen fortunes could find no more intriguing subject. The history of his reign was written, and his ode on his blindness translated.[42]

With the British possession of Delhi, the glamour of fallen greatness gradually faded, but the feeling of sympathy and respect remained. The forms of royalty were cheerfully observed and Shah Alam was regarded with deference. Three Residents in succession maintained the tradition. Not only the Indianized Ochterlony and the hyper-polite Seton, but the matter-of-fact Metcalfe, even as he was revolving the new doctrine of paramountcy, were content to dismount their horses and stand in the royal presence. The breaches of etiquette were on the Mughul side, as when Mirza Jahangir fired on Seton and barricaded the Fort.

But as the years passed, a change became apparent. The utilitarian spirit was silently creeping into the British ranks, even in India, and romance paled in the dawn of common sense. The possession of the Mughul name, which to Wellesley had seemed worth so much, came to be regarded more and more as an encumbrance. What before was a prize was becoming a nuisance. The officials who had before debated on means of improving the King's condition were now coming to say, 'to what purpose is this waste?' Sympathetic descriptions of the fallen state of majesty were replaced in travellers' tales by sarcastic descriptions of 'ridiculous' splendour. What was to be preserved as an interesting survival was now to be abolished as a fantastic imposition. No doubt some of this change of feeling was caused by the behaviour of the Mughuls themselves. The palace life was no model of virtue and was an easy target to the moralizings of an improving age. The *salatin* were no spectacle for edification, and the constant insistence on ceremonial bagatelles, the assumption of meaningless superiority, must have been very exasperating to practical men with a very good idea of their own worth. But it was more than this. All over India the British attitude to things Indian was changing.

The old interest in and respect for Indian civilization was changing to criticism and distaste. New intellectual and moral gods had arisen in Europe who frowned upon the gorgeous East. Once men had looked to India as the home of the natural man, of a culture closer to nature than that of Europe, and had idealized the simple and pious Hindu. Now through the twin eyes of utilitarian reason and Evangelical religion the scene was changed. To the glance of the one, all was superstition and denial of natural morality; in the view of the other, all was idolatry and darkness. The apostle of the first was the elder Mill, the prophets of the second Henry Martyn and the Clapham sect. Between the two views things Indian were laid under a cross-fire of reproach. Should so worldly a thing as the Mughul dynasty, and so useless an object as a titular monarchy escape?

For a time this change of sentiment was veiled in Delhi by the survival of older figures. Ochterlony returned as Resident, and retired, to die of a broken heart. To him Metcalfe succeeded, and to him Colebrooke, who had more solid matters to think of than disputes over etiquette. But Metcalfe himself, who had kept his mind open to the ideas of his time, was changing, and his own change is a good index of the general transition taking place. In his first term as Resident he was a firm believer in the Minto policy of pensionary courtesy. If he thought Seton too deferential, and inclined to concessions bordering on the substance of sovereignty, he combined perfect politeness with his greater degree of firmness. But as Vice-President of the Council in Calcutta all this had changed. He wrote to Bentinck 'I have renounced my former allegiance to the House of Timur'.[43] The appeal to England acted like a goad to complete his conversion. To Metcalfe it seemed almost like rebellion, and to him as to most Anglo-Indians, rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft. The mission was presumption 'from a man who had the Bells of a dancing-boy taken off his legs'.[44]

> We have on the whole behaved generously towards the King from the first; and I never found him unreasonable or assuming; but if he pretend to what is implied in his professing to regard his interviews with Lord Amherst as derogatory, I should think it was our best policy to let him sink into insignificance, instead of upholding his dignity as we have done.[45]

Any deference he had formerly paid was because the King was not assuming. He hoped that the Directors' letter about an increase 'may be such as to enable the Government here to prevent it, for it will only do mischief'. When the letter actually arrived, his indignation knew no bounds.[46]

> I am very sorry to see such mischievous nonsense as this. If we waste our Revenue in such ways, we shall not have India long on our hands.
>
> What is to be understood by the repairs of the Palace? The inhabited part is in sufficiently good repair. The ruinous part of the Palace would take immense sums to repair it and cannot with any reason be thought of. If any increase be made to the King's stipend, care ought to be taken that it be distributed among those who really want it. For his personal expenditure he has abundance.

In Delhi itself the change was felt with the advent of Hawkins as Acting Resident in September 1829. Hawkins suffered from George Granville's weakness, a habit of reading his despatches. He was a good Persian scholar in addition, and he had a well-grounded distrust of the Residency regime before him. Above all, he was influenced by the new ideas then spreading through British India. He perused the palace letters with diligence and was horrified by the superior status which of course they implied. What was almost a pleasure for Seton and a matter of courtesy and policy to Metcalfe, was for Hawkins an occasion for shame. He besought the Supreme Government to end this humiliating condition of things. In the cause of British prestige he entered upon a series of disputes with the King and the Princes. But the Supreme Government at the time was for practical purposes the very man who had endured these things for nearly ten years. Hawkins's representations received a frigid rebuke, and his quarrels led to the affairs of the palace being taken out of his hands. The full story of his tactlessness is told elsewhere, and here we need only note the state of mind which led to it. Hawkins considered that the assumption of royal authority by the King, not in his relations with the Governor-General, but with the Resident and in the precincts of the palace, was humiliating and degrading. It mattered not that it was part of the Government's policy; it conflicted with the new spirit of common sense, and was not to be borne. To present *nazrs* was humiliating; so to make the best of a bad job he presented his first with one hand instead of two. 'The occasion was the first, in my long period of public service, of my being obliged to submit to the humiliating ceremony of presenting *nazrs*.' He excused himself for having refused a present of flowers from the heir apparent because

> I consider it an uncontrovertible proposition that every public officer in common with every human being, is free by nature and by law to decline accepting any present that may be offered him... as they were only brought by a gardener, I may have meant to check at once the beggarly practice of menials frequently pestering the Resident with such trifles in the King's name, for the sake of a money gratuity in return.[47]

He refused to stand in the Queen's presence, or to receive *shuqas* (royal commands) from anyone but the King himself. 'Everyone of the royal family,' he wrote, 'actuated by the most obstinate pride, is for treating the British Resident as a servant and addressing requests to him in the imperious style of a *farman* or royal mandate.'

Hawkins was new to Delhi, and he therefore could not claim to be exasperated by the perennial quibbling of the Court. His was the natural reaction of the 'regulation' mind to hoary survivals and as such was an index of the new spirit spreading among the Company's servants. It had permeated the Court of Directors in Leadenhall Street and can be seen in their attitude to Ram Mohan Roy's mission. His mission was not only not to be recognized, but his name was not to be so much as mentioned in the Directors' letter on the subject. The Board of Control, however, perhaps because of its stronger political tradition and a consequent tenderness for royalty, or perhaps moved by the pacific spirit of Charles Grant, remained immune. The consequence was a pretty tussle between Directors and Board over the wording of the Directors' despatch. Agreement was reached over the substance of the reply but the Directors objected to any mention of the mission. For eighteen months the draft went backwards and forwards between the Board and the Directors. Charles Grant[48] 'could not give up the idea that it is due to the character of the Court [of Directors] and of this Country to recognize the justice of the claim'. But the Mughuls were not now worth considering; they would waste any money given to them.. Above all prestige must be considered. Calcutta must not be let down. When Grant persisted, the Directors' indignation boiled over.

> It is utterly impossible...that anyone who is conversant with the subject can view the statements in the present King of Delhi's letter to our late Sovereign and those of the King's Agent, Ram Mohan Roy, in any other light than a tissue of unfounded calumnious assertions, which are almost unworthy of serious refutation and which ought scarcely to be brought under consideration while deciding on the merits of the case; far less referred to, as they obviously have been by the Board, as a ground of the decision which has been come to.[49]

Not quite impossible; Grant added in pencil in the margin 'are these papers so unfounded and calumnious? Which are they?' A little later the Directors went so far as to argue from Wellesley's despatch of 1804 that the settlement was never meant seriously and stated, untruly, that Ochterlony had never informed Calcutta of his written engagement with Shah Alam. But Grant was a peace-loving and not over-industrious man. He washed his hands in face of the Directors' wrath and gave up, first the mention of Ram Mohan Roy's mission and then the mention of the Assigned Territory. Delhi was not worth an open quarrel, and he shrank from one of those ministerial 'beds of justice' with which Ellenborough had tormented and coerced the Court of Directors. The new spirit had won in London and Calcutta and must shortly triumph in Delhi.

The first manifestation of this new spirit was in the stipend discussions. They need not be followed in detail and it is sufficient to say that the disposition to satisfy reasonable needs gave way before a tendency to obstruct and ignore. The King was not to gain any personal benefit from the increase, and his consequent refusal to draw it was regarded with satisfaction. Payment was not to date from the time of award, as Grant intended,[50] but from the latest date of acceptance. The more travellers dwelt upon the shabbiness and poverty of the Court, the more officials insisted that the King had ample for his needs.

The next development was in the honour paid to the King within the palace. This involved the question of *nazrs*, the presentation of gifts implying sovereign status. The presentation of *nazrs* by the Governor-General seven times a year had been stopped by Lord Hastings on his arrival in 1813 and, in spite of protests, was never renewed. This, of course, was a logical outcome of the Minto declaration, since *nazrs* could not be reconciled with the equal status claimed by the Governor-General as an independent power. The money thus saved was returned as an increase to the stipend (Rs. 6000 per annum). At the same time the *nazrs* of the Commander-in-Chief, presented three times a year, were also stopped. This was questionable, because the Commander-in-Chief did not, like the Governor-General, claim to enjoy sovereign status.[51] But though the practice of regular presentations on his behalf was abandoned, the Commander-in-Chief continued to present *nazrs* on the occasion of personal and complimentary visits to the King. Lord Combermere in 1828, Lord Dalhousie in 1831 and Sir E. Barnes in 1832, all presented substantial offerings.[52] Sir H. Fane in 1837 went one better, and received a title as well in the absence of the agent, for which he was properly rebuked. The distinction was a clear one between *nazrs* presented by the Governor-General, which implied a subordination of British to the Mughul authority, and *nazrs* presented by others, which implied only a recognition of the King's royal status. It was illustrated by Amherst's visit when, under Metcalfe's supervision, Amherst himself presented no *nazr* but the members of his staff did. So the local officials and distinguished visitors like Bishop Heber[53] continued to present *nazrs* at government expense.

The first attack on the practice came, as might be expected, from the learned Hawkins. He complained that during the year 1828–9, Rs. 10,569.5 (643 gold mohurs) were expended in this way by the Resident and his assistants. To this Calcutta, who thought Hawkins a nuisance, replied briefly, that they 'did not wish any change to be made in the existing usage'.[54] Seven years later the change-over is visible. The Government itself questioned the item for *nazrs* in the agent's contingent bill for four months in 1835.[55] In the correspondence which followed the regular presentation of *nazrs* was limited to the agent,[56] his deputy for the time being, and the commandant of the palace guard. Lord Ellenborough, in Olympian mood, abolished this also because 'he deemed that the offer of even this inferior token of feudal submission is inconsistent with the relative position of the King of Delhi'. The King protested, and complained of an annual loss of Rs. 10,000. So deeply did he feel the matter that he ceased from that time to observe the *jushun* or ceremony of accession. The Directors reviewed the whole matter in their despatch of 12 December 1844.[57] Ellenborough was to them an even greater nuisance than Hawkins had been to Calcutta, and they were inclined to criticism. They had already, on 1 May, suggested that such changes should be made at the time of succession, instead of during the lifetime of the reigning king, and that therefore the Resident's *nazrs* should be restored for Bahadur Shah's lifetime. They were 'unwilling to withhold compliments without offence', and concluded:

> We stated that we should have preferred if in deference to the feelings of the House of Timur this change had been postponed till the occasion of a succession to their nominal throne, and we expressed an opinion that if the King should remonstrate on the subject, the former practice should be conceded to him for his life.... We presume that this has been acted upon.[58]

The King did, of course, remonstrate, but he did not get back his *nazrs*. There ensued an action which, more clearly than anything else, reveals the revulsion of feeling towards the Mughuls in Indian government circles, and which, in its own small sphere, rivalled the chicanery practised by Lord Wellesley towards Oudh. The King got wind of the Directors' decision and suspected that it was being kept from him. He sent a letter, asking for the Directors' decision.

> A great length of time has elapsed since I had the pleasure to despatch through your Lordship's office two applications, viz., one for the Hon. the Court of Directors, the other for the Board of Control. I understand now, that the Hon. Court was pleased to disapprove the order which was passed by Lord Ellenborough, prohibiting the presentation of *nazrs* by the Agent of Delhi, and that the Court instructed that it should not be carried out, and that no alteration should be made in that respect.
>
> From this, I am led to conclude that some necessary instructions were received by the Government in India long before now, for recontinuing the custom of presenting *nazrs* to me; but it is not known how it happened, that the necessary communication on this head has not been made to me through the Agent up to this date.

> I hope from your Lordship's high and pre-eminent character for justice and liberality that you will have the kindness to cause search to be made among the records of Government in Calcutta, and on finding that such instructions were received from Europe, be so gracious as to pass the necessary orders in the Agent's name for the payment and presentation of the amount of *nazrs* for the past two years, and that the custom should be regularly observed for the future. By doing this I will be gratified, and it will add to your fame.[59]

The agent was then ordered to inform the King of the substance of the Directors' despatch which did *not* concern *nazrs*, the vital passages being suppressed.[60] This action was that of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces. On receipt of this letter from the King, which was a polite indication that he had been found out in his deceit, the Lieutenant-Governor was asked by the Supreme Government whether the Directors' instructions 'had been acted upon'. He replied that they had not. He considered that they did not amount to 'positive orders' and that he might therefore comment upon them, and he then proceeded to argue strongly against 'the present concession' on the familiar lines of 'inferiority' and the weight attached by the people of Hindustan to symbols.[61] He found willing ears in Calcutta and there followed a *kharita* from the Governor-General to the King.[62]

> In reference to the remarks contained in your Majesty's letter regarding the information which you state has been conveyed to your Majesty respecting the purport of the Court's instructions, I must observe that no reliance should be placed by your Majesty on any statements that may be made to you on the subject of the Court's orders, except those conveyed in due form by the Governor-General's Agent in Delhi.

His Majesty might well feel that no reliance could be placed on the word of the Governor-General. But the Sikh wars intervened to distract the Directors' attention and the tide of the new opinion was flowing ever more strongly. In the roar of the Sikh artillery Bahadur Shah's voice was silenced and this was the last time that he was ever listened to in London. He had perforce to accept the situation and in 1851 accepted the monthly sum of Rs. 833 in lieu of the agent's *nazrs*.[63]

The episode of the *nazrs* is the outstanding example of the changed attitude towards the Mughul family. For what was abolished with the agent's *nazr* was not a recognition of the King's claims as the ruler of India, but the recognition of his status as a King. As the Company were justified in withholding the Governor-General's *nazrs* as part of the policy of claiming independent authority in India, they had been right in continuing the agent's *nazrs* as part of the policy of the complimentary recognition of the King's royal status. Their action in abolishing it was not a denial of the King's Indian sovereignty, but a denial of his status as a King. It was not a legal defiance but a personal affront. It marked the end of the Company's proclaimed policy of showing to the King 'every demonstration of reverence, respect and attention' and the beginning of his relegation to the status of a nobleman. But the new school cared for none of these things. What was Bahadur Shah to them or they to Bahadur Shah?

There remained the question of the succession to the throne. Ellenborough, who had Dalhousie's ruthlessness without his caution, had already opened the question by forbidding any steps to be taken for the recognition of a successor on the demise of the existing King. But this had been going too fast for the Court of Directors, and the matter slept until Dalhousie's time. The question was reopened by the death of the heir apparent, Prince Dara Bakht, in 1849 at the age of fifty-seven.[64] Dalhousie wanted the palace for a powder magazine and thought the occasion might be used to manœuvre the family out of both palace and crown. He was helped by the usual Mughul divisions, the claims of the eldest surviving son, Mirza Fakhr-ud-din, being opposed by the King and his favourite wife in favour of their younger son, Mirza Jivan Bakht. On second thoughts however (induced by misgivings in Britain), Dalhousie decided to continue the title, provided the family moved to their palace at the Qutab and the new King agreed to meet the Governor-General on terms of absolute equality. On these terms Mirza Fakhr-ud-din was proclaimed heir apparent, and all parties sat down to await the death of Bahadur Shah. The Mirza's claim was strengthened by his respectable character and good reputation. But in 1856 Mirza Fakhr-ud-din died suddenly in the prime of life. Once more the question was reopened and once more Bahadur Shah pressed the claims of Mirza Jivan Bakht. But the next surviving son, Mirza Muhammad Koeash, was a person of no special eminence. This time the title of King was to be dropped and he was recognized as prospective head of the family only, with the title of Prince or *Shahzada* of the House of Timur.[45]

It is interesting to note that it was Canning and not Dalhousie who took this final step. The Government now avowed their change of policy and justified it, first, on the ground that there were no treaties, secondly, that Mirza Muhammad Koeash was a person of no eminence, thirdly, that the last few years had seen 'not only an extension, but a remarkable consolidation of the British power in India', which made a titular king 'anomalous', and lastly, because 'there is every appearance that the presence of the Royal House in Delhi has become a matter of indifference, even to the Mahomedans'[46].

So a government which had forgotten the caution of Metcalfe, Elphinstone and Bentinck about the fragility of the British dominion in India, almost jauntily threw over a policy which that caution had enjoined. They thought that no pro-Mughul sentiment existed, 'even among the Mahomedans', because they had lost the habit of regarding Indian sentiment at all. The removal of anomalies, the flattening-out of local usage, the conformance of all with the Regulations, the measurement of everything by the yardstick of utility, were for them the deepest statecraft. But like their intellectual masters, they left 'imagination out of their system, and imagination governs mankind'.

CHAPTER IV

THE MUGHUL COURT AND FAMILY

The centre of the city life was the Exalted Fort (*Qila-i-Mualla*)[1] and the Court secluded behind its high red walls. The Fort had suffered little from the wars, for it had never undergone a serious bombardment. Only stray cannon-balls had chipped the marble and red stone here and there. But the palace had suffered severely. Nadir Shah had taken the peacock throne and the more obvious ornament. Worse than Nadir Shah and the Persians were Suraj Mal and the Jats, who in 1764 removed the silver roof of the *Rang Mahal* and cut out quantities of precious stones. Most fierce of all, but on the whole less destructive, was Ghulam Qadir in 1788. He dug up the floors to find hidden valuables, and despoiled the imperial library of many of its treasures. Some of them found their way to Lucknow where the Nawab Vazir purchased them. Under the Marathas the Fort was preserved intact, but lack of funds made any thought of restoration impossible. The blindness of the monarch was doubly convenient to the Marathas, for it not only reduced his personal wants, but also prevented him from realizing the ruin and decay which lay around him. Shah Alam was spared the spectacle of decay which distressed his visitors, and confined himself to supporting as best he could his large family. Akbar Shah, with ampler funds, began some restoration work. Lady Nugent,[2] in 1812, reported that the hall of private audience was well gilt. The precious stones had been replaced by mock; 'all the stones are mock, but the effect is good'. Rs. 500 a month was devoted to repairs and there was a gradual restoration on the old lines as far as possible. But the effort must have died away, for fifteen years later there are the same complaints of ruin and decay. Bishop Heber, a reliable and friendly witness, in 1824, described every part of the palace which he saw as 'dull, desolate and forlorn'. 'The *Shah Burj* was dirty, lonely and wretched: the bath and fountain dry: the inlaid pavement hid with lumber and gardeners' sweepings, and the walls stained with the dung of birds and bats.'[3] Mr Elliott, the acting Resident, told him that this was 'the general style in which this palace was kept up and furnished'.

There was a second revival at the beginning of Bahadur Shah's reign. The agent reported in 1838 that 'considerable improvements have been made of late, both with respect to the appearance and cleanliness of the Palace'.[4] But this effort too died away and the old complaints continued. The kings grew old and lost interest in the superintendence; money soaked easily into the hands through which it passed, like waters in a parched water-channel; in the absence of an impulse from above, there was the inevitable apathy and neglect. In spite of this some additions took place. A pavilion overlooking the Jumna and an addition to the *jharoka* by Akbar; a garden outside the palace walls by Bahadur Shah; houses in European style for the heir apparent and other princes all show that enterprise was not quite dead even if taste was tawdry.

There is in fact a certain conflict of evidence about the state of the palace. General denunciations of squalor alternate with admissions of activity and descriptions of a certain sober splendour. The explanation lies in the fact that a pensionary king was living in an imperial palace. The Mughuls were like Rhineland imperial knights, trying to maintain ancient splendour on an income many times too small. Metcalfe himself, while fiercely opposing any increase of the royal stipend, admitted that it would take 'immense sums to repair the ruinous part of the Palace'.[5] They had in addition a horde of poor relations whose ejection from the palace was forbidden by pride and who had at least to be kept alive. It was impossible to repair and maintain the whole of the palace; on the conditions given it was equally impossible to abandon any part of it. As a result the heart of the palace, where the King held his court, was maintained in decent state, while the rest of the area was left to the devices of its immediate occupants. Visitors to the palace passed through neglected outer courts before they reached the audience chamber, with the consequence that their first impressions were usually bad. Any revision of opinion to which they might feel tempted in the Durbar hall itself were offset by the tawdriness of the *khillats* and the cheapness of the presents given by the King. Very few people ever gained admittance to the *zenana* or the houses of the leading princes, and so the rumour spread that the palace was one vast slum. This rumour had its element of truth and was so much in accord with current prejudices that it became a dogma which even yet is hardly shaken. It is so much pleasanter to believe that people you disapprove of are really contemptible.

The Court consisted of the King and his immediate entourage, the royal Princes, his sons, and their families, the nearer collaterals such as nephews and brothers, and then the great mass of distant relations. These were the *salatin*. They were the descendants of former emperors going right back to Shah Jahan. The *salatin* were a problem to Mughul and Government alike. They were originally confined in the palace to prevent the possibility of their use as tools by designing nobles. But under the British they refused to leave the palace, partly because they would lose their royal status, and partly because they possessed no means of livelihood. Limitation of families was not a Mughul fashion and they increased largely. As each generation passed and their distance from the throne increased, the trickle of their allowances grew thinner and thinner. In 1836 the number of *salatin* listed as being in receipt of pensions was 795.[6] In 1848 their total number was reckoned by the King himself as 2104.[7] They exemplified nothing but the depths to which pride can reduce men. Even in 1856, only forty-five out of the hundred and thirty living sons and grandsons of the present and former kings lived outside the palace. The *salatin's* quarter was thus described by Major George Cunningham in an official paper.[8]

> The *salatin* quarter consists of an immense high wall so that nothing can overlook it. Within this are numerous mat huts in which these wretched objects live. When the gates were opened there was a rush of miserable, half-naked, starved beings who surrounded us. Some men apparently eighty years old almost in a state of nature, who from the earliest infancy had been shut up, others young men, some sons of Kings whose mothers either had died or not been in favour...others young children who had the space within these walls to look forward to as their world....The utmost allowed was a few blankets during the cold weather, distributed as if by the King, but in fact a private charity of Seton's.

But one man could do little to relieve this sea of misery. Suggestions were made that a college should be established to train them for the public service. But to this it was objected that all the available posts would then be filled with disaffected people.[9] The alternative policy of removing them from the palace to shift for themselves was not adopted until Dalhousie decreed the removal of the whole family from the palace on the death of Bahadur Shah. The usual makeshift was resorted to: the *salatin* were *allowed* but not compelled to leave the palace, and no inducement was held out in the form of education or employment.

The nearer collaterals, the brothers and uncles of the reigning king, were also kept in confinement, but their lot was easier since they enjoyed larger pensions. Under Shah Alam and the Marathas their confinement was strict, and they were not even allowed to attend Durbars. In 1803 'they appeared to be in want even of the necessaries of life. They were dressed meanly, and to our great surprise, began to make known to us all their misfortunes and the hardships they endured in their confinement (not one of them was allowed to go without the limited space pointed out, and guards were placed to see that they did not).'[10] Seton secured an improvement in their lot on the accession of Akbar Shah. They were allowed to attend the Durbar on particular occasions, were no longer confined to the *salatin* quarter, and continued to enjoy their previous allowances.[11] With this shadow dignity, they eked out their lives.

The sons of the reigning king formed what might be called the first class of the royal family. They had full liberty of action, enjoyed substantial allowances and had a perennial interest in intriguing against the heir apparent for the succession. They stood in rows on either side of the throne in Durbar, and were the only princes who enjoyed any real life of their own. They were not all of the same standing, a distinction existing between the issue of legitimate marriages and the offspring of concubines. Of the twelve surviving sons of Bahadur Shah in 1856, for example, only two were listed as legitimate.[12] One or two princes made some mark on the life of the time and are worth a passing mention. The most picturesque was Mirza Jahangir, the favourite son of Akbar Shah. He was a youth of seventeen when his father tried in vain to secure his nomination as heir apparent. He showed his spirit by gathering a following of boon companions and hired Pathans, and playing the part of a Mughul Prince Hal. The Resident insisted on his father restraining him, whereupon Jahangir turned his envoy out of the palace and fired on the sepoy guard. He did not surrender until Seton marched down to the Palace at the head of British troops. He was removed under escort to Allahabad as a state prisoner. He behaved so well there that he was allowed to return and given the command of an escort of 1300 men. But his restless spirit soon caused such further trouble, that with his father's consent he was sent back to Allahabad once more. He was said to have made two attempts to poison the heir apparent. Then he found solace in the bottle, and lived only too well. Sleeman knew him intimately in 1816.[13] He was then killing himself with Hoffmann's cherry brandy.

> 'This', he would say to me, 'is really the only liquor that you Englishmen have worth drinking, and its only fault is that it makes one drunk too soon.' To prolong his pleasure, he used to limit himself to one large glass every hour, till he got dead drunk. Two or three sets of dancing women and musicians used to relieve each other in amusing him during this interval. He died, of course, soon, and the poor old Emperor was persuaded by his mother, the favourite *sultana*, that he had fallen a victim to sighing and grief at the treatment of the English....He was not in confinement at Allahabad, but merely prohibited from returning to Delhi. He had a splendid dwelling, a good income, and all the honours due to his rank.

To obtain an interview with Lord Hastings in 1814, he promised to limit himself to one bottle of port wine daily. Hastings thus described him:[14]

> When he arrived I rose, and advancing to the door of the room, embraced him, leading him afterwards to a chair beside me. He was in Tartar dress; the robe crimson satin, the vest blue, both lined with fur, though the weather was overpoweringly hot. On his head he wore a high conical cap ornamented with fur and jewels. His hair was long and frizzed at the sides just enough to prevent its hanging too lanky on his shoulders.

Mirza Jahangir died in 1821 at the not surprisingly early age of thirty-one. His tomb in Nizam-ud-din's enclosure is one of the best examples of late Mughul marble work.

Mirza Babur, the second son of Akbar, affected European manners. In the courtyard of the *Rang Mahal* behind the

Diwan-i-Amm, he built a European-style house whose Corinthian columns and stucco walls horrified admirers of Shah Jahan's architecture. He wore European clothes or, rather, uniforms and drove about the city in a coach with six horses.[15]

> The youngest but one affects the manners and habits of Europeans, and is constantly betraying his absurdity by his want of reflection; for instance, when he set up an English coach, he insisted that the coachman should not sit above himself. He wears an European-cut coat, with stars on both breasts: top boots and a thick walking stick are his rage....He is constantly driving about in a coach-and-six, with a horseman carrying his *Kalleaum*, or pipe, by the side of it: carriage, horses, and all, are often seen in a ditch, of which there are many both wide and deep, in the outskirts of the town.

The sons of Bahadur Shah were less noticeable. But the Princes Dara Bakht and Fakhr-ud-din, the two heirs apparent. were both men of culture, respected by Delhi society. Mirza Mughul achieved notoriety as the titular commander-in-chief of the Delhi army during the siege, and the instigator of the massacre of the Englishwomen in the Fort. Jivan Bakht, the darling son of the King's old age, was too young to make any positive mark or share the fate of Mirza Mughul. All we know of him is that he was a handsome youth, and a devotee of pigeon-shooting and kite-flying. He accompanied his father into exile at Rangoon, where his descendants are still to be found. In general, it is to be noted that the immediate family of the kings, who enjoyed substantial allowances and some real freedom of life, preserved through successive generations a standard of intelligence and refinement. Coarse bullies like Mirza Mughul, and picturesque ne'er-do-wells like Mirza Jahangir, have their counterparts in every aristocracy and royal family. The wretched state of the *salatin* should not blind us to the real culture which existed round the persons of the kings.

A closer inspection will do much to dispel the popular idea of effete effeminacy and maudlin vice which clings to the last three Mughul kings. Only one of them had any chance to show what he could do as a ruler, and though he failed, he failed not ignobly in circumstances of unexampled difficulty. Little effort has ever been made to regard them as men, and to measure their qualities instead of mocking at their obvious defects. Their position was after all an impossible one, and the gibes from which they have suffered were largely the expression by practical and superior-minded men of their distaste for what they regarded as an absurd pretence. Yet these men could not escape from their phantom royalty if they would, and it is no fair judgement to condemn them for occupying a position they could not avoid. Few Englishmen had any opportunity of judging their personal qualities, for few got any nearer to them than the presentation of a few gold coins on a handkerchief at a Durbar, and the gift in return of a tinsel court dress. Those few who did were not nearly so contemptuous as the casual travellers who relied upon local gossip. One whole side of their life—in the *zenana*—was a closed book to all but one or two Englishwomen; another—their cultural life—which would have entranced Warren Hastings and his circle, was more and more disregarded by the new generation of utilitarian officials. At the end of the period Bahadur Shah was derided for being what Warren Hastings delighted in trying to be, a poet. It was not so much, in fact, that the Mughuls changed for the worse, as that the British changed their outlook. If Bahadur Shah had been an engineer or a financier, he would have been highly respected; but he was a poet, and so could expect no more consideration than the same men gave to Shelley or Byron or Keats.

The English only knew Shah Alam in his blindness and extreme old age. But he had been an active and adventurous youth. He had fled from Delhi by stealth rather than submit to the tyranny of Imad-ul-Mulk; he had conducted successive campaigns in Bengal and Behar against the rising masters of India, and was still in the field in his sixty-fourth year, when most men in India were already considered venerable. In spite of a childhood and early youth spent in the *zenana* when there seemed to be no hope of his succession to the throne, he was cultivated in the manner of his time and had the power of inspiring respect and affection. Jean Law, who knew him intimately when he was on the borders of Behar, thus described him:[16]

> The *Shahzada* passed for one of those who have had the best education and who have most profited by it. This education consists particularly in the knowledge of religion and of the Oriental tongues, of history and the writing of one's academic exercises well.

> In effect, all that I could perceive decided in his favour. He is familiar with the Arabic, Persian, Turki and Hindustani languages. He loves reading and never passes a day without employing some hours in it.... He is of an enquiring mind, naturally gay and free in his private society, where he frequently admits his principal military officers in whom he has confidence.

When Shah Alam was blinded, Jonathan Scott wrote in real distress to Warren Hastings.[17] All the later references by Englishmen who had more than a superficial knowledge show the same feeling. Shah Alam was very tenacious of royalty. He had a certain toughness of resistance even though he lacked the strength to impose his will. When, after his blinding, he learnt that his son Akbar had been made Emperor by Ghulam Qadir, he first of all refused to resume the crown in his delight at the elevation of his favourite son. But when he did so, he insisted on all the forms and trappings so far as he was able. Shah Alam was a brave and cultured man, though a shifty diplomatist and an unsuccessful ruler.

Akbar was a man of much less mark than his father, but he possessed the dignity and culture of his race, and also their strength of constitution. If Shah Alam and Bahadur Shah would have made good constitutional kings, Akbar would have been a very worthy country gentleman. His reliance on the advice of his ladies would have done no harm, and his benevolence and domestic tastes would have found full scope. He was already elderly when he came to the throne, but he remained vigorous until the last few years of his life. Lady Nugent reported in 1813[18] that he 'has very good features and a very fair complexion for a native. He wears his beard very long, and it is as white as snow; his dress was rather plain, but he wore some handsome jewels.' In 1827 Major Archer, an officer in Lord Combermere's train, thus described him:[19]

> The King appears to be upwards of sixty years old [he was actually seventy-three]: he is a remarkably healthy, strong man, exceedingly good looking, and is fairer than the generality of the upper classes: a venerable white beard adds dignity to his countenance, while his dark intelligent eye impresses all in his favour, and gains him credit for benevolence and goodness of heart, which amiable qualities are verified by all those who have the honour of any intercourse with him.

One Englishwoman, through her special position in Indian society, gained admission to the royal *zanana*. Her description shows traces perhaps of bias, but enough is left to make a pleasing and vivid picture:[30]

> I was conducted to the Queen's *makul* (palace for females), where his Majesty and the Queen were awaiting my arrival. I found on my entrance the King seated in the open air in an armchair enjoying his hookha; the Queen's *musnud* was on the ground, close by the side of her venerable husband....After having left my shoes at the entrance and advanced towards them, my salaams were tendered, and then the usual offering of *nuzzas*, first to the King and then to the Queen, who invited me to a seat on her carpet—an honour I knew how to appreciate from my acquaintance with the etiquette observed on such occasions.
>
> The whole period of my visit was occupied in very interesting conversation; eager inquiries were made respecting England, the Government, the manners of the Court, the habits of the people, my own family affairs, my husband's views in travelling, and his adventures in England, my own satisfaction as regarded climate, and the people with whom I was so immediately connected by marriage;—the conversation, indeed, never flagged for an instant, for the condescending courtesy of their Majesties encouraged me to add to their entertainment, by details which seemed to interest and delight them greatly.
>
> On taking leave his Majesty very cordially shook me by the hand, and the Queen embraced me with warmth. Both appeared, and expressed themselves, highly gratified with the visit of an English lady who could explain herself in their language without embarrassment, or the assistance of an interpreter, and who was the more interesting to them from the circumstance of being the wife of a Syaad.
>
> I was grieved to be obliged to accept the Queen's parting present of an embroidered scarf, because I knew her means were exceedingly limited compared with the demands upon her bounty; but I could not refuse that which was intended to do me honour at the risk of wounding those feelings I so greatly respected. A small ring, of trifling value, was then placed by the Queen on my finger, as she remarked, 'to remind me of the giver'.
>
> The King's countenance, dignified by age, possesses traces of extreme beauty; he is much fairer than Asiatics usually are; his features are still fine, his hair silvery white; intelligence beams upon his brow, his conversation gentle and refined, and his condescending manners hardly to be surpassed by the most refined gentleman of

Europe. I am told by those who have been long intimate with his habits in private, that he leads a life of strict piety and temperance, equal to that of a *durweish* of his faith, whom he imitates in expending his income on others without indulging in a single luxury himself.

The Queen's manners are very amiable and condescending; she is reported to be as highly gifted with intellectual endowments as I can affirm she is with genuine politeness.

The only important authority who takes a very unfavourable view of Akbar is Sleeman.[21] He complained of his senility, and told the story of his objecting to the shadow under his nose in Jivan Ram's painting as 'a great blotch'. But this is hardly proof of senility; similar *gaffes* have been perpetrated by men whom no one could accuse of either dullness or anaemia. In any case Sleeman's information was only hearsay, and he visited Delhi at the very end of Akbar Shah's life. A better witness is Bishop Heber, whose keen observation, literary talent and broadmindedness make his Journal quite the best description of India in the twenties. He describes not only the King, but the court ceremonial so clearly, that he is worth quoting in full:[22]

The 31st December was fixed for my presentation to the emperor, which was appointed for half-past eight in the morning. Lushington and a Captain Wade also chose to take the same opportunity. At eight I went, accompanied by Mr Elliott, with nearly the same formalities as at Lucknow, except that we were on elephants instead of in palanquins, and that the procession was perhaps less splendid, and the beggars both less numerous and far less vociferous and importunate. We were received with presented arms by the troops of the palace drawn up within the barbican, and proceeded, still on our elephants, through the noblest gateway and vestibule which I ever saw. It consists, not merely of a splendid Gothic arch in the centre of the great gate-tower,—but, after that, of a long vaulted aisle, like that of a Gothic cathedral, with a small, open, octagonal court in its centre, all of granite, and all finely carved with inscriptions from the Koran, and with flowers. This ended in a ruinous and exceedingly dirty stable-yard! where we were received by Captain Grant, as the Mogul's officer on guard, and by a number of elderly men with large gold-headed canes, the usual ensign of office here, and one of which Mr Elliott also carried. We were now told to dismount and proceed on foot, a task which the late rain made inconvenient to my gown and cassock, and thin shoes, and during which we were pestered by a fresh swarm of miserable beggars, the wives and children of the stable servants. After this we passed another richly-carved, but ruinous and dirty gateway, where our guides, withdrawing a canvas screen, called out, in a sort of harsh chaunt, 'Lo, the ornament of the world! Lo, the asylum of the nations! King of Kings! The Emperor Acbar Shah! Just, fortunate, victorious!' We saw, in fact, a very handsome and striking court, about as big as that at All Souls, with low, but richly-ornamented buildings. Opposite to us was a beautiful open pavilion of white marble, richly carved, flanked by rose-bushes and fountains, and some tapestry and striped curtains hanging in festoons about it, within which was a crowd of people, and the poor old descendant of Tamerlane, seated in the midst of them. Mr Elliott here bowed three times very low, in which we followed his example. This ceremony was repeated twice as we advanced up the steps of the pavilion, the heralds each time repeating the same expressions about their master's greatness. We then stood in a row on the right-hand side of the throne, which is a sort of marble bedstead richly ornamented with gilding, and raised on two or three steps. Mr Elliott then stepped forwards, and, with joined hands, in the usual Eastern way, announced, in a low voice, to the emperor, who I was. I then advanced, bowed three times again, and offered a nuzzur of fifty-one gold mohurs in an embroidered purse, laid on my handkerchief, in the way practised by the Baboos in Calcutta. This was received and laid on one side, and I remained standing for a few minutes, while the usual court questions about my health, my travels, when I left Calcutta, &c., were asked. I had thus an opportunity of seeing the old gentleman more plainly. He has a pale, thin, but handsome face, with an aquiline nose, and a long white beard. His complexion is little if at all darker than that of an European. His hands are very fair and delicate, and he had some valuable-looking rings on them. His hands and face were all I saw of him, for the morning being cold, he was so wrapped up in shawls, that he reminded me extremely of the Druid's head on a Welsh halfpenny. I then stepped back to my former place, and returned again with five more mohurs to make my offering to the heir apparent, who stood at his father's left hand, the right being occupied by the resident. Next, my two companions were introduced with nearly the same forms, except that their offerings were less, and that the emperor did not speak to them.

The emperor then beckoned to me to come forwards, and Mr Elliott told me to take off my hat, which had till now remained on my head, on which the emperor tied a flimsy turban of brocade round my head with his own hands, for which, however, I paid four gold mohurs more. We were then directed to retire to receive the 'Khelâts' (honorary dresses) which the bounty of 'the Asylum of the World' had provided for us. I was accordingly taken into a small private room, adjoining the zennanah, where I found a handsome flowered caftan edged with fur, and a pair of common-looking shawls, which my servants, who had the delight of witnessing all this fine show, put on instead of my gown, my cassock remaining as before. In this strange dress I had to walk back again, having my name announced by the criers (something in the same way that Lord Marmion's was) as 'Bahadur, Boozoony, Dowlutmund,' &c., to the presence, where I found my two companions, who had not been honoured by a private dressing-room, but had their khelâts put on them in the gateway of the court. They were, I apprehend, still queerer figures than I was, having their hats wrapped with scarfs of flowered gauze, and a strange garment of gauze, tinsel, and faded ribands flung over their shoulders above their coats. I now again came forward and offered my third present to the emperor, being a copy of the Arabic Bible and the Hindoostanee Common Prayer, handsomely bound in blue velvet laced with gold, and wrapped up in a piece of brocade. He then motioned to me to stoop, and put a string of pearls round my neck, and two glittering but not costly ornaments in the front of my turban, for which I again offered five gold mohurs. It was, lastly, announced that a horse was waiting for my acceptance, at which fresh instance of imperial munificence the heralds again made a proclamation of largesse, and I again paid five gold mohurs. It ended by my taking my leave with three times three salams, making up, I think, the sum of about threescore, and I retired with Mr Elliott to my dressing-room, whence I sent to her Majesty the Queen, as she is generally called, though Empress would be the ancient and more proper title, a present of five mohurs more, and the emperor's chobdars came eagerly up to know when they should attend to receive their buckshish.

To Akbar II succeeded his son Mirza Abu'l Zafar, with the title of Bahadur Shah. In the usual Mughul tradition, he was not his father's choice. Akbar had attempted to set him aside in favour of Jahangir, and had accused him of unnatural vice; Jahangir himself had at least twice tried to poison him. But Abu'l Zafar was the eldest son, and as such recognized by the British Government.

There is no doubt that he was the best fitted of Akbar's sons to succeed. He was in fact the best. rather than the worst of the late Mughul kings. The shadow of the Mutiny has darkened his fame and turned the philosopher-poet of fact into the scheming rebel of alleged history. But it should be remembered that Bahadur Shah was eighty-two years of age when the Mutiny broke out. For years travellers had been writing of his senility and feebleness. Mutinous sepoys seized the palace and treated him so disrespectfully that he threatened to retire to the shrine of Qutab Sahib as a *pir* or religious devotee, and those same critics denounced him as an arch-intriguer and conspirator, as one of the chief villains of the whole tragedy. These charges neutralize each other, and they are typical of a whole school of criticism of late Mughul Delhi. If the King kept up his palace, he had too much money and his allowance must be cut down; if he lived within his income, his establishment was squalid, and should be abolished. If he maintained his dignity and the traditional etiquette, he was preposterous; if he was ready to give it up, there was no need to maintain him in the palace. If a prince was idle and dissolute, it was a proof of Mughul effeteness; if he showed any signs of character, he was a danger and not to be countenanced. If the *salatin* were given employment, they would be a danger to the State; their consequent enforced idleness and penury was a proof of their turpitude. To satisfy these critics, Bahadur Shah should either have resisted the sepoys or fled from them. But no one has ever suggested how he could have done either. His own guard and most of his family had joined the mutineers. Was this octogenarian expected to rush out upon them, berserk, and to die resisting the restoration of the very authority he had always claimed for himself? Alternatively, where was he to fly? How was this young gallant to reach a non-existent British army in the height of the hot season? Perhaps he was to ride alone in disguise like Sir John Metcalfe, to rest by day in caves and guide himself by the stars at night, until he reached a friendly British camp. And how friendly would it have proved? Bahadur Shah must be judged on the evidence of his whole life, and not by the word of superficial travellers or of soldiers unbalanced by the strains of war, fatigue and racial passion.

Bahadur Shah appears throughout the records as a man of cultured and upright character. In 1806, when he was thirty-two years old, and his father was trying to pass him over in favour of Jahangir, he was described as a 'very respectable character by Seton. Twenty years later Charles Metcalfe, none too friendly a critic where the Mughuls were concerned, thus wrote of him:[23]

> I have always advised the Heir Apparent to submit with patience to the will of his Royal Father. I must add that his conduct is in every respect highly creditable to him. He is undoubtedly the mos respectable, the most accomplished of the Princes, the most worthy of his Majesty's love, and although it is withheld from him, I have never known him to deviate from the observance of proper respect and filial duty.

The Prince lived and dressed simply. He was described about the same time as 'a man of spare figure and stature, plainly apparelled'.[24] Even simplicity did not satisfy those who were determined that nothing Mughul (and very little Indian) should please. The same writer complained that the plainness was 'approaching to meanness', and that 'his appearance was that of an indigent Moonshee or teacher of languages'. These habits he retained during his reign; Emily Eden[25] gives us a glimpse of him sitting alone, except for a servant to keep off the flies, in his garden by the Jumna banks. Another is given by von Orlich who visited Delhi in 1843. 'As we entered the halls which lead to the King's apartments we saw a rhapsodist, who was sitting before the bedchamber of the Great Mogul, and relating tales in a loud voice. A simple curtain was hung between him and the king, who was lying on a couch, and whom these tales were to lull to sleep.'[26] In the palace diary of later years there are glimpses of him spending whole days reading and writing, studying the Koran, and composing verses in the Roshanara Garden.[27]

Bahadur Shah was educated to the life of a mediatized prince, and the role fitted him perfectly. Whether he could have developed the qualities of action we shall never know, for he was denied all opportunity in his early years and the Mutiny experience came far too late. But as a philosophic prince he would have adorned any court. He would have made a dignified ruler of a minor German state under the Empire or an excellent constitutional king. Delhi in his time was an Indian Weimar, with Ghalib for its Goethe. His interests and tastes were primarily literary and aesthetic. He loved poetry and philosophy, gardens and nature in all its guises. Nearly every day of his life he went for excursions across the Jumna morning and evening; every monsoon found him established at Mahrauli, where he built himself a country palace whose main archway may still be seen. He patronized the *Solona* or *Punkah* festival which was held each August towards the end of the rains, when he or his sons headed a procession to the shrine of Qutab Sahib, the King on his elephant and his followers waving large fans. He enjoyed gardens and laid out at least two himself, one below the palace wall on the Jumna bank and one at Shahdara. He loved animals and had a special fondness for doves. He was religious without being fanatical, and learned without being pedantic. He was fond of visiting famous shrines and continued the custom of making disciples or *murids*.[28] The disciple accepted the spiritual guidance of the King, and received a light red handkerchief as a symbol of his status. The practice had been begun by Akbar II, and was encouraged by the *pirzadas* (or descendants of saints) of Delhi who were firm believers in the divine right of kings. But he was no bigot; he freely admitted Dr Chiman Lal to the palace after his conversion to Christianity (and consulted him behind the back of his faithful *Hakim*), and rebuked those who criticized the doctor's action.[29] 'There was no cause for shame in what he had done', he said.

But above all Bahadur Shah was a poet and a literary patron. He was the pupil and friend of Zauq, whose rival was the famous Ghalib. He composed several volumes of lyrics, some of which attained considerable popularity. Though not quite in the same rank as Ghalib and Zauq he has his niche in the Urdu pantheon and his merit cannot be denied. It is this gift, much more than his crown, which gave him his place in the life of Delhi, and it is this even more than his political misfortunes, which has caused him to be affectionately remembered by the people.[30]

Bahadur Shah did not suffer from the usual vice of his race—addiction to strong drink, but he shared their taste for the good things of life. The illness which nearly killed him in 1853 was brought on by a succession of indulgences while recovering from an attack of colic. In particular he suffered from that amiable weakness of northern India, a fondness for mangoes. It was a mixture of mangoes and red pepper which brought on his first attack of colic, and more mangoes sent by the Resident, on receipt of which he improvised a couplet in their honour, which nearly killed him.[21]

Taking him all in all, Bahadur Shah presents a pleasing if not a heroic figure. That he lacked the greater gifts of personality is obvious; that he possessed real abilities and a certain charm is equally clear. He had the courage of his race and showed it when he faced the twice mutinous mutineers and protected Hakim Ahsanullah Khan from their vengeance. His later misfortunes brought out a quality of stoic endurance of suffering which must inspire respect in the least friendly. Judged by the evidence available, by the standards of his time and in relation to the peculiar difficulties of his position, Bahadur Shah stands as a dignified, cultured, intellectual and not unsympathetic figure. He lies in Rangoon, far from the city that he loved, but his memory, alone of the Mughuls since Aurangzeb, is still verdant among the people.

The later Mughuls maintained the etiquette of the Court in all its rigour so far as they were able. The miniatures and ivory paintings of the time depict the solemn processions through the streets in which the Court delighted on great occasions such as a religious festival or a royal wedding. The King or his representative always attended the Jama Masjid on the *Ids* or religious festivals. The King mounted on an elephant with the royal princes and chief noblemen behind, with foot and horse in front and rear, the party made a brave show with its gaily coloured trappings, its bejewelled figures and the scarlet uniforms of the soldiers. Trumpets and kettledrums went before, and the scene was enjoyed as much by the citizens as the courtiers themselves. Within the palace there were the Durbars. Durbars were held at irregular intervals, and on particular occasions such as the festivals or the visit of an English potentate, they were of special magnificence. The procedure was much the same as in the days of Aurangzeb, except for the smaller numbers, the reduced splendour, and the lesser note of the members. The standing rows of courtiers with bowed heads, the present-giving, the bowing and formal conversations, the exits and entrances, all followed ancient custom. In their full solemnity they have been described once for all by Bernier, and for their reduced proportions Bishop Heber's account is authoritative. The princely *nazrs* of former times became a few gold *mohurs*, the *khillats* or dresses of honour of fine worked muslin a tawdry tinsel, and the jewels coloured glass and beads. The processions of horses and elephants that once passed through the *Diwan-i-Amm* became an occasional horse or camel, or a curiosity like a rhinoceros. The magnificent steeds with which the emperors had graced their visitors became elderly animals who were led out again and again to successive English visitors, and led back again to their well-worn stables as soon as the Durbar was over. Looked at from the angle of the past, it was cheap and decayed enough; regarded by the eyes of Indian contemporaries, it was as fair a show as could be managed in the circumstances. It was at least better than nothing, and some solace for lost glories.

These public Durbars were held in the *Diwan-i-Khas*; the larger *Diwan-i-Amm* lay deserted and rubbish-strewn. Occasionally it would be cleaned on a royal order, and would then fall into neglect again. Those who had free access to the *Khas* were known as *Lal-purdaris*, from the fact that they passed through the red curtain which hung over the entrance of that court. They witnessed the more intimate ceremonies of the Court. The most picturesque of these was the weighing of His Majesty against seven kinds of grain, coral and gold on important occasions. The weights were then distributed to the poor. Formerly silver took the place of coral and there was an extra weighing against precious stones. These weighings had been introduced by Akbar, who borrowed them from the Hindus. They took place on His Majesty's birthday, the *Nauroz* or New Year, on the Hindu festivals of *Diwali* and *Holi*, and on the occasion of eclipses. Another was the *Ghusl-i-sehat* or bath of recovery, a ceremonial ablution which celebrated recovery from any illness. Another occasional function was the sacrifice of animals on the festival of *Bakr-id*, the Muslim celebration of Abraham's offer of his son to God. The late Mughul kings usually sacrificed a camel at the Idgah, but on occasion Bahadur Shah sacrificed instead in the *Diwan-i-Khas*. When remonstrated with he replied that he remembered it happening in Shah Alam's time.

There was nothing the Mughuls resented so much as any attempt to encroach upon their dignity. In general the British respected their feelings on this subject, though their gradual withdrawal of *nazrs* in later years produced a lasting soreness. This is illustrated by the story of the one serious attempt to disregard etiquette altogether.[32] It filled the whole of the short-lived residency of Hawkins, who succeeded Colebrooke in the autumn of 1831, and indeed was responsible for its untimely close. Hawkins came to Delhi without previous experience of Indian courts, but with a plentiful stock of prejudice and abstract knowledge. He was a good Persian scholar and had a zeal which led him to read for himself the royal *shuqas* or letters to the Residency. He was convinced of the corruptness of the previous regime and suspected the Court's implication therein. He was filled with the new ideas of superiority and stoutly believed than an Englishman should show deference to no man in India. His first duty was to present a *nazr* to the king. This he regarded as humiliating and compromised with his conscience by presenting it with one hand only. Even standing before royalty irked him, so that on reaching the Queen's apartments he insisted on a chair to support his dignity. From such a start there soon developed open warfare. He refused to receive dishes of sweetmeats from the heir apparent, drove away in wrath gardeners who brought nosegays from the palace, and sent back royal *shuqas* on the ground of disrespectful wording. The court politicians were equal to the occasion and entangled him in a dispute about the meaning of Persian words and the authenticity of seals. For three months he did not visit the palace or send his *chobdar* to inquire for the royal health. He was too 'busy'. In December the King visited the Qutab. While he was absent an English friend visited Hawkins. No doubt disappointed that he could not be received in audience, Hawkins one morning took him into the palace in the King's absence. With a grandson of Hafiz Rahmat Khan (of the Rohilla war fame), he rode through the gates and on through the *Naqar-Khana*, where the highest by custom must dismount, into the *Diwan-i-Amm*. With his friend he then rode through the *Lal Purdah* gateway into the court of the *Diwan-i-Khas*, disregarding the protest of the *peon* on duty. The *Diwan-i-Khas* itself was wrapped up in curtains. Hawkins thought it an affront that the *peon* should be clothed only 'in a blue cotton dress without arms'; the King thought it an affront that the Resident should not only enter the *Diwan-i-Khas* without leave, but should ride in on horseback, a thing unheard of in the whole annals of the House of Timur. Protests went direct to Calcutta and Hawkins found himself relieved first of the charge of the palace, and then of the Residency altogether. After this, in the deft hands of William Fraser and then Thomas Metcalfe, even the gradual withdrawal of British recognition of the imperial status was smoothed by dignified deference.

No better picture of the daily life of the palace can be given than by some extracts from a volume of the palace diary which has survived in the records of the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India.[23] Here is a specimen week. Bahadur Shah was then about seventy-seven years old.

Monday, 28 April 1851. Hakim Ahsanullah Khan having examined His Majesty's pulse, observed that he was very weak—and recommended that he should take no more medicine for the present. His Majesty intimated that he was of the same opinion. A petition was received from Mirza Kaus Shekoh, requesting H.M. would pardon the offence committed by Bansi Dhar, Perfumer, at which H.M. was much displeased and directed him to be put in irons. At 4 p.m. H.M. took an airing in the Qudsia Garden. Mourning *khillats* were conferred upon the sons of Maulvi Aziz-ud-din, demised.

Tuesday, 29 April. H.M. proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion. Husain Mirza Nazir reported that two children belonging to some *dhobis* in the City had been found in the *Mahal*. Bansi Dhar, Perfumer, was released on the payment of a fine of Rs. 500.

At 4 p.m. H.M. again proceeded on a shooting excursion across the river. A petition was received from Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, stating that he was prevented from attendance on H.M. by indisposition. Mahbub Ali Khan was directed to forward Rs. 200 to Kalah Sahib Pirzadah to defray the expenses of the offerings at the tomb of Maulvi Fakhr-ud-din, and also directing him to make the usual offerings at the tomb of the late Emperor Mohammad Akbar Shah.

Wednesday, 30 April. H.M. proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion. It was reported that as Ashraf Ali Khan was returning across the bridge on an elephant one of the planks gave way, and that the animal's leg went through, by which Ashraf Ali was thrown and severely bruised. A messenger was despatched to inquire regarding him. Mirza Jiwan Bakht, accompanied by Mahbub Ali Khan, took leave on their departure for the Qutab to make offerings at the Tomb of Maulvi Fakhr-ud-din and the late Emperor Akbar Shah.

At 4 p.m. several *salatins* attended with their game cocks in front of the Palace to amuse H.M. with cock-fighting.

Thursday, 1 May. H.M. proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion. Mirza Jiwan Bakht returned from the Qutab accompanied by Mahbub Ali Khan and represented that they had made the annual offerings at the tomb of Maulvi Fakhr-ud-din and the late Emperor Akbar Shah. It was reported that the *zenana* people of Mirza Fakhr-ud-din residing in the Daulatabadi House in the City during the night had been robbed.

At 4 p.m. it was intimated that the royal stipend for the past month had arrived at the Palace. Mahbub Ali Khan was directed to make the usual disbursements. Several *salatins* brought their game cocks in front of the Palace to amuse H.M. with cock-fighting.

Friday, 2 May. H.M. proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion. The huntsmen brought some venison, a portion of which was forwarded to Ahmad Quli Khan.

At 4 p.m. Mahbub Ali Khan reported that he had disbursed salaries for the past month. In the evening H.M. again proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion. Mirza Wali Sultan and Mirza Haji, *salatins*, complained that they had not received their allowances for the past month. Husain Mirza Nazir intimated that on the day H.M. proceeded to the home of Mirza Abbas Shekoh these two *salatins* appeared at the assembly in a state of intoxication and conversed in a very improper manner, and that they had been guilty of the same impropriety several times in the Palace, on which account their allowances had been withheld. H.M. indicated that until this habit was eradicated they should receive no allowance, and observed that the practice of drinking wine should be confined to those who had command over themselves, and not to those who drank to excess. A petition was received from Babu Suri Narain Singh, reporting the demise of his brother. The officers of H.M.'s Writing Office were directed to register the 15th year of H.M.'s reign.

Saturday, 3 May. H.M. enjoyed his usual sport across the river, and on his return forwarded a *shuqa* to the Agent.

At 4 p.m. a petition was received from Mirza Wali Sultan and Mirza Haji begging forgiveness of their offence and the issue of their allowances. H.M. observed that it would be necessary to fine them in order to impress upon others the impropriety of indulgence in spirituous liquors.

Sunday, 4 May. H.M. crossed the river and returned after some sport. The Agency *jamadar* presented two boxes of opium (received from Patna), and the Agency *Vakil* after a private audience retired.

Ahmad Quli Khan having presented himself was engaged in arranging matters connected with the alliance of Prince Mirza Jiwan Bakht with the daughter of Muhammad Khan of Malagarh. A *bania* complained that he had obtained a decree in this court of Rs. 100, against one Bansi Dhar, but that the royal officials would not enforce the award by the sale of the defendant's dwelling house. Mahbub Ali Khan and Hakim Ahsanullah Khan were directed to cause immediate arrangements to be made in satisfaction of the decree.

At 4 p.m. Hakim Ahsanullah Khan presented himself, and after submitting for H.M.'s inspection certain papers, withdrew.

Here are some other entries which give some idea of the variety of the royal interests and occupations.

23 April. At night H.M. witnessed a *nautch* and fireworks in the courtyard of the *Diwan-i-Khas* on the occasion of the marriage of Mirza Kaus Shekoh.

24 April. H.M. proceeded across the river on a shooting excursion and on his return at the request of the Astronomer despatched a horse as a present to the *khadims* of the Jama Masjid. Mirza Badr-ud-din Salatin was presented with a shawl as an expression of H.M.'s approval of the measures he had adopted in the arrangements of the *mahal.*

A *Durbari* of the *Lal Purdah* became a disciple of H.M.

25 April. H.M. proceeded in state to the house of Mirza Abbas Shekoh. On the road H.M.'s dependents presented the customary *nazrs* opposite their respective dwellings. The Commandant of the Palace Guards accompanied H.M. to the Prince's house and then took leave. Mirza Abbas Shekoh spread carpets from the entrance at which H.M. alighted to the house, and after H.M. had passed over the servants seized upon them as their perquisites. The Prince presented 11 trays of *pashmanahs* etc. to H.M., who observed that during the time the Palace was in course of construction H.M. Shah Jahan had occupied the house they were then in, and that it was constructed of all kinds of different stones, but that they had been stolen.

26 April. In the evening H.M. officers forwarded in order that H.M. might bless the same, certain alms previous to their being distributed.

6 May. Khuluqdad Khan *Valayati* in the service of H.M., presented two bottles of *Baid Musq* and stated that he had purchased them at a cost of Rs. 40. H.M. did not approve of the article and returned the same to the *Valayati*, who drank off the contents of both vials, and requested H.M. would deduct the price from his pay. H.M. was much displeased at the proceeding and directed him to be discharged.

12 May. At 4 p.m. it was reported that Mirza Kalan, son of Mirza Kaus Shekoh, aged 17 years, had been carried off by an alligator while fishing in the Jumna. H.M. was much grieved.

22 August. It was reported that as two [English] gentlemen were on their way to the Qutab in a buggy, one of H.M. elephants happened to be returning to Delhi; that the horse shied at the elephant and upset the buggy into the ditch, but that the gentlemen managed to jump clear of the vehicle and received no injury. They were however very angry. H.M. was much displeased at hearing this and observed that he had several times issued strict orders to the elephant keepers not to take their elephants near the gentlemen's vehicles, and immediately directed the *Daroga* of elephants to be written to, to send the offender to the Qutab forthwith for punishment.

22 December 1851. H.M. inspected an elephant sent by Mirza Latif Baksh. The *mahout* represented that the Prince was about to proceed to Mecca and required Rs. 500 for his elephant. H.M. offered Rs. 300 and sent a message to the Prince that he had better wait and accompany him as he was determined on proceeding to the holy shrine. [He talked of this project for two months but it was forbidden by Government.]

25 December. H.M. crossed the river and after some sport returned. Zauq, the Poet, read some verses composed by himself to H.M., and in return H.M. favoured the poet with some verses of his own composition.

30 June 1852. Sukhanand, astrologer, presented an *arzi* stating that there would be an eclipse of the moon on Thursday, and begging that the usual alms might be distributed....H.M. gave orders to bring a weighing machine, etc., on the occasion of the Eclipse.

2 July. H.M. weighed himself against seven kinds of grain, butter, gold, coral etc., and then distributed the result among the poor. H.M. inspected the rise of the river from the Nurgarh.

4 July. H.M. was told that...a European had come to inspect the Jama Masjid, and broken open the lock of the *Minar* door, and mounted to the roof disregarding all their remonstrances.

We may now sum up the influence of the Court upon Delhi life in general. First and most obvious, it was a centre of corruption and intrigue. With its cultured kings, its unruly and idle princes and its indigent *salatin*, the Court was like a marble pavilion built over a cesspool. The marble must not blind us to the cesspool, and the cesspool should not divert us from the marble. Anyone with a grievance to ventilate or an interest to promote naturally found his way into the palace, whose labyrinthine ways and intricate cross-currents afforded some hope to the least hopeful of causes. The Court itself, Micawber-like, was always hoping for something to turn up to improve its position, and welcomed any adventurer who could hold out the most slender hope. In its confined situation, the most fantastic reports were readily believed, and the most tenuous proposals seriously considered. When the mutineers arrived in Delhi, for example, it was widely believed that the Russians had come.[34] Dissensions among the British, as in the time of Colebrooke, factions in the city, reports from Lucknow, foreign wars and rumours of an invasion from Persia or Russia, were all grist to the mill of intrigue.

After intrigue came corruption. It was as extensive and as easy to understand as the former. An indigent court and a royal family of such dimensions were bound to provide a favourable soil, and the criss-cross of authorities, the numerous neighbouring states each with their subterranean activities, made the atmosphere that of a forcing-house. Inevitably the seeds of corruption grew lusty and rank.

But this is not the whole story and it is the mistake of previous critics that they have usually stopped there. The Mughul Court, so long as it lasted, was the school of manners for Hindustan. From the time of Akbar it had much the same influence upon Indian manners as the Court of Versailles upon European. Sorely pressed as it was in the eighteenth century by the rough Afghans, the uncouth Marathas and the rustic Jats, its influence revived with the new tranquillity of the early nineteenth century. *Nawabi* Lucknow was an offshoot which maintained and spread its influence farther down country. Another was Hyderabad in the Deccan. From Bengal to the Punjab, and as far as Madura in the south, Mughul etiquette was accepted as the standard of conduct and Persian was the language of diplomats and the polite. Forms of address, the conventions of behaviour and to a large extent ceremonial dress, approximated to the standards of Delhi. Even the Marathas felt its subtle and all-pervading influence, and the

Jats were proud to decorate a replica of a Mughul palace at Dig with the plunder they had carried from Delhi. At a time when English cultural influence had hardly begun to spread beyond the Presidency towns, such an influence was an valuable cement to society. The fall of the dynasty was a serious cultural loss, and inaugurated that period of nondescript manners and indefinite conduct from which India suffers to-day.

Thirdly, the Court under Bahadur Shah was a cultural influence of great value. With the royal patronage it became the centre of the second Delhi period of Urdu literature, whose brightest star was the great Ghalib. By its patronage it kept alive the Delhi school of painting which produced at least two painters of merit in Raja Jivan Ram and Husain Nazir. It was the natural centre of all the arts and crafts. By its influence it encouraged all these tastes in the leisured classes. Art in India has always depended upon aristocratic patronage. The end of the Court involved a break in cultural as well as political tradition, and ushered the garish period of utility into Indian life when education came to mean some knowledge of English, and culture foreign imitations. The Court of Delhi, faded though it was, had more in it than the tinsel of *khillats* or the honorifics of *shuqas*. It was the last refuge of a traditional culture whose tragedy it was largely to perish at the hand of political passion and misplaced alien benevolence.

CHAPTER V

THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

The Delhi Territory provided one of those virgin tracts which delighted the heart of the best officials in the early nineteenth century and brought out their best qualities. To spend the bracing cold weather touring the country, meeting and studying the villagers, noting strange customs and discovering unfamiliar conditions, restoring order and dispensing justice with a lordly hand, was calculated to kindle the imagination and to force into early bloom all the latent qualities of a man. Here were kingdoms not only to rule but to set in order, a system to introduce in a chaos of anomalies, a fit task for the constructive administrative mind. Above all there was little superior control. Calcutta was too distant to trouble much or to care so long as order was maintained and the revenue came in. On the other hand it brought out the weakness of more ordinary men. The lack of control led to capriciousness and vanity, the loneliness often to eccentricity. Long contact with alien people and ways of life in isolation might lead to a slurring of standards, a doffing of one set of values without the donning of another. An Englishman of those days might become as *déraciné* as a western-educated Indian of a later generation, and his position made the process not only a personal but a public tragedy. Pride easily overtook men surrounded with servility, and idleness those for whose every duty there was always a willing and plausible deputy. The local officials of the time, reared under Mughul and Maratha masters, were skilled in the art of pursuing private interests under a cloak of public-spirited appearances. Under the Marathas they were revenue-producing appearances, under the British they changed to reforming appearances, but they were still appearances, nevertheless. The doctrine of *maya* was as familiar to the administrator as the saint. And if some of the new rulers succumbed too easily to the delusions of *maya*, others were too bluntly aware of them and ran to the opposite extreme. For them all was chicane, jobbery and extortion;

they would mistake long-established custom for abuse, and some age-old custom for a complicated deception. Metcalfe himself, who in his later days had a sincere admiration for the Delhi villagers, began by calling them all robbers. The blundering reformer was often more mischievous than the *shikar*-loving slacker, for with the knife of honest zeal he would make fatal gashes in the finely spun web of rural society. So it came about that both the best creative work and some of the most disastrous changes were carried through by the first generation of British administrators all over India.

The first three years were too much occupied by the Maratha war and Holkar's raids for attention to be paid to the administration. The revenue was realized as and when it could be through the old agents. The first serious effort began in 1806 with the arrival of Seton, with the young Charles Metcalfe, only five years out of the College of Fort William, as his assistant. The first need was pacification and the reassertion of authority. The *zamindars* near Delhi were so bold that they had divided the city into wards for the purpose of plunder, and they carried on private wars, not only against the *amils* and their men, but amongst themselves. Metcalfe could find little difference between robber bands and village republics. It was the heyday of militant village autonomy. But let Metcalfe describe the scene himself.[1]

> When the force at Dihlee was not sufficient to keep in awe the neighbouring villages; when the Resident's authority was openly defied within a few miles of that city; when it was necessary to draw a force from another district, and employ a battalion of infantry with guns, and a squadron of cavalry, to establish the authority of government in the immediate vicinity; when the detachment was kept on the alert by bodies of armed villagers menacing the pickets, and when Sepoys who strayed were cut to pieces; when it was necessary to disarm villages and when swords were literally turned into ploughshares; when every village was a den of thieves, and the city of Dihlee was parcelled out into shares to the neighbouring villages, of which each co-partnership monopolised the plunder of its allotted portion; when a company of infantry was necessary to attend the officer making the revenue settlement, and even that force was threatened with destruction, and taunted with the menace of having its muskets taken as playthings for the villagers' children; when to realise a single rupee of the settlement then concluded,

purposely concluded on the lightest terms, it was necessary to employ a battalion of infantry with guns; when to subdue a single unfortified village a force of five battalions with cavalry and artillery was deemed necessary; and when the villagers, instead of awaiting the assault, sallied forth against this force, and for an instant staggered the advancing columns with the briskness of their attitude —if that gentleman had been at Dilhee in those days he would probably have been more indulgent towards a system which had brought the Dihlee territory into the state in which it was at the end of 1818. . . . We had to combat against crime. The bulk of the population were robbers. We had to subdue a refractory spirit before unused to submit to government. We had to conciliate, and at the same time to control, a considerable class of people more accustomed to command than to obey, and ready to wince under the slightest restraint.

Riding on his elephant and surrounded by his soldiers, Metcalfe toured the region in 1807 and made a settlement for one year, and thereafter triennial settlements were concluded. As conditions became more settled longer settlements were made with the more fully populated villages so that by 1820 there were settlements ranging from three to twenty years. As yet no attempt was made at measurement, the traditional measures being used as the basis. Two changes were made at once, the first being the substitution of cash payments for payments in kind, the second the elimination of Delhi bankers as middlemen. Others were still allowed as revenue farmers but it may be wondered where these others came from. The advantage of the banker was that he possessed the capital which enabled the village to tide over a bad season without defaulting and so risking the loss of their lands. The disadvantage to the Government was that the banker might sometimes default himself and would underestimate the crop-yield in order to increase his own profit. Here and there a wealthy *muqaddam*, or village headman, and an enterprising *jagirdar* took up farms, but the Government tended more and more to deal directly with the tenants. Both these changes were disliked by the villages. The gross produce was divided into two equal portions; from one the dues of the *muqaddams* were deducted, and the remainder taken by the Government; the other half remained to the cultivators,[3] after deducting the *patwari*'s (accountant's) allowance.

Seton's instructions to Metcalfe show that, filled with thoughts of his previous revenue experience, with landlords from whom the peasants must be protected looming large, he was far from fully understanding the unique system of Delhi. He was first inclined to believe, for example, that proprietary right to land did not exist in Delhi.[3] He also wanted to reduce both the power and numbers of the *muqaddams*, thinking them vexatious.[4] But he allowed his young assistant a wise discretion and no harm was done in this direction. Efforts were made to level up the shares of the *muqaddams* which varied from 2½ to 20 per cent of the produce. Metcalfe achieved a compromise of 5 per cent for the weaker *muqaddams* and 10 per cent for the stronger.

During the next twelve years Metcalfe was continuously in Delhi except for his mission to Ranjit Singh in 1808. His tours through the country soon changed his opinion of the *zamindars* to a sincere admiration and affection. Notwithstanding their turbulence, he wrote in 1815:[5] 'There is a manliness of character which makes it pleasant to deal with them...on the whole, notwithstanding the faults which have been mentioned, my opinion is in favour of the inhabitants both of the City of Dihlee and of its Territory; and I feel an attachment for them, which will make it painful to be separated from them, whenever the day of separation shall come.' He acquired in addition a profound respect for the system he found working in such rude vigour. It became the object of his administration to maintain the system intact as far as he could and to prevent outside interference. Long after he had first left Delhi in 1818 nothing so roused him as an aspersion on his 'Delhi system'.[6] 'If the Commissioners of Delhi are now able to smile benignantly on what they call innocent forgeries and to give way to sentiments of commiseration towards convicts—if they consider themselves at liberty to let loose criminals on society without dreading bad consequences—it is perhaps owing to the very system which one of them so strongly condemns and derides that they can venture to do so.'[7] While thus rounding on his critics he no less championed his work before the official world generally. He had made his name in Delhi and he staked his reputation on the worth of his work there. In a Supreme Council minute he challenged posterity.[8] 'When it comes to be decided whether the Dihlee territory has on the whole been better or worse governed than the provinces under the Regulations, the question, it is to be hoped, will be determined by impartial judges, free from prejudice and passion.'

Metcalfe's Delhi system depended upon a chance and a discovery—the chance that exempted Delhi from the Bengal Regulations, and his own discovery of the autonomous village system. The chance made it possible for him to exploit the discovery. Indeed, Metcalfe's system was to have no system; its essential principle was to preserve the old intact. It is the confirmations of custom which were fundamental, and the changes which were matters of detail. Beginning with the government officials, we find that the main framework remained the same. The whole Delhi Territory was treated as a province or *suba*, of which the Resident was the *Subadar*. His assistants, who varied from three to six, were his *naibs* or deputies, and were assigned no definite territorial jurisdiction. In 1815, at the height of his system, he had only four, of whom three were engaged in judicial duties. The one revenue officer was also in charge of the Delhi customs. So far from complaining he wrote cheerfully that he could manage without European assistance altogether if necessary.[9] The Resident himself was in the position of a Mughul frontier governor. He had in his charge the protected Cis-Sutlej Sikh states, and the various small states in and around the Delhi Territory. In addition he had the conduct of foreign relations with the independent states of Rajputana (till 1818) and with the Punjab and the North-West.

Below the Resident and his assistants authority descended straight to the *amil* or officer in charge of the *pargana* or subdistrict. In British usage the *pargana* became a *tahsil* and the *amil* a *tahsildar*. The *tahsildar* as before dealt with the village *muqaddams* on all matters except the revenue assessment, which was settled by an assistant at first in annual and then triennial tours. One change was here introduced. Contiguous villages were formed into groups called *zails*, with a headman known as a *zaildar*.[10] He was usually a prominent *muqaddam*, and served as a link between the villages and the *tahsildar*. The *muqaddams* retained their position as the representatives of the cultivators. Metcalfe resisted both Seton's idea of depressing their position and the suggestion, in the Bengal fashion, 'to make *maliks* of the village *Mokuddums*; in other words, to convert those who are deputies from the body of landholders for the management of the concerns of the village into absolute proprietors of all the lands of the whole village'. He continued both their numbers and their duties, and so, as he hoped, their influence. As part of the recognition of their proprietary rights, Metcalfe maintained the rule that land could not be sold or alienated except by the consent of all the proprietors. This ruled out the custom of Bengal, of selling up land for arrears of revenue, with all its disastrous social consequences. Metcalfe was very clear on the evil of this, and whatever is left of village life to-day in the Territory is probably due to his stand, for it enabled the villagers to survive without extinction the first thirty years of over-assessment.

> The sale of lands for arrears of revenue is a common instance of the little consideration in which the Zumeendaree rights are held by government. For trifling arrears of revenue, which might be restored in subsequent years, the hereditary rights of families, which have existed for centuries, are annihilated, and a new right of absolute property established in favour of other persons, purchasers of the proprietary right at the public auction; by which purchase the original proprietors or *Zumeendars* must either become the labourers of the new proprietor, or quit their houses and lands, their country and home, for ever.
>
> The custom of selling lands for arrears of revenue has not yet found its way into this district, and I trust that it never may be introduced.[11]

The essential condition of the *muqaddams* was largely untouched. They were restrained in their foreign relations it is true, but their internal supremacy within the villages apparently continued. Theirs was still the negotiation with the revenue officer or the *tahsildar*, the allotment of the assessment, and the payment of the *jama*. If swords were beaten into ploughshares, theirs was still the hand which held the new implement. The chief changes in their internal position were the addition of some new duties and expenses. The *patwari* was now protected by the Government, who relied upon him for a new set of records, and his payments had now to be made regularly. Government horsemen and *peons* or messengers who came on official business had to be entertained, and sometimes full-time *chokidars* or watchmen had to be paid by order of th magistrate. A vexatious impost, the parent of much grumbling and wrangling, was the allowance to be paid on each rupee or revenue to cover Government against loss through bad coins. A much more serious item, however, and the one which was the most real imposition and expense, was the incidence of *begar* or the Government claim to forced labour. The claim was as old as sovereignty in India, but its enforcement was new to this generation and more extensive than in former times. Government might requisition carts and bullocks for transport, and in times like the Gurkha war or the last Maratha campaign made extensive demands. Men might be impressed to work on roads or act as baggage carriers. Then the *muqaddams* had to pay the villagers concerned for the loss of time incurred, repair the carts and replace the cattle which had died. This, though irksome, was perhaps necessary, but what was still more resented was impressment for the trains of passing Europeans. Not only the high official touring his district, but the distinguished visitor, or anyone travelling through the territory who could get an order from the Supreme Government, exercised this right. Not all of them were as scrupulous as Bishop Heber in their treatment of those impressed. So what was a recognized custom and right of government became by too liberal an exercise oppressive and a grievance. *Begar*[12] was like ship-money—its acceptance depended upon its moderate use. Metcalfe was eloquent about its abuse and tried to suppress it, but he admitted that his success was far from complete. A revived authority meant more official movement, and the increased scope and activity of Government in British hands meant still further demands. It bore most hardly upon the villages near the high-road, whose inhabitants sometimes fled *en masse* at the approach of some large body or the train of a great man. Men even tended to desert these villages and settle elsewhere, which explains why on the Grand Trunk Road to this day villages are few and far between. High and low exercised the right, wrote Metcalfe, the low having the least consideration. The worst of the high were military officers and the worst of the low were the servants of Europeans. Sepoys would make men carry their muskets for them, and *chaprassis* their bundles. Women suffered more than men, because they could more easily be spared from the village. Women 'far gone with child, or with infants at the breast' were to be seen carrying the baggage of the great man ambling on his elephant or being carried in his palanquin. The officers supposed to suppress the custom had themselves an interest in its maintenance, and would be found impressing men themselves as they went round reporting on the enormities which existed. 'If this practice is to be put down, it will require all the authority of Government to effect it', wrote Metcalfe. A local order was plainly insufficient in face of so entrenched an official interest. Worst of all were the Europeans, over whom the Resident had no control. They could apply to the civil authorities for anything they wanted, from camels and carts to bearers, carpenters and any kind of craftsmen. Their servants were worse than they, and the general rule was that the lower the official standing of a man, the more determined was he in the exercise of his rights. For with him it was not only a question of money, but of the vital and all-important *izzat*. Abolition was not impossible, for those who had no power managed without it, but it was difficult in the case of Europeans, for there was a dearth of carts and bearers, and villagers preferred an Indian employer to a European. In other words there was not a sufficient surplus of labour to meet easily the greatly increased demand.

The actual supply of labour was not the only grievance; there was also the damage done to crops and trees. The drivers of elephants and camels would sally forth at each camping ground to the nearest village where their animals would strip the trees for fodder. Both the trees were damaged and the villagers deprived of a valuable source of fodder themselves. Bentinck suggested as a remedy the planting of trees at government expense along the main roads, but the Directors characteristically thought the idea extravagant. The budget must not be unbalanced for a villager's fodder. Curiously Metcalfe, while fully alive to the evil, had no idea of the remedy—the provision of good metalled roads with posting arrangements and a system of dak-bungalows. He opposed Bentinck's road schemes as extravagant and unnecessary, and Bentinck wrote sadly that 'he had no idea of a good road'.[12]

We come now to the administration of justice. The British could start from scratch, because such arrangements as their predecessors had were confined to the maintenance of order in the city of Delhi and spasmodic executions for robbery and plundering in the Territory. In the city itself two courts were established as part of the agreement with Shah Alam, for criminal and civil justice, and were presided over by the Resident himself and his assistants. The assistant in charge of the city criminal court was also superintendent of the city police. The villagers' depredations were soon stopped, the city was divided into wards and crime reduced to 'petty thefts of the city vagabonds'. The police intelligence was provided by the humble but essential sweeper. In the city they were not as dependent as is often imagined. They had an independent position of their own, and their own species of property—the right to sweep particular streets and quarters. This right was bought and sold between the sweepers themselves, the inhabitants of the streets having no control over it. The sweepers considered themselves 'as confidential officers of Government, and may in general be depended on as such'. Their ubiquity and their permanence made them the general recipients of gossip; no one was so well placed as they to hear of the movements of suspicious characters. Every day they assembled at the central police station to give in their reports. This was another example of the wise adaptation of existing institutions.

In the district the first great task after the cessation of private war was the suppression of *dacoity* or gang robbery. The first difficulty was the interlocking of independent or semi-independent territories with that of Delhi. The lands of eight Rajas, four Nawabs, three *Sardars*, one *Thakur* and the Begam Samru all abutted on and some were completely surrounded by British territory.[14] In addition there were three chiefs described as 'plunderers' by Metcalfe. Some chiefs, like Ahmad Baksh Khan of Firozpur Jhirka, gave every assistance, but some were 'dens of plunderers', and indeed derived an important proportion of their revenues from shares in the loot of these expeditions. The second difficulty was the long-established habits of the villagers themselves. Some gave shelter to gangs who came from great distances and of course paid for the hospitality;

other villages, mostly of Gujars, engaged in co-operative robbery themselves. One of the assistants had the duty of hunting down the professionals, and was so successful that by 1815 '*dacoity* in any shape is scarcely known'. The Gujars, as always when the hand of authority was strong, retired to more lawful occupations, and the most common crime left was cattle-stealing. There remained the prevention of crime by some permanent system. Here again Metcalfe followed closely previous practice. The *muqaddams* were made responsible for robberies within their land unless they produced the criminals. He argued that if robbery was being carried on from some village, the *muqaddams* must be aware of it; if a gang of professionals was operating in a district, the *muqaddams* must be accomplices. The responsibility was enforced in the same way as before, only of course much more effectively. The injured party gave notice to the village on whose land he lived. The village had then to turn out and follow the train to the next village. That village then did the same until the tour ceased and responsibility was fixed. The full value of the thing stolen, if not recovered, had to be paid 'for the sake of the principle', unless the value was very great, when further inquiries were made. In these cases and those of cattle the *khojis* were extensively used.[15] Their only difficulty was frequented high roads where tracks became confused and were difficult to pick up. But high roads were so few that their existence did not invalidate the system. Within the villages themselves crimes had to be reported to the *tahsildar* if any action was to be taken. It is to be noted that the practice of the Regulation provinces, where the police were supposed to inquire into crimes whether they were reported or not, was not used in Delhi.[16] Thus one great source of interference with the organic village unit was avoided. The portent of the district police was a cloud only just beginning to shadow the horizon of the village.

There remained the question of civil justice in the villages. This was largely concerned with disputes about land and secondarily about debts. Here Metcalfe relied upon the existing *panchayat*. No district courts were established, and the only innovation was an appeal to Delhi or to a touring magistrate. Metcalfe detested the Regulation judicial system and he and his school prevented its spread so far as they could.

The wayward genius of William Fraser invented a system which combined the idea of a jury with that of the *panchayat* proper.

> His scheme was partly on the principle of a jury, and partly on that of the *panchayat*; that is to say, the members were generally chosen on the nomination of the parties; but they were required to decide without delay; the matter in dispute was brought to a distinct issue and the whole proceedings were regularly recorded by a government clerk who was deputed for the purpose, with instructions to follow a prescribed course. The disputes were generally between (what I may call republican) communities of yeomen cultivating their own fields, for the possession of land generally of little value, but very easily contested by the people. The headmen of the contending villages, acting for and in the presence of the whole body, were required to nominate six on each side, making in the whole twelve. The right to challenge was freely allowed; and the jury (so to term it) was required to be unanimous. Mr Fraser's reason for having so many as twelve was, as he said, chiefly that they might, by their number and weight, be placed above the reach of intimidation or danger from the vengeance of those against whom they might decide; and it was with the same object, also with that of putting down party spirit, that he required unanimity.[17]

Fraser settled 300 cases by means of this method. But Metcalfe could not exclude the courts altogether, and he had to tolerate them in Delhi, albeit in Lord Salisbury's phrase 'with loud remonstrances'. He recorded that the courts were very unpopular and the seats of great corruption.[18] 'The European judge is the only part of them that is untainted. He sits on a Bench in the midst of a General Conspiracy and knows that he cannot trust anyone of the Officers of the Court.' Neither witnesses, pleaders nor court officials could be depended upon. Later experience in Delhi itself showed that not even the judge was always untainted. In any case he was often so young and inexperienced that he either gave hasty decisions neglecting local customs, or leaned too heavily on subordinate advice. At the very time Metcalfe wrote, the president of the civil court was a young man scarcely in his twenties and but two years out of College in Calcutta—his brother. The president of the criminal court was a youth still more junior, who in his first year had decided 166 cases. Men on Rs. 500 a month were doing the work of judges and this was the rule rather than the exception. The pleaders he and the whole public looked upon as pests, but they were constantly employed because they were the only available guides in the new legal labyrinth. Perjury of witnesses was so prevalent 'that it is disgraceful for a respectable man to give evidence in the Courts'. 'The Courts are regarded as places in which a man may be ruined. They are considered as sources of litigation and disturbance to the peace of families. They are spoken of with horror by those who have suffered and with derision by those who have not.' The courts were regarded as 'lotteries' and suits were started as a speculation. In fact that attitude with which any observer of Indian life is so familiar had already been born. The courts were to the public a great penny-in-the-slot machine whose workings passed man's understanding, and from which anything might come out except justice.

But for all his scorn Metcalfe could think of nothing better to put in their place. They were to him a cancer which he could not eradicate, whose workings he could only hope to circumscribe. He either did not see, or perhaps preferred not to contemplate, the effect the spread of this cancer would have upon his cherished village system.

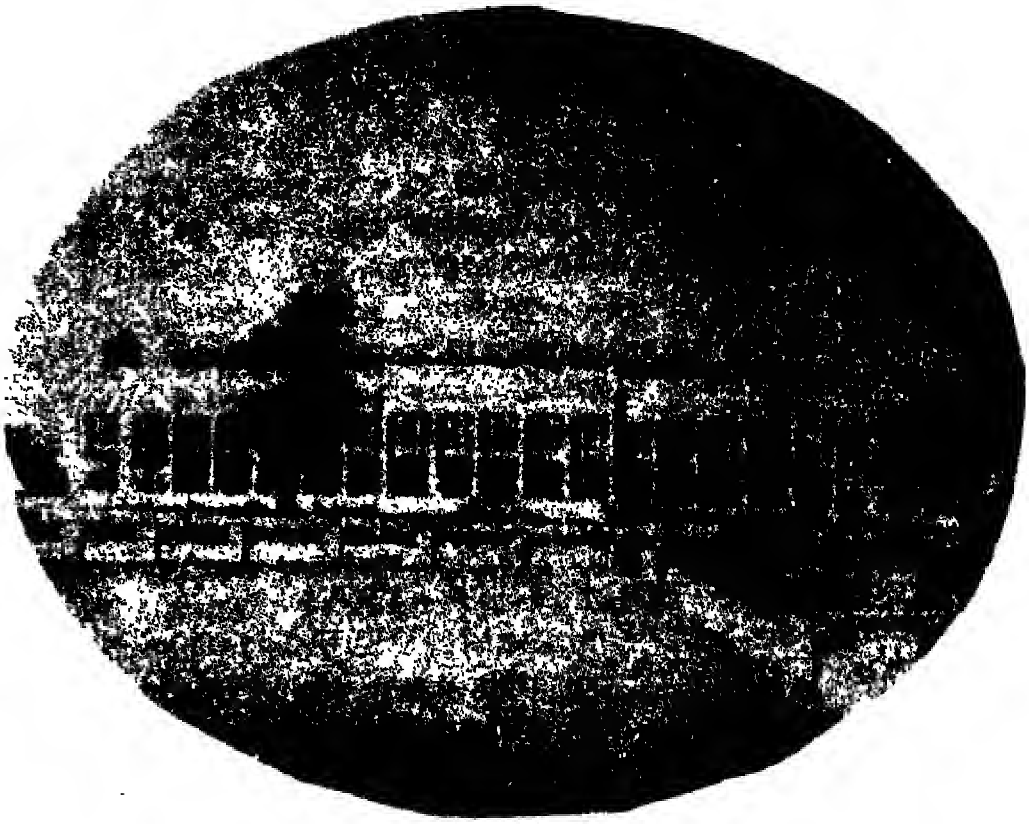
Metcalfe's Delhi system was notable for certain wider achievements. They were not essentially parts of his *system*, but rather expressions of his liberal ideas. They have been rightly eulogized by his biographers,[19] and do not need more than passing mention here. The first was the abolition of *sati*, which he ordered on his own authority. The practice was not common in the Territory and he had Mughul tradition to back him, but there was always the example of the neighbouring Rajput states to be guarded against, where it flourished with a rank luxuriance. Much more remarkable was the abolition of capital punishment, of which there was no instance after 1806. His remarks on the subject were like those of a modern prison reformer, but there was a diplomatic as well as a humanitarian reason which played its part. The death penalty required the sanction of the King. This would either be a mere form or expose judicial decisions to the caprice of a weak and tiresome old man. In any case it was bad for the King to imagine that he had any vestige of power. For once diplomatic convenience and humanitarianism coincided, and the result was to put Delhi in advance not only of the rest of India but of the whole of Europe also. The severest punishment was close solitary confinement in chains for life. For Metcalfe it was only life that was sacred, and he quite failed to see the irony of his next sentence, that prisoners asked to be hanged instead, and some tried to commit suicide. Most remarkable of all was his gradual abolition of corporal punishment. For this was a time-honoured form of executive justice, and particularly in cases of arrears of land revenue. In Bengal the old practice by which wealthy and ancient revenue-farmers and landholders were imprisoned and beaten for arrears was relinquished in favour of selling up their estates—a form of humanitarianism which the sufferers failed to appreciate. But in Delhi it was not a choice of one's skin or one's pocket, for land sales were prohibited. This was therefore the most truly progressive of the three measures.

Looking at Metcalfe's system as a whole, we may distinguish between a nearer and a more distant objective. The first was to maintain existing village institutions as far as might be, ringed round by the *Pax Britannica*, and directed by righteous rulers. The second was to win over the loyalty of the sturdy Delhi yeomen to the British Government. Metcalfe was as well aware of the value of such support in a time of emergency as of their existing disaffection. He saw good reasons for this disaffection, not only in the reassertion of governmental authority, but in the introduction of a law 'they neither like nor understand' and in the natural obstacle of differing customs and ideas. They were very restive during the Gurkha and again during the last Maratha wars. He hoped to overcome this feeling by giving the villagers benefits which would attach them to the British by ties of interest if not of emotion. The way was to administer the village system to their and not the Government's advantage. The method was to make moderate assessments for long terms, and to leave in the hands of the *muqaddams* the control of their own revenue arrangements. By so doing the *zamindars* would make a good profit from their land; they would be encouraged to extend cultivation, and would entice cultivators to take up vacant lands. Bulging corn-bins would make them forget the more exciting days of lawless penury. Regret would be swallowed up in prosperity. No one starts revolutions with a rising bank balance. And if there was risk of too much independence in an unforeseen future, the risk must be taken, for this was the path of justice and justice was the hand of God. Let Metcalfe state his own conclusion of the matter:[30]

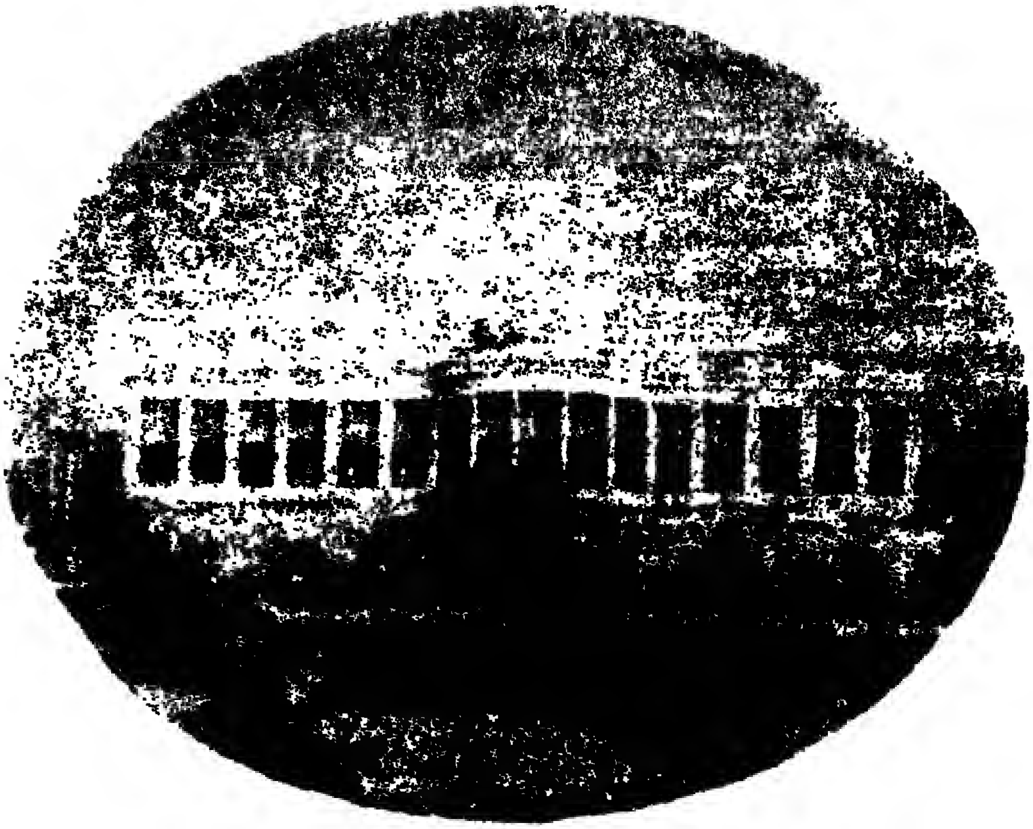
> It is proper to consider what would be the effect of such a system on the attachment of our subjects. It is evident that we do not at present possess their hearty affections. There is no reason why we should. There is necessarily a wide separation between them and us, arising out of our being foreigners and conquerors, and the difference in colour, country, religion, language, dress, manners, habits, tastes and ideas.
>
> This is a natural obstacle which we have to get over before we can win their affections. And the only mode of getting over it is by conferring on them benefits which they must feel and acknowledge every day and every hour.
>
> Hitherto our government has not conferred any such benefit on the mass of our subjects—that is to say, the cultivating inhabitants of our villages. The permanent settlement has kept them down in Bengal, and ensured their permanent depression. No system has yet been adopted in the Upper Provinces calculated sufficiently to secure for them any permanent advantages.
>
> We should deceive ourselves if we were to suppose that the system of justice which we have introduced is acknowledged to be such a blessing as we conceive it to be. That it performs considerable good there can be no doubt; but, like most human institutions, it has its attendant evils. These are felt more than its benefits, and our Courts of Justice are generally spoken of with disgust, with ridicule, or with fear, but seldom, if ever, with cordial approbation and respect....
>
> The preceding observations have been introduced merely to elucidate the remark which was previously made, stating that our rule had not yet conferred any such benefit on our subjects as, being acknowledged by them from conviction, can form a ground of strong attachment sufficient to overcome the obstacles imposed by original differences.
>
> But if the effects which have been anticipated be the result of the village system proposed, we shall then certainly have a claim on the affection of that numerous class of our subjects, the village landholders.
>
> They will compare their own situation with that of the cultivators living under other governments; they will acknowledge that we have conferred on them unrivalled advantages; they will feel that their interests are identified with ours. Instead of requiring, as at

> present, troops to control our villagers, we might depend on the latter for the defence of the country against foreign enemies, and the support of the government in any case of internal disturbance.
>
> It is, perhaps, impossible to foresee all the remote effects of such a systen and there may be those who argue that it is injudicious to establish a system which, by exciting a free and independent character, may possibly lead at a future period to dangerous consequences.
>
> There does not appear to be sufficient reason to apprehend any evil consequences, even at a remote period, from the introduction of this system. It rather seems that the establishment of such advantages for the bulk of our subjects ought to attach them to the government which confers the benefit.
>
> But even supposing the remote possibilities of the evil consequences which may be apprehended, that would not be a sufficient reason for withholding any disadvantages from our subjects.
>
> Similar objections have been urged against our attempting to promote the education of our native subjects; but how unworthy it would be of a liberal government to give weight to such objections.
>
> The world is governed by an irresistible Power, which giveth and taketh away dominion, and vain would be the impotent prudence of men against the operation of its almighty influence. All that rulers can do is to merit dominion by promoting the happiness of those under them.
>
> If we perform our duty in this respect, the gratitude of India, and the admiration of the world, will accompany our name through all ages, whatever may be the resolutions of futurity; but if we withhold blessings from our subjects from a selfish apprehension of possible danger at a remote period, we shall not deserve to keep our dominion; we shall merit that reverse which time has possibly in store for us; and shall fall with the mingled hatred and contempt, the hisses and execrations, of mankind.

Such was the Delhi system of which Metcalfe was so proud. For some time it continued unchanged. His successor as Revenue Commissioner, Thomas Fortescue, admired it and described its detailed working in his invaluable report of 1820. Twelve years later he stoutly defended it before the East India Committee. It was considered to be Metcalfe's chief administrative achievement, and one of his principal claims to fame. But it was not long before the head of criticism raised itself. Metcalfe had been too successful too early for others not to feel jealousy and to look keenly for some chink in the great man's



THE RESIDENCY, KASHMIR GATE, DELHI



METCALFE HOUSE BEFORE THE MUTINY

armour. It was just the subject for some aspiring individual who might hope to bring himself to notice or to find compensation for frustrated ambition by exposing an idol's feet of clay. In 1823 a commission of the western provinces examined the working of the Delhi judicial system. Among their number was Mr Ewer. His regulation mind was appalled by the slipshod methods of the Territory, and some twist of his soul delighted in the sport of belittling the efforts of others. There resulted a lively criticism of Metcalfe's methods by the whole Commission with special animadversions by Mr Ewer. He found fault particularly with the heavy sentences imposed by Metcalfe, especially in crimes such as night robbery with housebreaking, and the receiving of stolen goods. Above all he was severe upon the practice of doubling the sentences of those who attempted to escape. These in some cases amounted to gross severity and in all meant that the same crime was punished with the most unequal punishments. Punishment was for the reformation of the criminal, and if he failed to reform in prison, he should no longer be kept there. Metcalfe was in Hyderabad at the time, carrying on his battle against corruption organized in a system in the screening of which a Governor-General had been personally interested. Perhaps it seemed a favourable moment to launch an attack, to demonstrate that the incorruptible paragon of the Service was himself not above oppression and laxity in his own chosen kingdom.

But the attack rebounded upon the critics themselves. Metcalfe had little difficulty in showing that the picture was far different from the one Mr Ewer had tried to paint. Night robberies and the receiving of stolen goods had been part of the system of the plunder of the city by neighbouring villages, or by gangs sheltered by them. It was therefore extremely prevalent, and the heavy sentences were a necessary part of the campaign for putting an end to it. The men imprisoned for these offences were desperate and daring men and would stick at nothing in attempting or organizing escapes. Surprises were planned, and night attacks made on the prison guards who were often killed in the confusion while the prisoners made off to the shelter of friendly villages. These would then pass them across one of the numerous frontiers into one of the petty neighbouring states. A short fixed sentence would be no deterrent to these desperate men already serving long terms, but their practical conversion into a life sentence would. For petty offenders, on the other hand, it would be a great hardship. 'For instance, additional imprisonment for a year would be no object of fear to a hardened criminal condemned to fourteen; but if a poor wretch, sentenced to a month's detention for some petty offence, were in wantonness to attempt to escape, his supplementary punishment would be twelve times the original offence.'[21] The suggestion that criminals who failed to show signs of reformation should be let loose again upon society, provided Metcalfe with an opening of which he did not fail to take full advantage. Punishment was primarily for the protection of the community and existing prison conditions gave little hope of reformation. Severe sentences were 'to uphold the law against the hardened sinner'. 'The recollection of punishment may sometimes prevent a repetition of crime, but, in any other point of view, I hold him to be a visionary who expects to produce moral reform by congregating hundreds of hardened villains in a common gaol.'[22] These criticisms were in fact a vindication of Metcalfe's rule, for they brought into clear relief the improvement which had taken place in the Delhi Territory in the course of seventeen years. To say that such methods were no longer necessary was only another way of saying that conditions had improved so much as to render them unnecessary. The law *had* been upheld against the hardened sinner. It was the man who had made the rules whose government had rendered their continued enforcement needless. It is interesting to note that the man who in this incident assumed the mantle of an enlightened reformer a few years later was protesting successfully against the extension to his own district of the Delhi rule against flogging.[23] The only abiding result of this attack was a coolness between Metcalfe and Ewer which did nothing to help that gentleman's prospects.[24]

The next attack was by Sir Edward Colebrooke in 1829. He accused Metcalfe of winking at a system of jobbery and corruption on the part of his servants at the Residency. His *munshi* had made a fortune at Delhi and his *syce* had made a *lakh* of rupees by selling his horses. This was true, but Metcalfe was easily able to show that he had long since been aware of these things, had dismissed the offenders and paid back what he could to the victims.[25] This attack glanced off harmlessly. It was indeed in the nature of a *tu quoque*, for his accuser was himself a man undergoing an inquiry on much graver charges of a similar sort. It was the effort of the stag at bay to wound whom he could before the final kill.

A third criticism of much greater weight came from John Lawrence in 1838. It was not a criticism of Metcalfe himself, or indeed of the Delhi system, which he seems to have admired, but of its working. In his settlement report of the Rewari district he complained of gross over-assessment by previous officers. The revenue had actually declined between 1810 and 1837 from Rs. 214,503 to Rs. 184,383.[26] This in its turn brought the evils of pressure to realize the demand, of impoverishment and of depopulation. Metcalfe himself was aware of the danger and we find him not only insisting to Government on the need for moderate assessments, but exhorting his subordinates against excess of zeal. In 1826 he remonstrated with his friend William Fraser, his first assistant, against his practice of realizing the full demand and argued against the short-sighted policy of quick returns.

> No people labour so indolently as those who work in chains and by compulsion. Hearty exertion is always self-willed, and with a view to self-interest. The justice, the benevolence, the wisdom, the expediency, the necessity of a system of conciliation towards the *Zumeendars*, would appear to me to be indisputable, were it not that you apparently pursue one of compulsion. If you think that force alone is calculated for the management of these people, I shall respect both your opinion and your experience, but it will require strong proofs to convince me.[27]

Metcalfe's long-term policy required easy settlements for long periods, both to inspire the countryside with confidence and to encourage the resettlement of waste lands. We may indeed be permitted to wonder whether his practice was quite so enlightened as his theory. In 1815 he boasted that the revenue of the Territory had increased in six years (1808–14) from four to fifteen *lakhs*. The figure is so large that it prompts the doubt whether, even granting Metcalfe's genius as a pacificator, it can be reconciled with the principle of easy settlements and the sacrifice of revenue to confidence. In his very first settlement under Seton, when a bad season had ruined the crops and he was advised to settle for one year only with the fact in mind, he yet managed to raise the demand by six thousand rupees.[28] But be this as it may there is no doubt that Metcalfe's principles were sound and far-sighted. He probably grew more lenient in practice, and saw more clearly the advantage of moderation, as he grew older. All that he can really be blamed for was a failure to control his revenue assistants sufficiently strictly. But with a whole province to superintend in addition to his diplomatic duties, and with never more than six English assistants scattered widely over it, the task was next to impossible. And what assistants! No man ever curbed William Fraser's independent spirit, or reined in his fierce self-will.

The changes which followed Metcalfe's departure were not of any great importance. The system continued under his brother's long rule, and except for the momentary shock of Fraser's murder in 1835 Delhi was happy in having no history. The model province was gradually forgotten in the alarms of the Afghan war and the excitement of the Sikh campaigns. Delhi was thought of only as a base for the army of the Punjab. The ablest exponent of its system, John Lawrence, earned promotion not through his village administration, but by his prompt organization of a transport train in 1845, and thereafter it was the Punjab towards which men's eyes were turned as the centre of a model administration. We may well detect an echo of John Lawrence's Delhi experience in his Punjab preference for villagers rather than chiefs. Henry, with his diplomatic experience, was all for the chiefs or *sardars*, whom John regarded as robbers and upstarts. John would have been right in the Delhi Territory as Henry may have been in the Punjab; the conflict between the two was the result of differing experience as much as of differing temperaments, and it could not be resolved because neither fully realized how widely Indian conditions could differ in comparatively small areas.

What changes there were may now be mentioned. The scattered team of assistants of Metcalfe's earlier years became the collectors of five districts. At their district headquarters courts were set up and gradually extended their scope. They slowly trenched upon the village jurisdictions in much the same way as royal justice replaced the feudal courts in medieval

England. Along with the courts went the police, and as the police increased the village's sense of corporate responsibility inevitably grew less. But it still continued; the use of the *khojis* went on right up to the Mutiny. The Regulations were still held at bay, but their spirit seeped in with the men who came to Delhi steeped in the practice and precept of the Regulation provinces. In the villages the *muqaddams* and *zamindars* continued to manage revenue questions. If they were no longer lords of the countryside, free to fight or to pay as they listed, they were now freed from the worst evil of early British rule—frequent settlements and chronic over-assessment. In the thirties and forties long-term settlements were made throughout the Territory. Bentinck's and Bird's practice reinforced Metcalfe's precepts and they at last had a chance of thinking in the terms of Metcalfe's revenue minute twenty years earlier. A surplus for profit and improvement as well as for land-tax was now theirs in fact as it had always been theirs in Metcalfe's intention. Their liberty of dealing with the village cultivators was restricted, it is true, by the exact measurements which the settlement officers brought with them, but that disadvantage could not outweigh the boons of security and the prospect of increasing profits. The *muqaddams* themselves began to be called *lambardars*, which itself was a corruption of the new-coined word *numbardar*—the manager of the numbers or revenue figures. There was a tendency to encourage the appointment of a head or *ala-lambardar* in villages where the *muqaddams* were numerous and this in its turn was bound to detract from the position of the others.[29] There was also a tendency to treat the *lambardar*ship as an hereditary office, only to be transferred in case of serious misconduct. The office of *zaildar* also, which was usually given to a prominent *muqaddam*, tended to raise some at the expense of others. The ranks of the proprietors were full of butlers and bakers, dreaming of prosperity, whom the British unexpectedly exalted or depressed by these means. Nevertheless the village system continued in the main, and the *muqaddams* remained its accredited leaders. John Lawrence, no man for concealing unpleasant facts with the embroidery of official optimism, thus described in 1838 the result of a well-managed assessment:[30]

> In a flourishing *pargana* on this side of the river, we have no large *amindar* with his lac or two lacs of annual income, but on the other

hand, we have thousands of small proprietors each with his brood mare, his buffaloes, his oxen, in short, with everything that makes a comfortable position in life. In no part of the Western Provinces, of which I have had experience, are the tenures so complete and so well recognised as here, no district where the ancient village communes are in such excellent preservation, or where the practice of our Civil Courts has hitherto done so little harm.

Another development which vitally affected village life was the restoration of the ancient canal system of the Delhi Territory. The canal system was originally constructed by Firoz Shah in the fourteenth century and extended on both sides of the Jumna. On the west the canal ran to Hissar, which was renamed after Firoz Shah, and later was extended to Hansi. On the east it ran through the Doab and rejoined the Jumna near Delhi.[31] After Timur's invasion and during the confusion which followed this system broke down, and was not restored until the sixteenth century. Shah Jahan undertook this work and his engineer Ali Mardan Khan constructed in addition a branch from Karnal to the new city of Shahjahanabad. The restored system flourished until the troubles of the mid-eighteenth century, and was said to have provided the Vazir Safdar Jung with an annual revenue of twenty-five *lakhs*.[32] The branch to Safidon ceased running in 1740 after Nadir Shah's invasion. The Delhi branch was broken in Safdar Jung's civil war of 1754. It was repaired by Ahmad Shah, but thereafter neglected. An accident to the headworks cut off the flow of water, and no one was strong or rich enough to undertake the necessary repair. Zabita Khan made an attempt to restore the eastern branch, but his power ebbed away and he achieved little more than the adding of his name to a ruined earthwork. It was left to the British to follow in Mughul footsteps and restore the whole network of Tughluq canals.

Metcalfe early saw the possibilities of irrigation and strongly recommended restoration.[33] A survey was made in 1810 and two reports were written thereafter, but nothing definite was done until Lord Hastings visited the Territory in 1815. He saw the traces of the old canal, including a fine stone bridge, near Karnal, learnt that the ordinary water of the district was brackish and that the district had formerly been called 'The Sea of Plenty'. Engineers reported that the canal could be put 'in a perfect condition' for three *lakhs* of rupees, and he forthwith ordered the work to be undertaken.[24] Another survey was made and work started in 1817. On 30 May 1820 the water ran into Delhi again for the first time in eighty years. There was a general festival; the people went out to meet the oncoming water and welcomed it with garlands of flowers. The next year a defect caused a stoppage, but thereafter the water flowed steadily and a new era started for the districts it fed. The repair of the western branch, or Firoz Shah's canal proper, was undertaken on Fortescue's recommendation in 1820, and the water flowed in 1825. The eastern or Doab canal was the last of Firoz Shah's works to be restored. Begun in 1822 it was completed by Lieut. de Bude and Major Smith in 1830.[25]

The restoration of these canals had varied and important results. There was some talk of using them for power and one or two mills were started. It was also hoped to use them as a means of transport and locks were fitted for the purpose, but neither project came to much. Their main use was for agriculture and here the results were remarkable. Pastoral groups like the Gujars and Ahirs showed a tendency to adopt agriculture when they saw the water flowing at their doors. Agriculturists made haste to increase their holdings and take in any available waste land. While the restored canal was still young there was a remarkable increase of fertility and prosperity, so that Lawrence could write

> *Sonepat Bangur* is the finest, most populated and best cultivated *pergunnah* in the district....The population and the produce bears a very good proportion to the area and at the same time is very equally spread over its surface. This circumstance and its extensive irrigation has rendered it a perfect garden. You may ride for miles and see nothing but the most splendid cultivation.[26]

But there was a serpent in this as in most gardens. The workings of silt deposits and seepage were not understood then as they are now. The first great burst of fertility was followed after some years by a falling off caused by the accumulation of *reh* and silt deposit along the banks.[27] Villagers who had cheerfully paid increased assessments found their crops falling off and remission became general. From 1856 to 1860 some Rs. 23,000 was remitted in thirty-five villages.[28] In addition to this the canal on its old alignment ran along a depression in the apparently flat Jumna plain. In some places the bed of the canal was above the level of the land and seepage and waterlogging was the result. The canal was lined with a series of lagoons and stagnant marshes which proved a paradise for wild fowl and their hunters, and a death-trap for the villagers. As a further consequence, the annual rains were prevented by the canal from draining out of the 'valley' into the river. Marshes became *jhils* and laguons lakes. Malaria appeared and the health of the villagers in the canal track became noticeably worse than that of those elsewhere.[30] Conditions were worst in the region between Panipat and Karnal. Karnal itself suffered a change of climate which none could ignore, for Karnal had been a military station since 1806. This verdant spot with its cool waters and shady trees became, in the course of a few years, a mausoleum for civilian and soldier alike. Rows of graves in the quiet and deserted cemeteries still tell the pitiful tale of young men and infants cut off in the prime and on the threshold of life. Lord Ellenborough acted where others had only wrung their hands and removed the cantonment to Ambala. Rows of barracks and lines of chimneys, crumbling bungalows and the solitary church tower still point to the former activity. But the villagers could not move to Ambala, and it was fifty years before the root of the evil was attacked. Then the alignment of the canal was altered to correspond with the lie of the land, and it now sweeps round in a great curve from Karnal to Panipat. Karnal is now as healthy as any other place in the canal area.

The Delhi system was and remained a monument of what one man could do when armed with ample powers and given a free hand to use them. It provided one of the best arguments in British-Indian history for trusting the man on the spot, and at the same time underlined the condition of such trust. An outstanding man could effect great changes and improvements, but the average official would either adhere rigidly to existing practice and the letter of the law, or by leaning on his subordinates overmuch would allow abuses to creep in. The Delhi Territory had an exceptionally able group of officials; it had also its quota of the average, though few of the really incapable, who were then a much larger proportion of the service than later.

There remains the larger question of the success of the system as a whole. How far were Metcalfe's ultimate objects, the conciliation and contenting of the *zamindars*, the maintenance of the village institutions in their pristine vigour, actually achieved? Metcalfe shared with Munro and Elphinstone the ambition of conserving village institutions as far as possible, and in many respects his were the most promising efforts of the three. Munro and Elphinstone grasped the position of the cultivator as the owner of the land and of the village as an organic social unit. But Metcalfe went further; he realized the relevance of the second as well as the first to the revenue measures of Government. He did not stultify his endeavours to conserve village institutions by settling with each villager separately and so leaving the village authorities with no reason for existence. Above all he did not regard the *panchayat* as the heart of village life. The *panchayat* for him was the heart-beat, not the heart; the heart itself was the yeoman *zamindar* with his immemorial holdings and rights. Metcalfe approached more nearly to the heart of Indian rural life than any of the early administrators. Nevertheless, if his spirit in after years ever brooded over the Delhi Territory and its people, he must have shared with Munro and Elphinstone their disappointment at the results of their work. His failure was not so complete as that of the other two men, but it was definite all the same. Since Metcalfe's grasp of village realities was greater than that of the others, his failure along with them is all the more puzzling and it prompts the query as to whether anything the British could have done would have saved the village institutions. Yet the same village, whose institutions were so anaemic in the nineteenth century, had seemed to be the protoplasm of all Indian social life. It was at any rate something so tough that it had survived intact all the wars and revolutions, all the pestilences, floods and famines of twenty centuries.

In the reasons for Metcalfe's failure may be found a clue to the larger problem. In the first place Metcalfe's hope of so attaching the *zamindar* to the British Government that 'we might depend on the villages for the defence of the country against foreign enemies, and the support of the government in any case of internal disturbance', has never been realized to this day. A crucial test for the Delhi Territory was the Mutiny.

Zamindars who felt that they had something vital to lose from a rebel victory would have actively supported the British forces. They shared none of the specific grievances of the mutineers; they had been affected little by Dalhousie's westernizing measures. But their support was not forthcoming, in spite of the fact that the new Mughul Government offered no very rosy alternative. There was passivity and a waiting on events; there was a ready supply of provisions but no active intervention. Their attitude was very different to that of the Sikh chiefs, whose interest was clearly with the British and who might well dread a revived Mughul monarchy. It is no answer to say that villagers are always passive and apathetic. The Delhi villagers fifty years earlier were neither, and were ready enough to act whenever they thought their interests involved. Clearly the villager, while he thought the Government was not so bad as to be worth rising against, was also sure that it was not good enough for him to raise a *lathi* in its defence.

The first reason for this failure to appreciate 'the manifold blessings of British rule' is to be found in the over-assessment already mentioned and its attendant consequences. Over-assessment meant first a loss of profits which the *zamindars* expected. Then it meant expensive loans to meet arrears, and all the time administrative 'pressure' which meant village oppression. If the evil continued the point was reached when the *zamindars* said: Why should we labour to extend our fields if all our profits are swept away by a Government more insatiable than the Marathas and more implacable than the Afghans? Then came flight and settlement elsewhere. The abolition of *sati* and flogging and the death penalty was poor consolation to penniless farmers. All these things happened and happened constantly in the Delhi Territory. Their prevalence may be gauged from the fact that the first assistant for nearly twenty years, the man mainly responsible for revenue work, was the notoriously severe William Fraser. In Rewari the revenue actually dropped Rs. 30,000 a year instead of rising after Fraser had been at work. In Sonepat nine villages were assessed in 1821 for Rs. 16,131. In 1826 there were less than two thousand people left in them; in 1842 they were deserted. The assessment had to be nearly halved before recovery took place and even in 1880 a population of over 5000 was paying only three-quarters of the original demand.[40] In the Karnal district 'villagers absconded en masse' rather than face the settlement officer.[41] One officer reported that Chattra Bahadurpur, which had just been re-assessed for Rs. 860, was then paying Rs. 1400, and ought only to pay Rs. 500. 'Malba Mazra, assessed at Rs. 2180, beats Chattra Bahadurpur hollow in poverty and privation.' In Kishmapur (assessed at Rs. 4130) 'the *zamindars* are tolerably intimate with poverty'. Atael 'has not a tale to tell nowadays for it is deserted'. Against the names of villages in the three years' settlement lists was constantly written the word 'deserted'.

It must not be imagined that the revenue officers easily gave up the effort to realize the government demand. Edmondstone, an enlightened officer who rose to be Chief Secretary to the Supreme Government, wrote of the Panipat district in 1842:[42]

> It was ascertained that the greatest difficulty had been invariably experienced in realizing the demands of Government, that notwithstanding sternness and well sustained efforts, the district officers and their subordinates had been baffled and that balances were frequent and large.

The sternness of the collectors took the form of pressure applied from above. The collector frowned on the *tahsildar* and the *tahsildar* frowned on the village *lambardar*. The *lambardar* frowned on the *zamindars* as long as he could, and when he could do so no longer, prepared with the whole village for flight. To help the *lambardars* in this process, soldiers were billeted at free quarters upon the villagers until they paid up.[43] The only relief which could be obtained was by bribes, and it is not surprising to find a new collector reporting of his district 'that the Durbar of extorting bribes is in force'. It was not only the severity of the revenue demands which caused discontent but (it cannot be too often repeated) the impossibility of ever escaping them as in former times.

The second reason for the failure of the British to win the positive support of the *zamindars* was the fate of the village institutions. This brings us to the second of Metcalfe's main objectives, their conservation and encouragement. He realized that the *muqaddams* and not the *panchayats* were the keystones of the village arch. But his perspicacity was rendered fruitless by forces beyond his control. These were, in a word, the courts and the police. Together they worked to undermine the authority of the *muqaddams* that the revenue arrangements so carefully tried to preserve. The *muqaddam's* authority depended upon his influence both as the manager of the revenue and as the keeper of the peace in the village. The revenue rules recognized the former and the system of village responsibility the latter. The courts came upon the scene in despite of Metcalfe and his assistants, simply because they were an invariable part of the British system and therefore could not be kept out. In Metcalfe's time his assistants were not stationed in any one district. Their tours of the country provided only spasmodic opportunities of appeal for the disgruntled villager. They were intended and probably actually succeeded in providing correctives rather than substitutes for village justice. But from 1820 the Territory was divided into districts, each with its collector and steadily increasing apparatus of authority. The result was the multiplication of opportunities for appeal. Village courts became in effect courts of first instance only and no one any longer thought of allowing the *muqaddams* to have the last word. The well-known character of the new courts still further hastened the process. If the courts were regarded as a lottery and a case as a profitable speculation, it followed that the man with a bad case would resort to the court even more readily than the man with a good one. Everything was possible in the courts, and, when family honour was at stake, everything possible must be tried. The rustic, in the presence of people who knew his lifetime's thought and action intimately, would hesitate or scorn to depart far from the truth. If he did, his hopeful economies were easily and accurately discounted by his neighbours. But in the distant court there were no keen-eyed, vigilant neighbours to keep him in the way, no watchful assembly to carry on a running commentary of praise or blame. Instead he found *vakils* without whose help and rupees the court officials could not even be induced to put his case upon the record. They told him, as they clinked his grudged rupees, that the last thing needful for his case was the truth, that in fact it was the one thing to avoid. The case would depend entirely upon their skill in adapting the law to the alleged facts, or the facts to the law. Arrived in the court, he was awed by the presence of the collector who perhaps had recently visited his village to 'settle' it in all the panoply of post-Mughul officialdom; he was astonished to find no account taken of tones of expression and bearing, of personal position and character; above all, no audience of familiar commentators. Instead, there was an unaccountable obsession with the spoken word in itself, and an industrious scratching of pens. The sincerest assertions had no more weight than the shamefaced mumblings of the man with guilt stamped on every line of his features. He would discover that for two annas a day witnesses could be found who would testify to anything under the sun and see their tales being written down as solemnly as though they were the oracles of the gods themselves. Truth and sincerity would not have the slightest effect, for the judge probably only half understood the language in which they were uttered. The whole process was one which seemed to the villager to neglect every relevant factor in the discovery of truth, and to concentrate, with terrifying pomposity, on the one thing which certainly had no objective reality—words. Words and statements were for him images and shadows, veils which half revealed and half concealed, that to which the shrewdness of the judge should penetrate. Yet here they were regarded as the only realities, the only basis of any decision. And that decision, when it came, was too often unaccountable: too elaborate where it should have been simple and blunt where it should have been subtle. Can it be wondered that the courts were feared and despised and yet resorted to more and more? The villager would go home marvelling and (if he had lost his case) cursing the British, but in any case convinced that the *muqaddams* were much smaller men than he had previously supposed. The courts tended steadily to replace the village jurisdictions, not by direct encroachment, or by providing better justice, but by providing an alternative and speculative method of winning a point. The very uncertainty of their processes increased their magnetic attraction, because it gave the man with a bad case the hope of success. Hope is a more potent parent of change than distress, and to the ambitious, the disgruntled and the jealous, it pointed unerringly to the courts.

After the courts came the police. They were admittedly effective against *dacoits* and *thags* and equally admittedly corrupt. 'The police again is universally condemned as a source of general oppression', wrote Bentinck to Metcalfe, and again to Auber, 'the police management is beyond measure oppressive'. Everyone, 'in or out of authority, admits fully the extent of their exactions and most tormenting and exacting conduct'.[44] The police had the power of inquiring into crimes in a village, which gave them the opportunity of exacting hush money. Or they might arrest men to answer charges which, on suitable payment, would not be proceeded with. The pages of the judicial consultations are full of 'animadversions' upon this prevalent practice. When a case actually came to court, witnesses would be dragged long distances to give their evidence. One magistrate in the Agra district noticed long lines of what he took to be convicts chained together. No, he was corrected, they were chained, it was true, but they were not convicts. They were witnesses, who only in this way could be got to participate in the benefits of British justice.[45] But if no policeman had been corrupt, the effect of their influence would ultimately have been the same. They undermined the authority of the village elders and the whole system of village responsibility by providing an alternative system. Intended to 'improve' it, the police in fact destroyed it. Their corruption, by tending to make crime a great lottery as well as litigation, only hastened the process. The proprietors became year by year less and less masters in their own villages. Outside interference undermined their authority, and the uncertainty of its working sapped their self-confidence. The village lords of an earlier day, *lathi* in hand or matchlock on shoulder, became little by little querulous sticklers for annas and pice.

If this be a correct explanation of the withering of village institutions in spite of the most earnest efforts to preserve them, it raises the larger issue as to whether anything the British could have done would have saved them. The discussion of so great a question is hardly within the scope of this study, but one or two considerations may be noted. It must be remembered that British action in the main was not due to any personal idiosyncrasies or turpitude. The officials were driven on by a rising tide of opinion in Britain, which was now, for the first time, able to transfer itself *continuously* to India. Episodes like the trial of Warren Hastings were sporadic comet-like manifestations, but from the early years of the nineteenth century opinion in England exercised a continuous and increasing pressure. And as yet there was no effective Indian opinion to act as a counterweight. Ram Mohan Roy was a portent, but not during his life an effective influence. This rising tide of opinion was utilitarian, and its manifestation was the improving spirit. Bentinck was typical of his time when he prided himself on the title of improver. Elphinstone read Bentham on his tours, Holt Mackenzie preached utility in high places, and Metcalfe imagined himself a utility man. Thus it came about that the more aware the official, the more anxious was he to improve, and the very men who were most anxious to conserve the best in Indian institutions were bound by their principles to try to improve them as well. The elder Mill has given the utilitarian view of India. It was for him one vast field for improvement of every kind. Following his cue, there was one class of men who held that everything Indian was bad, that new wine must be put in new bottles. Of such were Macaulay and later Dalhousie. And there were those who, seeing the value of things like the village and the *panchayat*, thought our mission was to improve and develop them. It was this attempt to improve which precipitated the destruction of village institutions. It was the tragedy of the time that this was brought about, not by deliberate intention, but by the best efforts of British benevolence. The mistakes of the eighteenth century were the results of their faults; the mistakes of the nineteenth the expression of their virtues.

To the utilitarian, law was an inspired scripture and legislation a Delphic oracle. Order was the necessary condition of law, the ether which surrounded and permeated it. Together they were the twin pillars of the utilitarian state, beneath whose shelter rational man sought enlightened pleasure and avoided pain. The conviction found expression in India in the pathetic belief in the efficacy of law courts and police. Its force was such that it swept before it the strongest protests of the most influential men on the spot. Malcolm, Metcalfe, Munro and Elphinstone protested together against them, but the courts defeated them all. They were no better than so many Canutes pushed back by the rising waters. And the conflict was within them as well as without; for most of them, as has been were utilitarians in principle. They could only plead local conditions or temporary expediency; they could only mitigate instead of excluding.

One other factor must not be omitted. The new Government was much more thorough in its action and much wider in its scope than any which had gone before it. So the occasions for interference with village life were much more frequent and the results more widely felt. The trouble with the land revenue was not so much that the British demanded more than before, but that they realized every penny they demanded. The trouble with finance was not that they spent the money of the peasants in riot and excess, but that they maintained a larger and more expensive official cadre. The trouble with the villages was not that they were more oppressive and arbitrary than their predecessors, but that they interfered in the same ways much more frequently. A bullet a year fired at a house leaves the house intact, but under successive machine-gun volleys the walls soon crumble. In all these things the British were better than their immediate predecessors; but the effect of th measures on the organic village life was fatal.

To the nineteenth-century administrators to rule well was t improve; to improve was to interfere. Their mistake was a simple as it was great. They thought that the Indian village had survived down the ages in spite of constant neglect by governments. The reverse was the truth: the Indian village had survived *because* of their constant neglect.

CHAPTER VI

THE RURAL LIFE OF THE DELHI TERRITORY

When in 1804 the dust of Holkar's retreating horsemen had settled, Ochterlony looked round on a scene more confused by disorder, petty chiefships and overlapping sovereignties than any in Hindustan. The once fair province of Delhi, the most orderly in the Empire, had suffered not merely from the disintegration of the Mughul power, but also from the imposition of power upon power. Over the Mughul had come the Persian, from whom Muhammad Shah had received back the Empire with folded hands. In place of the Persian had come the Afghan Abdali, and against the Afghan the Maratha Peshwa. Over the Peshwa had come his general Sindia, and in Sindia's train French officers and European adventurers. The well-behaved *Mansabdars*, officers in the imperial service who had derived their salaries from assignments of land, had long since disappeared, and their place was taken by chiefs who were successful rebels and rebels who were dispossessed chiefs. The *mansabs* remained indeed, but, like medieval baronies, they had ceased to be offices entailing duties and privileges and had become mere titles of honour. The French had their stronghold at Aligarh, where their fort may still be seen; a dancing girl who had married a German and turned Christian (Begam Samru) ruled at Sardhana near Meerut as the Mughul's 'beloved daughter'[1]; and George Thomas the sailor had fought and blustered for a few glorious years at Hansi. To the north wild bearded Sikhs on ponies rode and plundered and exacted tribute whenever they could. Their power was crystallizing at Patiala, but one of them held Kharkauda, only twenty miles from Delhi. The concourse of struggling powers was matched by a multitude of competing jurisdictions. Between them all the regularly graded Mughul system of *pargana* and *sarkar*, *suba* and imperial authority, each with its revenue and judicial authorities in due subordination, had vanished. All that was left was the central authority at one end, collecting what it could when it could from whom it could, and the village. The government agents were the *amils* who waged ceaseless diplomatic and sometimes physical war with the *muqaddams*, the village representatives.

The Mughul province of Delhi had extended to a point near Palwal south of Delhi. It had embraced both sides of the river as far as the hills and was bounded on the east by the Ganges and on the west by the stony wastes of Mewat. It was irrigated by Firoz Shah's canal in the north and Ali Mardan's branch to Delhi, and to the east of the Jumna by the restoration of another of Firoz Shah's canals. It was one of the most fertile of all the Mughul provinces and its revenue was given by Abu'l Fazl as fifteen million rupees. The regular administration broke down finally between the years 1748–61, beneath the weight of Imad-ul-Mulk's civil war, and of Maratha and Afghan conflicts. Thereafter what may be called the *jagirdar* system prevailed. This was the granting of land with ruling powers to chiefs in return for military service. Often of course this became merely the recognition of chiefs who had seized the land. The Doab, the region between the Jumna and the Ganges, as the most fertile, was naturally the most prized portion. In consequence it was the scene of continual warfare and was rarely under a single control until the final Maratha hegemony of 1785.

While this complex of jurisdictions was growing up, and the dust clouds of marauding horsemen were darkening the sky, the village cultivator had somehow to live. To his human plagues were added two great natural misfortunes. First, the canal system broke down. Water ceased to flow into Delhi after 1761[2] and the canals became a series of stagnant pools which witnessed to past glories and present mosquitoes. The whole northern district fell back upon the uncertain rains for thei annual crops. The second was the great famine of 1785, whic was far more destructive than all the wars put together. Fro a half to a third of the rural population died, there was n security to stimulate revival and insufficient Maratha generosit to take its place. Sikhs were an annual visitation in the nort as were Maratha troop movements elsewhere. The villager had nothing but the doubtful honour of the imperial protection They must fend for themselves as best they could.

One of the easiest of mistakes is to imagine that villages are the same all over India. But village life varied not only from province to province but from age to age. Some had become the property of landlords, some the perquisites of hereditary tax-collectors. But in the region round Delhi the village community had retained many of its traditional communal features as well as a characteristic vigour. They were classically described by Metcalfe:[3]

> The Village Communities are little Republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Mughul, Mahratta, Sikh, English, are masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves; a hostile army passes through the country; the Village Community collect their cattle within their walls, and let the army pass unprovoked; if plunder and devastation be directed against themselves and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance, but when the storm has passed over they return and resume their occupation. If a country remains for a series of years the scene of continual pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away but the succeeding generations will return. The sons will take the place of their fathers, the same site for the village, the same position for the houses, the same lands will be reoccupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success.

We are fortunate in possessing a detailed picture of the Delhi village, not only in the writings of Metcalfe but in the even better informed work of Thomas Fortescue.[4] It was in the grip of no high-born landowner, tracing his descent from the sun or the moon, as in Oudh, or of a tax-gatherer turned landlord by British 'common sense' as in Bengal. It was a genuine village community, a corporate body, owning no obligations but the payment of taxes to the Central Government, and having the complete control of its own affairs. The basis of the village community was the proprietors or *zamindars*.[5] The proprietors were supposed to be those whose ancestors had originally settled the village. Their right to the land was a common law right, the right of original occupancy and reclamation from the jungle. As time went by the original shares were subdivided among the founder's descendants and so large and small shares grew up. A full share was generally reckoned at 125 acres, but the average share was three and a half, and a man might not have more than one. Some descendants did not subdivide, but owned and cultivated the family share jointly. As in the Domesday Book, a man's position was reckoned by the number of ploughs and bullocks he had. A rich *zamindar* had four ploughs, a poor one only one bullock. But rich or poor they were all proprietors, and were a class set apart from the rest of the village. They were the governing aristocracy, whose land could not be alienated, mortgaged or bargained away. If the sharers became too numerous, some would be sent out to seek a livelihood elsewhere, perhaps reclaiming waste land a few miles off (waste land was plentiful in the eighteenth century), perhaps seeking the recognized alternative to village life, government employment. The adventurous might join the standard of a roving chief and hope to set up a little *raj* of his own. The idle might find himself having to work for another in order to eke out his scanty share. But he would still retain his proportion of the year's produce; no one could take it from him and he could not give it up himself without his co-sharer's consent. Sometimes the division of the share was final and complete, each man cultivating his plot in his own fashion, sometimes it was a division of a single crop field. The crop would thus be communally sown and reaped and the proceeds divided according to the hereditary shares.

The proprietors of the village were naturally all of one caste, since they began with a blood relationship. They were the rulers and owners of the village, but by no means the only inhabitants. The others belonged to all castes, and can be divided into four classes. The first were the old residents or *ryots*. The casual visitor would not distinguish them from the *zamindars*, but the difference was nevertheless real. They were the occupancy tenants to the freeholding proprietors. They were the descendants of men who for various reasons had been allowed to occupy land under a proprietor. Perhaps some lands were waste, perhaps the *zamindar* had gone off to the wars and his relatives had no other means of cultivating his land; in one way or another the stranger came in with the *zamindar's* consent, and, having come in, had established a customary claim to a portion of the soil. They were the hereditary tenants of the proprietors, who could not be dislodged so long as they paid their share of the annual produce. They were less than freeholders and more than tenants-at-will. Since there was no limit to their holding they cannot strictly be called leaseholders and can perhaps best be described as subordinate freeholders or proprietors without governing rights. Lapse of time might allow the old resident imperceptibly to rank himself with the *zamindars* proper, and this was the ambition of every *ryot*; but if the *zamindars* increased and land grew scarce, their status tended to fall. Jealous eyes would regard their land and unseen hands be ready to alter their landmarks; by increasing their share of the public tax and by the numerous social devices of village society the world over, they would be encouraged to manifest a spontaneous desire to give up their land.

These two classes constituted the core of village society and round them the social sphere revolved. Next to them came the *pahi* or itinerant cultivators. These were men who owned land in one village and cultivated it in another. If land was scarce in one village, and plentiful in another, if holdings were confined in one village, and large in another, the small proprietor was tempted to take up some of the vacant land. His was something of the status of a resident trader in a foreign country. In his new village he had to pay the assessment (and probably something over) on the land he cultivated, but the surplus he could use to improve his position in his own village. The itinerants were not very popular anywhere, for to their own village they seemed to possess more than their real position entitled them to, and to their adopted village they seemed to be taking outside the village the produce of the land. Their position was much less stable than the 'old residents', for they were only tolerated in any village as long as they afforded them any convenience. It was better for an outsider to cultivate waste land in a half-deserted village and to help the village with its assessment, than for the land not to be cultivated at all, but let the number of proprietors increase and the itinerants, bundle on *lathi* and shoes in hand, would soon be trudging back to their own villages. It was a convenient device to assist the recultivation of wasted villages and, in the uncertain days of the 'Time of Troubles', a fairly widespread one.[8]

Below the itinerant or 'foreign' farmer, we come to the agricultural labourers or 'coolies'. They came from all castes and classes. They worked for the richer proprietor or resident cultivator, or perhaps for an enterprising itinerant. They had no trade unions to safeguard their rights, no tribunals to fix their wages. They had no hope of rising within the village or indeed anywhere, unless they could set out in a body to re-people some unclaimed waste tract. Since they came from all classes, they were as divided among themselves as they were cut off from those above them, and combination was difficult. But they were not wholly without resource. Strikes were beyond their scope, but dilution of labour they understood. If they were hardly treated they could emigrate to some other village where they would usually find a ready welcome. Here again their position fluctuated with circumstances. In prosperous days the demand for labour would be less and the weapon of emigration proportionately blunted, but in times such as those of the eighteenth century their position was strong. The country was like England after the Black Death when labour and not land was scarce.

These labourers were both permanent and temporary. The permanent ones usually received three or four rupees a month or else an allowance of grain and clothes. The clothes—cloth for their *dhoti* and a turban—were given at the harvest, when they received one-sixth of the produce of the fields they worked on. In addition they might be given a pound of grain a day instead of any cash wages. If they were whole-time labourers attached to a particular family, their houses and persons were under the family's protection and they could not be enticed away by a fellow-proprietor. To do such a thing would convulse the proprietary body and would lead either to a *panchayat* to settle the matter or a village feud or possibly to both. But if their services were not wholly engrossed by their employer, they filled in their time cutting firewood or grass or in doing any of the numerous odd jobs about the village. When bearers were required for a great man's passing train, or beaters for a great man's *shikar*, or a tank had to be dug or a mud wall to be built for defence, these were the men to whom the proprietors turned. The temporary labourers were simply the men attached to some other village who did not happen to be needed by their own usual employers, and went out to work by the day for others. They received clothes and food with a rupee or two at the end of the month.

The last order of villagers were those who might cultivate small plots of land as a part-time occupation. They really constitute the second great division of the village, the artisans and menials. They were looked down upon by all the cultivators, for whom respectability meant the ownership or cultivation of land, and the term *kamīn* applied to them implied inferiority. The craftsmen were really more independent than the labourers, because their work was essential to the village economy and their presence could not be dispensed with. While they lived separate and disregarded, and folded their hands in respect before the *zamindar*, they were nevertheless perforce well treated. Since these men were equally essential to all, they were paid by means of fixed allowances per plough. The man who failed with his allowance would find himself without their services and the subject of complaints before the *panchayat*, and no one could afford to see the craftsmen depart in dudgeon. The extent of their allowances therefore depended not upon their caste or social status, but upon the necessary nature of their duties. Thus the lowly *chamar*, the cobbler and dresser of unclean leather, received the highest allowance of all, while the priest or Brahmin was given by these hard-headed people the least. He had to make up as best he could by exacting presents on occasions like marriages and deaths when his presence was essential, and by soliciting gifts at festival times, when people were good-tempered and liked to stand well with the gods. A little astrology would also be useful, and in times of pestilence or war, when fore-knowledge was apt to be at a premium, might prove very profitable. The barbers and the water-carriers, two other despised occupations, were also rated highly. No one in the hot weather could do without the water-carrier, who laid the dust of the village street as well as poured water into the hands of the thirsty. The barber, as he went from house to house, was the retailer of gossip and news, and was an important agent in matchmaking. Well paid men, too, were the blacksmith, who shoed the horse and fashioned the rude but effective farm implements, and the carpenter, who not only supplied the community's beds and rough furniture, but made the bullock carts of the cultivator and the *raths* or wagons of the opulent proprietor. Then there was the potter who was always kept busy; for every vessel once touched by the lips was defiled and had to be thrown away, while the drinking pots were constantly broken. The washerman and the tailor, the cloth dyer and the man who made blankets or *risais* by stuffing a quilt with cotton, all had their place in this mutual system of dependence and obligation. Lastly there came the musician, a standing example of love of the sin and contempt of the sinner. No words could express the caste-man's contempt for the professional musician, but none was more appreciated everywhere, or more essential at marriages, festivals and all social gatherings.

Beneath the artisans came the menials, who sometimes, as in the case of the *chamars*, were artisans as well. The sweeper was the first of these, being something of both, for while he was looked down upon as a servant as well as an outcaste, his occupation was also a profession, since no one else could possibly practise it. His wife, too, was the village midwife or *dhai* and as such indispensable. Along with them came messengers, guides and informers, the men who served by standing and waiting and eporting to the village authorities.

Outside the cultivating and occupational hierarchy came the government officials. These were the *patwaris* and the *qanungos*. The *patwari* was the village accountant, a man who understood figures and kept the records of the revenue assessments. His books were essential for the annual dealings with Government and the general illiteracy gave his learning considerable prestige. He it was who knew just how much each had paid towards the last assessment, and who might for a consideration alter one's own or a neighbour's figures. Finally, there was the village *bania* or banker and shopkeeper, and he would give advances to the cultivators for the Government demand against the next harvest. A clever *bania* might have the whole village in his pocket, but he was always in danger of being beaten up. In times when the only external authority was a state absorbed in paying mutinous troops and staving off surrounding foes, no one was likely to inquire too closely into such incidents. The *qanungo* was the record keeper, who kept the records of holdings and land measurements. His importance rose and declined with the annual revenue assessment, for upon his records depended the amount a man might have to pay. As the *patwari* might make a slip in his arithmetic, the *qanungo* might make a slip of the pen. He was no man to offend, and could profitably trade upon the advantages of friendship. His regular income was a percentage on the revenue collection, or else a fixed cash payment every year. *Qanungos* did not exist in every village, but every large village would have one.

We have now passed in review all the classes which, locked by economic, social and religious ties into an intimate interdependence, made up the village community. It remains to consider the governing class, the rustic philosopher kings who saved all that survived from the wreck of more complex political organizations. These were the *muqaddams*. The *muqaddams* were the leading proprietors or *zamindars* of the village. They were often hereditary but by no means necessarily so. If another than the eldest son seemed more fit for the complicated work they had to do, he would be chosen in preference to the other. They were usually about ten in number and they formed the village executive council. They acted as the representatives of the body of proprietors, and in the name of the rest of the village. They had first to fix the assessment with the government officials. This in itself required all the qualities of the diplomatist, the statesman and the soldier. If Government was short of troops and they put on a bold front they might escape payment altogether. By judicious management, such as presents to soldiers mutinous through arrears of pay, they might turn the troops against their commanders, and even receive money for ransoms instead of paying up. If this was not possible they could retire behind their mud walls and defy the officers, hoping that the rains would break, that a party of marauding Sikhs would gallop up or that the troops might be called away before they had time to bring up artillery. But they must not resist too long and allow the village to be stormed, when all would be lost in the general plunder. Before the troops proceeded to extremities they must negotiate with the *amil* or government agent and make the best terms they could. Here again natural conditions favoured them. The revenue was paid in instalments, usually twice a year in relation to the two harvests. What was promised for the whole year need only be paid in part at once, and there was always the hope that later on there would be no troops to enforce the next payment. It was not robber barons but robber villages which had to be reduced in any pacification of the country; not adulterine castles, but adulterine village walls which had to be levelled. If some payment could not be avoided, the *amil* must be somehow circumvented in negotiation. The *muqaddams* would walk delicately before him, would spread out their hands in supplication, and use all the arts of half-truths, deception and cajolery to induce him to take as little as possible. By raising his commission he might be bribed to take less for the state, and so it came about that strong villages gave small commissions and weak villages large. Everyone and everything concerned had their price, but it was not a fixed price; it was the *muqaddams'* business to fix it all round as cheaply as possible for the village. Failure meant the plunder of the village and success prosperity for the next season. Many village Napoleons met their Waterloos in the early days of British rule, because they did not realize that British resources and persistence were much greater than those of their predecessors. If the Government had a stronger hold, warfare gave way to continual diplomacy and the technique of statecraft to that of commerce. A favourite method was to contract with a farmer—usually a Delhi banker —who in turn dealt with the Government. The village paid the farmer a fixed sum and he in his turn satisfied the government officials. This was the usual method in the short intervals of comparative peace.

After dangers from the Government came dangers from marauding bands. At one time they were Maratha horsemen, lean men riding on swift ponies who appeared from nowhere and disappeared again to the south without ever seeming to get any richer. At another they were ruddy-faced Afghans, the stragglers of a host bound for Delhi who were apt to take what they wanted first and listen to arguments afterwards. Then came tattered and hungry Sikhs, men of the same race as the villagers themselves, as fierce though not as resolute as the

Afghans. And always there were parties of Mewatis, men of every class, Adullamites from the stony wastes to the west, who scented plunder as vultures a carcass. Finally, there were neighbouring villages who were not above cattle-lifting or even plundering a whole village if occasion offered. The elders had to be constantly on the alert, and it was no wonder that messengers, guides and informers were part of the regular village establishment. To guard against horsemen who might appear from nowhere and vanish again in a night, and the ever present danger of cattle-lifting, a system of watchmen was necessary. They were called *thikars*. The whole village took part in this and the system was thus described by John Lawrence.[7]

> The able bodied men are enrolled in the *patwari's* book and their names written on small potsherds called Theecur (hence the name). These are thrown together into a large pot, kept in the village hall or *chopel*, with a second empty pot beside it. Every day it is the *patwari's* duty to visit the *chopel* with the *dhanook*[8] and draw at random from the filled pot the required number of names, which he inscribes in his book. The *dhanook* warns those whose names have been drawn for the night duty. The potsherds so drawn are thrown into the empty jar, and the process is repeated daily till the first jar is exhausted, when it is replaced by the full pot and the system recommences. The watch is generally relieved at midnight. The duty is well performed, and without expense to the village, there being under this system many more watchmen out by night than the village could afford to pay.

The best means of protection from all but the greatest dangers was to surround the village with a mud wall. All villages of any size did this, and added in addition towers fifty to eighty feet high to protect their wells. Matchlockmen were stationed upon them and were provided with rope ladders as the only means of ingress. A village which was fortunate enough to be near an old ruin appropriated it and moved in bodily. *Sarais* near the Grand Trunk road, walled gardens of some vanished nobleman, and even large mosques were thus seized. The records of the Archaeological Department contain many instances of the removal of villages from monuments of historical interest. Close to Delhi itself, the Purana Qila, Homayun's Tomb and the great Jama Masjid at Mubarakpur were all occupied in this way. Some villages went further, and like the ancient Greek cities, confederated themselves together.

> By inter-marriages and the necessity of a common cause the interests of several villages were identified, and thus leagued they were strong enough to oppose more regular and formidable foes. We know consequently of individual villages having frequently repulsed assaults from the local troops of the *Amil* and *Faujdar*, and of the forces of many villages united by the *Rooka* (or particular loud cry of the voice) to have been equal to the complete defeat of the best appointed and most numerous forces that the State could send against them: such was the union, spirit and desperate bravery of the people.
>
> Attacks on the villages were usually made with all possible haste. If not surprised, they acquired strength hourly, but when overcome, except by capitulation, their fate was sealed[9]

The State regarded the sturdy peasants as bandits, the *zamindars* regarded the State as a robber. The condition recalls Augustine's description of society without the Church. 'The State is a great robber band, for robber bands, what are they but little states?' In the stress of the warfare and confusion of these years of anarchy, the village communities became more vigorous than ever before. If there was not much scope for village Hampdens there was plenty for village Cromwells among the *muqaddams* or for village *condottieri* among the disbanded, unemployed or half-paid soldiers who roved the countryside. One more element had to be considered in the politics of the *muqaddams*. This was the *jagirdars* to whom slices of territory were frequently granted in lieu of military service. These grants involved the assignment of the revenue of the tract to the *jagirdar*, who then occupied the position of Government in relation to the villagers. These *jagirdars* changed with bewildering rapidity; hardly one of Najib Khan's grants after Panipat survived forty years later. Villages which became the headquarters of these lords would suddenly rise to prominence and become forts, only to decline as soon as the holder died or the estate was confiscated or transferred. So Najibabad in the Doab flourished for a while under Najib Khan, Hansi under George Thomas, Najafgarh as the seat of Mirza Najaf Khan, Aligarh under Perron and Sardhana as the capital of Begam Samru. Often the affliction was very temporary, but while it lasted the control of the *jagirdar* was probably stronger than that of the State. No less of a robber, the *jagirdar* had the advantage of being nearer the spot and so able to check possible arrangements between his agents and the *muqaddams*. Often he would lead forays in border style on neighbouring lands, with such effect that some of the chiefs were officially referred to by Metcalfe in 1806 as the 'plunderers' of this and that. The prudent *muqaddams* in these cases compounded their revenue in return for a share in the lord's expeditions. They became members of a co-operative plundering society with limited liability. This was perhaps the safest form of investment in anarchy, for if the hand of authority reasserted itself, it was the lord who suffered most, while they always had a share in the profits. But there was at all times the chance, of course, that the lord would turn against them. A varied and adventurous life was this, fit to kindle the imagination of youth and to spur the ambition and skill of grown men. It was no time for the elderly, and indeed between famine and pestilence and continual combat, there could not have been many of them left. With every man's hand against every man, life was inevitably short.

But the *muqaddams* were not only a board of foreign affairs; they were also the administrators of the internal village affairs. Their first care was the peace of the village. Affrays, thefts and murders they dealt with themselves, unless they came to the ears of an inquisitive *amil* who chose, as was his right, to hold them to account. Then they must either produce the criminal, or else be liable for punishment on his behalf. It is not likely that many *zamindars* suffered in this way. In so closely knit a society, there was little hid that could not be revealed, and if a culprit were really missing a well-known *badmash* or local bad character would be fixed upon by general consent to suffer as the village scapegoat. There was a rough justice in all this, for it would rarely happen that a really innocent man would suffer for the guilty, though a guilty man might suffer for someone else's guilt instead of his own. Still, the interference of government officials was never welcomed, for one never knew the direction which such inquisitions might take. 'Least said, soonest mended', was the villager's motto, and he much preferred to keep his troubles and crimes to himself if it were possible. They were therefore concealed as much as possible from the prying eye of officialdom. But this very possibility of outside interference acted as a wholesome check on the *muqaddam's* temptation to tyranny. If rough justice were denied beyond a certain point, or tyranny exceeded a certain degree, there would be abscondings from the village, appeals to the *amil* or the *jagirdar* or even to Delhi itself, and what was most dreaded by the *muqaddams* would come to pass. Abuse of power risked an instant retribution and raised the spectre of beatings, imprisonment or even the loss of the precious land. The *muqaddams* could not afford to be a Venetian Council of Ten even if they wished it.

The species of crime which was most troublesome and expensive to the village was cattle-lifting. It was the easiest to carry out, and in the wide open spaces of the Delhi Territory it was not easy to identify the strays in the great herds that roamed the country. But there was one method of search which the nature of the country made possible. The dry climate and sandy soil caused trails to be visible for weeks and perhaps months. A special class of men, the *khojis*, specialized in this work. They could follow a trail of men and cattle to the boundary of the next village. The cattle or stolen goods would then be demanded and if the village disclaimed responsibility, the trail would be followed again to the next village. So the process would continue until the trail ended in some village or proceeded too far for safe pursuit. If any authority outside the village were functioning, its aid would be invoked to recover the stolen goods. If the cattle or goods were not forthcoming, the elders had to make good the loss and pay a fine. The liability for this was one of the contingent corporate village expenses. If there was no authority which chose to intervene, the village had to look to itself for justice. A village feud would begin and add one more feature to the already overcrowded canvas of struggle and intrigue. Surprise and night raids would be the usual mode of procedure, while if the offending village were some distance off, intrigues with adjacent villages on the time-honoured method of Kautilya, would be tried.

The next duty of the *muqaddams* was the settlement of disputes within the village. Questions of inheritance and disputes about land were the most common. There were also personal disputes arising from marriage questions and personal quarrels. The relevance of the injunction 'Cursed be he who removes his neighbour's landmark', can nowhere be better realized than in the Indian village. The rules were decided by age-old custom, the question of equity in their application by general discussion and agreement. Speaking generally, it may be said that those questions affecting one section within the village only were settled by that section itself, while questions affecting the village as a whole, and particularly all questions of land, were dealt with by the *muqaddams*. The instrument for all these matters was the *panchayat* or meeting of the elders and the means—endless discussion. How, it may be asked, could all these questions affecting men's rights and interests, and often stirring their deepest passions, be thus amicably settled even with the help of the bubbling hookah and the crackling flame beneath the stars of Hindustan? Had the full moon after a scorching day or the burning puffs of wind which presage a dust storm on a hot weather night some magically soothing effect? The answer is to be found in two institutions whose sway was universal and authority unchallenged—customary law and respect for the elders. Custom had the sanction of religion. The villager of the Delhi district had no undue respect for religion, it is true, and would on occasion beat the gods who let him down. It might indeed be said that religion had rather the sanction of custom, but it only emphasizes the fact that if religion was something customary, custom was something sacred. The elders were the embodiment of custom, and their authority was universal throughout India. And behind these two mental sanctions lay the social penalty of outcasting. From the village point of view, the sentence of outcasting, like that of excommunication, was more terrible as one went downwards in the social scale, for to these there were fewer ways of escape. The sturdy *zamindar* of spirit could take to the road, *lathi* in hand, join the nearest company of freebooters or offer his services to a chief or the Emperor. If he had a horse and a sword he was sure of a welcome and the world lay open before him. But the lesser man must live with his neighbours, or nowhere. He could not afford the luxury of defiance. So the *panchayats* inflicted fines, beatings and occasional confiscations with perfect confidence, for strong custom supported them and the terrors of the unknown gave strength to their arm.

In these village assemblies there were of course no rules of court, no process of pleading and judgement. The accused could speak as much and as often as he liked. The *panchayat* was both judge and jury and considered their verdict in the presence of the interested parties. The result was the development of rustic eloquence and forensic skill. Given conditions and facts with which he was familiar, no one could put a case more convincingly, or appeal more cleverly to his audience than these rustic Ciceros and Demosthenes. The ready wit and repartee, and the taste for talk and lengthy discussion for which India is noted, come from these twilight debates beneath dust-laden skies.

Perhaps the most important duty of the *muqaddams* within the village was the allotment of the annual *jama* or revenue assessment. In the times of which we are speaking, measurement of the land was unknown, and had not taken place within living memory. The recorded measurements of some would go right back to the famous Todar Mal's *bandabast* of Akbar's reign, and even if there had been revisions since then, it did not much matter since in most villages all the records had been lost. In times when the Government might not be strong enough to collect any revenue at all, and could at best give but a cursory glance at the cultivated land, the virtues of forgetfulness were too obvious to be forgotten. Later, this left a clean slate for the British to write on with scientific precision. All that was done was for the *amil* to estimate the extent of the cultivated area and the probable crop yield, and from this to fix the government share. If an arrangement was made with a revenue farmer, the sum was fixed in consultation with him. The *muqaddams'* work then began. With them lay the distribution of the *jama* amongst the various cultivators, and here lay one of the chief sources of their power. He who neglected the respect due to the chief proprietors was likely to find his assessment enhanced and he would get cold comfort from the neighbours who had been more circumspect. He who had cultivated the great men's friendship and done them service, might find his assessment reduced. There were limits to this power of the *muqaddams* as in other respects; for glaring injustice would lead to complaints and complaints might bring in the officials. Everything tended to a balanced society, with interdependence as its principle and moderation as its keyword.

The collection of the money or more usually the share of the produce (for the revenue was usually paid in kind) was also in their hands; it still further strengthened their position and added yet another check to abuses, for the *muqaddams* were charged with producing the stated demand. If they failed they were held responsible and it was of no use to lay the blame on some luckless cultivator. Here again seriously unfair assessments brought their own retribution; the full *jama* could not be produced and the *muqaddams* had to make up the difference. We may suppose that in this respect also, through the medley of claim and counter-claim, bargainings and protests, appeals and insinuations, rough justice emerged in the long run.

There were several methods of apportioning the demand, of which the two most important may be specified. The first was that called *jhundi*. It was based upon an ancient division of the land into lots (or *jhundis*), each containing a fixed area of land. The traditional lots consisted of a traditional number of *bigahs*, also of a traditional size. There was no criterion but custom, and the *bigah*, used to measure the lots in one village, might be twice as big as that of another village, and again would differ from the size of the *bigah* in everyday use. Such were the pitfalls which later awaited the inquiring settlement officer and it is no wonder that mistakes were constantly made based on such misconceptions as these. Speaking generally, however, the lot contained from two to five acres, and the number of lots in a village varied from fifty to five hundred. Each cultivator had from one to ten lots. The lots settled, the assessment was divided equally upon the lots. On this system the arrangement and size of the lots took into account the variations of the soil, so that a general equality was achieved. The second method was called the *chaubacha*, which was based upon the plough. Each plough paid from ten to fifty rupees (according to the richness of the village soil); each *pagri* or male over twelve, paid from one to three rupees; each *kuhdi* or hearth where separate family cooking was carried on, paid from two to four rupees; and each head of female cattle a limited tax, 'as one rupee for a buffalo, eight annas for a cow, four calves equal to one buffalo, and one anna or so on for smaller animals'. This was the fairer mode on the whole, since it was subject to least dispute, most easily ascertained, was related to the actual amount of land under cultivation, and allowed for changes in soil fertility. But bad times would come, and upset the most carefully laid traditional arrangements. Then common sense came to the rescue.

Occasionally, when fixed arrangements cannot be adhered to without great distress to some, or from the impracticability of raising the Government share of the *jumma* owing to the scanty produce of some sharers, the whole body of proprietors will collect their total grain into separate heaps, and from these at a rateable proportion, so as to be lenient to those who have had bad crops, divide off sufficient to discharge the public revenue. This grain the *bania* or some other person purchases at a fixed or market price.[10]

In addition to the negotiation, allotment, collection and payment of the annual revenue demand, the *muqaddams* were in charge of the corporate village expenses. These were of the most varied kind and reveal the village life as nothing else does. A first charge was the repair of tanks and wells, both vital to north Indian villages without canal irrigation. The wells in the drier tracts might be eighty feet deep, and needed periodic repairs; the tanks caught the monsoon rains and supplied the cattle with water through the cold weather. Another essential was the payment of interest upon loans raised to meet a revenue demand in a bad year. Upon a village's credit might depend its chance of surviving a rainless crop and a pressing (and hard-pressed) Government. Another charge was fines for property traced to their village by the *khojis*. Then came expenses incurred in the way of village business, which nowadays would be described as entertainment and travelling allowances. *Zamindars* absent on village business were provided for, and *zamindars* of other villages on visit or travel were entertained. The *panchayat* assembled on village business was fed so long as it sat, and that often meant a long time. Respect and superstition alike dictated that all wandering holy men of whatever denomination should be fed as long as they stayed in the village. Similarly ceremonies for rain or favourable seasons, to propitiate Kali in time of pestilence or any other deity who might be offended, were necessary and could not be had without their price. The village priest when on official business, had a special lowance, and was accustomed to fix his terms before he began ons.

The village, like a Greek city, had a communal attitude to amusement. If there was no village theatre, there was village support of entertainment. No programmes were fixed or bills posted, but everyone knew that from time to time there would come troops of performers. If approved, they amused the whole village at joint expense. There were the singers who rent the still night air with love songs, the nasal twang of whose voices was unnoticed because it was universal. The audience listened with *wah-wahs* of approval or grunts of disgust. The themes were simple but the poetry was classic and the art considerable. Centuries of tradition had made discrimination keen along limited lines. In this way the whole folk-song and music of Hindustan was handed on. Then came the bards, who would chant for hours tales of the heroes of old. Rama and Sita and Ravan, the Kurus and Pandava heroes fighting on the fatal field of Kurukshetra whose relics lay all around them, the chivalrous Prithvi Raj and his fatal end, the loves and hates and incredible feats of knightly Rajput chiefs, lived on in these popular epics and were the treasured possession of the whole countryside. A Muslim village had its own heroes, and they were no less moving or remarkable. The days of Nurshirvan and the exploits of Suhrab and Rustum supplied the place of the Mahabharat. The kings of Iran and Turkestan lived again under the stars; and was there not the most popular subject of all, Akbar and his round table? The wit of Birbal, the wisdom of Abu'l Fazl and the prowess of the Emperor never failed to delight. Stories of Akbar were a connecting link between the Hindus and Muslims, for both looked back to him with reverence, and indeed both claimed him as their own. As Akbar tended to unite popular sentiment, so Aurangzeb tended to divide it. For Aurangzeb's name was reverenced by Muslims quite as much as Akbar's, but to Hindus he was a symbol of all they disliked and feared. As Akbar was given the credit of anything good, so Aurangzeb bore the blame of anything bad. If a temple was ruined, it was Aurangzeb who did it, if a favour was done Akbar was responsible. As the bards sang on in a plaintive plainsong, men would drop off and sleep awhile, and then listen afresh. No one minded the length or found it tedious. They could not hear enough of the glory that was departed and of the great men of old. A gentle melancholy suffused the assembly and golden dreams passed before their eyes. It helped them, with its emphasis on fate ever knocking at the door, to bear the whips and scorns of the present, and to reflect that the Afghan, the Maratha and the Sikh too would pass and be forgotten in their turn.

These epics formed the general adult education of rural India; all that they knew of the past and of the world in general, and most of what they knew of religion, apart from ceremonies which only meant so much extra expense and worry, came in this way. The bards were the corporate memory of the country, and preserved through the ages its ideals, its heroes and its aspirations.

After these come the religious singers. These were wandering *bhaktis* or devotees, belonging to some particular sect. They spoke not to the memory but to the heart, and they had some particular teaching. Theirs was a way of salvation, which filled their heart and soul. They had some special *guru* who was for them the saviour of men. Perhaps it was Kabir, the weaver poet of Benares, perhaps it was Chaitanya, the ecstatic devotee of Shri Krishna, or perhaps Guru Nanak, the seer of the Punjab. Whoever it was, they agreed in two things: their religion was personal, an affair of the individual, and it was a matter of the heart and life and not of ceremonies and traditions. They were the Evangelicals of the Indian countryside and their influence was a perpetual antidote to the orthodox village priest who thought only of ceremonies and charms at so much a time, and the austere idealism of the epics, which was for admiration and precept rather than for practice. The village admired these 'good teachings' without very seriously thinking of following them and venerated any one who tried to live up to them without feeling much urge to follow suit. They were corporate exhortations which did not affect the individual more than to a certain extent; standards accepted with a good margin for error. But the *bhakti* went straight to the heart of each one; his appeal was intimate and his demand unlimited. If the epics set and maintained the standards of village life, it was the *bhakti* saints which changed men's lives and sometimes produced results undreamed of in the *muqaddam's* philosophy. They also were a link between Hindus and Muslims, for they drew their disciples from the ranks of both, and took little account of outward distinctions. They commonly denounced caste and unlike the Brahmins, made the way of salvation plain to all. A kindred development in Islam, the *sufi* movement, stretched out towards them, and it was not always easy to distinguish the two. A *sufi* was a Muslim *bhakti*, a *bhakti* a Hindu *sufi*. For each was based on the common element of an appeal to the heart of man with its hidden longings, man's need of support in this troublous life and his desire for salvation.

But village entertainment was not all solemn or soul-stirring; revue and vaudeville had also its place. There were troops of jugglers and conjurers to delight the children and young people, while the elders looked solemnly on and wagged their heads sagely as they told each other how it was done, only to cause uproarious laughter when they tried to prove their wisdom and were deceived by the next simple trick. And then came the dancers and contortionists who revolved at the top of long poles, swung clubs and weights to and fro, and tied themselves into knots. These men came round especially at festival times, such as *Dasehra* which marked the end of the rains and celebrated the victory of Rama over the demon Ravan. If the village was large and lucky they might stage the time-honoured drama of Lanka, with its daily processions and fights, the final fall of Ravan in single combat with Rama, and the ceremonial burning of his paper effigy stuffed with that delight of every villager, fireworks. Then came *Diwali*, the beginning of the cold weather, marking Rama's return with Sita, when the village was gay with twinkling lights and the children were happy with sweets and gaudy clay toys. In the spring came *Holi*, the Indian saturnalia with its coloured water throwing, its excitement and horseplay. For all these things the *muqaddams* must provide from the common village fund. The total charge was reckoned at two to ten per cent of the assessment.

The *muqaddams*' was thus a busy and responsible life. But they did not forget their claim to compensation. By the Government they were allowed a share of the revenue demand, which varied according to their strength. Some obtained as much as twenty per cent, others no more than two. Within the village they were allowed a plough untaxed or a share of the cultivators' grain. There were other ways too. They might enhance the village assessment over the government demand and quietly pocket the difference, or with the connivance of the *patwari* they might enhance the bill of village expenses and so make a profit in that way. No doubt much of this went on, but the law of checks and balances operated here once again, for too great a discrepancy would cause an outcry, and *izzat* or reputation, the most precious possession of every respectable man, would be lost. The exceptions which proved the customary rules were themselves ruled and limited by custom.

CHAPTER VII

THE BRITISH IN DELHI

Delhi has always exercised a fascination over the minds of the British. As the remote scene of Mughul splendour in the great days of the Empire it was the goal of ambassadors seeking concessions and of adventurers seeking wealth and glory. According to Manucci there were Englishmen in Akbar's artillery service. In the days of decline it attracted both the adventurers hoping to fish in troubled waters and travellers drawn by the romantic spectacle of a fallen dynasty and a desolate capital. Envoys' despatches were followed by travellers' descriptions and artists' sketches. To romanticism we owe Francklin's *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum* and the Daniells engravings. When in 1803 Delhi became a place of residence for the British as well as an object of pilgrimage, this attraction continued. The tendency was for those who came, to see and be conquered; having once come they generally stayed. Long residences became common, private mansions were built and the British settled into the country as they did nowhere else up-country. Their mansions were landmarks and their families formed a new official aristocracy. They approached also more nearly to Indian life around them. The common habit of Indian establishments prevailed, and Anglo-Indians, or men of mixed descent, held an honourable place in society. The promising recruits to the service thought it an honour to be stationed at Delhi, and elderly men high in rank thought no ill to return to it. To some, the goal of youthful ambition became a haven of rest for life, and there was no one who had served there for any length of time, who did not look back upon his experience with pleasure and regret. It cast its spell upon Fortescue, though he only spent a year in the Territory, and inspired him to the best description of the Delhi country-side which exists. Those who crossed the shaky bridge of boats at night and saw the white walls of the palace gleaming in the moonlight, or entering by day, saw the domes of the Jama Masjid rising beneath in the morning sun, experienced something which they never forgot.

Yet the Delhi life of the British was no dalliance in marble pavilions, or rose strewn gardens cooled by crystal fountains. One half of it was spent in the saddle or the *howdah*, touring the country-side, and the other half cooped up in prison-like houses. It was reckoned one of the hottest stations in India, and to the heat was added the dust, which swept in from the encroaching desert across unirrigated sandy plains with suffocating force. The Court afforded no cooling salve, but only added trouble and vexation. The country-side was suspicious and unfriendly. They were few in numbers and remote from their fellows. Until the Grand Trunk Road was completed Delhi was three months from Calcutta, let alone Britain.[1]

The answer to this problem was to be found first in the official position of Delhi. Delhi was to Calcutta what Peshawar was later to Simla. It was the frontier capital of the Indian Empire, perpetually watching the Lion of the Punjab across the Sutlej, the Rajputs to the west, Sindia and the Pindaris to the south, and the Gurkhas in the Hills. Against all of these, except the Rajputs, and with the Jats of Bharatpur as well, there were campaigns before 1850. In addition to its importance as a strategic centre Delhi was the centre of the diplomatic web which spread all over these countries and beyond to Afghanistan and the North-West. The spider was the Resident, untrammelled by the Regulations, and answerable only to the Governor-General himself. Further there was the administrative problem of the Delhi Territory stretching from the Jumna nearly to the Sutlej, and from the neighbourhood of Delhi to the mountains. It was virgin administrative soil, bereft of centralized authority, but with everywhere the signs of former systems and rulers, offering a clear field for investigation, for speculation and for construction. The political department was the favoured avenue of promotion until the Mutiny and Delhi almost throughout our period was one of the foremost centres of its activity. So it came about that both the best seniors were sent there by the Government and the best juniors gravitated there in the hope of promotion. Delhi can show a list of famous names which no other district throughout India can rival.[2]

The best men gravitated to Delhi not only because there were the best prospects of promotion, but because there was the most interesting work to be done there, and the most congenial conditions for doing it. The constant changes of the political and diplomatic scene fascinated while it busied the politician; the novel conditions of the Delhi country-side aroused the best instincts of the administrator. Again the freedom from the Regulations which Delhi enjoyed and the paucity of the British officials multiplied their duties, so that each man, like an Athenian citizen, had to be ready for any kind of public service. The 'political' turned his hand to administration and might achieve, as in the case of Charles Metcalfe, as great a fame in this as in his own proper sphere. The administrator often found himself a 'political'; all had to be judges and any on occasion might be soldiers. The distance of Calcutta made the Resident the effective ruler of the Territory and left with his assistants a large discretion and independence in which they delighted. Many district officers all over the country had some degree of independence, but they did not have the same novel questions to deal with. For this reason many of them found in eccentricity that means of the self-expression which in Delhi found a natural outlet in official work. They were oiling the wheels of an existing (if creaky) machine; the Delhi men were building the machine itself.

These considerations account for the ability of the Delhi officers; their greater cordiality, noticed by Jacquemment and others, has still to be explained. Partly, no doubt, it was due to their greater satisfaction in their work. Partly also it was due to their isolation and loneliness, the ever present bugbear of the district officer to the end. The isolated man without a living interest in his work, supported only by a sense of duty, turns inward to become a misanthrope; he is apt to repel the occasional visitor who intrudes upon his self-pity. But the similarly placed man whose interests are creative, though conscious of his isolation none the less, shares all the more eagerly his thought and his work with any chance visitor who comes his way.

We may complete this analysis by adding the charm of the Delhi scene. For nearly six months the weather was cool, sunny and bracing. The work, arduous though it was, was interspersed by unlimited sport in a half-desolate country. There were all kinds of wild-fowl, deer for the hunter, hogs for the pig-stickers. The people were independent and vigorous, and like their masters were lovers of sport. Most men who stayed long in the Territory came with Metcalfe to admire and respect their sterling qualities. The summer heat was intense it is true, and the sky overcast by dust clouds, but it was nevertheless healthy; fevers were rare; days in darkened rooms were compensated by nights spent in gardens beneath swinging punkahs under the Indian moon. The rains were less healthy and were irritating to the highly strung, but they had their own attraction in the verdant rebirth of nature, the cloud-capped skies, and the fresh breezes. Finally, there was the intellectual interest of Delhi. The relics of past empires, both human and inanimate, aroused the interest of men who would elsewhere have concerned themselves in the mazes of law and official technique. It was not an accident that Henry Elliot spent his early years of service in Delhi. Again, Delhi was a literary and cultural centre, and some who were not historically minded found delight in the treasury of Urdu and Persian poetry. For variety and fascination of work, for human and professional interest, for intellectual stimulus, as well as for prospects of promotion, Delhi was unrivalled in northern India.

The company of Europeans in Delhi consisted first of the higher officials. They were a small, select band who spent much of their life on tour and were rarely all to be found in Delhi together. Only one or two, engaged in the city administration, were permanent residents. Then came the military-officers, attached to the regiments stationed in cantonments. Their stay was naturally temporary as the regiments moved round on their tours. A few, such as the commandant of the palace guard, who lived over the Lahore Gate of the Fort, or officers detached for civil duty, were more permanent. Between the civilians and the military there was a proverbial jealousy arising from the difference in their scale of pay. In the eighteenth century both supplemented their income, the one by plunder and prize money, the other by private trade and presents. Greater tranquillity had reduced the soldier's perquisites whereas the civilian's irregular earnings had, as it were, been commuted for handsome salaries Jealousy reached its peak in dislike of the 'soldier-political'. To the civilian he was a cuckoo in the nest; to the soldier he was deserting his proper duty for the fleshpots of 'civilianism'. The 'soldier-political' drew his military pay and added to it the civilian allowance of his position so that both parties felt sore on financial grounds. But the opportunities and interests of political work were so great that the 'soldier-political' did not mind. Between the military themselves there were the divisions between the Royal and Company's officers, and between regular and irregular in the Company's army itself. The pages of the *Delhi Gazette* and the *Delhi Sketch Book* are full of jibes at the officers of the irregular regiments, with their long beards, their Ruritanian uniforms and their lax discipline. Close contact with their men and Indian officers, who came of a better class with a more independent position than the ordinary type of sepoy, was another and increasing source of mirth in military circles. Deriving from bodies of horse raised by adventurers like Skinner, Hearsey and Gardner, during the Maratha wars, adventurers were numerous around Delhi.

Below the soldiers and civilians came the commercials. These again were divided between wholesalers and retailers, the merchant and the shopkeeper. The former, who included in their ranks men like bank-managers, were respected and admitted to society; the civilians themselves had not so long ago been merchants. But the latter, the successors of the keepers of the European shops in Calcutta, who appeared as Delhi society gradually grew, were a class apart. They had their place with the subordinate Europeans, or those in the 'uncovenanted' government services. They were segregated from their betters, even while they claimed all the privileges of the ruling race. These men were clerks in the government offices, and their position corresponded with those of office superintendents of later times. Few of them were of pure descent, and their ranks were completed by the clerical class of Anglo-Indians or Eurasians or Indo-Britons, as they were then often called. Not a few of them came from the Indian establishments of high officials; others with a longer pedigree came up-country as openings for subordinate service increased.

They were all excluded from the higher services under the then prevailing belief based on the French experience in the West Indies during the Revolution, that free admission would lead to their ultimate rebellion and the subversion of British authority. This by-product of the Terror did much during the nineteenth century to darken their horizon and induce among them a permanent sense of frustration. But for the accident of birth and the bar of race and colour there is no doubt that many of them might have risen to high position. One of Charles Metcalfe's sons, who by means unknown obtained a military commission, rose to high rank in the army and was aide-de-camp to Lord Dalhousie.

A cross-section of Anglo-Indian society was provided by the small professional class. They may be described as the *faqirs* of the Anglo-Indian caste system, in that they were exempt from the usual social restrictions and were allowed to possess an esoteric knowledge denied to others. They might meet the great as well as mix with the humble. They were admitted to be gentlemen without previous inquiry into their salaries and official standing. Some of course held official rank, but it was the same with those who did not. First amongst these men were the doctors, or surgeons, civil and military. One of them, Dr Ludlow, resided for many years in Delhi and was a Delhi character. He attended Lord William Bentinck during his up-country tours, and insisted that his energetic lordship should spend his summers in Simla.

Then there were the professors of the Delhi College and Institution. It always had an English head, and its English department required English teachers. After the teachers came the chaplains and the missionaries. The best known of the chaplains was Jennings, who founded the S.P.G. Mission, and was killed at the outbreak of the Mutiny in the rooms of Captain Douglas in the Fort. Apart from him, the missionaries were represented by Thompson of the Baptists. We shall meet him again in the gallery of Delhi portraits. Then there were a few journalists who conducted the *Delhi Gazette* and the *Sketch Book*, and thundered against their rivals at Meerut and Agra. One class alone was conspicuous by its absence—the legal profession. The European lawyers who had done well in Calcutta from the days of Impey's Supreme Court and William

Hickey, did not penetrate so far up-country until after the Mutiny. The *zillah* judges of the Lower Provinces were kept at bay by Metcalfe for more than half our period. The gentlemen of the robe, for all their foibles, had an independence of station and view which made them a valuable element in Anglo-Indian society; if the country-side was possibly the happier for their absence. English society was certainly the poorer.

On the flanks of the regular Delhi society hovered two other groups—the Anglo-Indians or Eurasians, and the Indian Christians. The subordinate Anglo-Indians coalesced with the subordinate Europeans, as already mentioned, but there remained the aristocratic Anglo-Indian, the relic of the late wars. These men were of the most diverse origin; they were of French, German and Portuguese extraction as well as English. Some had settled in Delhi in Mughul times, as officers of the Emperor, like the Deremao family; some had come in as adventurers in the 'Time of Troubles' like the notorious Walter Reinhardt, the husband of Begam Samru, and some were men like James Skinner, who had served in Sindia's armies and fled to the British on the eve of the second Maratha war. Some of French race, like the Indian Bourbons, remained faithful and lived on in obscurity. Finally, there were British officers, like the Gardners and the Hearseys, who contracted marriages according to Muslim forms with ladies of high rank and settled down as Indian landed gentry. Major Hearsey married a daughter of the Prince of Cambay and the Gardners married into the Mughul family. The acknowledged leader of the group in the Delhi territory was James Skinner, with his town house in Kashmir Gate and his country seat at Hansi. The natural leader of the Indian Christians was the Begam Samru, who built a fine cathedral at her capital at Sardhana, and even secured a bishop for it during her lifetime. She had a Palace in Delhi, but she rarely came there, and her dependants belonged more to the life of Meerut than Delhi. But in the last few years before the Mutiny a new Christian community was born as the result of the Chaplain Jennings's work. Jennings enjoyed on a small scale the fruits of what Duff of Calcutta had gathered on a larger—an intellectual renaissance. As in Calcutta, some of the best men turned to the Christian religion as the soul of the Western culture which they admired, while the majority sought to reconcile the new learning with the spirit of their traditional religion. Sayyid Ahmad Khan was the Erasmus of Delhi, as Ram Mohan Roy was of Bengal. Two men of distinction formed the nucleus of this little community, both of whom were first attracted to Christianity as something more than an intellectual creed by the services in St James's Church. They were Dr Chiman Lal, the sub-assistant surgeon who attended on Bahadur Shah, and came from the Kayasth community, and Ram Chandra, a distinguished mathematician of the Delhi College, who was a Brahmin.

The tale of the new society, which lived side by side with the old Indian society of Delhi, is now complete. Here and there, as in the Court, or in the contacts of individuals with the old Delhi families, the two impinged upon each other. But it came in the sum to very little, and grew less as the years went by. Speaking generally, it may be said that contact was at the top and the bottom; the middle body of officers and civilians were largely unaffected. Curiously enough, the people of Delhi were influenced more by English ideas than by English customs. There was more contact of thought than of persons. The medium for this was the Delhi College, in its oriental even more than in its English department.

Each group had its appointed place of residence, like the caste groups of the city, and together they made up the civil and military station. To begin with, the troops camped outside the city beyond the Ridge, but the civilians lived within the walls. The cantonment covered the area now occupied by the old Viceregal Estate (the modern University site) and the old cantonments. The bells-of-arms still stand in mute reminder of bygone bustle, and the old cemetery, finally filled by the toll of the Mutiny, lies quiet beyond. The military *bazar* straddled the Ridge at its northern end, just before it dips into the Khyber Pass, and its mosque can still be seen. The officers' bungalows would appear to have occupied the ground now allotted to the Colleges of Delhi University, and the old cavalry lines beyond. It was protected in front by the Ridge, and behind by the drain of Najafgarh *jhil*. The Jumna covered one flank and behind the Grand Trunk Road ran straight to the stations of Karnal and Ambala. So much has been said in criticism of the military disposition of Delhi that some of its advantages are worth noticing. The cantonment was excellently placed for controlling the city, or for repelling any attack from it. It was open to the north, but any enemy from that direction would of course be met long before he reached Delhi. To deal with such a foe there were the city walls, hastily repaired by Ochterlony and redesigned by Napier. The weak spot upon which critics have fastened, was the placing of the magazine within the city while the troops were without. But here again there was originally a good reason. From 1803 to 1828 Delhi was a military outpost, with potential enemies north and west and south. At any time, by a turn in fortune's wheel, it might have had to sustain a siege much more formidable than Holkar's in 1804. What use then would a magazine have been far out in the cantonments? Till 1827 the untamed fortress of Bharatpur threatened communications with the south, and from that time, though Delhi was no longer a frontier town, it was the principal base for the army of the Sutlej. If the Sikhs had turned on the armies retreating through the Punjab in 1842, or if they had broken through, as they so nearly did, in 1845, Delhi would have been the first rallying point for the British. Its defence would have been necessary not only on grounds of prestige, but also to give time for reinforcements to arrive and to concentrate.

Again, though Sindia is often assumed to have dropped out of history after 1818, the battle of Maharajpur reveals the continuance of a military danger for another generation. Right down to 1850 in a variety of contingencies the defence of Delhi might have proved the salvation of the British *raj* as the assault of Delhi redeemed it in 1857. It was only after 1850 that the magazine could have been safely moved outside the city, and this, though it has been largely overlooked by critics, was in fact to a great extent done. At the time of the outbreak a plan for the taking over of the Red Fort was only awaiting the death of the octogenarian Bahadur Shah. The real mistake of the military was in stationing no British troops in Delhi, a vital point, while placing them at Meerut, forty miles away, an open town of no particular importance. With Delhi firmly held, a mutiny at Meerut would have been much less serious.

The civilians at first lived within the city walls. The insecurity of the country-side was such that no house would have been safe without a military guard. Inside the city there was, as it were, a space already prepared for them, for the line of the city wall facing the river, whose centre was roughly the palace itself, was occupied by the palaces and gardens of noblemen. One of these, the palace of Ali Mardan Khan, popularly known as Dara Shukoh's palace, and now the Government High School, became the Residency. The usual classical colonnade was added in front, and the necessary alterations made inside. Parts of the grounds along the wall were given up for the erection of houses. These houses are now fast disappearing, but one or two still remain.

As numbers and security both increased, men began to move out and build in the space between Kashmir Gate and the Ridge. In this way the present civil lines were born, and they have altered little, save for the erection of new houses, to the present time.[3] The two nearly parallel lines (Alipur Road and Rajpur Road) which meet at a point at the Khyber Pass, the road up to the Flagstaff Tower, and the main cross-roads are all to be found in the pre-Mutiny maps. The landmarks were first, the mansion of Sir Thomas Metcalfe, overlooking the river. Its grounds ran up to the Alipur Road and included the site of the Temporary Secretariat (now railway offices). Then came Hindu Rao's house on the Ridge. It was built a little earlier than Metcalfe House and was occupied by William Fraser until his assassination in 1835. It is generally thought to have been built by Fraser, but there is evidence to suggest that it was actually built by Sir Edward Colebrooke, and bought from him by Fraser when Colebrooke left Delhi.[4] Hindu Rao's house was severely damaged in the Mutiny, but in its present use as a hospital the main lines of the original building have been preserved. Next came the Flagstaff Tower, towards the northern end of the Ridge, whose purpose was strictly what its name suggests. For one day, the fatal 11 May, it became a focus of history, as the British survivors strained their eyes towards Meerut to catch the first glimpse of the dust columns of succouring troops. In the plain below, at the juncture of Alipur Road and Flagstaff Road, was the Assembly Rooms, the social centre of the settlement. Near by was a racquet court, still commemorated by the name Racquet Court Lane. In the space between Rajpur and Alipur Roads lay the principal bungalows. Very few of them still remain. One of them was Ludlow Castle. It was built by Dr Ludlow, the surgeon already mentioned. It became the office of the commissioner and then the residence of the commissioner and agent, Simon Fraser. Reconstructed after the Mutiny, it was for many years the headquarters of the Delhi Club, but now its future is once more in doubt. Nearby is No. 1 Ludlow Castle Road (now the property of the Baptist Mission). This is the reputed residence of John Lawrence when stationed at Delhi between 1831 and 1838. It is a good specimen of an early nineteenth-century official's house. A rough guide to pre- and post-Mutiny houses is afforded by the distinction between classical and Gothic styles. Before the Mutiny the classical style held sway, with its inevitable lofty piazza rising to the full height of the house. Afterwards, the pointed arch and sometimes the castellated style became fashionable. Its last victim in Delhi was Metcalfe House itself, in its restoration of 1913. The first important Gothic building was Calcutta Cathedral, built by Bishop Wilson in the 1840's. But the influence of the Gothic revival in its Indian form was not felt in Delhi before the Mutiny.

The Telegraph Office was situated within Kashmir Gate behind the church.[5] Another vanished building was the Custom House, which stood in a corner of the present (enlarged) Qudsia Gardens, and opposite the Water Bastion. Here troops sheltered before the final assault on the Kashmir Gate. The scene was completed by the royal gardens of Roshanara, Tis Hazari and the Qudsia Bagh. The Tis Hazari was a fruit garden whose revenues went to the heir apparent, but the others were kept up and frequently visited by the King. The design of the Qudsia, with its imposing gateway, its pavilions at each side, its mosque and its *chabutra* or platform overlooking the river, can still easily be traced. A print of Daniells shows that it had an imposing stone terrace, flanked by two towers, facing the river. This was broken up in the Mutiny and is now marked by a greensward bank. The river ran along its walls, and the present *bela* did not exist.

The general aspect of the civil lines from the time the canal began to run in 1820, must have been as leafy and sylvan as it is now. But the Ridge was bare, a stony furnace in the hot weather, and a mirror of heat for civilians and soldiers on either side. It was the Ridge that gave Delhi the reputation of being one of the hottest stations in India. For the heat stored up by day was given off at night for the special benefit of the British residents. Delhi has never been noted for maximum, but for minimum temperatures, which, though less spectacular, are much more trying. The Ridge has been a scourge to the British throughout their connexion with Delhi, and Flagstaff Tower, firmly planted on the top, was a symbol that nothing should daunt their determination to remain in possession.

Five miles away to the north along the Grand Trunk Road, about a mile from the village of Badli, lay in leafy seclusion the Shalimar Garden. Here Shah Jahan had taken his pleasure and Aurangzeb, hot-foot from his defeat of Dara, had crowned himself. It was half in ruins, but the Residents used it as a country retreat. Ochterlony delighted in it and Charles Metcalfe visited it regularly. His family lived and were reared there in privacy. There is some evidence too that Trevelyan lived there,[6] but after his time the garden fell into decay. To the south of Delhi lay another country retreat, Mahrauli, close to the Qutab Minar and the ruins of the first Muslim capital. Here Blake of Jaipur lived in Adham Khan's Tomb, and Thomas Metcalfe adapted another to his use.[7]

We now enter the city again, and note the changes that took place during the British occupation. The suburb of Daryaganj, as the higher officials moved out, became the quarter of subordinate Europeans and business men. In consequence, it became the scene of the chief massacre when the mutineers entered Delhi, while the Fort became the refuge for the surviving women and children. In front of the Fort the present *maidan* or old parade ground, between Lothian Road and the Jama Masjid, was covered thickly with houses. But an open space between them and the Fort remained, and here, under the lee of the high red walls, stood in incongruous contrast a low classical building which was the Delhi Club.[8] Beyond the Fort and the dip which runs down to the Calcutta Gate, the ground rose again to the magazine, the gateway of which survives. The magazine covered the area now occupied by the new Post Office and adjacent buildings. The Old Post Office, which stands close to the new, was the Delhi Dak Bungalow from 1860 to 1880. Beyond the magazine stood the Residency with its ample grounds. From 1832 this became the reorganized Delhi College, and from that time it has been continuously an educational building.

The next landmark was St James's Church, consecrated in 1836 by Bishop Daniel Wilson. It was the gift of Colonel Skinner, a handsome, if somewhat belated thank-offering for escape from death on a Maratha battlefield more than thirty years earlier. The records of the church perished in the Mutiny, and there is no certain knowledge of its architect. But there is evidence which points to Colonel Smith of the Engineers. He passed most of his life in or near Delhi, and was one of its characters. He was responsible for much restoration work including the repair of the Jama Masjid and the Qutab Minar, upon which he placed a *chattri* or cupola of his own design. Fanny Parks mentioned him by name, and states that it was built upon the model of St Paul's Cathedral.[9] This is much more credible than the suggestion of another traveller, that the dome was an imitation of a Muslim mosque, and a symptom of Skinner's fondness for Islam. A glance at the dome is sufficient to dispel the Muslim suggestion. Before the Mutiny it was coloured pink.

Opposite the church was Skinner's town house, a place of entertainment until the Mutiny. It was a typical up-country mansion with its classical main block and high colonnades, its marble baths and its *zenana* behind built in the current Indian domestic style. It is now the seat of the Hindu College. Beyond the church lay the square of the Mainguard, which led on to the Kashmir Gate itself. Adjoining was the *Cutchery* or Court on the site of the present courts. The Treasury was also there in a part of the magistrate's office. It was from a room in this building that the mutineers were first seen clattering across the bridge-of-boats. Next to the Treasury and behind the church was the house of John Gubbins, the judge, 'a very pretty one'. Then came the office of the *Delhi Gazette*, whose weekly discharges of gossip and news from Europe were the recreation of the officials and their main touch with 'home'.[10] One other building may be mentioned. It is the house of the Begam Samru. After her death in 1842 her heir, Dyce Sombre, departed for Europe, where he married the daughter of Lord

St Vincent, and spent his fortune trying to prove his sanity. The house then became the office of the Delhi Bank, and the residence of its manager. In 1857 it was the scene of the manager's heroic resistance to death on the roof of an out-house, and in later times it was occupied by Lloyd's Bank.

Such was the scene of late Mughul Delhi to European eyes. But their life was not really so magnificent as their surroundings. Officials were few and military officers were migratory. The few officials spent most of the cold weather touring and most of the hot weather, perforce, in their houses. There was an annual ball in the Assembly Rooms to celebrate the King's or Queen's birthday. But apart from this what social life there was centred round the residents and agents. The occasional visits of high officers like governor-generals and commanders-in-chief afforded the only other relaxation. Thus it was rather a case of the visitors entertaining the residents than the residents entertaining the visitors. Ladies also were scarce, and without them festivities wilted. 'A dearth of unmarried ladies is frequently a subject of complaint, and when this happens at a period when no stranger of rank is a visitor to the imperial city, parties of every kind are in a state of suspension.'[11] Even Sir Thomas Metcalfe entertained on quite a modest scale. Later, in the days of the Afghan and Sikh wars, numbers increased, and with them gaiety. When entertainments did take place, they were on a splendid scale. 'The gardens are illuminated by coloured lamps, and the banquets have all the abundance considered so essential to splendour by the native purveyors.' The poverty of resources allowed some diversions to continue which had died out down country. Thus the custom of attending parties given by Muslim gentry, where *nautches* were performed, continued in Delhi.[12] In Calcutta it was suppressed by the rising Evangelical influence in the early years of the century. The hookah, too, once universal in Calcutta, continued in Delhi as a gentleman's smoke.[13]

The houses of the Europeans were large and solid. Their plan was possibly borrowed in part from that of the Muslim tomb, consisting of a large central chamber with lower surrounding rooms and verandas. The central room had an apse or rotunda, and was often divided into two by curtains. Its ample dimensions made it available for dinner parties on the grand scale—where each guest brought his own servant and sometimes his plate as well—and for dances as well when there were any ladies to dance with. In the hot weather its great height made it the coolest place in the house. Externally, the houses apart from their classical piazzas with their rising tiers of verandas, outer rooms and central halls, resembled miniature step pyramids. Undeniably cool in summer, these houses had one defect, a lack of proper ventilation. Their design made windows impossible, and their only vents were sky-lights or *roshandans* placed high up in the walls, adequate neither for light nor air. The depression of Europeans in the Delhi hot weather arose not only from the heat and necessary confinement, but from the want of light and air from which these cavernous buildings suffered.

The houses of Delhi and Agra had certain peculiarities which distinguished them from their fellows down country. The first was the *taikhana* or underground chamber, which was borrowed from the Mughul mansion. The habit began through the early use of Indian houses which already possessed them; then they were deliberately added to European houses.[14] Major Smith who had a house on the city wall, had a *taikhana* which is thus described:[15]

> The one now under mention doubtless belonged at some time past to a man of great wealth; the descent to the apartment was 30 feet, and the surprise and pleasure were equal, to find such beautiful rooms and so elegantly arranged and furnished. Coloured to resemble marble, the eye is at first deceived with the likeness; the deception is countenanced by the coolness, so different from the oppressive sensations always felt above. Long corridors lead to different apartments embellished with coloured walls, and other decorations, all by the owner's hands, and it should not be omitted, that many exquisite drawings of places of celebrity in Delhi and its neighbourhood, add to the appearance of this truly fairy palace; light is admitted from above and by windows in the eastern face. A retreat of this kind in the hot months of April, May and June, is a luxury scarcely to be described, when by every precaution possible to be taken, the thermometer above stairs can rarely be brought below 85°, very often it is 90°, and sometimes even higher than that point. The rooms are ample, large, lofty and convenient.

Major Smith was an architect who thought he could improve upon the Mughuls themselves and he had an old mansion to work on. His was a *taikhana in excelsis*. But many possessed more modest ones, and it was reckoned that their temperature was at least ten degrees below that of the rooms above ground.

Another Mughul loan was the marble bath. These varied from miniature copies of the great baths in the Palace itself to large wells into which one entered by marble steps, and stood up to the neck in water.[16] Examples of the former can still be seen in the Begam Samru's Delhi Palace,[17] in Skinner's Delhi house,[18] and at Sardhana.[19] When these baths were not available, water was kept in great jars, which were emptied over the head by servants.[20]

The pride of the up-country houses was the thermantidote. It was to the old method of cooling what the swinging *punkah* was to the old hand-fans. The old method was to place *khaskhas*[21] tatties over the doors on the windward side of the house. They were then watered at intervals, and by evaporation converted the scorching wind, or *loo*, into a refreshing breeze within. So long as the wind held all was well, but if the wind failed, or there was no opening on the windward side, the *khaskhas* stood streaming and useless. The thermantidote changed all that. It was a machine for creating a breeze where none existed, and like the swinging *punkah*, it was the invention of a nameless European benefactor. It was a large wooden box containing a wheel with wooden sails or flappers turned by a handle. The draught created by turning the handle was passed through a wooden pipe on to the *khaskhas* tatty. It looked like a paddle-box with a handle to turn it and a funnel at the top. Hoffmeister thus described it:[22]

> The rotunda was surrounded by a wide corridor, on which various machines for cooling the atmosphere are stationed like pieces of artillery. Several of these, with their broad, wind-mill like wings somewhat resembling clappers, are turned without intermission, and the current of air thus caused, finding its way into the room through small double tatties, produces a most grateful effect. The ever active punkah is in motion at the same time; even at night it is never suffered to rest, as it serves the double purpose of creating artificial coolness and driving away the mosquitoes.

The last solace of the English in the hot weather was ice. Down country none was available until 1833, when it was imported by ships from America as ballast. The captain of the first ship received a letter of gratitude from the Governor-

General.[23] In Delhi the old Mughul custom of bringing ice from Srinagar in Garwhal by relays of runners was too expensive for revival.[24] It continued in Lahore for the supply of Ranjit Singh's Court. But the method of making ice in the cold weather by running water into shallow pans in the season of the cold winds and storing the ice in pits against the hot weather, was continued. Companies were formed whose members received ice regularly during the hot weather in proportion to the number of shares they held. The cutting off of the supply from the ice-pits was one of the hardships suffered by the garrison during the siege of 1857.

The ice-bed was divided into six-foot squares each about eighteen inches deep. In these were strewn straw of various kinds. Water-pots were provided for each square, and should the weather promise a cold clear night, water was poured into cloth-bottomed pans which were then fitted into the earthen squares or hollows. On a good night ice would form to the depth of one and a half inches on the pans. This was gathered by shivering coolies in the chill morning and stored in ice-pits. The pits were covered with a low mud house thickly thatched, drained by a well, and further protected from the air by layers of straw. Within the pit the ice was beaten into a solid mass by relays of blanketed coolies. The highest temperature at which ice could be made was about forty-three degrees; the pits were opened at the beginning of the hot weather and the supply lasted as late as August. Each night in December and January the old *abdar* would keep his watch. If the winds were fresh and likely to increase, he wrapped his blanket around him and retired to his bed, but if the air was clear and frosty, a drum was beaten and from the nearest *bazar* came lines of muffled figures to fill the pans and fix them in the beds.[25] The ice-beds of Delhi were between the Delhi and Turkoman Gates of the city and the ice-makers lived in the village of Banskauli.[26]

The means of conveyance were magnificent and uncomfortable. The district officers moved about the country on elephants, on which they could read in comfort. For more rapid movement there was of course the horse, and in the sandy regions to the west and north-west the useful but bony camel. Apart from these animals the only resource was the palanquin, a curtained litter carried by bearers at a jog-trot of four or five miles an hour, in which the traveller was blinded by dust or suffocated by the enclosing curtains. Wheeled carriages could only drive on a few roads round Delhi. The Grand Trunk Road did not enter Delhi until after 1850, and then its primitive carriages must have made travellers sigh for the gentler jolting of the palanquins. The horses were unbroken, the carriages boxes on four wheels which would just seat two on one seat. Lady Clive Bayley thus described the journey from Allahabad to Aligarh in 1848, when she was travelling to join her father in Delhi:[27]

> The journey was to be accomplished by horse-dak (as it was called) a very rough and ill-arranged kind of posting. The carriages were huge wooden boxes on four wheels, large enough to accommodate two people with a tight fit; the luggage was fastened on to the roof, and a very wretched specimen of a horse was put into the shafts The animal was generally unbroken, and could not be said to be driven by the coachman, for it simply went where it liked. Very often it would not start for many minutes after everything was ready. The coachman would smack it with his whip; the *syce* or groom would tug at its forelegs with a rope, all to no purpose. Then the *syce* would collect some straw, put a heap under the animal's body, set it on fire, and then when it became too hot to be pleasant to the horse, he would suddenly dart forward, and would gallop at a tremendous rate for the five or six miles that intervened before the next posting station. Sometimes there were amusing and very awkward experiences, as on one occasion when the horse attached to Uncle Edward's carriage[28] had behaved in this obstinate manner, he had got out to assist in making the animal start, when the creature suddenly bolted off before he could get into the carriage again (for the doors were very small) and he was only able to clamber on to the footboard at the back, and stand up there for the whole of that stage, which under a boiling sun was not a pleasant way of travelling.

Until the road was metalled between Aligarh and Delhi after 1850, the final stage was covered by palanquin. They were carried by four, six or twelve men, according to the weight of the traveller and the state of the road.[29] The journey was made by night, each palanquin having a torch-bearer and a mounted orderly by its side. The luggage was carried by *bhangi-wallahs* 'who carried two tin boxes slung to either end of a long bamboo which he carried across his shoulders'.[30]

The journey from Calcutta to Allahabad was made partly by palanquin and partly by *budgerow* or river-boat. This was the most comfortable form of travel. The *budgerows* were 'covered barges built of wood, painted green, very comfortably furnished, and divided into two rooms each for sleeping and sitting rooms'. There were separate boats for the kitchen and the servants. They were sometimes towed by men on the bank, and the travellers strolled to some mango grove or neighbouring temple. Gliding past sandbanks and tree-fringed shores by day, and resting under the stars by night, the days slipped pleasantly away. The only disasters which could happen were stranding on a sandbank or the separation of the kitchen-boat from the rest of the fleet. From the 1830's the *budgerows* were towed by small steamers which shortened the journey from Calcutta to Allahabad to a month.

> Progress was slow against the stream, but the life was most enjoyable and peaceful. It was one continual picnic from morning till night, and for the whole of the month we were on board, we all spent the day on deck under an awning, reading, working or writing letters. We had our meals on deck and in the evenings when we moored to the bank, we all went on shore for a walk and retired to the deck to spend the evening in pleasant conversation before going to bed....
>
> Sometimes there was only a small native village where we anchored for the night; at other times we arrived at a station, and then the residents used to ride or drive down at once to welcome the newcomers on board the steamer and to offer them all the hospitality in their power.[31]

There were giants in Delhi in those days. The first was the almost mythical Ochterlony, who lived in and around Delhi from its capture in 1803 till his death at Meerut in 1825. He was the hero of Holkar's siege in 1804 and of the Gurkha war eleven years later. He was twice Resident of Delhi and his dismissal in 1825 in favour of his friend Charles Metcalfe broke his heart. Metcalfe then carried out with complete success the operation against Bharatpur which Ochterlony had recommended. He was the only Englishman whose Mughul title gave its name to an English station.[32] He lived magnificently in the style of a Mughul nobleman and wherever he went built mansions on the classical model.[33] A generation earlier he would have founded a principality of his own like George Thomas and the Begam Samru. He was in a sense the last of the adventurers as he was the first of the great soldier-administrators of the North-West. To meet his cortège on the road was an event, and to talk of his doings a hot-weather pastime. Bishop Heber met him in Rajputana.[34]

> There was a considerable number of led horses, elephants, palanquins, and covered carriages, belonging chiefly, I apprehend (besides his own family), to the families of his native servants. There was an escort of two companies of infantry, a troop of regular cavalry, and I should guess forty or fifty irregulars, on horse and foot, armed with spears and matchlocks of all possible forms; the string of camels was a very long one and the whole procession was what might pass in Europe for that of an Eastern prince travelling. . . . Sir David himself was in a carriage and four. He is a tall and pleasing-looking old man, but was so wrapped up in shawls, Kincob fur and a Mogul furred cap, that his face was all that was visible.

After Ochterlony came the greater Charles Metcalfe. He and his brother Thomas between them dominated the life of Delhi for nearly fifty years. Charles was Assistant-Resident at the age of twenty-one; was Resident twice, and was altogether 'King of Delhi' for more than ten years. He created the administration of Delhi as his brother was the centre of its social life. Charles occupied the old Residency, where he was the benevolent father of his 'family' of assistants and the royal entertainer of the station and passing Europeans. At the week-ends he retired to the Shalimar Garden, six miles to the north of Delhi, and built a house nearby, where his Indian family dwelt in sylvan seclusion. He used Aurangzeb's pavilion for his parties. This house still stands amidst the fruit trees, and is known as *Metcalfe Sahib ki kothi*. With the exception of Elphinstone, he was the most bookish of all his official generation. He preferred travelling on an elephant because he could read while moving. His relaxation was reading classical and Persian literature. He was so poor a horseman that in his later years at Agra he used to take his exercise by having a horse led round an enclosed courtyard where no prying eyes could penetrate.[35] All the more remarkable was his hold not only on the sport-loving British of the day, but upon the equally sporting gentry of Delhi. Hunting was in their blood, and horsemanship a second nature to them, but they all fell under the spell of this short, thick-set, awkward and plain-looking man with a pimply face. He wrote like an old man when still his twenties, he retained a youthful zest for life when in late middle age. He described his first visit to the hills in 1827 with boyish enthusiasm; with equal zest he helped push his carriage through the snow, when on his way to Canada, turned sixty. 'He never seemed to one to alter to the day of his death', wrote his niece. 'He had a most kindly face, but he was a very plain man as far as features were concerned, and he had several large pimples dotted about his face and forehead.'[36]

> Ahmad Baksh, the Nawab of Firozpur, [wrote a friend to him in 1821] has at least half a score of times requested me most particularly to write on purpose to you, to say how gratefully and respectfully he ever thinks of you, and that he shall continue to do so to the end of his life....He is a perfect enthusiast when speaking of you; a young man, says he, 'who has the wisdom of a very wise old man, whose firmness, justice and integrity were as much admired and reverenced by the best amongst us, as the dread of these rare qualifications made the worst amongst us fear him'. This is not a singular case, my dear Metcalfe, for I know hundreds speak in the same tone of admiration. I hardly ever go into the Palace, but I hear the same sentiments of the most respectful esteem for you, and when there were strong reports of your coming back, I cannot tell you how joyously the high and low of Dihlee expressed themselves on the occasion.[37]

Charles Metcalfe had a great reputation for integrity, and it may be admitted he was inordinately proud of it. Nothing aroused in him such indignation as Colebrooke's aspersions on this score. 'Metcalfe', a man wrote of him at Hyderabad, 'stalks abroad in all the Majesty of Rectitude—is open, candid and fair in all his opinions and acts, and the people of the old school as well as the Inhabitants stare at him with admiration and amazement.'[38]

If Ochterlony was the Babur and Charles the Akbar of British Delhi, Thomas Metcalfe was its Shah Jahan. Arriving in 1813 under the aegis of his brother, he lived for forty years in Delhi without a break, and was for eighteen years agent and commissioner. He had the ability to dominate Delhi without the genius to rise beyond it. His start was shaky and dogged with misfortune. His brother early paid his debts, and years later was solemnly wondering how it was that he had saved nothing in twenty years and that his patrimony of £10,000 had disappeared as well.

> Tom, I regret to say is unlikely to join us for many years to come. He has been exceedingly improvident, and not only has he not made, but has actually spent his fortune. Although bound to believe him, I still can scarcely credit his account of the nothingness of his means. What can we think of his having £10,000 in 1815 and nothing now?[39]

Two years later Charles was still severe. Tom did not live extravagantly, 'except for the Folly of the House, which he has built and furnished'. He feared 'something that will not bear the light'.[40] He had been in trouble for debt to a banker which was forbidden by Government. Whatever the skeleton was, Tom managed to keep it securely locked in its cupboard. To debt was added domestic sorrow. His first two children lie in the old cemetery at Karnal and a few years later his wife Grace followed them. Tom was desolate and not to be comforted. But fate relented towards him after its early buffets. He married again happily and delighted in his growing family. He visibly grew in character and discretion, so that in 1835 he was the obvious successor to the murdered Fraser as agent; his financial difficulties cleared so that he could indulge his passion for building. The last twenty years of his life were a long Indian summer of growing respect, of static prosperity and patriarchal benevolence. He became the epitome of the benevolent pre-Mutiny Nabob. His daughter Emily who lived with him for two years, from her return from England until her marriage in 1850, has left this picture of him:[41]

> He was not a tall man, I should think about 5 ft. 8 inches, but well made, with beautifully small hands and feet. His hair was grey, and he was bald on top of his head; his eyes were blue, a straight nose, well formed mouth, with often a whimsical expression on it, but as he retained a good many small-pox marks from his boyhood, he could not be said to be a handsome man. He was very sprightly in all his movements, and had a very pleasant voice; a perfect gentleman every inch of him. He was the pink of tidiness in appearance and habits, his clothes always extremely well made by a first-class London tailor, Pulford in St James Street, and were sent out regularly every year. His shoes and gloves were of the very best, and everything about showed perfect taste. He wore only one

ring, a signet ring on his little finger. His bed room and dressing room adjoined my sitting room. He always got up at five o'clock every morning, and having put on his dressing gown he would go into the verandah to have his *chota hazri* (early breakfast). He used to take a walk up and down the verandah, and his different servants came at that time to receive their orders for the day. At seven o'clock he used to go down to the swimming bath which he had built just below the corner of the verandah, and then having dressed and had prayers in the Oratory, he was ready for breakfast at eight o'clock punctually.

Everything was ordered with the greatest punctuality, and all the household arrangements moved as by clockwork. After he had had breakfast, his Hookah was brought in and placed behind his chair. It stood on an embroidered carpet worked for him by some lady friends. The stand was of solid silver about eighteen inches in diameter at the bottom, and the tube for the sweet smelling tobacco mixture which he smoked was from six to eight feet long, and the mouthpiece of it was exquisitely wrought in silver. By his side on the table a soup plate of water was always placed, and he took the mouthpiece and passed it through the water for fear there should be any animal in it before attaching it to the pipe. He smoked for about half an hour, and the gurgle of the Hookah still rings in my ears, a most musical sound.

After he had finished his smoke, he generally went to his study to write letters until the carriage was announced, which always appeared punctually at ten o'clock under the Portico. He passed through a row of servants on his way to the carriage, one holding his hat, another his gloves, another his handkerchief, another his gold-headed cane, and another his despatch-box. These were put into the carriage, his *Jemadar* mounted beside the coachman and he drove away, with two *syces* (grooms) standing up behind. He had two pairs of horses, one pair of Chestnuts, and one of Bays, the former generally used in the day-time, the latter for the evening drive.

It was in this room (the Library) that my dear father used to sit every afternoon after his midday meal to refresh himself by reading before going down to the billiard room in the *Taikhana* underground. This daily game of billiards was not only a great amusement to him, but gave him the exercise he required, and when he had finished his game, he always went directly to the *Chabutra* or terrace overhanging the river, where three or four chairs were placed, and where he sat for a couple of hours till it was time to dress for dinner in the evening (he returned from office every day at half past two, and established the custom of dinner at three o'clock as he found that was conducive to his health, and in the evening he made only a very light meal, as it was his invariable custom to leave the dining room at eight o'clock in order to go to bed early).

It used to be a great source of amusement to Mary and me to watch his proceedings as soon as the retiring gun fired and the clock struck eight. He immediately got up from the chair where he was smoking his Hookah, said good night to everyone at the table, undid his neckcloth and threw it on the ground while he was walking to the door, and unfastened his waistcoat buttons, then turned and gave a wave of his hand as he disappeared behind the curtain into his dressing room. Sometimes if I alone was with him he actually took off his coat and flung it aside before he got to the door. But whenever he had guests in the house, or at his periodical parties, of course he conformed to the usual customs, and did not retire till after his guests had left. He was so full of fun, so witty, constantly making good puns; and having a great fund of anecdote, he was always capital company.

He was an excessively fastidious man and very particular as to the habits of the ladies. He could not bear to see them eat cheese, and as for eating mangoes and oranges, he thought ladies ought to indulge in them only in the privacy of the Bath room. Many a time have I, with Colonel Richard Lawrence, taken a basket of oranges to the top of the Kutab pillar, two hundred and thirty eight feet high, to indulge in a feast in that seclusion, but we were careful to bring down all the peel etc. as nothing disorderly was allowed within the precincts of those beautiful ruins and buildings.

Sir Thomas had his own method of reprimanding servants. He sent for a pair of white kid gloves, 'which were presented to him on a silver salver, and drawing these on with solemn dignity, he proceeded to pinch gently but firmly the ear of the culprit, and then let him go—a reprimand that was entirely efficacious'.[48] Perhaps in this he was following the example of his hero Napoleon, who pinched the ears of those he approved.

Sir Thomas was a great builder. He built first, about 1830, his mansion of Metcalfe House on the banks of the Jumna. The grounds extended to Alipore Road over the site now occupied by the temporary Secretariat. Later, discarding his brother's retreat of Shalimar, he adapted a Muslim tomb close to the Qutab Minar as a country retreat. Into Metcalfe House he put all the family treasures, and added the result of forty years' steady and tasteful buying. Metcalfe House was one of the sights of Delhi, and famous all over northern India. To-day Gothic arches have replaced the former classical colonnade, but the ground-plan and general proportions are the same. But it was not so much the exterior as the interior which gave it its reputation, for Thomas Metcalfe was one of the few examples of an Englishman who had transferred all his family treasures to India. Although he inherited the family estate of Fernhill in 1846, he never thought of returning to occupy it. Neither did his son, who delayed the sale of the Metcalfe House furniture so long that most of it was lost in the Mutiny. Here an Englishman lived at his ease in his own castle, combining in one dignity the virtues of the Nabob and the Squire.

> Round all four sides of the house was a splendid verandah, twenty to thirty feet wide, very lofty, the roof supported by magnificent stone pillars. It was a glorious house, and everything in it really beautiful, though some of the furniture struck new-comers to India as heavy and old fashioned. It was hardly possible to avoid this, as of course it was the style of those days, solid mahogany, rosewood and marble. Many of the tables were entirely of marble, tops, pedestals and all, and very beautiful they were. The books in the different rooms were all beautifully bound, those in my Father's study being bound in Russian leather. He got out a box of books from England twice a year, and during his forty years residence in India he had gathered together a very valuable library of five and twenty thousand volumes, all of which were destroyed in the Mutiny of 1857.
>
> He had a great love for engravings, and the walls of the house in every room were covered with engravings of well known persons and of events of historical interest....In every room there were handsome silver inkstands and paper knives and clocks.
>
> The room called the Napoleon Gallery, which was in the north-east of the house, was entirely devoted to the memory of Napoleon Buonaparte, of whom my father was a devoted admirer. Its bookcases were filled with all the best and most interesting works relating to his life and career, and the walls covered with fine engravings, portraits of the great hero and his generals, and of all the events of his life. In one corner of the room on a marble pedestal stood Canova's marble bust of Napoleon, a beautiful work of art, of which I now possess only the broken pieces which I gathered out of the ruins of the house at Delhi two years ago.
>
> The centre and side tables in the Napoleon Gallery were covered with beautiful bronzes, and statuettes, all connected with the

history of the Emperor. One specially fine bronze, three feet long, depicted the fight of the Bridge of Lodi, and this like everything else, was destroyed....On the centre table under a glass case there was a beautiful marble stand with an exquisite silver statuette of Napoleon, and below the figures were hung the Napoleon gun which I possess, the Cross of the Legion of Honour, and his diamond ring with the initial on it, which my father purchased after the death of Mr Fraser, to whom they had all been sent by Napoleon's desire in acknowledgement of the courteous and generous gift which he had despatched to St Helena for the use of the Emperor, but which was lost at sea, and therefore never reached the exiled hero.[43]

Even more interesting and much less known was Metcalfe's country house near the Qutab Minar. The remains of it can still be seen near the Dak-Bungalow and close to the Minar. It was built about 1844.

It was a delightful residence, and a very quaint one, for it was originally a Mohammedan Tomb, surmounted by a very big dome. The family to which it belonged had become impoverished, and had handed over this tomb as the only available asset to the Banker to whom they owed a large sum of money. He wished to sell it, and so my father bought it, and made no use of the ground floor, below which the Tomb was, but built a suite of rooms in the verandah surrounding the central hall, above, which was used as a dining room. The building was octagonal in shape, and consisted of my father's bedroom and library, drawing room and my bedroom, spare bedroom and dressing room, and a tiny room called an oratory, and two entrance halls, east and west, which were reached by flights of steps from the outside.

Round the house he laid out a very pleasant garden, and built three or four rooms for the accommodation of gentlemen in the garden. Our house was called the Dil-Koosha (the delight of the heart), and was lent constantly by my father to bridal parties for their honeymoons. It was a most enjoyable spot in itself, and had also the additional charm of being close to the beautiful Kutub Minar, the great historical Pillar, and all the ruins surrounding it. The grounds on which the pillar and ruins stood had been laid out, at my father's suggestion, as a beautiful garden and the place was kept scrupulously clean and in excellent repair....As my father's favourite amusement was bricks and mortar, he designed and built at some distance off, on high ground, a lighthouse and a small fort, or rather, a building that looked like a fort, with a castellated wall. This created a diversion from the level monotony of the rocky ground, and as my father always had a light put in each of the buildings on the nights that we stayed at the Dil-Kusha, we could see the buildings as we sat on the Chabutra of an evening, and fifty years after, to my amazement, in a picture exhibition in Bond Street I saw a water colour drawing of this same little fortress which was entitled 'The Metcalfe Battery'.[44]

Sir Thomas died in 1853 at the age of fifty-eight. It was believed by his family that he was poisoned by Zinat Mahal Begam in revenge for the part he played in excluding her son Jivan Bakht from the succession to the imperial title. The means were said to be either 'vegetable poisons prepared in such a way as to leave *no* trace behind them—a secret well known to the famous *Hakeems* or native doctors';[45] or alternatively ground diamonds. It is certain that the heir apparent, Mirza Fakhr-ud-din, died suddenly in 1852. Sir Thomas believed that he had been poisoned by the Queen, to pave the way for her son. 'The first act of the drama is played out; what will be the next?' he wrote in December. The three men mainly concerned in the passing over of Jiwan Bakht were Sir H. M. Elliot, James Thomason, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Province, and Sir Thomas Metcalfe. All of them died in 1853. All were said by a doctor to have shown symptoms of poisoning. On the other hand the symptoms of all three were consistent with natural causes. There can be no final proof or disproof of this story, whose truth will remain a secret of the vanished palace underworld.

Totally unlike Sir Thomas was the tall bearded figure of William Fraser who stalked the Delhi Territory until his death in 1835 like a civilian John Nicholson. He was generally admitted to be of great ability 'if waywardness did not spoil all'.[46] Sir Charles Metcalfe, who admired him, thus summed him up:

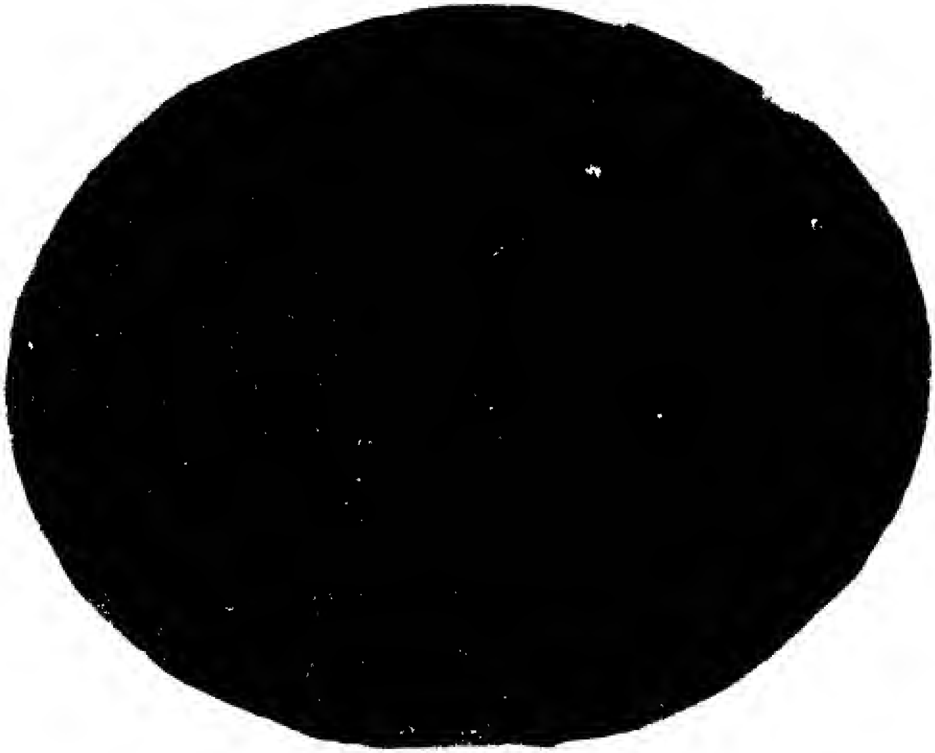
> He is masterly and self-willed to so great a degree that no power can be entrusted to him without some risk of its being abused, and he might drag the Government into mischief before they had the means of avoiding it. But he can be, when he chooses, exceedingly amiable, and would have no difficulty in dealing with the higher order of Natives, with some of whom he has been more intimate than Europeans usually are. If he was free from the faults I have mentioned he might be the most valuable servant of the state.[47]

The waywardness which barred the path to high office created his legend in the countryside. He roved the Territory in intimate touch with the people and was said to know more of land tenures than any living Englishman; yet he over-assessed every district which he had to settle.[48] As a member of a Board, he solemnly disapproved of his own actions as an individual. His sensibility was such that he could not bear to shed blood; his pugnacity so great that he would leave any post to join in a fight.

> Where there is a war anywhere he forsakes his tribunal and goes to it. He is always the first at a storming party, an amusement in which he got two sabre cuts on his arms, a pike thrust in his loins, and an arrow in his neck which nearly killed him....The emotion of danger is the most voluptuous to him; that is the theory of what is called his madness.[49]

He consorted with the grey-beards of Delhi, and so earned the disapproval of his fellow-officials. He lived as a solitary among his colleagues saying that they had no rational conversation. But when he met the botanist Jacquemment, he travelled two days' journey out of his way to enjoy his company. He supported Colebrooke so vehemently that he himself was suspended from office for disobedience. He won the Indian gentry by his insight into their ways, and exasperated them by his arbitrary temper. So it was he, the friend of India, who fell to the rage of an outraged chief. Jacquemment thus summed him up: 'He is half Asiatic in his habits, but in other respects a Scotch Highlander, and an excellent man with great originality of thought, a metaphysician to boot, and enjoying the best possible reputation of being a country bear.'[50]

No gallery of Delhi portraits would be complete without Colonel James Skinner and his family. His early adventures are well known:[51] at this time he lived on the *jagirs* granted him by the Marathas, and estates added by purchase. His headquarters were at Hansi, but he periodically visited his town house in the Kashmir Gate and watched the erection of his Church of St James. He wrote Persian more easily than English; he is perhaps the only Englishman who has written his memoirs in that tongue.[52] His manners were Indian, his hospitality proverbial.



THE QUTAB MINAR AND DILKUSHA

CHARLES METCALFE'S PAVILION,
SHALIMAR GARDEN

> It was his joy to assemble a knot of friends at his hospitable house at Dehlee or at Hansee...; and many a pleasant day and week and month was spent with 'old Secunder' in the pastimes and pursuits which then made India so delightful....The joyous excursions which were made among the interesting environs of Dehlee, when pitching our tents amidst ruins which extend twenty miles around it...; we used to wander and explore day after day, till the evening saw us all gaily seated round our well-spread table, hookahs in mouth, enjoying the comforts of excellent fare, and no less pleasant conversation—these were the enjoyments which none who partook of them will ever forget.[53]

Skinner himself was a legend; his family was an abiding wonder. Here is Lady Clive Bayley's account, when fresh from England:[54]

> My father had a great regard for Colonel Skinner himself, as a warm hearted friend and a very fine soldier, but it was difficult to say what the religion of the family was. I only knew two sons and one daughter. One son, called Joe Skinner, was a marvellous creation, as you may imagine, when I tell you that his visiting dress consisted of a green customary coat with gilt buttons (or possibly gold as they were very pretty), very light claret coloured trousers, patent leather boots, white waistcoat and gilt buttons, and a white necktie. He always carried a gold mounted Malacca cane, with which he incessantly tapped his boots, and talked of the time when he was in the Guards, though he had never been out of India.
>
> Another son was called Aleck Skinner, and when I went to call upon his wife, who was supposed to be educated English fashion, she offered to sing to me, and therefore set herself down at the piano and sang a song playing the accompaniment herself; but both words and tune were unknown to me until I looked at the title page and found it was 'Villikins and his Dinah' totally metamorphosed by her playing and accent, and perfectly unrecognizable.

Around the major planets revolved the lesser satellites. There were the surgeon and his wife, Dr and Mrs Ross; 'both short and corpulent and as broad as they were tall and very ugly'. Dr Ross was a kindly soul but a primitive doctor. He sent pills of enormous size in wooden boxes, and packed senna in beer bottles.[55] There was the German principal of the College whose homely wife hid his trousers every night lest he should go out and leave her. There was the Rev. David Thompson, the Baptist missionary and his wife, a most worthy

Anglo-Indian couple, whose ideas of society were original. When visited in the forenoon the whole family appeared in full evening dress. Mr Thompson and his two sons wore dress clothes, black hats and white kid gloves. His wife and five daughters 'were seated in a row, dressed in white cotton dresses, low necks, short sleeves and white kid gloves; white embroidered Delhi scarves of brilliant colours were thrown over the necks of some of the ladies'.[56] There was John Gubbins, the judge, famous for his fiery temper, and Colonel Palmer in the Cantonment, 'a portly old gentleman and bon-vivant'. There were the subalterns who spent their hot weather mornings trotting to the Dilkusha to call on Miss Metcalfe. She distinguished them by the sound of their horses' hooves, but their conversation was as limited as their horses' paces and their periodical proposals were always referred 'to my father on his return from office'.[57]

Delhi had its full quota of eccentrics in an age which multiplied the species. But it had more than its share of able men, many of whom came early and retired late from the Territory. The work to be done attracted them first, and the charm of the country and its people detained them long after. Jacquemment, no indulgent critic of the English, remarked the fact:[58]

> How many good and amiable men you find among the British in Northern India! I do not know why, but at Bengal it is not exactly the same thing. There is less cordiality and less intellect. This difference is proverbial in India, and not the less true because it is proverbial

In all the wide plains of Hindustan if there was a paradise on earth for the British, it was to be found in Delhi.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COLEBROOKE CASE

Early in 1827 Sir Charles Metcalfe completed his second reign as King of Delhi and retired to the hills before commencing his third and longest official period as King of Calcutta. In twenty-seven years, mostly spent in the north, he had never visited those hills with their pine-clad slopes and cooling breezes, which had always been within call and frequently within sight. It was almost the only period of real relaxation of his long official life. The scented and invigorating air of Kasauli, the sight of the distant snows, the log fires burning on his hearth, acted like an elixir in this prematurely aged statesman. As he described nature at his 'Fernhill in India' the fatigue and disillusion of years dropped away and he was a young man again, full of zest and Wordsworthian enthusiasm.[1]

> I have given the above name to this place, for one reason which will be obvious to you, and another is, that it abounds with such a variety of fern as makes the designation very appropriate. I have come into the mountains at the northern extremity of our Indian Empire, in order to avoid the heat, which at this season rages in the plains. At Dihlee, the wind day and night is blazing hot. Here we are clad in broad-cloth and flannel and warm ourselves with fires—I am now sitting close by a window with a sash down to keep out the cold breeze. The country between the hills and the plains is wonderful. Eight miles off, the day before I ascended to this place, I was obliged to use artificial means to keep myself cool. Here it is the reverse. We are about 7000 ft. above the level of the sea. The only road is a pathway along the sides of the mountains, winding by gradual ascent to the top, but generally so precipitous as to be impassable for horses and elephants and other cattle of the plains, impassable, I mean with safety and comfort to their riders. The hill ponies are surefooted and safe, and on one of these I found my slow way up here, leaving my Camp, stable etc. below. The scenery here is grand. The plains on one side, the mountains on all sides, and in two directions crowned by that immense range, the highest in the known world, covered with perpetual snow and ice, and forming the northern barrier of our Indian Dominion—beyond

is Chinese Tartary—and it is curious to observe, even in this quarter, so remote from their Capital, how the characteristic caution and jealousy of the Chinese prevail—travellers, who, led by curiosity and enterprise, penetrate through this almost impenetrable obstacle intervening, are received by the Chinese authorities with civility, as far as that can be said to be, where all further progress is effectually prevented, which is always the case; and the disappointed traveller has to return, as wise as he went, with the addition of a little experience of Chinese manners and policy. Nature is here in luxurious fecundity—the hills are covered with trees and shrubs and flowers—what delights us Indians most is to see the earliest acquaintances of our Infancy, on which we have not before set eyes since we quitted England—daisies, buttercups, nettles, dandelions etc. strawberries, raspberries, roses, growing wild, with larkspur, columbine, violets etc. and the oak too, the leaf different from those of ours, but the acorn the same. A Botanist would revel in endless delight, and I, though no Botanist have a delight of my own, in wandering about the hills, enjoying Nature's richness, and lifting up my heart in grateful adoration to the Creator, Father, and Preserver of all. It has long been my creed, that man ought not to destroy animals for food, and that to kill them for sport is savage cruelty, scarcely less criminal in reality than the murder of our fellow men, but here I also find myself becoming tender of the lives of flowers, and it seems to me to be almost a sin to pluck them and shorten the period of their brief existence. In solitude among Nature's works and away from the selfishness of man, which engrosses everything, one finds friendships with the Children of inanimate Creation. There is a sentiment in Persian Poetry which has always struck me as beautiful, 'The Stone and the Plant which you imagine silent, have voices which reach to the Ear of Heaven'—and with this I shall conclude what must I fear look like a rhapsody. Among the other enjoyments of this mountainous region we have storms, and while I have been writing, one has been raging, which has blown down two of my tents, and swept away two or three of my servants over the side of the hill. The poor fellows have been picked up again; we have been doctoring them with brandy, and they will do well I trust. My kitchen has been demolished and with this melancholy intelligence I shall close my romantic epistle.

In Metcalfe's place there came to Delhi as Resident in July 1827, Sir Edward Colebrooke. He came of a distinguished family, for his brother Henry was the famous Sanskritist, and his nephew was to write the life of Mountstewart Elphinstone.

He was an old and tried servant of the Company, having been forty-nine years in their service, and this was the last post he was likely to occupy. He had been tried in more senses than one, it is true, but if weight of years and official experience, up to the Governor-General's Council itself, went for anything, Delhi, its territory, and its surrounding states should be safe in his hands. He found experienced and able assistants awaiting him. There was William Fraser, the civilian knight-errant of the north, with whom he immediately struck up a friendship. There was the promising Hislop and the experienced Cavendish. There was Thomas Metcalfe, Sir Charles's younger brother and there was young Henry Elliot, laying the foundations of his oriental scholarship. Newest arrival of all, there was the young Charles Trevelyan, who had just passed out of the College at Calcutta. His promise had secured his appointment to the coveted Political Department, and he had specially applied for Delhi in order to be under the contemporary ideal of young 'politicals', Sir Charles Metcalfe himself. He was an earnest as well as a brilliant youth, combining the serious background of an Anglican rectory with an enthusiasm for the rising creed of utilitarianism. He united the traits of the crusader with those of the reformer. He was perhaps a little priggish. For him Metcalfe's departure must have been a disappointment, but foı the moment he solaced himself shooting lions in Hariana, conversing with the French botanist Jacquemment, and writing letters describing his first hot weather.[2]

Thus the stage was set for an acute clash of personalities which was also a clash of standards and of old and new outlooks. It is proposed to tell the story here, both because an account of Delhi at this period would not be complete without it, and because the episode provides a clear picture of the kind of irregularity which persisted long after the reforms of Cornwallis. The Colebrooke case affords an anatomy of latter-day corruption.. Cornwallis had ended corruption in the grand manner, but a lesser venality remained which required the vigour of Bentinck for its suppression. The case resounded through official India at the time but public reference to it was long suppressed with remarkable success. There is now no ground for further reticence. The case was not an isolated one, as the fate of other residents at Bentinck's hands shows. Its study is justified because the evidence it affords of contemporary methods and irregularities is more complete than in any other case, and because the facts have been more certainly established.

On his return to Delhi Trevelyan became First Assistant to the Resident and a member of the Resident's official family. Soon the proceedings of the Resident and his wife caused the young man uneasiness. Unlike the past generation of writers who came out at the age of fifteen and accepted the conditions which they found as part of the order of nature, Trevelyan had already principles and standards which the Resident's actions seemed to flout. Doubt deepened into suspicion and suspicion into certainty. There was a visit to the Company's *tosha-khana* or treasure-chamber for the auction of the presents received by officials on the Company's behalf, when Trevelyan saw shawls marked down Rs. 500 in value, on the plea of being damaged, for the benefit of Lady Colebrooke. There was the Resident's visit to Alwar, when during the whole trip no money was drawn from the Treasury for expenses, the whole being defrayed by the Prince. There were the goings and comings to Ram Gopal, the Resident's private agent and the general disposer of fortune and favour in the city. The uneasy assistant remonstrated, but no notice was taken of his scruples. These things were always done, he was told, and life could not go on without them. Next he sought to evade the issue by flight. He applied for appointment to a Mission to Bikanir, but was refused. He actually went to Bharatpur for a time as political agent, but was soon recalled. His scruples, it would seem, were not regarded seriously nor was he judged to be a menace. Trevelyan then took the serious step of withdrawing from the Resident's official 'family' and a kind of armed neutrality ensued.

Matters were at this stand in the spring of 1829. At that time Appa Sahib of Nagpur appeared in Bikanir and Jodhpur and began collecting followers on assurances from Ram Gopal. When challenged he produced two documents signed by the Resident himself. Here was something that affected not only money but high policy. Trevelyan determined to act. In so doing he behaved with great daring. A youth of twenty, he had but two years' experience to match against a man old enough to be his grandfather, heavy with honours and backed by the whole force of vested interests in the city and tradition in the services. He had been in Delhi long enough to know that this would be the case. His only aid was mother-wit and the distant council at Calcutta, absorbed at the time in the half-batta controversy and economy measures. Their attitude was far from certain and failure meant shipwreck to his official career at the very outset.

Trevelyan's first step was to lay an information before the magistrate against Ram Gopal for forgery and to inform that official of his intention to stop the prevalent system of corruption. This act could not go unnoticed. Colebrooke first ordered the suppression of the proceedings against Ram Gopal on the ground that Trevelyan possessed no authority to institute them. Trevelyan replied by claiming his right to prosecute as a private citizen. Colebrooke then transferred him to Kotah and launched a prosecution against his chief agent, Bakhtawar Singh, the *chaudhri* of the Delhi bankers, for 'conspiracy, perjury, disturbance and holding an illegal court'.[3] Bakhtawar Singh was arrested and his trial was given precedence over Ram Gopal's by the Resident's order. Bail was refused and when the first witnesses proved unsatisfactory fresh ones were produced in spite of the Delhi practice that the prosecutor should abide by the witnesses he had produced in the first instance. When the magistrate still declared the evidence insufficient he was ordered to commit the prisoner notwithstanding. The trial went on until its further prosecution was forbidden by the Supreme Government. Colebrooke was said to have 'declared his resolution to have Bakhtawar Singh mounted backward on an ass, to have his face blackened, and in that state to have him conducted through the streets of the city'.[4] But Colebrooke did not stop there. He now informed Trevelyan of his intention of prosecuting him before the Supreme Court of Calcutta for conspiracy. This was a threat of ruin which compelled Trevelyan to take the final step. On 30 June 1829, he formally charged the Resident with corruption. The Government took immediate action. Colebrooke was suspended from office pending an investigation by a specially appointed Commission. The Resident used his authority, and when deprived of that, his influence with his friends and in the city to prevent the production of evidence. His first move was to gain the sympathy of the British civil and military officers. Lady Colebrooke circulated a round robin by the Residency *chaprassi.*

> Lady Colebrooke begs to take this method of appealing to the public and of leaving them to form an opinion of the base and dishonourable conduct of Mr Trevelyan, who is found to have been plotting and fabricating falsehoods against her, and clandestinely transmitting falsehoods to Government, for several months past, during which he was partaking of Sir Edward's hospitality. Lady Colebrooke cannot but think that *liar* and *villain* are the mildest terms which can be applied to such an act of depravity in so young a man.[5]

But the *chaprassi*, as *chaprassis* will, took it to Trevelyan himself on his round, and so it found its way to Calcutta.

Next the Resident exploited William Fraser's friendship for him. Fraser was appointed to act as Resident during Colebrooke s suspension. He sympathized with his friend, but Colebrooke failed to inform him that the Supreme Government had ordered the abandonment of the trial of Bakhtawar Singh in the same letter in which it had suspended Colebrooke from office.[6] Fraser therefore continued the trial in good faith and brought down upon himself a reprimand from Calcutta for disregarding explicit orders. Fraser's generosity led him to action whose warmth was as characteristic as its unwisdom. He allowed Sir Edward to continue to act as 'Sudder Commissioner', that is as the 'supreme civil and criminal authority of the Delhi city and Territory'. He further ordered that all the honours due to the Resident should continue to be accorded to Colebrooke, while he himself remained in the background. Colebrooke was to be relieved of nothing but his political office.

> I wrote to-day to Mr Elliot to order that all the residency servants, guards, escorts and establishments should continue to attend on Sir Edward *as before*, and the official functionaries to offer obedience to his orders *as before*, particularly if he required the perusal of books, papers, letters, documents and the like, or the assistance of the English or Persian writers. Mr Elliot in reply stated that you had taken charge, which I had not intended until to-morrow; but it matters not, only you draw remarks more strongly on yourself. Pray be so kind now to direct as above. I have stated I requested Mr Elliot to direct all the sumptuary establishments in

particular; the escort guards etc. are to remain precisely as before with Sir E. Colebrooke, none to come to me or go to you, and the English writers and moonshies to obey all Sir E. Colebrooke's orders and to call upon him to inquire whether they shall attend daily or only when sent for. I wish in externals that the appearance of change should not be observable to the public, and I myself do only what is necessary for public business. The reality to me is sufficiently painful and irksome, and need not the display to make it more so.[7]

Trevelyan considered that no witnesses or evidence could possibly be forthcoming so long as the defence had the whole weight of local authority on its side. He appealed to Calcutta once more; Fraser in his turn was suspended from office and a newcomer to Delhi, Francis Hawkins, appointed to act as Resident. He was nearly as senior as Colebrooke himself, having seen forty-six years' service. At the same time Messrs W. Ewer and C. Macsween were appointed to examine the charges and to receive evidence. Colebrooke's next move was to try to prevent the evidence reaching the Commissioners; he endeavoured by personal influence to induce the bankers to withhold their books in which were the entries upon which the prosecution's case mainly depended. When the Commission ordered the production of the books, he accused Trevelyan of seizing them by the aid of a riotous gang and of examining them in secret. His difficulty was that he knew that he could not refute the evidence when once it was produced When asked to give his answer to the various charges he replied with counter-charges and an appeal to the customs of the past. These charges, beginning with Trevelyan's own turpitude, extended as high as Sir Charles Metcalfe on the Supreme Council and as far back as Sir David Ochterlony and Seton, Residents twenty years before. It was, in fact, an attempt not so much to justify his own conduct as to drag others down with him. Some specimens of his style may be quoted.

Mr Trevelyan, who, like the Turk, can bear no brother near the throne, or like his prototype in Milton, having risen so high, deemed only one more step to be necessary for placing himself highest, became jealous of Lady Colebrooke receiving visits from the Sirdars who occasionally came to Delhi; from the Vakeels of those absent Sirdars who, with a view to pay a compliment to my self, might instruct them to solicit an introduction to my wife, and

> from the native nobility and gentry of the capital, particularly members of the royal family. It interfered with his prerogative, with his diplomatic supremacy; and this jealousy, working on a naturally gloomy and vindictive disposition, had been inflamed into a most inveterate hatred which is seeking its gratification in the present measures.[8]
>
> The inveterate hostility, the infuriated hatred, the disgraceful means, the deliberate falsehood with which he is prosecuting his revenge would disgrace a Nero....I certainly never met with so infamous a character in my whole life, and I do not recollect that I ever read of such a one.[9]
>
> The current remark is that Delhi has been exposed to four visitations of Providence, which the inhabitants denominate *Gardis*; the Nadir Gardi, or the invasion of Nadir Shah; the Ahmad *Gardi*, or the troubles during the reign of Ahmad Shah, the Gammandi *Gardi*, or the Cavendish inquisition...and the present transactions which some people denominate the Trevelyan *Gardi*, and some Bakhtawar *Gardi*.[10]

To read Colebrooke's defence is to be convinced of the weakness of his case even without considering Trevelyan's rejoinder. The verdict was inevitable on the evidence; Colebrooke was convicted of accepting and misappropriating *nazrs*, of violating his oath on various occasions, and of countenancing the same among his family and dependants. On 29 December 1829 he was dismissed from the Residency and suspended the Service, and was later 'unanimously'[11] dismissed by the Directors. Colebrooke remained in Delhi for some months, settling his affairs and threatening vengeance. He proposed to appeal to the Court of Directors and the British public and for that purpose transmitted a paper to the Supreme Government.[12] In this Lord William Bentinck took the place of Trevelyan as the object of his invective, and an appeal was directed to all those vested interests which had been affected by Bentinck's measures. The events at Delhi were described as the culmination of a system

> So disgraceful to British rule, so injurious to our native subjects, and calculated to render us so unpopular and contemptible in the eyes of our neighbours that I consider it my duty to the state which I have served for half a century to warn the public of the fatal consequences to be expected.

> But of all the disgraceful situations in which a Government ever exhibited itself, the scenes lately produced at Delhi have entailed upon Lord W. Bentinck's administration the most indelible contempt. He has been maintaining a clandestine correspondence with my junior assistant and encouraging him by praises and promises to come forward with the pretended discoveries of his espionage. He has been seen suspending from office not only the representative of Government in Northern and Central India, but also the second in rank to him, at the requisition of this assistant. He has been seen authorizing the forcible seizure of the books of all the Delhi bankers by a burglarious entry into their houses. He has been seen encouraging perjury and forgery thro' the able ministry of the Delhi spy office.[13]

To meet this attack Trevelyan prepared a selection from the official documents in the political department entitled 'papers from India'. But the attack never materialized and so the papers remained private. Colebrooke disappeared from India and Trevelyan was called to Calcutta, there to champion the cause of English education, to prepare his report on Inland Transit Duties, and to meet Macaulay and his sister. Colebrooke had in general the sympathy of the older men, not because they approved of all his actions, but because of their dislike of the new generation's radical ideas, contempt for the past and for things Indian. This clash of ideas becomes clearer when Trevelyan's later activities, an expression of the militant reforming spirit, are remembered. It was the misfortune of the conservative administrative school, which placed a value on things Indian as well as on Western importations, which believed that the two should grow together rather than the one supplant the other, that their cause was linked with men like Colebrooke of Delhi and Ricketts of Lucknow. Their cause was discredited by the exposure of these men, and it failed increasingly to get the hearing to which its merits entitled it.

More important than the story of Colebrooke's decline and fall is the system upon which he worked. For it is an epitome of the modified corruption which was practised between the time of Cornwallis and Bentinck. Cornwallis had forbidden the reception of presents of more than Rs. 1000 in value, and the sale of any property valued at more than Rs. 5000 without the prior consent of Government. *Nazrs*, the ceremonial gift to a superior on admission to an audience, might be received on behalf of the Government, but could not be retained. Whether in cash or kind they were placed in the Government *tosha-khana* or treasure chamber, from whence they could be either redeemed at their cost price or were periodically sold by auction. The return gifts which the inferior made to the superior likewise came from the Government treasury, so that the official was relieved from the loss as well as the gain of these transactions. By these means Cornwallis had sought to regulate a custom which could not be abolished without giving offence to the whole aristocracy of India. At the same time he had abolished the whole system of private trade on the part of officials which was the greatest evil of his day, and sought to remove temptation by substituting handsome though fixed official salaries. Finally, loans from bankers, by means of which young writers anticipated their later increments and often enmeshed themselves for life in an impenetrable web of debt, were also forbidden.

The Colebrooke case, along with the Hyderabad and Lucknow cases of about the same time, shows how far the Cornwallis system had been successful. There is no doubt that private trade was virtually stamped out. Cases occurring after this time were the exception which proved the rule. A new generation of servants arose thinking in terms of official duty rather than of commerce, and there began that long line of public men, distinguished as much by their integrity as their ability. The political merchants of the Anglo-French wars, who became the merchant politicals of the time of Clive and Hastings, were henceforth politicals only. But in the other half of his work Cornwallis was less successful, for here he encountered a twin difficulty. The practices forbidden or regulated were far more difficult to detect than that of private trade and were backed by the whole weight of Indian tradition. Private trade by officials, with all the advantages which their official position gave them, threatened the interests and the very existence of the merchants, and it was therefore in their interest to expose it whenever possible. But present giving and *nazrs*, irregular inducements to official favour and considerations for services rendered, were the time-honoured custom of the country. It was the way by which those with money without power gained their ends, and those with power but without money lined their pockets. The fact that the momentary holders of power had also plenty of money made no difference to the seekers of favour; they argued that there were few men with much money who did not think that they ought to have more and none without it who did not think that they deserved some. As Writers were tempted by drafts on their future prospects in the shape of large loans on easy terms, so splendid officials in the plenitude of apparent prosperity were often burdened by secret debts which made them easy victims of temptation. So to the period of frank plunder which Clive first inaugurated and then tried to end, and the period of profit-making which Cornwallis stopped, there ensued the period of covert corruption by indirect means which the Colebrooke case revealed and which Bentinck largely ended.

This system flourished most within the precincts of Indian courts where the tradition was strongest and the supplies most abundant. But wherever there were rich landholders or wealthy bankers the danger existed. So we find that it was at Allahabad that Colebrooke was previously suspended under suspicion of practices similar to those at Delhi. There he was said to have been 'overwhelmed by temptation by the Raja of Benares'.[14] Maddock was similarly overwhelmed by the King of Oudh in 1831. It was not a universal system but it was certainly a widespread one, and the difficulty of preventing it, even by an upright man, can be gauged from the behaviour of Sir Charles Metcalfe's own servants at Delhi.[15]

Colebrooke's Delhi system was a compound of permitted practices pushed beyond the regulations, of obsolete practices revived, and of illegal practices which were difficult to unmask. Under the first of these headings came *nazrs*, purchases from the *tosha-khana* and the reception of presents.[16] *Nazrs* were received at the Residency according to a regular tariff, to the sum of Rs. 450 per month, and distributed in proportion. The Resident received about half and five others the remainder.[17] Lady Colebrooke helped in this work by receiving *nazrs* on her own account, and she was of course beyond the government rules. The irregularity here was the misappropriation of *nazrs* rather than their reception. Next came the purchase of articles from the *tosha-khana*. This in itself was a permissible and frequent practice, but the marking down of costly articles to less than half their real value was not.[18] Under the heading of obsolete practices came the levying of *ziafat* or entertainment money. This was money paid by a chief to a visiting magnate during a visit to his capital, or sometimes as soon as he crossed the frontier. This practice was revived in its most stringent form. The Resident's cold weather tours thus paid for themselves and made a profit besides.

> It is clearly proved that from the time that Sir Edward's camp left Goorgean on the 5th January, until its return to Delhi on the 8th February 1829, not one rupee was drawn for or advanced by the *potdar*, Bakht Singh, but that every charge and expense, including remittances made during that time, was defrayed from the sums collected from the various chiefs, through whose territories the Resident happened to pass.[19]

Also in this class came the sale of property at inflated prices. Sometimes the property never changed hands at all, and these sales were really a device for screening substantial loans. The sale of a carriage-and-four and of the Residency furniture was a good instance of this. The highest valuation of the carriage and four horses was Rs. 4000. They were sold first to Nawab Shams-ud-din Khan of Firozpur. In November 1828, they were sold again to the Patiala Raja for Rs. 8000 and a year later they were still being used by Sir Edward. The Residency furniture had been bought by Sir Edward from Sir Charles Metcalfe, upon his taking over, according to custom. Payment, however, was delayed and Sir Charles never received part of the price.[20] Nevertheless, the furniture was then sold for Rs. 30,000 to Shams-ud-din Khan, to whom it was of no use, and who did not as a matter of fact even see it, because Sir Edward continued to use it. Colebrooke could have resold it to his successor in the usual manner, and have left him to deal with Shams-ud-din's complaints as best he could.

The collection of *ziafat* could only be made when the Resident toured in the cold weather. There remained the third and largest class of illegal transactions which were difficult to unmask. These took the forms of loans and commissions which would never have been discovered but for the scrutiny of the banker's books. There were loans that were no loans and economies that were really loans to Government. The Rao Raja of Alwar's *vakil* first loaned Rs. 20,000 at the then low rate of 6 per cent to Sir Edward's son, and later he gave the same sum outright.[21] The despatch of remittances from Delhi to Nimach and Nasirabad were transferred to new hands on the plea of economy; in fact the new bankers' rates were higher than the old, the difference in the shape of a commission of four annas per cent going into the pockets of Sir Edward's son, who was in charge of the Treasury. The loss to the Government amounted to more than Rs. 5000 on one transaction alone.[22] Some of the payments, as in the case of *nazrs* and *ziafat*, were, so to speak, in the ordinary course of business. They were paid, not in return for favours to come, but simply to remain in the good graces of the Government. They were not so much monetary bargains as periodical offerings at the shrine of authority. They were the regular offertories for 'church expenses' by the Resident's political congregation. In themselves they were not specially heavy or even particularly oppressive. Purchases from the *tosha-khana* were acts of the Resident's prerogative, from which no one gained but the Resident himself. The other and larger transactions, however, were not done for nothing. They were 'considerations' received for benefits which a Resident was particularly fitted to give. The workings of the system can properly be described in the words of Trevelyan himself, since all the payments mentioned were deemed by the two Commissioners to have been proved.

> The orders he had so solemnly and deliberately given on the Doluddee case and had confirmed by earnestly requesting the Nabha Raja to accede to them were cancelled by Sir E. Colebrooke for a consideration of Rs. 7000, which were paid some time after by the Patiala Raja. Nawab Shams-ad-deen Khan paid Rs. 3600 to Sir Edward, and Rs. 3900 to his lady (the last was received under the plea of the sale of a pearl necklace to the Nawab) besides other sums to Mr E. Colebrooke and the baboo, to obtain his investiture, which had been delayed by the Resident with a view to induce the Nawab to produce his father's will, which he was supposed to have withheld. Subsequently to this Sir E. Colebrooke received Rs. 30,000 from the Nawab, under pretence of the sale of the Residency furniture, but really in consideration of a favourable decision of the important question (the same to which the suppression of the will related) at that time pending between the Nawab and his younger brother, Ameen-ud-deen Khan. The Rs. 20,000 from Alwar were

> paid in consideration of Mulhar's release; for Sir E. Colebrooke deceived the Rao Raja and withheld the orders of Government directing Mulhar's release until he received the money Rs. 7000 were received from Tijara in consideration of an emendation in the Raja's titles....[23]

Such was the steady system of exaction practised upon princes, landowners, bankers, litigants and all expectants. It was no longer the large-scale robbery of the past, when young merchants dealt in kingdoms and paid more for *appointment* to a Residency than Colebrooke made in two years' tenure of the chief of them. It was not spectacular but steady, not grinding but remorseless. In less than two years Colebrooke sent to Calcutta two *lakhs* over and above his official salary. The question naturally arises, why was the system tolerated by those who suffered from it, and why did they not find it to be in their interest to expose it? The answer is to be found in the tradition of the country. The system was not exposed because it was a popular system. It was popular because it was traditional, the generally accepted method of getting things done. What was condemned by Indian society was not the system itself, but excess on the part of its operators. Clive was condemned, not because he received presents, but because, to adopt one of Dr Toynbee's similes, the monstrous drive he imparted into the system impoverished the country. In itself, the system had actual advantages for the bankers and merchants, because it stimulated the exchange of goods and the circulation of money. Colebrooke's practice was vigorous and systematic, not excessive to the point of ruining its victims. The merchant gained by the buying and selling which a traffic in presents involved; the bankers by the commissions on the remittances which he was constantly sending from place to place in the form of loans.

> The money market was busied by the frequent transfers of cash consequent upon these transactions, and there was a constant demand upon it for gold mohurs in particular, owing to the secrecy and facility with which a large value can be transferred through the medium of that coin The jewellers and haberdashers were in high fettle and received constant employment at their own houses and at the residency, where they came in flocks almost every day, in buying, selling and exchanging those articles which were to be given or had been already received.[24]

The prince played for higher stakes and his gains were measured in terms of *izzat* or honour as well as in more substantial things. Those who did not gain immediately hoped for good things to come in the future; for them these gifts were an investment Those who had suffered from the system might still hope, by some turn in fortune's wheel, to gain later. The working of the system depended upon personalities, and personalities in high places were constantly changing. He who had lost a suit in the courts through a slip of diplomacy, might hope to win the next one through a better disposed judge. The system broke down in India as a whole because, as worked by the British in the eignteenth century, it became economically intolerable; it remained popular and workable whenever it continued to be practised with moderation. For this reason prosecutions for corruption at this period were always unpopular. Too many people were involved in the system to relish its exposure. The system broke down in Delhi because it was there revived after a period of disuse. What was really a revival seemed to the eyes of a newcomer to be the introduction of a new and monstrous system.

CHAPTER IX

WILLIAM FRASER'S MURDER

The Delhi citizens did not lack drama with which to spice their lives during the decade which covered the Colebrooke case. It had been preceded by the campaign against the Jat fortress at Bharatpur, and it was succeeded by the murder of William Fraser, the Governor-General's agent, in 1835. The character of Fraser has already been described and his murder was the climax of a tragedy to which both his faults and virtues directly led. His sense of justice and his intimacy with the Indian world were as essential to its consummation as his hot temper and his hastiness. The other actor in the drama was the young Nawab of Firozpur in the district of Gurgaon, Shams-ud-din Khan. He had been an attractive young man, and three years before had favourably impressed Jacquemment.

> Two leagues from this very Firozpur, as I was coming this morning on foot from Nagaina, with weather as delicious as our lovely April mornings, I saw a troop of horsemen advancing, headed by a fine young man whom I recognized as the Nawab. He alighted from his horse to approach me. We embraced each other as on the stage, upon each other's shoulders, and after exchanging some other expressions of Asiatic politeness, we re-mounted our horses and he conducted me to the elegant villa whence I am now writing to you. The guns of the adjoining fort were fired as I alighted at the garden gate. Breakfast was served up when we entered the hall, and in the European fashion, with all the elegance and style imaginable. As it is the *Ramzan*, my host, who is a Mussulman, could not with propriety set me the example at table, but he did the honours in the most graceful manner....[1]

Firozpur was one of those little states with which the Cornwallis policy of limited liability had surrounded the Delhi Territory. Shams-ud-din's father, Ahmad Baksh Khan, had been the agent of the Alwar raja in his dealings with Lord Lake and the British. He so favourably impressed both the Raja and the British that he was granted the district of Loharu in hereditary rent-free tenure by the one, and the principality of Firozpur by the other. Ahmad Baksh lived for twenty years to enjoy his gains and was widely respected. He was an admirer of Metcalfe, whose miniature portrait he cherished and whom none welcomed back to Delhi more warmly. In 1822 Ahmad Baksh declared his eldest son, Shams-ud-din, his heir, with the consent of both Alwar and the British. But Ahmad Baksh had two other young sons, and as old age drew on he sought means for providing for them also. Herein lay the seed of the later trouble. In 1825 Shams-ud-din, at his father's behest, assigned Loharu as a provision for his two brothers, and soon after was given the management of the whole estate. Ahmad Baksh died in 1827. At once there began a family feud between the three brothers. The two younger complained of the elder and at length the matter was referred to the Resident of Delhi. The Supreme Government, in 1828, awarded the complete possession of Loharu to the younger brothers, with the proviso that Amin-ud-din, the elder of the two, should pay Rs. 5210 annually to the Delhi Treasury until his younger brother came of age, after which the estate should be divided between them equally. This meant that Shams-ud-din was deprived of the management of Loharu, and the quarrel was sharpened. Shams-ud-din instigated the Loharu landowners to refuse payment to his brothers, and so prevent the elder from paying the stipulated sum to the Delhi Treasury. Martin, a successor to Colebrooke, then proposed to hand Loharu back to Shams-ud-din in return for a fixed payment for the brothers' support. To this the brothers objected and so a state of veiled warfare continued for some years.

Shams-ud-din continued to press his claim and received the reward of importunity when the Supreme Government, in 1833, once more transferred Loharu to him on condition of a cash payment to the brothers, and on the ground that Amin-ud-din's annual payments to the Delhi Treasury had fallen into arrears. By this time Fraser was the Governor-General's agent, and he took up the brothers' cause with all the warmth of his excitable nature. To add piquancy to the controversy Trevelyan, the opponent of Fraser's friend Colebrooke, was a Secretary to Government in Calcutta. We get a glimpse of the personal heats behind the legal issues in one of Metcalfe's letters to Bentinck.[2] Fraser's letter on the subject, he wrote, was 'as warm on one side as is Trevelyan's on the other'. He hardly knew the right course, 'but if there be any right independent of the judgement of Government, it is, I conceive, with the party opposed to that which Fraser patronises, Shamsoodeen being heir to his father in his territorial possessions'. Fraser followed up his letter by encouraging Amin-ud-din to go to Calcutta to press his suit, and once more the case was reconsidered. Fraser must thus have seemed to Shams-ud-din as the last obstacle to his final success. But this was in itself hardly enough for murder, and to the public motive there was now added the personal gall of wounded vanity. Fraser had been a friend of Shams-ud-din's father, and had treated the boy as a son. 'He had brought him up as a child of his own; indeed he had been as fond of him as a child of his own, and the boy used to spend the greater part of his time with him.'[3] But he had become disgusted, not only with his injustice, as he thought, towards his brothers, but with his growing dissipation and vice. The amiable host of Europeans had become a petty tyrant in his state, and it was said that in Firozpur no woman was considered safe. Fraser did not know the meaning of half-measures. When the Nawab came to Delhi he refused to see him and repulsed him from his mansion on the hill. His best friend, James Skinner, remonstrated, but Fraser replied that 'he considered the Nawab still but a boy, and the only way to improve him was to treat him as such'.[4] This was too much; the combination of public grievance and private insult turned the young man's mind to assassination.

We have an account of the Nawab's plot from Sleeman,[5] who visited Delhi shortly after the incident and heard the details from the local officers. The proceedings of the Nawab's trial are also preserved in the National Archives of India in New Delhi; a comparison between the two serves to confirm the general accuracy of Sleeman's narrative.[6] The Nawab had of course to work through instruments. He had a friend in the palace at Delhi in the person of Mughul Beg who could tell him of Fraser's habits and movements. He also had a house in Daryaganj where his agents could shelter without suspicion. Firozpur is on the borders of Mewat, for centuries a proverbially turbulent region, and there was no want of adventurers to do his bidding. The Nawab chose one Karim Khan, nicknamed *Bharmaru*, or sharpshooter, and sent him to Delhi ostensibly to sell a carriage through the agency of Mr M'Pherson, a European merchant in the city, to learn the process of extracting copper from the ore, and to sell dogs. This last purpose also provided a code for communication between the Nawab and his agent. Karim Khan came to Delhi in September 1834, lived at Daryaganj and observed Fraser's habits. It was decided that the murder must be done at night, so as to give a reasonable chance of escape. Fraser lived in his mansion on the Ridge, later famous as Hindu Rao's house. He rode daily from there to his office at Ludlow Castle, and often to the city or its environs to see the gentry or visiting Rajas. One who mixed as freely with the Indian gentry as Fraser did should have provided plenty of opportunities for a shot. But Fraser was always attended by a number of horsemen. Karim Khan with Ania, an attendant Meo from Mewat, watched and waited, but never could he find him alone or at night. At the end of three months he returned to Firozpur in despair. But the Nawab was adamant if cautious, and Karim returned to continue his watch and with strict orders to shoot only at night. This time he took up his quarters near Colonel Skinner's house in Kashmir Gate. Here he was nearer his prey. He had his gun filed off, so that it could be fired at point blank range, and lay in wait for Fraser as before. The weeks passed by, but Fraser still persisted in riding about attended. Karim complained of his orders not to shoot by day and said that he would certainly shoot some European gentleman before leaving, if only to save appearances. All the time the Nawab's younger brother, Amin-ud-din, was in Calcutta prosecuting his suit with Fraser's support. To the Nawab's inquiry of progress, Karim replied that the 'dogs' were well guarded. To this the Nawab replied in his own hand. 'You have written that there was an orderly with the dogs; tell me, are these persons with the dogs as guardians or merely in company with the dogs from another quarter? You must purchase the dogs but purchase them so that no one shall be aware of the purchase....' Karim wrote two more letters. 'A short time ago', said the first, 'an opportunity once presented itself, but they asked a very high price, on this account I could not purchase them. I trust in God that your slave will bring the dogs in such a way as to please you . . .'. The second showed increasing anxiety. 'With regard to the purchase of sporting dogs, you order me not to be in a hurry. Sir, I hurry matters because much delay has already occurred. By some means I will purchase the dogs and do myself the honour of waiting on you with them.' The Nawab again enjoined caution, showing clearly that he was thinking more of revenge than of forestalling Fraser's efforts in Calcutta. 'In the matter of the dogs such haste is not proper. Circumspection is necessary, so that no one may know who purchased them.'[7]

Karim redoubled his watchfulness. At last, he heard that Fraser would attend a party of Hindu Rao's[8] in the suburbs on 13 March. Karim lay in wait on the road usually taken by Fraser. But that night Fraser rode home by a different way, and once more Karim returned to Kashmir Gate disappointed. On the 22nd the Raja of Kishangarh gave a party at his house in the suburbs. Karim Khan again lay in wait. This time he was not disappointed. About 11 o'clock a shot rang out, the sound of a galloping horse was heard, and Fraser, the friend of Jacquemment, the chivalrous and wayward genius of the Delhi Territory, lay dead.

Then followed the hunt. Thomas Metcalfe was aroused in his mansion, and his daughter described the scene that followed:[9]

> Georgie and I were sitting in the Bay drawing room with our Mother who was instructing and reading to us—how clearly I remember that evening—sitting between us! My Father was sitting in the Napoleon gallery. . . . The whole house was still and hushed as only an Indian house can be, when suddenly there were sounds of great stir amongst the servants, and my Father came hurriedly into the room where we were sitting and announced Mr Fraser's death and that he was going out at once to inquire into the murder. How well I remember clinging to my Mother, and her horror at the news, and our childish fears for our Father's safety, that because Mr Fraser had been murdered, perhaps Father would be too! We heard the carriage drive rapidly away, and we sat by our Mother who was silent and remained there till our Father's return.

Karim Khan had turned his horse's shoes round to conceal his tracks. At daybreak he had entered the city and concealed himself in Wassail Khan's house. The gun he threw down a well. He believed himself safe there until the first storm blew over, for Mughul Beg in the palace assured him that there was no evidence whatever against him. His accomplice fled back across country to Firozpur, and being a man of the country, he could do so without exciting suspicion. But Karim had reckoned without John Lawrence,[10] a hitherto unknown district officer. John was then at Panipat; he heard the news while taking his bath on the morning of 23 March after many hours' work, and immediately rode the forty miles to Delhi to help Metcalfe. Metcalfe had already been told by one Fateh Khan, that Shams-ud-din was possibly implicated. This must have been generally obvious, since Shams-ud-din was the only prominent man known to have an adequate motive. But here John's local knowledge came in. He knew that Wassail Khan was a connexion of the Nawab's and he forthwith searched his house. There he found a horse with fine nail marks indicating that the shoes had been reversed and replaced. Lawrence admired the horse and when a lounger in the courtyard said it was off its feed, gave it grain which it ate greedily. Lawrence forthwith arrested the lounger who was in fact Karim Khan himself. His quarters were searched and his correspondence discovered. But still there was nothing but circumstantial evidence against Karim, who protested that he was merely in Delhi purchasing dogs for his master, and there was as yet nothing to link the Nawab with the murder.

The missing link was discovered in the person of Ania, the Mewati accomplice of Karim. If the Nawab had been judicious and had sheltered Ania, all might yet have been well for him. But the news of Karim's arrest threw him into an agony of suspense and indecision. Could Ania be trusted to keep quiet? Would it not be better to put him away also and so destroy possible hostile evidence? But if so, how could it be done secretly? Would not the disappearance of a man known to have been in Delhi in his service excite comment in the district and come to the ears of the Government? Might not ill-wishers, of whom there was never any lack, carry tales to Delhi? He wavered between the desire of removing evidence and the fear of further implicating himself, and the result was to precipitate just the disaster that he wished to avoid. Ania came to know that his death was being discussed. He fled, just in time, to his village and then to the hills. He lay concealed for some time, but at last, despairing of his life in Firozpur, he determined to give himself up and turn king's evidence.

From this point the story is simple. The Nawab was arrested and asked to explain his letters to Karim Khan. He said that he had to purchase dogs in secret in order to avoid paying exhorbitant rates. But this did not explain why Karim Khan had lived in Delhi for six months without buying any, and the curious language in the letters about seeing the dog alone. This would not in itself have gone far, but the proved connexion of Karim Khan with the Nawab, and then the confessions of Ania completed the legal chain of evidence. Finally, the sawn-off gun was accidentally recovered from a well near the Kabul Gate when it was being dragged for a brass vessel which had fallen to the bottom on the breaking of the rope. It was the evidence of Ania which was fatal to him, and it is clear that Ania's desertion was the direct result of the Nawab's suspicions and indecisions.[17]

The Nawab's judge was Russell Colvin, the future Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces who died at Agra during the Mutiny. He was sentenced to be hanged. There seems to have been no compunction such as was later felt in the case of the Gaekwar of Baroda about executing a ruling prince.[18] Presumably the secondary rank of the state, a *jagir* created by the British Government for services rendered in the Maratha wars, was the explanation. Firozpur was annexed, while Amin-ud-din, the younger brother, was left in possession of the disputed territory of Loharu.

The Nawab and Karim Khan were executed on 3 October 1835, outside Kashmir Gate. A town crier was sent round the city, using the traditional call of Oyez, Oyez, to warn the crowd to keep behind the sentries. It had the effect, however, of keeping them away until the execution was over, when they gathered expecting to see the body 'made into smoke', or blown away from a gun. In this they were also disappointed. The Nawab wore the martyr's coat of green, and the pious declared that the body swung towards Mecca at the last.

He was buried at the *dargah* of Qutab Sahib at Mahrauli, the favourite burying place of the late Mughul kings and gentry. For some time there was a vogue of pilgrimage to the tomb but this has long ago ceased. A trace of the feeling aroused survived till the Mutiny. When the mutineers plundered St James's Church, they spared the tombs both of Metcalfe and the Skinner family, but destroyed Fraser's beyond repair. Colonel Skinner had erected a handsome tomb,[13] supported by marble pillars and surmounted by a dome, facing the west front of the church. Only the base of the tomb a piece of inlaid work now in the chancel, and an inscription now remain. Fragments of marble pillars believed to belong to the tomb lie behind the church, but they are not sufficient to enable a reconstruction to be made. The records of the church were lost during the Mutiny, and no picture of this monument has yet been discovered. We have, however, a description of the tomb by Fanny Parks, who visited Delhi and saw the tomb in 1838.[14]

'In the churchyard is the tomb of Mr William Frazer, who was murdered by the Nawab Shumsheodin: Colonel Skinner has erected a monument to the memory of his friend; it is of white marble, in compartments, which are inlaid with green stones, representing the weeping willow; the whole was executed at Jeypore, and cost, it is said, 10,000 rupees. On the top is a vase, and, in a compartment in front of the church is a Persian inscription. Below are these lines, and in front of the lines are two lions reposing: to none but an Irishman would it be clear that the *us* in the epitaph proceeds from the lions.

'Deep beneath this marble stone
A kindred spirit to our own
Sleeps in death's profound repose,
Freed from human cares and woes;
Like *us* his heart like *ours* his frame,
He bore on earth a gallant name.
Friendship gives to *us* the trust
To guard the hero's honour'd dust

'On the other side of the monument is another inscription, also written by Colonel Skinner.

'THE REMAINS
INTERRED BENEATH THIS MONUMENT
WERE ONCE ANIMATED
BY AS BRAVE AND SINCERE
A SOUL
AS WAS EVER VOUCHSAFED TO MAN
BY HIS
CREATOR!
A BROTHER IN FRIENDSHIP
HAS CAUSED IT TO BE ERECTED,
THAT, WHEN HIS OWN FRAME IS DUST,
IT MAY REMAIN
AS A
MEMORIAL
FOR THOSE WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN LAMENTING
THE SUDDEN AND MELANCHOLY LOSS
OF ONE
DEAR TO HIM AS LIFE.
WILLIAM FRASER
DIED MARCH 22ND, 1835.'

APPENDIX A

Fraser's Tomb

Search has so far failed to reveal the exact nature of Fraser's tomb. The India Office Library has prints of St James's Church in 1835, before the tomb was erected, and in 1857, after it had been destroyed. The only two prints it possesses of the intervening period marked 'received in the Library, March 1839', unfortunately are taken from an angle which precludes a view of the tomb, even if it had been erected when the print was made. The prints do show a subsidiary structure, but this is quite clearly one of the servants' quarters and storehouses to the east of the church.[15] The *Asar-as Sanadad* of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, first published in 1843, mentions the grave and says: 'The grave of Mr Fraser is also built of very good marble with inlay work. The grave is enclosed with an iron enclosure.'[16] Garcin de Tassy in 1852 repeated this description.[17] Neither Fanny Parks nor C. J. French in his *Journal of a Tour in Upper India*[18] mention the iron railing, but the evidence of Sir Ahmad Khan on this point is decisive. Perhaps iron railings were not picturesque enough for Mrs Parks. The only ocular evidence left is the marble work in the sanctuary of St James's Church, which is typical of the period, and the marble columns, mentioned by Hearn in 1906 as 'being scattered about the place in confusion'.[19] These same columns were during the last war buried to the east of the church for their better preservation. In the absence of any picture, the description of Fanny Parks holds the field with the addition of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's iron railings and the detail by French that the inscription was in letters of gold. The iron railings were very probably similar to those surrounding the Skinner graves. These are entered through a gate, and one would thus think of the railings as being part of the tomb.

APPENDIX B

Hindu Rao's House

Sleeman, in his description of Fraser's murder, speaks of Fraser as attending a party at Hindu Rao's house.[20] He thereby caused some confusion by the natural implication that this house was the same as that known later as Hindu Rao's house and to-day as the Hindu Rao Hospital. In fact Fraser himself was living in what subsequently became Hindu Rao's house and it was on his return thither that he was shot. Fraser is stated in the list of Muhammedan and Hindu monuments of Delhi Province[21] to have built the house in 1830, and his executors to have sold it to Hindu Rao in 1835. This is confirmed by Fanshawe in his *Delhi Past and Present.*[22] Hindu Rao himself came to Delhi in 1832 and died there in 1855. It was this twenty years' tenure which identified his name with the house in the public mind and caused Fraser's connexion with it to be forgotten. Fraser's occupation of the house is further supported by a note in the Hardcastle Papers.[23] Finally, we have Jacquemment's note in 1831:[24] I am alone in Mr Fraser's immense house which is a kind of Gothic fortress, built by himself at an immense expense where Timur Lan$\overset{o}{g}$gne pitched his tent when he laid siege to Delhi.'

Timur is known to have taken the Jahan Numa, Firoz Shah's hunting box on the Ridge close to the later site of Hindu Rao's house, and to have repulsed there an attack by Indian cavalry in 1398. From his camp at Loni he crossed the river near the present waterworks at Wazirabad, and passed via the Ridge to the scene of the main battle with the Tughluq Sultan on the site of the present aerodrome. The site of metropolitan Delhi was then of course at the Qutab.[25] Timur's name was popularly connected with the Ridge, and if therefore Jacquemment was not strictly accurate in his historical reference, he had quite enough historical material to feed his active imagination. The reference to 'a kind of Gothic fortress' is puzzling, because Hindu Rao's house, as shown in Mutiny prints, was of classical design. There was no doubt, however, of its fortress-like appearance. The entrance to the house was under a deep porch vaulted in the late Mughul style, which has a resemblance to Tudor Gothic, and the basement, which was used in the hot weather for coolness, was similarly vaulted. This fact may account for Jacquemment's phrase, which was written at a time when things Gothic were 'in the air', and men saw its traces in the most unlikely places.

But there remains a question whether Fraser actually built the house or took it over from another. Fraser spent much of his official life in the Territory until his appointment as Commissioner. In 1829 he acted as Resident for a short time but was suspended (as had been noticed) for undue tenderness to Colebrooke. It is not till 1831 that he was said to live in 'an immense house' which he had built at great expense. Building great houses costs money, and there was another in Delhi at the same period who had both the means and the taste for lavish expenditure. This was Sir Edward Colebrooke himself. The following suggestion is put forward, not as a finally proved statement, but as an explanation suggested by several pieces of evidence. Colebrooke is known to have had a house of his own and not to have used the Residency at any rate after the first few months. The possession of his own house was perhaps the reason that he was so ready to dispose of the Residency furniture, which he had bought (but not paid for) from Sir Charles Metcalfe. The possession of a house by Colebrooke is attested by the Records, which mention a suggestion for its purchase for the use of the Delhi Institution for Rs. 20,000 in 1831.[26] The Delhi Institution eventually came to rest in the old Residency, and this fact, together with the price, suggests that Colebrooke's house was a large one. In a note to Trevelyan in 1828 Colebrooke wrote: 'Every man who has anything to ask or anything to say has direct access to myself *even at the hill* in this hot weather.'[27] Only one hill exists in the civil lines to the north of Delhi, and it is the Ridge. There was only one house of European style on the Ridge before the Mutiny, and it was the house known as Hindu Rao's house. The only other houses were in the *bazar* round the Khyber Pass which served the cantonment, whose sole relic is now a small mosque. A house of the size Colebrooke's could not disappear completely any more than of Thomas Metcalfe's could; it was both too large and too valuable. It seems therefore a fair conclusion that Colebrooke built Hindu Rao's house and was there during the quarrel with Trevelyan. Fraser was a friend of Colebrooke to the point of risking his official position. What was more likely than that Fraser should finally have helped his friend by taking his house off his hands when the Government refused to purchase? It is notable that neither Colebrooke nor Fraser lived long enough in the house to give their names to it.

CHAPTER X

THE MUTINY IN DELHI

Any study of late Mughul Delhi would be incomplete without some reference to the final catastrophe of the Mutiny. At the same time a fresh recital of the mutineers' arrival from Meerut, of the resultant massacre, of the march of the relief force and the consequent siege and capture of the city would add nothing further to a story already often and skilfully told. The victims of the outbreak and the siege have been mourned, its heroes and their deeds have been celebrated.[1] But the impact of the Mutiny upon the city itself has never yet been systematically treated. The attitude of the Court and citizens has only received a passing mention and the fate of the city and its people after the recapture has been suggested rather than described. Two narratives of affairs in the city during the siege have been published, but other available material, including papers collected by Kaye and now in the Commonwealth Relations Office Library, have not been used because historians have hitherto been concerned mainly with the siege from the British point of view. It is therefore now proposed to examine the Mutiny in Delhi from the point of view of the Delhi citizen.

In the spring of 1857 Delhi was a prosperous and growing city. The city which was reported to have had two million inhabitants in the days of Aurangzeb's residence and 500,000 in 1740 after Nadir Shah's invasion, had shrunk to something over 100,000 in the early years of the century.[3] An observer had estimated the population to be 120,000 about 1833,[4] but this was probably an underestimate. A census return made in the years 1845–7 gave a total for city, suburbs and palace of about 166,000.[5] Simon Fraser gave a figure of 152,000 for the city only in 1856, which with the suburbs and palace would give a total of about 182,000. Delhi was no longer economically a frontier town looking to an alien Punjab and surrounded by an exhausted countryside. It was the metropolis of a flourishing agricultural territory and the commercial centre for a growing trade with the reviving Punjab, and a stable if still feudal

Rajputana. Its suburbs, it is true, were only relics of the fifty-two *bazars* and thirty-six *mandis* of the eighteenth century,[6] but all the signs were that the city was prosperous and that its wealth was growing.

The life of the city had now continued in a well-worn groove for over forty years. The former insecurity had vanished and the fact was attested, not only in the growth of the suburbs without the walls, but by the British bungalows in the civil lines to the northward. Civil officers had moved from Daryaganj and the Kashmir Gate area and some, like Colebrooke and Metcalfe, had built mansions in the open country. The unwalled township of Mahrauli had awakened to new life, and was now the summer resort of the aristocracy. Mughul courtier, Hindu and Muslim merchant and British official lived side by side in a peaceful plural economy. The Court was the cultural centre, the Hindus dominated the commercial life and the British conducted the administration. There was much interchange of civilities and much give and take in daily life. Official garden parties at Metcalfe House were attended by Mughul princes and Hindu bankers equally with British officials and their wives.[7] The Court celebrated the Hindu festivals of *Diwali* and *Holi* as well as the Muslim *Ids*; the Hindus regarded the *Mohurram* ceremonies and procession as almost as much their own as the Muslims'. Bahadur Shah followed his father in the semi-Hindu custom of making *murids* or disciples, who regarded him as a spiritual preceptor in virtue of his kingly office,[8] and the festival of *Punkahs*, held at Mahrauli in the rains, was attended impartially by Hindus and Muslims, who went in procession in turn to the Hindu temple of Jógmayaji and the tomb of the Muslim saint Qutab-ad-din.[9] Communal life was tranquil but not quite idyllic.[10] There were no records of riots during the period, but there was always an undertone of tension. It centred round the vexed question of the sacrifice of cows. From time to time Hindus suggested that the right should be restricted and the Muslims that it should be extended. In 1819 on a general dispute about cow-sacrifice Thomas Metcalfe and Fortescue issued an order allowing sacrifice within houses.[11] The usage was crystallized by an order in 1835 which stated that 'Mahomedans are allowed to kill cows at the *Eed* in their own houses and at accustomed places where it would not be offensive to the Hindoos.'[12] In 1852 on a fresh dispute the magistrate Roberts ordered 'that a list be prepared of the individuals who were in the habit of making sacrifice and that the rite may be observed at certain places where it used to be observed before'. Those who made the sacrifice that year had their names inscribed on a permitted list to the discontent of those who, through sickness, absence from Delhi or mere disinclination at the time, omitted to do so. The Hindus had the weapon of petitions to the Lieutenant-Governor, the Muslims the possibility of talking round the King and the suborning of Hindus in the royal employ to support the Muslim case. In 1854 the question was once more agitated; the Hindus in their petition wrote as follows:[13]

> Since the arrival of the British in India and the occupation of several of its provinces, by its just and generous masters, justice reigns over all subjects without any partiality whatever, and all the nations whether Hindus or Mohammedans enjoy peace and freedom, security of property and religion. A Mohammedan says his prayer in a *Masjid* while a Hindu offers his oblations to the gods in his temple without the slightest hindrance whatever. But before the arrival of such benevolent and just people as the British the poor helpless Hindus were subjected to innumerable persecutions. None and particularly a Hindu was ever permitted to have a red cloth in the days of the holy *Mohurram* and if (God forbid) they ever did so their whole body was lacerated with blood. The deliverance of the Hindus from that miserable condition which they suffered long under their tyrant masters, has created jealousy in the minds of the Mohammedans and the King particularly, who being their chief in religious matters, had, through the persuasiveness of several Punjabis, and particularly Hakim Ahsan-ullah Khan, the loyal physician, written a *shuqa* to your Honour's Agent at Delhi urging him to issue an order for the sacrifice of cows to take place in all the bazars and streets of the city for three sucessive days at their abominable festival, *Id-ul-Zuha*.

This petition, which had a familiar ring, received the usual answer, that the feelings of both sides must be considered and that there would be no change in the existing practice. Communal tension existed, but it did not reach breaking-point because of the firmness of the administration on the one hand and the general unwillingness of the King's advisers to encourage it on the other. The Palace Intelligence[14] recorded a

Muslim complaint of the magistrates' decisions upon which 'Hakim Ahsan-ullah Khan (by the King's desire) spoke angrily and said their faith did not consist in sacrificing cows and they were not to embroil his Majesty'. The King himself usually sacrificed a camel in the *Diwan-i-Khas* at the *Id*, and when challenged on the point said that he remembered its being done in the time of Shah Alam (who died in 1806).

The general picture of the city before the Mutiny has been so well sketched by the late C. F. Andrews on the basis of reports of old residents still living in the early years of this century that it is worth quoting extensively. Allowance should of course be made for the golden haze through which old age is apt to view the scenes of youth, but the picture presented is even then picturesque and attractive:[15]

> The city itself was almost strictly confined within the walls, which were then intact. The city gates were shut each night and opened again every morning. By far the greater number of people lived within the walls of the city. They rarely went outside, except either to visit the tomb of some saint, or to go on a long distant journey. There were only a few houses outside the Kashmere Gate, and none at all outside the Delhi Gate. where the ruins of the seven cities of Delhi covered the ground.
>
> Inside the city itself the people were crowded together; for Delhi was very prosperous during those peaceful years after the British occupation. Where the present railway stands with its network of railway lines, was in those early days one of the most thickly populated parts of Old Delhi. Furthermore (and here the change of the picture was greatest of all) the large wide open space between the Jama Masjid and the Fort, which is now kept without any buildings at all for strictly military purposes, was at that time filled with houses of the middle class inhabitants of the city, and used as a residential quarter. There were also houses there which belonged to the nobility of the Moghul Court; this Court was held near at hand in the Fort.
>
> During the second quarter of the nineteenth century, between 1830 and 1850, when the 'English Peace', as it was commonly called, was firmly established, there was great abundance within the city, and people began for the first time for want for room, and because of the peaceful conditions, to live in small numbers outside the city walls. The common people were much helped and encouraged by the general cheapness of articles of food. For a long time the prices remained extremely low, since Delhi was the centre

of a very large and fertile agricultural area. The rate of wheat was about forty seers to the rupee, and that of *ghee* (or clarified butter) four seers to the rupee—a 'seer' being reckoned at about two pounds avoirdupois. Such figures as these were given me from two or three sources; they represent an almost incredible cheapness as compared with similar prices in modern times. Articles of clothing were practically all made of homespun cotton cloth; wool was very rarely used. The padded cotton quilt was worn in the cold weather in order to keep out the winter cold. Anything that came up country from Calcutta was usually brought by boat to Agra and thence on a pack-saddle, and therefore was very expensive. But every handicraft in Old Delhi was kept fully employed, and a good price was obtained for durable hand-made goods.

The majority of the residents led a comfortable and easy going existence owing to the general level of prosperity within the city and the peace which had been newly established. Festivals were common, and they were kept with great pomp and ceremonial. Processions through the city were of almost daily occurrence during the marriage season, and immense sums of money were spent in wedding festivities and decorations. The daily intercourse and intermingling of the citizens in the streets were full of colour, variety and charm. Bright coloured clothes were the fashion, and the nobles especially rivalled one another in their splendid costumes. The markets contained very few foreign goods; the country-made goods were fine in quality and not expensive. They were also remarkable for their rich dyes. The horses, on which the nobles rode through the streets of the city, had gorgeous trappings, and there were frequent cavalcades with tinkling bells and costly equipage. 'You might have thought it rather tawdry', said one of my informants, 'but we, who were boys at the time, can never forget its magnificence. We used to walk along by the side of the horses and join in these processions.'

Another informant told me that outside the city there was only one good high-road. This was kept in repair and was much frequented by carriages in the evening during the twilight hour after the sun had gone down. Inside the city, the ordinary roads and by-lanes were full of holes. They regularly became a mass of mud during each rainy season, and the people used to get along the sides close to the shop-fronts on stones which stood above the mud. But the Delhi people did not notice much inconvenience, because they had been used to it all through their lives and the rainy season did not last very long. The dust in the dry weather was more trying than the rain.

The nobles of the city, who were attached to the royal court, kept stately bullock carriages, richly caparisoned, in which they went from place to place accompanied by much jolting. Sometimes one wheel of the carriage would come off, owing to the roughness of the road, and the whole traffic would be blocked. Down the middle of the central thoroughfare of Delhi—the world-famous Chandni Chowk—ran a canal, and shady trees grew on both sides. There was a universal opinion among those whom I questioned, that the Chandni Chowk had been spoilt by the modern 'improvements' that had widened the road, but covered over in doing so the water of the canal....

The finest sight in the streets, which was in a certain sense the pride of the inhabitants of Delhi in those by-gone days, was to watch the royal elephants, covered with cloth of gold, with huge gilded howdahs on their backs, as they were led in a stately, slow procession through the streets. The Chandni Chowk would be thronged with spectators on these rare occasions. These State elephants were especially attractive to the young. It is interesting to note that among the reminiscences of Old Delhi, these elephant processions occupied a prominent place. Those who related the story to me were themselves children in those early days, and the gorgeousness of the scene had evidently impressed their young imaginations. Not far from the Jama Masjid was an immense well, called the 'Well of the Elephants'. Here the royal elephants used to be brought, each morning and evening, without their gorgeous trappings, in order to be bathed and to be given water. The children would watch them with never-ending excitement.

But Delhi life did not consist only of processions, social festivities and gaily coloured dresses. There was also an active literary and intellectual movement. Urdu literature flourished, its rival leaders being Ghalib, the great poet, and Zauq, the favourite of Bahadur Shah. The Delhi College with its English Institute existed in the Royal Library of Dara Shukoh's palace near Kashmir Gate. Here a movement of even greater import was proceeding. English books sent up for the English courses by the Calcutta Book Society were translated and passed from hand to hand. But whereas the enthusiasm which English literature inspired in Bengal was mainly literary, in Delhi it was scientific.

By far the most popular side of the education offered in the old Delhi College was that which dealt with science. Here the interest was paramount, and it soon extended into the nomes of the city, where the new experiments would be repeated as far as possible in the presence of the parents.[16]

One of the group thus describes the effect:[17]

> The doctrines of ancient philosophy taught through the medium of Aristotle were thus cast in the shade before the more reasonable and experimental theories of modern science. The old dogma, for instance that the earth is the fixed centre of the universe, was generally laughed at by the higher students of the Oriental as well as by those of the English Department of the Delhi College.

Among the group were Ramchandra the mathematician, who became a Christian, Mukand Lal, the first Indian in the North-West with a European medical training, Nazir Ahmad, who later became the leading Urdu prose writer, Zia-ud-din and Muhammad Husain, who were famous literary figures, and Altaf Husain, the Hali of Urdu poetry. Maulvi Zakaullah was then a student. He and others of this group were afterwards associated with the Aligarh movement of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who also valued Western knowledge specially for its scientific content. Old and new for a time met together in the short-lived Delhi Renaissance.

It was upon this scene that, with hardly any warning, there burst the troopers from Meerut in the morning of Monday, 11 May. There was talk, it is true, of unrest in the army which had been creeping up country. There had been outbreaks of arson at neighbouring cantonments and rumours of the circulation of *chapatis*.[18] There had been rumours of palace discontent with Government's refusal to recognize the King's favourite son, Mirza Jiwan Bakht, as his heir, and its decision to remove the royal family to the Qutab at his death. There had been rumours of aid from Persia, recently at war with the Company, and even of interference from Russia.[19] A notice had appeared on the walls of the Jama Masjid purporting to be from the Shah of Persia, calling on Muslims to sink their differences and promising aid. But, according to Sir John Metcalfe, it was only a 'small dirty piece of paper with a naked sword and shield depicted', which had remained in place for about three hours one day in the month of March.[20] Within the palace community the prophecies and nostrums of Pirzada Hasan

Askari, an attenuated prototype of the Russian Rasputin, had aroused some interest.[21] But all these amounted to little more than the murmurings which normally formed the undertone of the Delhi community, the summer lightning, as it were, of old-fashioned Oriental society. They were one part of the amusements of an idle society rather than a call to action. More serious was the news of the refusal of the eighty-five sepoys at Meerut to accept the new cartridges and the journey of Indian officers from Delhi to take part in their court martial. But this had not had time to penetrate far into the Delhi population. It is safe to say that none of these things had seriously stirred the Hindu citizens or the rank and file of the Muslims.

The King was sitting in the *baithak* or sitting room of his private apartments overlooking the Jumna when the first troops appeared at 7 a.m. in the open space below the *jharoka* or balcony which adjoined it. At about the same time a trooper of the 38th Regiment appeared at the Lahore Gate of the Fort and asked for a drink of water and a pipe.[22] On hearing shouts from the open space below and being told the cause, the King sent his *vakil*, Ghulam Abbas, who was standing near, to call Captain Douglas, the commandant of the palace guard.[23] Douglas was restrained by the King and the *Hakim*, who had arrived in the meantime, from descending to the troops by the small gate immediately below, and remonstrated with them from the balcony connecting the private apartments with the *Diwan-i-Khas*. Thereupon they made off along the line of the Fort and city wall which continues southward and found an entry at the Rajghat Gate which led into the Daryaganj quarter inhabited by the subordinate European community. The 38th Regiment, which was on duty in the city, joined them and there then began a period of confusion which ended in the complete disappearance of government authority. The sequence of events has been frequently described and here a brief summary must suffice. The Europeans and Anglo-Indians in Daryaganj and isolated posts in the city were overpowered; the men and some women were killed, the remaining women finding refuge in the palace or private houses. The British officers at the Calcutta Gate were killed or, like Sir John Metcalfe, fled to friends in the city; the palace was thrown open by its guard and its British commandant killed; the magazine, a large enclosure where the present Post Office stands, was defended by nine men from 10 to 3.30 p.m. and then blown up; the three Indian regiments in the cantonments to the north of the city mutinied and at dusk the surviving officers and British women, who had spent the day at the Flagstaff Tower on the Ridge, looking expectantly in the direction of Meerut, made off by the Grand Trunk Road, the canal and across open fields towards Karnal and Ambala to the north.

All the evidence from Indian sources suggests that the city was completely taken by surprise. The inhabitants, whether sympathizers with the troops or not, were going about their daily business when overtaken by the tumult; even the *badmashes*, or bad characters, were unprepared to plunder. The cry was that the Russians had come.[24] To the peaceable mercantile and official Hindu community the coming of the troops was another *gardi* or visitation like that of Nadir Shah or Ahmad Shah Durrani; to the Muslim merchants it was much the same. To the Muslim malcontents and the Mughul princes the surprise was delightful, but nevertheless a surprise; neither the troops from Meerut nor the regiments in Delhi knew what to do next. Outside the walls, the collapse of authority meant to the Jat cultivators danger to their crops and the probability of exactions, and to the pastoral Gujars an unexpected opportunity to resume their ancestral trade of plunder. There was no rising in the countryside, and even Gujar action was limited to particular acts of vengeance such as the sack of Metcalfe House.[25] Neither in the city nor among the troops from Delhi or Meerut was a leader to be found, and if conspirators existed they lacked both a directing genius or any concerted plan of action.

For the Delhi citizens the day was one of terror and tumult, resounding with cries of *Din, Din* (the faith) and devoted to the hunting out and killing of Europeans and their supporters. Shops were shuttered and houses barred, the people sitting within in fear of their lives. At nightfall the local bad characters added their quota to the general terror. More European fugitives were betrayed to the mutineers because of the citizens' terror of the soldiery than through any calculated ill-will.

To fill the political and administrative vacuum there was an obvious recourse in the King of Delhi. But it would not have been obvious if there had been any serious planning of the revolt. All the regiments contained Hindu elements. The titular headship of a rebellion by a Mughul King could not be pleasing to Hindu and particularly Maratha conspirators, who had a leader in Nana Sahib in Cawnpore and potential resources in the army of Sindia in Gwalior. It could not but alienate the Sikhs (as the event proved) who had a longer and deeper tradition of hostility to the Muslim rule than they had to the British. The possibilities of Sikh support are suggested by the fact that there was a Sikh force in Delhi in the latter part of the siege.[26] It was therefore for lack of any preconceived plan and as it were by instinct that the troops turned to an old man of eighty-two whose reputation was purely literary and who had never shown any great sign of ambition.

The King, too, was surprised by the arrival of the Meerut troops. He ordered the palace gates to be shut against them, and on the news of the death of Douglas and Simon he was 'bewildered'.[27] When two companies of the palace guard and a crowd of Meerut cavaliers burst into the *Diwan-i-Khas* firing and shouting the King came out to them and asked for silence and an explanation. To their reply that they had come to fight for their religion he answered, 'I did not call for you; you have acted very wickedly'. But they insisted, seated him in a chair and did obeisance to him.[28] According to the *Hakim* the King said, 'I have neither troops, magazines nor treasury. I am not in a condition to join anyone.' To which the troops replied, 'Only give us your countenance and we will provide everything'. The King then retired, the cavalry remaining in the *Mahtab Bagh* (Moonlight Garden) and the infantry in the courtyard of the *Diwan-i-Khas*. By nightfall 300 irregular cavalry, the three cantonment regiments and two from Meerut had crowded into the Fort in chaotic bivouac. The King found his two most trusted confidants, Mahbub Ali Khan, the *mukhtar* or agent, and the *Hakim*, Ahsanullah Khan 'the loyal physician', no more enthusiastic than himself, and on the advice of the latter sent a letter by camel express to the Lieutenant-Governor at Agra informing him of the situation. The camel-driver reported delivery of the letter, but brought no receipt or reply.[29]

This wild scene, the mutineers in disorder and violence without, and the King and his advisers in bewilderment and despondency within, marked the height of the confusion. There was tumult in the city all night. The King was reluctant but he was also old. Though distraught by his position and offended by the familiarity of the soldiers,[30] he had neither means of resistance nor possibility of escape. He had his own grievances and sense of injured dignity. He had not very much to lose and possibly something very great to gain. He bowed to destiny or the force of circumstances and thenceforward the pattern of the new régime rapidly took shape. The reluctance of the King was more than compensated by the eagerness of the Princes. Mirza Zohur-ud-din, henceforward to be referred to as Mirza Mughul, took the lead, and the others followed in claiming the command of the various regiments. After a conference of leading Muslims had failed to produce an executive council,[31] Mirza Mughul was recognized by the army as commander-in-chief with other princes as colonels of regiments.[32] On this day both the King and Mirza Mughul went in procession through the city and the King went again on the 15th in order to restore confidence. But the first burst of revolutionary violence had not yet spent itself. Its principal target was the Europeans surviving in the city and its secondary ones were Christians in general and those thought to be in sympathy with the British or lukewarm towards the revolt. The European leaders had been killed in the first day's tumult, some trapped in their houses and some fighting to the last like the bank manager Beresford on the roof of the Begam Samru's former palace. Some, like Sir John Metcalfe,[33] escaped with the aid of Indian friends while others lay concealed in the city. About fifty (mostly women and children) found refuge in the palace, where they were confined in a long dark room whose only aperture was the door.[34] As soon as it was known that they were in the palace an agitation began for their execution, led by Mirza Mughul and Basant Ali Khan. The King and his advisers, Ahsanullah and Mahbub, resisted; to Turki horsemen calling for death the King replied 'that there was no risk in keeping women and children in confinement and no advantage in killing them,'[35] while the *Hakim* said that it was against worldly wisdom and the Koran and quoted the example of the Afghan treatment of British women prisoners in 1842. Upon this the cry was raised that the ministers were in league with the British; Mahbub Ali Khan's house was plundered and both ministers were accused of writing to the British.[36] On the 16th came the tragic climax. Troops thronged the *Diwan-i-Khas* and horsemen with drawn swords were in wait for the *Hakim*. The leaders went in to the King. 'There was a great uproar in the Palace, the sepoys on the one hand and the King's household on the other contending with violent language and harsh vociferations.'[37] What precisely happened within will never be known. But eventually Mirza Mughul and Basant Ali Khan came out and said that they had permission.[38] The prisoners were brought to the tank in the court of the *Naqar Khana* and there butchered in cold blood.[39] Mirza Mughul looked on from the roof of his house.

The first blood-lust of the troops and Princes being now sated, it was possible to set about the work of organizing the Government. The administration was rapidly improvised and addressed itself to the triple task of restoring order, collecting funds and extending its authority. It will be convenient here to consider the mutiny administration of Delhi as a whole. The fount of authority was of course the King himself, but the physical sanction of that authority was the troops. The problem was in the beginning, and remained throughout, to weld the nominal authority to the actual power. The King depended upon his personal advisers, of whom the chief were Hakim Ahsanullah Khan and Mahbub Ali Khan, but these two men were suspected by the army, not altogether without cause, of being in sympathy with the British. Whatever their private feelings might be, their worldly wisdom was considerable, their scepticism great and their distaste for the rough manners of the soldiery but partially concealed. Both had their houses plundered at different times and both found themselves under guard. The natural link was the Princes, with Mirza Mughul at their head. But the Mirza's sympathy with the King was very imperfect, and before long that of the army with the Princes was less perfect still. At first Mirza Mughul as commander-in-chief and the Princes as colonels fulfilled, at least to some extent, this function. The civil power was in theory directly responsible to the King. His favourite son, the youthful Jiwan Bakht, was appointed Vazir (or Prime Minister)[40] but there is no evidence that he ever transacted any business. The work of administration was carried on by the *Kotwal* or head of the city police. The courts continued to work though the theoretical supremacy of the Muslim law was recognized by the appointment of a *Sadr-us-Sadur*. Officers were appointed to collect revenue in the districts and worked, as far as they had opportunity and authority, like deputy commissioners and collectors. The treasurer continued his office. The actual day-to-day work was performed, on the evidence of the *Mutiny Papers*, by the *Kotwal* and the *thanadars*. The striking fact about these arrangements was that they followed almost entirely the existing model; no attempt seems to have been made to revert to the old imperial system. The titles were Persian but the system was British. Time of course was brief, and the British system itself contained Mughul elements, but the fact remains that there was no conscious reversion to the past.

There was, however, one innovation of interest. With the coming of the Bareilly force early in July, a fresh attempt was made to integrate the civil and military sides of the Government and to link the King with the mutineers. Muhammad Bakht Khan, the Bareilly leader, was nominated Governor-General (the title was *Sahib-i-Alam Bahadur*) and a court, known as the Administrative Court, or Court of Mutineers, was created.[41] Its function was to control both civil and military affairs, and its membership of ten included six military and four civil representatives. It elected its own President and its decisions were subject to the approval of both Muhammad Bakht Khan and the King. It appears as sometimes taking decisions, sometimes giving advice and even as trying legal cases.[42] Representatives from particular regiments were sometimes called to its meetings.[43] In intention it would seem to have been a war cabinet with the widest powers; in practice it was a sort of liaison committee between the various regiments and between the civilians and military. In its latter days it fell under the universal suspicion of being in league with the British.[44] There is no Mughul precedent that I am aware of for such a body, nor was it borrowed from the British. No doubt it was in fact a device invented on the spot to meet a difficult situation. But there is also a distinct resemblance to the 'Punches' or committees of the Sikh army, whose final dissolution had occurred only eight years previously.[45] References to committees of regiments reinforce the resemblance and it is at least possible that the memory of the Sikh committees, whose existence must have been well known in the Indian army, suggested the idea of the court's formation.

There was little time for anything like a settled administrative policy to develop. Some evidence of a plan, however, can be discerned in two directions. An effort was made to control the adjacent countryside. One bundle of the Mutiny papers concerns the efforts of the *jagirdar* Tula Ram to establish order in the Rewari district.[46] It would appear that the royal authority extended as far as Rohtak to the north-west, Rewari to the south-west and Mathura to the south. Across the Jumna there was little or no control after the skirmish at the Hindan river at the end of May. The Raja of Ballabgarh, while playing a somewhat equivocal part, kept the Agra road open as far as Palwal.[47] Troops were sent to collect revenue and serious efforts were made to check the depredations of the Gujars for whom this summer was a golden moment of return to their ancestral occupation.[48] In the second direction there was a clearer policy which met with some success. Both the King and the army leaders were determined to avoid communal strife. They had, however, to reckon with the fanaticism of individuals among the troops and of a section of the Delhi Muslims. On 19 May, Maulvi Muhammad Sayyid set up the standard of *jehad* or 'holy war' in the Jama Masjid; he was immediately ordered to remove it by the King. The *Maulvi* explained that it was intended against the Hindus, whereupon the King declared that Hindus and Muslims were alike to him. Hindu army officers also complained and were tactfully told that it had been intended against the English.[49] A moment of danger occurred at the end of July on the occasion of the festival of *Id-ul-Zuha* when it was customary to sacrifice cows as well as goats and sheep. The King had promised that no cows should be sacrificed and a series of orders testifies to the energetic measures taken to effect this.[50] The prohibition was extended to oxen and buffaloes. Soldiers were to be court martialled and the penalty of death was threatened. The sale of cows was stopped, no dealers were allowed to enter the city during the festival, and cows of Muslims were impounded. The butchers were looked upon with special suspicion, and the argument used that the killing of cows at such a time implied sympathy with the British. It was even proposed to take sureties from the Princes against cow-sacrifice. These measures proved successful; there is no record of any Hindu complaint of actual sacrifice. This episode constitutes perhaps the most creditable feature and the most striking success of the Mughul administration of Delhi. Much of the success was clearly due to the personal initiative of the King.

For the rest the administration struggled with a series of difficulties which it never overcame. Order of a sort was restored within the first few days. But it was much easier to restrain the lawless elements in the city than the troops themselves. There were constant civilian complaints of military looting. As fast as one body of troops was reduced to some form of order a fresh body would arrive and the process would have to be repeated. In addition the troops suffered from chronic arrears of pay and from an increasing shortage of supplies. The spasmodic plundering of newly arrived bands of excited soldiers, whose bonds of discipline had been relaxed, was therefore reinforced by the indiscipline of men short of money and supplies whose minds were filled with rumours of hidden stores and secret sympathizers with the British. It was so easy to believe that a citizen said to have money or food was a British sympathizer and to regard protestations of innocence as proof of guilt. An improvement was noticeable on the arrival of Muhammad Bakht Khan in July, but the trouble soon restarted and continued till the end.

The next difficulty was that of finance. The troops had to be paid and there was little regular revenue with which to pay them. Some relief was obtained from the district treasuries, some of whose contents were brought into Delhi.[51] Muhammad Bakht was said to have brought four *lakhs* (£40,000) with him.[52] Parties of troops secured some revenue and some was contributed by local chiefs.[53] The King also drew on his own treasury.[54] But the main resource was loans from the bankers and merchants of Delhi. There was no greater cause of friction between citizens and Government, of disorder and of misery. The matter was complicated by the variety of agents who took it upon themselves to collect funds, not forgetting to recompense themselves in the process. Not only the King through the *Kotwal* and Mahbub Ali Khan summoned bankers to the presence, but Mirza Mughul, the commander-in-chief, Muhammad Bakht Khan (on his arrival) and the whole crowd of Princes made exactions on their own account. The ward police officers joined in and the administrative court helped.[55] The papers are full of charges and counter-charges of all kinds. On 4 June the bankers subscribed a *lakh* of rupees (£10,000). But on 1 July the bankers Jugal Kishore and Sheo Pershad complained that they had paid Rs. 1200 but were still harassed by the Princes.[56] Mirza Khair Sultan complained that his efforts to raise money were stopped by Colonel Gauri Shankar. Mirza Mughul complained that Muhammad Bakht was also empowered to collect loans. 'Punjabis and other merchants and the rich servants of the English'[57] were thought to be legitimate prey and over everyone hung the possible charge of being a friend of the English. Munshi Jiwan Lal was dunned for Rs. 50,000 and after arrest and intercession by Mirza Illahi Baksh escaped with the loss of his jewellery. On 19 August Rs. 25,000 were extorted from the bankers; Devi Singh and Salig Ram paid Rs. 6000 more after ten hours' confinement. On 31 August the bankers complained that they had already paid nearly four *lakhs* of rupees,[58] but by that time the army's monthly demand for pay was said to be Rs. 573,000.[59] The pace grew hotter and heated scenes more frequent; upon a dispute on the distribution of Rs. 40,000 brought in from Rewari, the King 'took up his cushion from the throne, threw it down and said, "Send the horse-harness, the silver *howdahs* and chairs to Mirza Mughul that he may sell them and pay to all with the proceeds. I have nothing else left"'.[60] The indiscipline of the troops, the division of authority and the chaotic arrangements for collecting money made the months of the siege for the citizens of Delhi a miserable period of insecurity and extortion.

The third problem was that of supplies. At first the position was easier than in the case of other matters. The control of the British west of the Jumna had practically ceased; at Agra and Meerut they were immobile, and when their force appeared on the Ridge there were no troops available to control more than the line of communications to Ambala and the Punjab. The bridge-of-boats over the Jumna remained open for supplies from the east. Barges, which ascended the Jumna as far as Delhi until the coming of the railway, continued to arrive with wheat and molasses.[61] The bullock train from Mathura along the Mughul Grand Trunk road was running till July.[62] The peasants had their stocks of grain and cattle which they were ready to bring to Delhi and sell. The difficulty at first was rather that the advent of the troops increased the demand and that they were short of cash to pay for their purchases. Merchants, alarmed by demands for loans, house searches, and indiscriminate looting, grew reluctant to buy. When the British were established on the Ridge, although they did not control the surrounding country, they provided an attractive alternative market because of their ability and willingness to pay. Merchants were tempted by high prices to sell to them clandestinely; a number of butchers and bakers were executed on this account.[63] From June onwards, therefore, shortages began to be felt. Attempts were made to regulate prices and in order to overcome the shortage of coin proposals were made to establish a mint.[64] But the shortages steadily grew. In June we hear of merchants who declined to give money and *chaudhris* who objected to supplying goods. By the end of July confectioners would not supply sweets because they had not been paid for the last lot. Sugar could not be purchased except for cash.[65] By mid-August opium, much used as a counter to fatigue and by troops going into battle, as well as a narcotic, was so short that a breach of the peace by the regular consumers was feared. Brass vessels and hookahs joined the general shortage and by September the corn-chandlers were being summoned by the *Kotwal*.[66] The joint influences of increased demand within the city accompanied by a collapse of credit, a rival market on the Ridge backed by plentiful funds, and increasing reluctance on the part of the country people to bring in supplies, had produced a general shortage. If the city had not been taken by storm by the end of September it might have been reduced by famine in the course of a few months.

Military supplies were not quite so difficult. Though the magazine within the city was blown up on 11 May the destruction was by no means complete because the supply of powder was limited. The main supply of gunpowder was in the new magazine at Wazirabad three miles north of the city on the banks of the Jumna, and within easy reach of the cantonment. This fact should be remembered when the pre-Mutiny government is censured for failing to remove the main magazine from Delhi. Arms were useless without powder. The real indictment against the authorities was the failure either to move the magazine to Meerut or some of the British troops at Meerut to Delhi. In actual fact the mutineers derived little advantage from the Wazirabad magazine because the powder there was plundered by Gujars before military control was reasserted. It yielded a *lakh's* worth of arms but no gunpowder.[67] The loss of gunpowder, however, was not crippling, owing to the abundance of saltpetre in the neighbourhood for its manufacture. A powder factory was set up in the Begam Samru's house and later another in Chariwala. The explosion of this factory on 7 August, when 494 people were said to have lost their lives, cost Hakim Ahsanullah Khan his position and nearly his life, because he was suspected of complicity in a plot with the British.[68] Arms the army had in plenty, for each force brought its own artillery and small arms; it was only after this event that there began to be talk of a shortage of ammunition.

So far the situation has been viewed chiefly from the point of view of the chief actors and the administrators. The King and his advisers, Muhammad Bakht Khan and a few energetic soldiers and civilians such as the *Kotwal*, Sheikh Rajab Ali, the *Darogha* of the magazine, and Colonel Gauri Shankar are seen wrestling manfully with mounting difficulties in the attempt to infuse and maintain some order in the administration. But how were the actual citizens of Delhi affected, who had for the most part been contented with their position, had desired no rising and stood to gain little from victory and lose much by defeat? The one class who would seem to have enjoyed and profited by the crisis was that of the Mughul *salatin*. For a brief period they were released from an aimless and idle life of frustration and able to enjoy at least a show of authority. Mirza Mughul could hold Durbars and satisfy his blood-lust, Mirza Khair Sultan could extort money and Mirza Abu Bakr brandish a sword and talk of the succession by day as well as indulge in convivial pranks and amatory adventures by night.[69] To these can be added some of the Muslim nobility who still dreamed of recovering their power and genuine fanatics like Maulvi Mohammad Sayyid and the eunuch Basant Ali Khan. But these formed only a minority, even of the Muslims. The mercantile class, both Muslim and Hindu, had done nothing to promote the outbreak and gained from it nothing but terror and loss. The bankers and brokers, mostly Hindus, who sustained the financial structure of the whole region, were in like case. For them the whole period was a long nightmare of forced loans, extortions and domiciliary visits, of insult and indignity. The shopkeepers and craftsmen fared no better. Silversmiths had their ornaments seized to be melted into rupees; shopkeepers their stocks removed by roving soldiers and city *badmashes*. The clerical class, mainly Hindu, tinctured with the new learning and British sympathies, lived in fear of denunciation as 'friends of the English'. If butchers and bakers could make great profits by secret sales to the British on the Ridge, they risked and on occasion suffered decapitation or the cutting of their throats. Even the ice-makers of the Turkoman Gate sought refuge in the enclosure of the Jaipur raja's observatory or *Jantar Mantar* a mile away.[70] The casual labourers and menial classes like the sweepers had always been poor and often hungry. Their failure to go about their duties showed that they were now in fear as well.[71] The drug addicts, as has been noticed, were in no better case, and apart from the Princes, the only group, judging by the number and severity of the references to them, who seem to have found in the period a time of enlargement, were the gamblers. Without any sack or the events which followed it, the Mutiny in Delhi would have lived in the minds of the people as a *gardi* or calamity.

Against this background of general unease and danger the leading events of the siege were enacted. After the first days of terror and confusion there ensued a period of comparative calm, the honeymoon period of the revolt. Order of a kind was restored and the shops were reopened; a loan was subscribed with resignation if not with enthusiasm. A committee of property-owners hired a regiment by the month to protect lives and property, an arrangement which proved successful until the Princes grew jealous and imprisoned the committee.[72] Supplies were coming in, the weather was hot, *Ramzan* was drawing to a close and the British were far off. This halcyon period was interrupted by Mirza Abu Bakr's expedition to Meerut which ended with his defeat at the skirmish of the

Hindan on 30–31 May. The *Hakim* was said to have encouraged Abu Bakr to go because of his turbulence in the city.[73] The immediate result was discouragement among the troops and mutual recriminations. The shops were closed for three days and a riot occurred in which sweetmeat shops were plundered because Muslim soldiers were said to have touched Hindu sugar dishes.[74] This period ended altogether with the defeat at Badli on 8 June and the arrival of the British on the Ridge. The troops were said to have been so disheartened that the gates were left open and the British could have marched in.[75] But before pronouncing judgement on their failure to do so the fatigue of the British as well as the confusion of the Indian troops must be remembered. The British troops had marched before dawn four miles from Alipur, had fought a battle, continued a running fight for five miles more, and then repulsed a counter attack on the Ridge during the afternoon. All this was done in the height of the hot weather against greatly superior forces. There was no reason to suppose that the Delhi garrison was panic-stricken. It seems likely that Jiwan Lal, who heard the complaints of returned warriors and the gossip of citizens hostile to them, but did not see the picture as a whole, allowed his own wishes to colour his judgement. This belief is strengthened by the vigorous attack made on the Ridge on the following day.[76]

Delhi was now the scene of active operations though it could only be said to be besieged in a technical sense. The direction of active operations was beyond the capacity of Mirza Mughul, and the contest could not have been long maintained if there had not been some change of command. This occurred with the arrival of the Bareilly force led by the *Jamadar*, Muhammad Bakht Khan. Bakht Khan was an artillery officer who had served with Sale at Jellalabad. He came from Lucknow and claimed relationship to the Oudh royal family, and with the Mughul family by marriage. He was resolute, energetic and ambitious, but rough and uncouth. He demanded the command of the troops, and after long talks with the King and Mirza Mughul largely won his point. Mirza Mughul remained the titular commander-in-chief, but the active command devolved on Bakht Khan with the title of Lord Governor-General (*Sahib-i Alam Bahadur*).[77] Between these two jealousy persisted, which is reflected by mutual complaints in the records. But whatever of vigour and skill was to be seen in the conduct of the Delhi troops during the next three months must be attributed mainly to Bakht Khan. The King was sorely torn between respect for his military virtues and distaste of his manners. On the arrival at the Durbar to present his officers Bakht Khan failed to make his reverence, and the scene is thus described by the *Hakim.*[78]

> Though many people remonstrated with him he paid no attention. When he came near to the King's chair in the *Diwan-i-Khas* he salaamed as though to an equal, and merely taking his sword from his side presented it to the King. The King was [vexed] at this want of curtesy but praised the bravery of his troops. The *Risaldar* Mohammad Shafi and Maulvi Imdad Ali said, 'Your Majesty should bestow a sword and buckler upon such a chief, for he deserves them; such a favour is but proper for such a chief'. At first the King excused himself, saying, 'They are not ready', but being importuned, called for them from the armoury and bestowed them upon Bakhtawar Khan. But even then he offered no *nazr* to the King. He said, 'I hear that you have given the Princes jurisdiction in the army. This is bad. Give the power to me and I will make proper arrangements. What do these people know of the customs of the English Army?' The King answered, 'The Princes were appointed at the request of the officers of the army'. He was then dismissed.

This republican attitude of Bakht Khan was not, perhaps, without its influence on the King's later decision not to flee with the general into the open country.

There was a new vigour in the direction of events, but there was never a unified control. To the tension between troops and civilians, and troops and the Court was added tension between the Bareilly force and the Delhi troops which had accepted the Princes. The administrative council helped to bridge the gulf between the two and during July the British were hard pressed on the Ridge. But when it became clear that their position was growing stronger as reinforcements came in and the siege train approached, while supplies were failing in Delhi, all their jealousies and suspicions rose to the surface once more. The peaceful celebration of the *Id-ul-Zuha* at the end of July was the last internal success of the Delhi administration. The battle of Najafgarh on 25 August marked the beginning of the end in the external field as did the assault on the 'loyal physician', Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, within the walls. On 7 August one of the city powder factories blew up, whereupon the soldiery plundered the *Hakim's* house and the cry was raised that he was in league with the British.[79] Mirza Mughul, at the head of a military rabble, came to the Hall of Audience and demanded his arrest 'until the hill be taken'. Since the death of Mahbub Ali Khan in June the *Hakim* was the King's most trusted adviser and the struggle vitally affected the King's authority. At first he sheltered the physician, but finally gave him up for house-arrest on solemn promises of safety. Then followed a series of papers that show that the *Hakim* was the victim mainly of military suspicion and that the King still possessed some tenacity of will. Repeated orders were sent through Mirza Mughul for his release. Rewards were offered for the recovery of his property, and his seal was declared invalid until two missing seals were recovered. A paper, written apparently at the King's dictation, showed his state of mind.[80] The *Hakim* was essential to the King, said the paper; he should be released and the plundered property restored.

> If you are not disposed to comply with these requests [continued the King], let me be conveyed in safety to the *Khwaja Sahib* [the shrine of Qutab Sahib at Mahrauli]. I shall there sit and employ myself in the occupation of a *mujawir.* And if even this is not acceded to, I shall relinquish every concern and go away.[81] Let those who think they can detain me, attempt to do so. Not having been killed by the hand of the English, I shall be killed by yours. Further, the oppression that is at present being inflicted on the People is not inflicted on them; it is inflicted on me. It is incumbent on you all to take measures to prevent it. Let me have my answer, or I shall swallow a diamond and kill myself.

The officers first allowed the *Hakim* to visit the King twice a day and then released him altogether. The King had won his battle and his authority was not questioned again.

The final act of the drama was now approaching. Within the city and among the troops there was increasing gloom and in the Court despair of the result. Only Bakht Khan remained unshaken. On 6 September the siege-train arrived. On 11 September the batteries were in position and the guns opened fire. At dawn on 14 September the assault was delivered; troops penetrated to the Jama Masjid, but were driven back to the Kashmir Gate.[82] Fighting continued in the streets until the 20th. From the time of the assault all was confusion and the palace was left to its own devices. The final scene may best be told in the words of the loyal physician himself:[83]

> I was in my house that evening and was unable to get out of the Fort owing to the vast crowd of sepoys in the Bazaar and at the principal Gate. On the morning of Friday [18 September] I sent a man who returned saying the door of the *Diwan-i-Khas* was closed. I heard nothing more. But in the afternoon of the same day one of the residents of the Fort ascertained the fact I have recorded [that the King had fled]. Being astonished I wrote a petition to the King asking the reason of his departure without informing me of it. In the evening a reply came summoning me and saying that a verbal explanation of the King's bad case would be given me. In reply to the above I sent another petition in the morning stating that my bearers and *syce* had run off and that I had no means of travelling, that if His Majesty could furnish me with a conveyance I would go off at once to him.
>
> In the afternoon of Saturday two elephants came, on one of which I placed my things and on the other my brother Hakim Ghulam Najaf Khan and myself. We started for the Court towards the close of the afternoon. On the road the mutineer army abused me and called me a Christian. In short, I reached the King in the evening and at night the conversation turned on the conduct of the army to the King. The King said, 'Well, what could I do against them?'
>
> In the morning I saw the whole army in retreat, and after them came Bakht Khan, with the Risaldars. He importuned the King to go with him whithersoever he went. I said, 'You have just escaped to this place from the Fort, where will you wander with these runaways? We must now trust to our Fate. Be pleased to remain here. Wait for an answer to the *mukhtarnamah* sent yesterday to Captain Hodson (Hodson Sahib) by the Queen through Mirza Illahi Bakhsh. Perhaps some chance of bettering ourselves may turn up, though the time has gone for that.' The King then told Bakht Khan that he could not go with him, saying, 'Whither will you wander in your ruined condition. If you could do anything why are you running away?' He answered, 'The Hakim who is in league with the English is leading you astray, you'll suffer for it in

the end'. He then brought a *palki* and wished the King to start. At last I told the members of the Royal Family to talk to the King and not allow him to proceed, that if he did accompany Bakht Khan it would be a great misfortune. If he were seized his life would be in danger. Many of the Royal Family forbade his going, and much abuse was bandied about. The officers, being unable to effect their object, went off.

A *parwanah* was written to Mirza Illahi Bakhsh to settle matters quickly and come over. The order was sent to the Arab Sarai (near Homayun's Tomb) forbidding any conflict with any of the Government (English) people who might come there. Several orders were sent in succession to the mutineer army not to encamp at the Tomb, but to go where they list.

In the afternoon Prince Muhammad Azim came with his troops and wished to encamp at the Tomb. He was ordered to go on, and not stop there, for His Majesty had lost all confidence in the rebel army.

In the morning Qadir Baksh came and he also asked the King to accompany the army. He also got his answer, and was told that the King would await his fate, that he now placed no trust in anyone but God. After 12 o'clock Mirza Illahi Bakhsh arrived and stated there was a pass for the safety of the Queen and Mirza Jewan Bakht, and *Samsham-ad-Daulah* [the *Hakim*] and showed an English signature, probably Hodson Sahib's. He said that on condition that all present would lay down their arms and the King go off alone in his *palki*, he would be allowed to remain in the Queen's apartments, and that other particulars would be settled hereafter: that *Maulvi* Rajab Ali[84] had come with 25 Sikh *Sawars* to the Tomb and that Hodson Sahib would come to meet the King.

Having reassured the King, and having started him and the Queen off, we went off too. The *Maulvi* [Rajab Ali] presented his *nazr* outside the Arab *Sarai*, and reassured the King, and when the cavalcade neared the city, having caused the *palki* to be put down. he wrote informing Captain Hodson that the party had got so far. 'Be pleased to come in person.' After a while he came, and I, having got down from the elephant, advanced to meet him and saluted him. He came near the King, took off his hat to him, and taking the party along with him came to the Delhi Gate of the city. Thence we arrived in front of the Fort. He told the Queen's party and all of us to go away and took the King with 8 or 10 men inside the Fort, by the Lahore Gate, to meet the General.

CHAPTER XI

THE AFTERMATH

For the citizens of Delhi the aftermath of the Mutiny was a case of the scorpions of Rehoboam following the whips of Solomon. Under military rule they had been subjected to shortages and insecurity, to extortion and plunder, but for the first few weeks after the capture they were evicted from the city altogether and liable to summary execution at sight. We may pass over the scenes which occurred during the actual fighting within the city, for no troops could be expected to be altogether restrained after the privations which the British army had endured on the Ridge and the exertions it had made over a period of months. Hindus and Muslims were at first indiscriminately killed; women and children were, however, spared and respected.[1] But it was the events after 20 September which burnt themselves into the consciousness of the Delhi people. 'In the city no man's life was safe,' reported Main-ud-din; 'all able-bodied men who were seen were taken for rebels and shot.'[2] 'For several days after the assault,' wrote Mrs Saunders (wife of the commissioner of Delhi), 'every native that could be found was killed by the soldiers, women and children were spared.'[3] 'The troops', wrote Saunders himself, 'were completely disorganized and demoralized by the immense amount of plunder which fell into their hands and the quantity of liquor which they managed to discover in the shops of the European merchants of Delhi.'[4]

After this first collapse, the reaction of exhausted and over-wrought men, there followed a more systematic reign of terror, which lasted for several weeks. The whole population of Delhi was at first driven out. Mrs Saunders wrote in the same letter of 25 October, 'every house in the city was desolate and many of them injured....The inhabitants of this huge place seven miles round are dying daily of starvation and want of shelter. The Prize Agents are digging for treasure in houses where rich Natives are said to have hoards.' In December another observer reported that the search for plunder still continued;

'he visited the outlying bands of fugitives from the city, and found a very serious share of misery and sickness among the lower orders, the infirm and those with large families'.[5] 'Is private plundering still allowed? Do officers still go about shooting natives?' wrote John Lawrence from Lahore on 12 December.[6] There was much indiscriminate shooting besides drum-head court martials and summary hangings. There were many cases like that of Haji, who was cut down by an officer at Nizam-ud-din 'without a word of inquiry' as a suspected murderer and left for dead.[7] The *Delhi Gazetteer* of 1883–4 records the case of a village which had given up a servant of Sir John Metcalfe to the King. In retaliation twenty-one of the leading villagers were summarily shot.[8] A gallows was set up and fed with five or six victims a day.[9] An idea of the magnitude of the operations can be gathered from the fact that the Special Commission set up to deal with offenders tried summarily 3306 persons of whom 2025 were convicted. Of these 392 were hung and fifty-seven sentenced to life imprisonment.[10] To this number must be added first, all those who fell in the six days' fighting after the assault, when there was admittedly no discrimination, and secondly all those who suffered death without any sort of trial from maddened or reckless officers. The shooting of the three Princes by Hodson in cold blood was the typical instance, and others had less excuse than he. The Commission cautiously commented, 'It is difficult to analyse all that may have been done during that period of excitement'.[11] The nature of this excitement can be gauged from the outcry which occurred when Colonel Hogge took Mirza Jiwan Bakht (accused of no crime) for an airing on an elephant.[12] The report reached Lawrence that Saunders himself had taken him out. Lawrence did much for Delhi but even he was not unmoved by the general feeling. He wrote of the King, 'It is a great pity that the old rascal was not shot directly he was seen—I would not have taken him prisoner,' and 'I think that all *Shahzadas* and other leading insurgents should be summarily dealt with'.[13] The situation from the citizen's point of view was thus summed up by Main-ud-din: 'numbers perished, until Sir John Lawrence re-established order and courts were once more opened for the trial of the guilty; every man who had an enemy declared against him.

False witnesses abounded on every side. On one side a man feared the rebels; on the other he dreaded the false accusations of relatives and compatriots. The slaughter of innocent women and children was revenged in a manner no one had any conception of.'[14]

Towards rebels Lawrence was implacable, but he set his face from the beginning against indiscriminate revenge. Already on 24 September he was writing to Saunders, 'tell the people that only murderers and those who *fight* will be injured'[15] and on 6 October he thought that the mass of the population should be allowed back 'under proper restrictions'. 'It is the poorest and most innocent that will suffer.' Muslims should not be employed round Delhi except those who remained faithful and these should be treated with special favour.[16] The agony of the Delhi people was prolonged by the time-lag between Lawrence's intentions and their translation into fact. The whole population had been driven out of the city on its capture, as has been noted. Dr Farquhar's report in December shows that they were still outside, chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Qutab and Nizam-ud-din, lacking shelter on the eve of the winter rains and the severest period of the cold weather.[17] It was only in the New Year that the Hindus began to return and it was then reported that the city retained one-quarter of its former population. The civil courts reopened in July 1858.[18]

After the people came the buildings of the city. There was a cry that the whole city should be razed to the ground. The Government itself proposed to raze the walls, but Lawrence only recommended filling in the moat and a partial lowering of the walls.[19] In the end neither measure was carried through. A similar cry arose for the demolition of the principal mosques on the ground that they were Muslim rallying points, that some, like the Jama Masjid, had been used as strongholds in the street fighting, and that it was a fitting act of revenge.[20] The principal mosques were occupied by troops and for some time their fate was debated. There was a proposal to sell the Jama Masjid, and then to use it as a barrack for the main guard of European troops since 'it can never be allowed to remain in the hands of the Muslim population'.[21] It was five years before it was handed back to a Muslim committee with Maulvi Sayyid Ahmad, a descendant of the first *Imam*, in charge.[22] The Fatehpuri Masjid, the second largest in the city, was also considered as a possible barrack for the main guard. The mosque and its platform were released for worship, but the quadrangle and shops below were sold by auction. This was rather as though the choir and sanctuary of Westminster Abbey were released for Christian worship, the nave and transepts being sold for office space. Restoration in this case was delayed for nearly twenty years. Then, with the first Delhi Durbar in prospect, the Hindu owner was bought out and the whole building restored to the Muslims by order of Lord Lytton.[23] The beautiful 'Ornament of Mosques' in the Daryaganj quarter, built by a daughter of Aurangzeb, suffered still longer. After the Mutiny it was used partly as a dwelling-place and partly as a bakery until 1875. The mosque was then closed and neglected. Lord Lytton's vigour did not quite extend to this building and the mosque had to wait for rehabilitation nearly twenty years longer, until it caught the eye of Lord Curzon.[24] After the mosques came the royal palace and Fort. Since only artistic considerations could be urged in its defence, there was little hope of preventing much destruction, and so the event proved. But the critics[25] have not been quite fair in regarding the demolitions as an act of careless barbarism. The orders of the Governor-General in person were taken on the matter and the work was only sanctioned after the proposals had been personally explained to Lord Canning by a Captain Hutchinson. The palace was to be used as quarters for a British garrison 'but instructions should be given to preserve isolated buildings of architectural or historic interest, and in this matter it will obviously be best for the departmental officers to err on the safe side, referring for orders to his Honour the Lieut.-Governor whenever there is the slightest ground for hesitation'. The care was there, the taste lamentably lacking. The Hall of Public Audience was to be used as a hospital and 'to be injured as little as possible', while the exquisite buildings south of the *Diwan-i-Khas* or Hall of Private Audience were pronounced to be 'of little architectural interest' and to be suitable for troops. In effect only the *Diwan-i-Khas* was thought worthy of preservation on its artistic merits.[26]

The citizens had yet to suffer a final trial. Once it had been decided that the Fort or palace should take the place of the old main guard in Kashmir Gate, it was necessary to secure a suitable field of fire beyond its walls. For this extensive clearances were necessary, and they were accordingly undertaken. During 1860 sanctions were given for the demolition of all buildings within a radius of 448 yards from the Fort walls.[27] At one time the engineers wished to include the famous Dariba, the street of the silversmiths, but it was reprieved on a petition from the city *panchayats*.[28] Within this area all buildings including the larg Akbarabadi mosque, were cleared, with the single exception of the small and graceful Golden Mosque of Javid Khan. Since this work (unlike that of Lucknow) was done in time of peace, compensation was admissible.[29] This was arranged by means of a complicated system of ticket-holding, by which owners of property scheduled for demolition were able to exchange tickets for houses in other parts of the city which had been confiscated as a result of the rebellion. The intention that buildings should be exchanged for buildings was largely defeated by the sale of tickets and consequent speculation. Eventually the confiscated property remaining in the city was sold by auction, tickets being usable in settlement of the purchase price at their face value. At first a profit was made, but in the end there was a loss. The total value of the tickets representing demolished property was Rs. 8,77,000, or nearly £90,000 at the then rate of exchange.[30] There was no victimization in these proceedings, but much uprooting of old ties and associations.

Bahadur Shah was tried by a military commission acting under the instructions of Sir John Lawrence. The trial, which lasted from 27 January to 9 March 1858, was regarded by Lawrence more as a court of inquiry than as a judicial tribunal, but the proceedings were judicial in form. There was never any question of execution, because the King's life had been guaranteed. The Supreme Government decreed his removal to Rangoon with selected members of his family. It may be convenient here to consider shortly the general question of his responsibility for events in Delhi.

The formal charges were four in number;[31] that he aided and abetted Muhammad Bakht Khan in rebellion, that he aided and abetted his son Mirza Mughul in a similar rebellion, that being a subject of the British Government, he proclaimed himself sovereign of India and waged war against Government, and that he was responsible for the death of forty-nine Europeans, mostly women and children, on 16 May. It was not difficult to find documentary evidence for the first three once the premises of the prosecution were accepted, and there was circumstantial evidence for the fourth. The defence was that the King was a victim of *force majeure*, and acted throughout under duress. The defence was too cowed to put forward the juristic argument of still subsisting imperial Mughul rights and it was left to a British scholar more than sixty years later to maintain that it was really the Company which had rebelled against the King.[32] For the purposes of discussion we may consider the question under the following heads. Did the King conspire before the actual outbreak against the British authority? How far was he responsible for the murder of the European women and children in the Fort on 16 May? How far could he be said to have waged war against the British Government and could he be described as a rebel against its authority?

The evidence for previous conspiracy is very slender indeed. The fact that this charge was not included in the indictment even in the excited atmosphere of 1858, points in this direction, and though the Judge-Advocate-General affected to regard the evidence in this respect as conclusive[33] his arguments were far from convincing. Obscure journeys to Persia, the admission of a few soldiers as *murids* or disciples (a practice begun by the very unwarlike Akbar II), the dreams and incantations of an eccentric divine, a dirty piece of paper exposed on the Jama Masjid for about three hours, was all that could be adduced.[34] The fact that Persian connexions implied *Shia* sympathies whilst the bulk of Indian Muslims were *Sunnis*, was also overlooked. The evidence of planned rebellion in these findings is flimsy and of the King's promotion, as distinct from knowledge of them, flimsier still. Sir John Lawrence considered that there was no good evidence of any conspiracy, but if conspiracy there were, the events of 11 May showed that the King had little knowledge of it and no part in promoting it. His surprise and distaste at the arrival of the mutineers on that day was evident.

The King's part in the murder of the European women and children on 16 May is more open to question. There is no doubt that the murders were committed with his alleged consent. The

Court diary, attested by the *Hakim*, stated, 'The king delivered them up, saying, "the army may do as they please"'.[35] At the same time the evidence both at the trial itself and of the written accounts points to the fact that he was overborne by the army and the Princes in a tumultuous scene of riot and passion. He acquiesced in fear of his life and that of the *Hakim*. He was a man of eighty-two with five days' experience of power of a sort thrust upon him without warning. He had nothing but his personal authority to oppose to the clamours of the Princes and the soldiery. While he cannot escape from some responsibility it is clear his action was on an altogether different plane to that of a man like Mirza Mughul. Acquiescence in fear of life is a very different thing to a positive order expressing a deliberate intention.

The third question concerns the fact of the King's waging war against the British Government as a free agent. There is much evidence in the Mutiny papers themselves of the King's distrust of and distaste for the army. His surprise and concern at their arrival was unfeigned, his dislike for their manners and methods unconcealed, and his scepticism of their efforts unceasing. But there is also no doubt that he clothed their acts with the mantle of his authority, and that while he may be said to have acted under pressure, he can hardly be said to have acted as one permanently under duress. For all his disgust at the soldiers and the boorishness of Muhammad Bakht Khan, for all his refined cynicism of their proceedings and doubts of the outcome, he was prepared to profit by their efforts should they prove successful. And he was prepared to take a chance on those efforts being successful. So far it would seem to be established that the King waged war against the Company, if not as a spontaneous and entirely free agent, at least as a contingently willing accessory after the fact. But was he in consequence a rebel against its authority? It is here that the exact legal position of the King in relation to the British has to be considered. It has been noted in a previous chapter[36] that the Company concluded no formal treaty later than that of 1765 when the imperial supremacy was clearly acknowledged.[37] Wellesley's arrangements concerned Shah Alam's comfort and powers, but not his rights. They implied the recognition of sovereign status though this was never explicitly acknowledged. Thereafter the courtesy acknowledgements of sovereign status were gradually whittled away until the presentation of *nazrs* and *khillats* was stopped by Ellenborough in 1844. Here, thinks Mr Buckler, was the decisive moment when the British Government ceased to be *de jure* the agent of the Mughul imperial authority, and became an alien power subsisting as far as India was concerned by the sole right of force and conquest. From that moment it could claim no moral right to the obedience of either Muslim or Hindu. For both communities the only moral sanction for authority was religious, and the East India Company carefully disclaimed any connexion with religion. Throughout northern India at any rate the Hindus had accepted the Mughul authority. The Marathas had carved up the Empire, but in the imperial name and as imperial servants. Both Madhu Rao Sindia and Daulat Rao Sindia were *Vakil-i-mutlaq*[38] or regents of the Empire. From that time, then, the British authority may be said to have rested juristically at best on consent and at worst on force. Morally its claim to obedience depended upon a steadily lengthening prescriptive right and the benefits which its subjects considered that they owed to it.

But we are here concerned with the juristic problem. Setting aside the position of the average Hindu and Muslim it seems clear that the King of Delhi could have no juristic obligation of obedience to a power which, having ceased to recognize his paramount authority, had neglected to exact from him any acknowledgement of formal dependence upon his late ceremonial subordinate. Bahadur Shah's relation to the British Government after 1844 was rather like that of the last Merovingian to the mayor of the palace after his deposition by Pepin in A.D. 752. He had the right but not the power. So long as the power remained firm in other hands, nothing could be done, and the prescriptive right of *de facto* power would gradually assert itself. But until that process was complete, the legal rights were dormant only, not extinct, and were ready to be revived the moment they could be clothed with power. In the nineteenth century the British had no papal blessing to help them and only thirteen years of undisturbed possession before the storm broke.

So far the argument of Mr Buckler may be followed. His critics could only seek to disprove the *de jure* Mughul claim by proving the *de facto* British power.[39] But it could be maintained that the King of Delhi had in fact surrendered his claims in the course of the negotiations for an increase in the royal stipend. It is true that in 1829 the King's agent, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, had offered to abandon all the royal claims in return for the doubling of the royal stipend, and that a much smaller increase was granted in 1833 on condition of such abandonment.[40] Bahadur Shah actually accepted this condition in 1838, but the negotiations eventually broke down in 1843 over the question of the manner of distributing the proposed increase. The King never drew the money and so the surrender of rights never took place. It cannot be maintained, therefore, that the King was in any Indian juridical sense a subject of the British Government. He waged war and he allowed, albeit unwillingly and under duress, British women and children to be killed in his palace. But he was no rebel against constituted authority. He had broken no pledge, violated no treaty, committed no treachery; he had merely exercised rights which Indian opinion had conceded to his ancestors through eleven generations. He should probably have been treated as a hostile ruler, whose dominions might be liable to annexation and whose person might be subject to detention. In fact the Government were misguided enough to try him as a rebel, wise enough to treat him as a defeated prince and foolish enough to mingle indignities with their measures of precaution. Indian opinion never regarded him as a rebel, and always considered him to have been ill-used in his detention in Delhi and his exile in Rangoon. A halo of martyrdom and an aura of romantic sympathy collected round the aged figure who would otherwise have been regarded as an unfortunate plaything of destiny. His poetry kept alive this memory; the plaintive *ghazls* of the King proved more effective weapons against the British than all the guns of the mutineers.

For nearly a year the King was confined in circumstances of considerable squalor and much indignity. At first he was allowed ten servants, but these were reduced to two by Lawrence's orders after the trial.[41] He and Zinat Mahal were allowed two rooms each. Here for some months they provided a peep-show for any European who chose to stand and stare, from the wife of the Commissioner downwards. The feelings of the more sensitive were thus described by Lord Roberts, then a young officer of the victorious besieging army.[42] 'I went with many others the next day to see the King. The old man looked most wretched, and as he evidently disliked intensely being stared at by Europeans, I quickly took my departure.'

By October 1858, the Supreme Government had determined to remove the King and his immediate family to Rangoon. By this time more humane sentiments had prevailed, and we get a very different picture of the royal party on its way down-country. It was in charge of Lieut. Ommanney and left Delhi on 7 October. It consisted of Bahadur Shah himself; Zinat Mahal Begam; Mirza Jiwan Bakht (her son); Nawab Shah Zamani Begam, wife of Mirza Jiwan Bakht, with her sister and mother; Taj Mahal Begam, another wife of the ex-king; Mirza Shah Abbas, another son, and his mother Mubarak Nissa, a harem woman; four other harem women, five male and eleven female attendants. Saunders, the Commissioner, was up most of the night seeing them off, and two days later Ommanney thus described the cavalcade:[43]

> I was unable to make up the annexed list of prisoners yesterday, but have now done so having got my camp in working order.
>
> Everything correct and the ex-King stands the travelling very well.
>
> The camping ground cannot be marked out till daybreak consequently although in pursuance to orders issued by me, 30 coolies are stationed at each encamping ground to help my four *chaprassis* sent on ahead to pitch the prisoners' tents, it is impossible to have them ready pitched by the time of my arrival on the ground; however I have not long to wait and the prisoners are kept perfectly separate from everybody till their tents are pitched and I never leave them till they are comfortably settled in their respective tents guarded by European Sentries. Eight *chaprassis cannot* pitch the tents in time, 20 *chaprassis* at least are required, but I can manage by having 30 coolies to assist and practice will make them perfect.
>
> Yesterday morning at starting the Pole of the Bullock *palki gari* broke in two; it is repaired.
>
> I allow the ex-King to travel in his *palki* as he cannot sleep in the *gari* and this arrangement is as safe as the other and does not cause any *delay* on the march; I also allow Jumma Bakt's wife to travel in the other *palki* as being in an interesting condition the jolting of the *gari* and a restive bullock at starting or any accident which might happen, causes and would cause her pain.

I always get up at 1.30 a.m., begin to place the prisoners in their respective conveyances and then have them drawn up ready on the road, so that the column may not be delayed. I send you a sort of plan of the encampment, and also of the line of march.

My carriage is all complete, the two pairs of spare bullocks made their appearance and I have 20 camels. I send one set of tents at 5 p.m. every afternoon; I think I have told you everything connected with the prisoners.

It is rather hard for me getting up at 1.30 a.m. packing up the prisoners, the march and then settling them again, I never get into my tent till about 9 a.m. when I have breakfast, but I dont care a straw for any amount of work and am very jolly.

I am Honorary Member of the Lancer Mess, breakfast, dinner and tiffin, good stags at dinner twice a week, a pack of Hounds accompany the column on the march, and we have a run when we succeed in getting a jackal, there is a Hook Club[44] and in short it is as comfortably and perfectly managed as any.

There, fading into the dust haze to the east, young Ommanney with his pack of hounds, Bahadur Shah with his memories, we take leave of the last of the Mughuls.

GLOSSARY

Abdar. Water foreman, e.g. servant in charge of drinks, foreman of ice-makers.

Aftabgir. The sun ensign. A large flat circular parasol or disc, Mughul insignia of high rank.

Alqāb. Titles, form of address to persons of high rank.

Altamgha. Grant under royal seal conferring a title to rent-free land in perpetuity, hereditary and transferable.

Amil. Revenue officer under the Mughul government.

Amir-ul-umara. *Lit.* chief of the nobles. One of the most distinguished titles of honour.

Arzi. A respectful petition or memorial, written or oral.

Badmash. Bad character, hooligan.

Baid musq. Scented musk.

Baithak. Private sitting-room in the royal apartments.

Bakr-id. Muslim festival commemorating Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son Ishmael.

Bandabast. Settlement or arrangement. Colloquially the arrangements for any undertaking.

Bania. Trader, merchant, shopkeeper, banker.

Banjar. Waste or fallow land.

Banjari. Travelling merchant and carrier.

Batta. Additional allowance for special service.

Bazar. Retail daily market, shopping centre.

Begar. Forced labour.

Bela. Reclaimed riverine land (in the sense here used).

Bell-of-Arms. Cf. bell-tent—a conical bell-shaped tent (cf. *Shorter Oxf. Eng. Dict.*). A bell-of-arms in a cantonment was the same thing in permanent form, made of brick and plaster.

Bhakti. Devotion, divine grace, devotee.

Bhangi-wallah. Professional carriers, responsible for much inland transport before the age of railways.

Bigah. A measure of land.

Budgerow. A river boat.

Chabutra. A platform of stone or earth outside a house which serves as a meeting-place.

Chamar. The caste of tanners, leather workers and shoemakers.

Chapati. An unleavened flat circular cake, consisting of flour and water.

Chaprassi. A messenger, so called from the name of his badge of office.

Chattri. A small dome supported by pillars, usually intended for ornamental purposes.

Chaubacha. *Lit.* Four things. One of the methods of assessment in the Delhi Territory, which had four sub-heads.

Chaudhri. Headman of village, of a profession or trade; in general, a foreman

Chaupal. Village hall or meeting-place.

Chauth. *Lit.* one fourth. The fourth part of the revenue assessment charged by the Marathas on states as the price of immunity from raids.

Chobdar. Mace-bearer or holder of a silver stick who carried it before men of rank as a symbol of authority.

Chokidar. A watchman.

Choti hazari. Light early breakfast or tea.

Cutcherry (*Kachahri*). Court or public office

Dacoit. Member of a gang of robbers.

Dacoity. Gang robbery.

Dargah. A Muslim shrine or tomb of a saint.

Darogha. Superintendent or overseer.

Dasehra. Autumn festival commemorating Rama's defeat of Ravan.

Dervish. Muslim ascetic, properly member of a religious order.

Dhanuk. A low caste, formerly archers and fowlers, now cultivators and personal servants.

Dhobi. Washerman.

Dhoti. Loose cotton garment passed between the legs and fastened round the waist, a substitute for trousers.

Din. *Lit.* faith. The party cry of Muslims.

Diwali. Hindu festival of lights commemorating Rama's return home after defeating Ravan and rescuing Sita. Usually occurs in late October.

Diwan. Court or tribunal. The title of the chief revenue officer of a state.

Diwani. Relating to the revenue administration.

Diwan-i-Amm. Hall of Public Audience in the Imperial Palace.

Diwan-i-Khas. Hall of Private Audience in the Imperial Palace.

Doab. Land lying between two rivers. The land between the Jumna and the Ganges is the Doab *par excellence*.

Durbar. The court or levée of a man of rank or prince. Also used as a synonym for government.

Durweish. See *Dervish*.

Faqir. Muslim ascetic or religious mendicant.

Farman. A royal mandate or ordinance.

Faujdar. Commander of a body of troops, also governor of a city and chief of police.

Gardi (Marathi). Calamity or visitation.

Gari. Cart or carriage.

Ghazl. Urdu or Persian lyrics with a characteristic metre.

Ghi. Clarified butter.

Ghusl-i-sehat. Ceremonial bath of recovery marking the end of an illness.

Guru. Hindu religious teacher or spiritual guide.

Hakim. Muslim physician. To be distinguished from *Hākim*, an Arabic term for governor or judge.

Half Batta. See *Batta*.

Holi. The Hindu spring festival in the month of March.

Howdah. Elephant-seat.

Hundi. A bill of exchange.

Id. A Muslim festival.

Id-ul-Fitr. The Muslim festival of breaking fast at the end of the fasting month of Ramzan.

Id-ul-Zuha. Feast of Sacrifice. Another name for the Bakr-id (q.v.).

Imad-ul-Mulk. Mughul title of honour, *lit.* the Prop of the State.

Imam. Leader of Muslim congregational prayers and warden of a mosque. Among Shiahs, their spiritual and temporal head. Among Sunnis, certain revered teachers.

Izzat. Self-respect, prestige, honour, reputation.

Jagir. Assignment of land and its rent with or without conditions of service.

Jagirdar. Holder of a *jagir.*

Jaidad. An assignment of land for the maintenance of troops.

Jama. *Lit.* total or whole. A revenue term, the total demand for revenue of all kinds payable by a cultivator. In conjunction with *masjid,* congregational or cathedral mosque for all the worshippers of a district. Also as an abbreviation of *jamabandi,* the annual revenue settlement of a district.

Jamadar. A leader of a group. In the Indian army the officer next in rank below the *Subadar.*

Jantar-Mantar. Observatory. Four were built by Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur in the eighteenth century at Jaipur, Delhi, Benares and Ujjain.

Jharoka. Balcony in the imperial palaces in which the Emperor showed himself to the people outside.

Jhil. A swamp or fenny lake.

Jhundi. A system of land-assessment in the Delhi Territory depending on a division of the land into lots.

Jushun. Ceremony of accession.

Kamin. Artisan and servant of a village who received small allotments of land in addition to allowances of grain. *Lit.* inferior.

Karori. A revenue officer of the Mughul period.

Kautilya. The Minister of the Mauryan Emperor Chandragupta and the reputed author of the political work known as the *Arthasastra.*

Khadim. Mosque servant or warden of a religious endowment.

Khalsa. Lit. free or pure. Government land with no intermediate landlord between cultivator and the state. Used by the Sikhs as a synonym for their community.

Kharita. A silk bag in which letters for men of rank were enclosed. Hence a letter between equals.

Khaskhas (or *Khuskhus*). The fragrant grass from whose roots cooling screens for hot weather are made.

Khasmahal. Private apartments in a Muslim palace.

Khillat. A dress of honour conferred by a superior.

Khoji. Professional tracer of stolen or strayed cattle.

Kothi. House or place of business.

Kotwal. Chief of police in a town.

Kuhdi. Hearth, one of the terms used in the *chaubacha* system of assessment (q.v.).

Lakh. One hundred thousand.

Lal-purdah. *Lit.* Red curtain. This curtain covered the entrance to the *Diwan-i-Khas*.

Lal-purdari. Confidential adviser of the emperor. One who had the right to pass through the *red curtain* into the *Diwan-i-Khas*.

Lambardar. One who pays government dues on his own or others' account. A village headman.

Lathi. A stout stick or stave, often ringed and ferruled.

Loo. Hot winds of April to June in the Delhi district.

Mahal. House, palace.

Mahāl. A district.

Mahout. Elephant driver.

Maidan. Plain, large open space, levelled ground.

Malik. A proprietor, cultivator with hereditary rights. In some parts a landlord or village headman.

Mandi. Market for a particular article, e.g. *Sabsimandi*, vegetable market. A wholesale shop.

Manjha. Middle-land between the environs of a village and its farther boundaries. The land between the rivers Sutlej, Bias, and Ravi, the homeland of the Sikhs.

Mansab. Mughul official rank, carrying with it emoluments and responsibilities.

Mansabdar. Holder of a *mansab*.

Masjid. A mosque.

Masnad. A cushion. Hence throne or seat of authority.

Maulvi. A master of Muslim law, a teacher or learned man.

Maya. Illusion.

Meo. A Muslim community in Alwar and adjacent areas.

Minar. A tower.

Mir-bakshi. Paymaster-General.

Misl. A word used for the parties or confederacies into which the Sikhs were divided before the rise of Ranjit Singh.

Mohur. See *Muhr*.

Mohurram. The first month of the Muslim year. So applied to the ten days of mourning observed by Shia Muslims to commemorate the death of Husain, the third *Imam*, in A.D. 680.

Mufti. An expounder of the Muslim law.

Muhr. Gold coin worth about fifteen rupees.

Mujawir. A servant in mosques and graveyards.

Mukhtar. An agent or representative.

Mukhtarnamah. A written authority to act.

Munshi. A writer or secretary.

Muqaddam. Leader, headman of a village, caste or corporation.

Murid. A religious disciple.

Musnud. See Masnad.
Mutasaddi. A writer, a clerk.

Naib. Deputy, lieutenant.
Naqar-Khana. Chamber where the state drums were struck. In Delhi an alcove over the gateway leading to the *Diwan-i-Amm*.
Nauroz. New Year's Day.
Nautch. Dance.
Nawab. Prince, lord or governor.
Nazr. Offering from inferior to a superior.
Nuzzas. See *Nazr*.

Pagri. Turban.
Pahi. Non-resident cultivator.
Palki. Palanquin, a kind of travelling hammock suspended from a cross-pole.
Panchayat. Committee, traditionally of five members.
Pargana. A district.
Parwanah. Order, writ, letter from a superior to a dependent.
Pashmanah. Woollen cloth.
Patwari. Village registrar and accountant.
Peon. A uniformed messenger (cf. *Chaprassi*). formerly an armed attendant.
Phulkian. Sikhs who occupied land south of the Sutlej and received British protection.
Pir. Muslim saint or preceptor.
Pirzada. Mosque attendant, Muslim mendicant or *bir's* disciple.
Potdar. Money-changer.
Punkah. Fan.

Qanungo. *Lit.* an expounder of the laws. In India a village revenue officer.
Qazi. A Muslim judge.
Qila-i-mualla. *Lit.* the exalted fort. Formal name of the Red Fort in Delhi.

Raj. Rule, regime.
Ramzan. The Muslim month of fasting (the ninth).
Rangila. Pleasure-loving.
Rang-mahal. Hall of Colour (in the Delhi palace.)
Rath. Four-wheeled carriage used for religious processions and family journeys.
Razai. A cotton padded quilt.
Reh. Alkaline salts which render land unproductive.
Risaldar. Commander of a troop of horse.
Roshandan. Skylight.
Ryot (Ar. *raiyat*). A cultivator.

Sadr-us-Sadur. Chief judge.
Salatin. Junior members of the royal family of Delhi.
Sarai. A rest house for travellers.
Sardar. A chief or notable (in the north-west). A prefix used by Sikhs.
Sarkar. A Mughul district. Used as a synonym for government.
Sati. *Lit.* a virtuous wife. Used to denote the burning of a wife on the funeral pyre of her husband.

Sawar. Horseman.

Sayyid. Muslim title applied to those claiming descent from the prophet Muhammad.

Sebandi. Irregular troops.

Shah-burj. The Royal Tower (in the Delhi Fort).

Shahzada. The heir apparent, and generally a royal prince.

Shia. One of the two main divisions of Islam. The prevailing cult in Persia, but a minority in India.

Shikar. Hunting, sport.

Shuqa. A royal letter from a superior.

Solona. A Hindu festival observed at the full moon of the month Srâvan (July-August). It is marked by the *Raksha-bandhan* ceremony, the tying of a thread on another's wrist as a sign of protection.

Suba. A province.

Subadar. The governor of a Mughul province. A military rank in the Indian Army.

Sufi. A Muslim sage or mystic.

Sultana. A Muslim queen.

Sunni. One of the two main divisions of Islam. The prevailing cult in India and outside Persia.

Syaad. See *Sayyid*.

Syce (Ar. *sais*). Groom, horsekeeper.

Tahsil. *Lit*. collection. A sub-district in the Delhi territory.

Tahsildar. The officer in charge of a sub-district.

Taikhana. Underground apartment used during the hot weather.

Takhi. Fee, perquisite.

Tatty. Matted screen used for covering doors and windows.

Thag (*thug*). A robber working in groups who murdered their victims by strangling.

Thakur. A chief or noble (in the north-west). Used specially of Rajputs.

Thanadar. Police officer in charge of a ward or *thana*.

Thikar. The duty of keeping the village watch (in the Delhi territory).

Tosha-khana. Treasure-chamber or store-room.

Vakil. Agent, hence ambassador, pleader or advocate.

Vakil-i-mutlaq. Regent, hence representative with absolute powers.

Vali-ahad. An heir, heir apparent.

Vazir. Chief minister.

Wazir. See *Vazir*.

Zail. A sub-district containing a group of villages.

Zaildar. Headman of a *zail*.

Zamindar. A landholder. In the Delhi territory one of a group of village proprietors.

Zenana (*zanana*). The female apartments of a house.

Ziafat. Entertainment money.

Zillah. A district.

NOTE ON AUTHORITIES

The original materials for this book are mainly drawn from public records and private papers. The records are chiefly drawn from the India Office Library, the Imperial Record Office in India (now the National Archives of India), the Punjab Record Office and the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi. The principal private collections used are papers relating to the Metcalfe family, a collection of Sir Charles Trevelyan's private papers and the Saunders Papers. Detailed references to authorities have been provided in the text, but for convenience in securing a general view of the sources it may be useful to mention here the principal ones for each chapter.

Chapter II is mainly based on secondary authorities of whom Sir J. Sarkar, H. G. Keene and W. Franklin are the chief. Use has also been made of published documents such as Sir G. Forrest's selections from the Bengal records and Sir J. Sarkar's selections from the Poona Papers. In the vital years 1782–5, however, recourse has been had to unpublished materials. These include Major Browne's record of his mission to Delhi, correspondence from the residencies and the Bengal Consultations.

In Chapter III ('The Mughuls and the British'), the Bengal Political Consultations were used for the relations of Wellesley with Shah Alam. Collections of papers in the Home Miscellaneous Series of the India Office Library provided much material. The other principal source was the collection of papers to be found in the Punjab Record Office known as the Delhi Residency Records. The Bentinck Papers provided one or two interesting sidelights. Chapter IV ('The Mughul Court') uses the same sources supplemented by printed memoirs and travels such as those of Sleeman, Bishop Heber and Mrs Meer Hassan Ali. The National Archives of India provided a volume of Palace Intelligence which was illuminating in its detailed day-to-day record of palace life.

Chapter V ('The British Administration') is based on Charles Metcalfe's papers, both printed and unpublished, relevant papers in the Bengal Consultations, and the Settlement reports of the Delhi Territory. Chapter VI ('The Rural Life of the Delhi Territory') is specially indebted to the masterly survey of Thomas Fortescue in 1820 (printed in vol. I of the *Selections from the Punjab Records*). This is supplemented by Settlement reports, specially those of John Lawrence. Much further material lies embedded in the Revenue Consultations of the Bengal Presidency of the Government of India (from 1834) and the records of the North-Western Provinces.

Chapter VII, on the British in Delhi, is based mainly on memoirs and books of travel. It also owes much to the unpublished reminiscences of Lady Clive Bayley, the daughter of Sir Thomas Metcalfe. Copies of the *Delhi Gazette* preserved in the Fort Museum, Delhi, were also useful. The main authority for Chapter VIII ('The Colebrooke Case)' is the collection of papers made and privately printed by Sir Charles Trevelyan at the time. These are backed by further papers to be found in the Bengal Consultations, and by some references in the Bentinck Papers. For the account of Fraser's murder (Chapter IX) Sleeman's almost contemporary narrative in his *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official* was used together with Bosworth Smith's account in his *Life of Lord Lawrence*. Sleeman's account has been checked and amplified by reference to the original records of the trial in the National Archives of India.

The two final chapters (X and XI) on the Mutiny in Delhi and its aftermath both rely on original materials. For the Mutiny itself there are three main sources. The first is a series of Indian accounts of events in Delhi, of which the most important are the narratives of Hakim Ahsanullah Khan and Munshi Jivan Lal. The second is the Mutineers' Papers of which a valuable press list has been published by the Government of India. The third is the report of the proceedings of the trial of Bahadur Shah and certain others which contain translations of many of the Mutiny Papers and much other valuable material. For the aftermath the Saunders Papers, containing a series of letters of John Lawrence, and papers in the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, were specially used.

NOTES

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

(1) Irvine, W., *Later Mughals*, II, pp. 257–67 and 288–94.

(2) See for Karnal, W. Irvine, op. cit. II, pp. 337–9; for Panipat, J. Sarkar, *Fall of the Moghul Empire*, II, pp. 285–7; and for the Marathas, ch. II of this book and J. C. Fanshawe, *Delhi Past and Present* (based on W. Thorn's *Memoirs of the late Great War in Hindustan*).

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

(1) Sarkar, J., *Moghul Empire*, I, pp. 446–7. He is often referred to as *Ghazi-ud-din*, which was another of his titles, but this is liable to lead to confusion between him and his father, the eldest son of the first Nizam, known as Ghazi-ud-din, Firuz Jang. Imad-ul-Mulk's name was Shihab-ud-din and his full titles were Imad-ul-mulk, Ghazi-ud-din Khan Bahadur, Firuz Jang, Mir Bakhshi, Amir-ul-Umara, Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah.

(2) Law, J., *Mémoire sur quelques affaires de l'Empire Mogul* (ed. A. Martineau), p. 179.

(3) Sarkar, J., op. cit. II, p. 537.

(4) *Cambridge History of India*, IV, pp. 420–1.

(5) Sarkar, J., op. cit. II, pp. 377, 380–1.

(6) *C.H.I.* IV, p. 439. He received this title and that of *Amir-ul-Umara* from Ahmad Shah Abdali in March 1756.

(7) Sarkar, J., op. cit. II, p. 549.

(8) This payment was stopped by Warren Hastings on his accession to office in 1772.

(9) Sarkar, J., op. cit. II, pp. 552–3.

(10) Francklin, W., *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum*, p. 50. His full titles were Khan Sipah-i Salar Hindustan, Rustam-ud-daulah, Rustam-i-Hind, Zulfiqar-ud-daulah, Mirza Najaf Khan Bahadur, Ghalib Jang; or Commander-in-Chief in Hindustan, The Rustum of the State, the Rustum of India, Splendour of the State, Prince Najaf Khan, Victorious in Battle.

(11) I.O. Home Misc. vol. 336, pp. 1–8. Bengal Consult. 22 March 1781.

(12) For evidence of the effects of this famine still persisting in 1803, see ch. VI (Rural Life).

(13) I.O. Home Misc. 336. Bengal Secret Consult. 29 April 1782. Middleton to G.-G. 15 April 1782.

(14) Ibid. Beng. Secret Consult. 3 March 1783. Bristow to G.-G. 23 Nov. 1782.

(15) Ibid.

(16) Sarkar, J. (ed.), *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs* (1936)

(17) I.O. Home Misc. 765, p. 67. Bengal Secret Consult. 6 Oct. 1782. The instructions are dated 20 Aug. 1782. They are also printed in G. W. Forrest, *Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Foreign Dept. 1772–1785*, III, pp. 1025–8.

(18) I.O. Home Misc. 336. The manœuvres are given in letters from Middleton, Bristow, Gen. Stibbert and Col. Morgan, to be found in the Bengal Secret Consultations of 26 Sept. 1782, 22 Nov. 1782 and 3 March 1783.

(19) Ibid. pp. 37–44. Anderson to G.-G. 8 May 1783.

(20) Ibid. Browne to Bristow. 11 March 1783.

(21) Ibid. pp. 51–3. Bengal Secret Consult. 23 June 1783. Papers from Delhi. 14–15 April 1783.

(22) I.O. Home Misc. 765. Bengal Secret Letter. 20 Oct. 1783, paras. 61–9.

(23) Ibid. pp. 84–5. Bengal Secret Consult. 6 Oct. 1783.

(24) I.O. Home Misc. 336. Bengal Secret Consult. 20 Jan. 1784.

(25) Ibid. pp. 99–122. Memorandum by Major Browne on the State of Affairs at Delhi.

(26) Mill, J., *History of British India*, ed. 1858, v, pp. 13–15. See H. H. Wilson's long note to the text.

(27) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, p. 6. See Sir J. Sarkar's note.

(28) Forrest, *Selections*, III, pp. 1087–9.

(29) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, pp. 312–14. Delhi newspapers, 1 Aug. 1788.

(30) B.M. Add. MSS. 29, 171, pp. 319–20. Jonathan Scott to W. Hastings. 20 May, 1789. I am indebted to the late Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdul Ali, late Keeper of the Imperial Records, for the suggestion that the word 'atomny' of the manuscript is a corruption of 'domni', a *nautch* or dancing girl of Upper India. Such a word exactly fits the context. The princes were called 'children of dancing girls'. See also the account based on *Delhi News-letters* in Jonathan Scott's *History of the Deccan*, II, pp. 285–303.

(31) Ibid.

(32) William Palmer stressed this last point in a letter to Hastings. 29 Oct. 1789.

(33) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, p. 347, no. 252. W. Palmer to G.-G. 29 July 1789.

(34) B.M. Add. MSS. 29,171, p. 115. Palmer to W. Hastings. 29 Oct. 1789.

(35) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, p. 342, no. 247. W. Palmer to G.-G. 7 April. 1789.

(36) Delhi Residency and Agency Records [D.R.R.], Pol. and Misc. Records, Case 1, no. 84. Note on the Royal Stipend. 13 Dec. 1855.

(37) *Mahadji Sindia ahd N. Indian Affairs*, p. 345, no. 249. W. Palmer to C. W. Malet. 12 June 1789.

(38) B.M. Add. MSS. 29,172, p. 192. W. Palmer to W. Hastings. 21 Nov. 1790.

(39) Ibid.

(40) B.M. Add. MSS. 29,171, p. 449. W. Palmer to W. Hastings. 30 Dec. 1789. I take the last sentence to refer to the Mughul Family as a whole rather than to Shah Alam himself. Complaints of bad treatment of Shah Alam are voiced by Palmer as late as 1795. See B.M. Add. MSS. 29,174, p. 141. W. Palmer to W. Hastings. 10 Aug. 1795.

(41) Twining, T., *Travels in India a Hundred Years Ago*, p. 234.

(42) Francklin, W., *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum*, p. 199, Appendix 1.

(43) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, p. 391, no. 284. Malet to the Court of Directors. 5 Feb. 1794.

(44) Compton, H., *Hindustan under the Freelances* (1907). Keene, H. G., *Fall of the Moghul Empire* (1876).

(45) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, pp. 392 7, no. 285.

(46) Not all the artillerymen were disciplined. They included blacksmiths, carpenters, water-carriers and bullock-drivers.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

(1) *Mahadji Sindia and N. Indian Affairs*, pp. 315–16. Cornwallis to Palmer. 16 Aug. 1788.

(2) For example, see Ghulum Husain Khan, *Seir-ul-Mutaqherin*.

(3) See *C.H.I.* v, pp. 597 and 603.

(4) Delhi Agent of the Resident at Sindia's Court.

(5) I.O. Home Misc. vol. 492, pp. 251–2. Wellesley to Shah Alam. 27 July 1803.

(6) Ibid. pp. 241 ff. Wellesley to Lake. 27 July 1803, paras. 7, 8. (Pol. Consultations, 2 March 1804.)

(7) Ibid. 485, pp. 196–8. Lake to Shah Alam. 8 Aug. 180;

(8) Ibid. 492, pp. 300. S. Rezzi Khan to Lake. 1 Sept. 1803.

(9) Ibid. 492, pp. 251–2. Wellesley to Shah Alam. 8 Oct. 1803. The italics are mine.

(10) Ibid. 492, pp. 198 ff. Letter to the Secret Committee, 12 April 1804, paras. 559, 564.

(11) Ibid. 492, p. 292. Letter from S. Rezzi Khan, forwarding Shah Alam's reply to Wellesley.

(12) Ibid. 492, pp. 349–50. Lake to Wellesley. 21 Sept. 1803. The titles were Samsam-ad-daula, Astya-ul-Mulk, Khan Dauran, Khan Bahadur, Sipah-i Salar, Fateh Jung. The title which was also an office was that of *Sipah-i Salar* or Commander-in-Chief.

(13) Ibid. 492, pp. 566–78. Letters to the Secret Committee 12 April 1804.

(14) Ibid. 708. Ochterlony to Wellesley. 1 Dec. 1804.

(15) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 3.

(16) The Red Fort contained the palace and also an extensive area which formerly provided quarters for the palace guards. It was in effect a little city within a city. It was officially known as the *Urdu-i-mualla* or later the *Qila-i-mualla* or Exalted Fort.

(17) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 13, 1836.

(18) I.O. Home Misc. 708, pp. 77–8. Memorandum on the claims of the King of Delhi.

(19) Ibid. p. 66.

(20) For Ram Mohan Roy's actual Mission, see later.

(21) 28 Sept. 1833.

(22) 1 Feb. 1837.

(23) 1 Aug. 1838.

(24) I.O. Home Misc. 336. Mr Holford's Memorandum on the Affairs of Delhi.

(25) Ibid.

(26) *Aftabgir*. The Mughul sun ensign, indicative of high rank. See Glossary and *Ain-i-Akbari*, 1, 52.

(27) *Political Despatch to Bengal* (1811), para. 199.

(28) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, pp. 336–42.

(29) Ibid. pp. 342–54.

(30) *Alqāb*. Set forms of address to the Sovereign.

(31) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 5. Ram Mohan Roy to Sect. of Govt. 23 Feb. 1829.

(32) I.O. Home Misc. 708, pp. 183–200. Ram Mohan Roy to Charles Grant. 4 Nov. 1831.

(33) Ibid. Ram Mohan Roy to Sect. of Govt. 29 Sept. 1830.

(34) Bentinck Papers. P. Auber to Bentinck. 4 June 1831 and 7 July 1831.

(35) Bentinck Papers. Ravenshaw to Bentinck. 26 June 1831.
(36) Ibid. P. Auber to Bentinck. 11 Oct. 1833.
(37) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 5.
(38) Ibid. para. 13.
(39) *Bengal Political Consultations*. 5 March 1830, no. 83.
(40) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 6. Agent to Sect. Gov.-General. 18 July 1833.
(41) Ibid. Agent to Sect. Gov.-General. 1 July 1838.
(42) Francklin, W., *History of the Reign of Shah Aulum*. Appendix. London 1794.
(43) Bentinck Papers. C. T. Metcalfe to Bentinck. 18 April 1832.
(44) Ibid. Metcalfe to Bentinck. 18 Dec. 1831.
(45) Thompson, E., *Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, p. 140.
(46) Bentinck Papers. Metcalfe to Bentinck. 18 April 1832.
(47) Bengal Political Consultations. 19 March 1830, nos. 6 and 7. Hawkins's replies to the King's charges.
(48) I.O. Home Misc. 708. C. Grant to Campbell 21 Dec. 1831.
(49) Ibid. pp. 321–9. P. Auber, Sect. to the Court, to Charles Grant.
(50) Ibid. pp. 263–7. C. Grant to the Chairs. 5 July 1832, 16 Dec. 1831.
(51) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, pp. 377–8.
(52) Ibid. pp. 400–3. Rs. 4338 and Rs. 3580 respectively.
(53) Ibid. p. 300.
(54) Ibid. pp. 378–82.
(55) Ibid. p. 385.
(56) The Residency was reduced to an Agency in 1832
(57) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 30. Despatch to Bengal. 12 Dec. 1844, para. 16.
(58) Ibid. paras. 19, 20.
(59) Ibid. Case 1, no. 31. Agent to Sect. Gov. N.W.P. 8 March 1845.
(60) Ibid. Case 1, no. 30. Sect. to Gov. N.W.P. to Agent. 17 March 1845. (The paragraphs are 1–10 and 21–37.)
(61) Ibid. Sect. to Gov. N.W.P. to Sect. Gov. Calcutta. 17 March 1845.
(62) Ibid. Case 1, no. 31. 11 April 1845.
(63) Ibid. Case 1, no. 61. Correspondence of 1851.
(64) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, pp. 413–43.
(65) Ibid. p. 463.
(66) Ibid. p. 466.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

(1) Originally it was called the *Urdu-i-mu'alla*.

(2) Nugent, Maria Lady, *Journal of a Residence in India*, I, pp. 420–5.

(3) Heber, Bishop R., *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India* (ed. 1844), I, pp. 306–7.

(4) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 16. Letter of Agent. 3 May 1838.

(5) Bentinck Papers. Metcalfe to Bentinck. 2 Jan. 1833.

(6) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 13 (enclosure).

(7) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, p. 431.

(8) I.O. Home Misc. vol. 708, p. 28.

(9) Sleeman, W. H., *Rambles and Recollections* (ed. 1893), II, pp. 178–80.

(10) Pester John, *War and Sport in India 1802–6*, p. 176. 18 Sept. 1803.

(11) I.O. Home Misc. 336, p. 829. Mem. on Delhi Affairs by Mr Holford.

(12) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, p. 455. Enclosure to S. Fraser's letter. 11 July 1856.

(13) Sleeman, W. H., *Rambles and Recollections* (ed. V. Smith), p. 509.

(14) *Private Journal of Lord Hastings* (ed. the Marchioness of Bute), I, pp. 153–4.

(15) Archer, Major, *Tours in Upper India*, I, p. 383.

(16) Law, J., *Mémoire sur...l'Empire Mogul*, p. 329.

(17) B.M. Add. MSS. 29,171, pp. 319–20. J. Scott to W. Hastings. 20 May 1789.

(18) Nugent, Maria Lady, op. cit. I, p. 423.

(19) Archer, Major, op. cit. II, p. 114.

(20) Mrs Meer Hassan Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmans*, II, pp. 156–8.

(21) Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections* (ed. 1893), II, pp. 185–6.

(22) *Bishop Heber's Narrative* (ed. 1844), I, pp. 304–6.

(23) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 1, no. 3. C. T. Metcalfe to Deputy Sec. in attendance on the Gov.-Gen. 26 June 1827.

(24) Archer, Major, op. cit. II, p. 113.

(25) Eden, Emily, *Up the Country* (ed. E. Thompson, 1930), p. 97.

(26) Orlich, L. von, *Travels in India*, II, p. 25.

(27) N.A.I Foreign Dept., Misc. Political, vol. 361. Palace Intelligence, Delhi, 1851–4.

(28) *Bahadur Shah* (ed. 1870), pp. 249–50

(29) N.A.I. op. cit. 13 July 1852.

(30) Bailey, T. G., *History of Urdu Literature*, pp. 70–2.

(31) N.A.I. op. cit.

'Amba, ai farzand, mere liye marghūb hai
Kuch nahin karte zarūr, mere liye yih khūb hai.'

(32) I.O. Public Consultations. 19 March 1830, nos. 6 and 7. This contains Hawkins's replies to the Mughul complaints. The account (p. 77) is based on Hawkins's own version.

(33) N.A.I. op. cit.

(34) I.O. Home Misc. 725 (Kaye Papers).

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

(1) Kaye, J. W., *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, p. 55.

(2) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, p. 19. Seton's Instructions to Charles Metcalfe.

(3) Ibid. p. 23.

(4) Ibid. pp. 1–4. Seton to Sec. Gov. Calcutta. 15 Sept. 1807.

(5) I.O. Home Misc. 776. Report on the Judicial Administration of Delhi Territory 1815. Report of 1815, Para. 201.

(6) E.g. Mr W. Ewer's attack in 1823, and Sir E. Colebrooke's in 1829.

(7) Kaye, J. W., op. cit. p. 56.

(8) Ibid. p. 65.

(9) I.O. Home Misc. 776. Report of 1815, para. 88.

(10) Not to be confounded with the *zillah* of Bengal—a district.

(11) Kaye, J. W., op. cit. pp. 37–8.

(12) I.O. Home Misc. 776. Report of 1815, paras. 107–37.

(13) Bentinck Papers.

(14) These were: the Nawabs of Kunjpura, Indri, Narnal, Firozpur; the Khan of the Bhattis; the Sardars of Ladaura, Thanesar, Azimgarh; the Rajas of Jind, Patiala, Nabha, Bikanir, Jaipur, Ketri, Alwar, and Bharatpur; the Rao of Shahjehanpur; the Bhai of Kaithal; the Begam Samru; the Thakur of Burao; the Plunderers of Sidmuk, Bahadura and Dadrera.

(15) This system was still in use in Hissar in 1853. See Keene, H. G., *A Servant of 'John Company'*, pp. 111–12.

(16) Bentinck abolished this practice in 1831. His action was extremely popular.

(17) *E.I.C. Affairs* 1832. vol. IV, p. 24. Evidence of Mr Holt Mackenzie.

(18) I.O. Home Misc. 776. Report of 1815. Paras. 182-96.

(19) Kaye, J. W., *Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*. Thompson, E., *Charles, Lord Metcalfe*.

(20) Kaye, J. W., *Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, pp. 43–7. Revenue Report of 1815. The whole passage, pp. 43–7, contains the essence of Metcalfe's larger objective.

(21) Ibid. p. 63. Metcalfe's reply to W. Ewer.

(22) Ibid. p. 57.

(23) I.O. General Letter to the Court. 9 March 1830.

(24) Ewer was a little later insubordinate and disrespectful to Lord W. Bentinck, who transferred him with Metcalfe's cordial approval. E. Thompson, *Metcalfe*, p. 277. He was in further trouble in 1835.

(25) I.O. Bengal Public Consultations. Minute by C. T. Metcalfe, Nov. 1829. The charge is to be found printed in the Trevelyan Papers.

(26) *Selected Delhi Reports*. Settlement Report on Pergunneh Rewari, 1838, by J. Lawrence.

(27) Kaye, J. W., op. cit. p. 49.

(28) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, pp. 25 and 33.

(29) *Delhi Settlement Report* (1882), pp. 267–9. *C.H.I.* vi, pp. 87–8.

(30) *Selected Delhi Reports*. Report on Sonepat and Panipat Districts (1836), by J. Lawrence.

(31) Shamsi-siraj Afif, *Tarikh-i Firoz Shahi*. Elliott and Dowson, *History of India as told by its own Historians*, iii, pp. 298–300.

(32) *Asiatic Annual Register* (1800), ii, p. 37. W. Hamilton, *E. India Gazetteer*, Delhi.

(33) Kaye, J. W., *Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe* (ed. 1858), i, p. 265.

(34) *Journal of Lord Hastings*, i, pp. 282–4. 5 Jan. 1815.

(35) *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, ii, pp. 105–28. Colvin, *Restoration of Ancient Canals in Delhi Territory*.

(36) *Selected Delhi Reports*. Report on the Sonepat District (1836), by J. Lawrence.

(37) *Delhi Settlement Report* (1882).

(38) Ibid. p. 148.

(39) Ibid.

(40) Ibid. p. 141. The figures for 1880 were 5789 people and Rs. 12,755.

(41) Ibid. pp. 138 seq. Quotations from the Karnal Records.

(42) Ibid. p. 148.

(43) Ibid. p. 138.

(44) Bentinck Papers. Bentinck to Charles Metcalfe. 16 Sept. 1829. Bentinck to P. Auber. 14 Dec. 1829. Minute, 10 Feb. 1829.

(45) I.O. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

(1) This phrase is used on her own seal. (Information supplied by Dr R. B. Whitehead.)

(2) *Asiatic Annual Register* (1800), II, p. 37.

(3) Metcalfe, C. T., Minute of the Board of Revenue. 17 Nov. 1830.

(4) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, pp. 69–130.

(5) The word is here used in its literal meaning of a land-holder, and must be distinguished carefully from its Bengal usage.

(6) Dr R. B. Whitehead informs me that this class of landholder is not now recognized.

(7) *Selected Delhi Reports*. Settlement Report of Rewari District (1838) by John Lawrence.

(8) Head messenger.

(9) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, p. 114. Fortescue's Report (1820), paras. 173, 174.

(10) Ibid.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

(1) Jacquemment, V., *Letters from India*, II, p. 271.

(2) E.g. Sir David Ochterlony, Sir C. Metcalfe, Sir T. T. Metcalfe, William Fraser, C. E. Trevelyan, John Lawrence, Sir Charles Elliot, John Colvin, Thomas Fortescue.

(3) This is clearly shown in the pre-Mutiny maps.

(4) See Chapter IX, Appendix II.

(5) The site in Alipur Road, behind the castellated house which is now the Malaria Survey Centre and was once the Commander-in-Chief's house, is that of the Telegraph Office built *after* the Mutiny.

(6) In the Trevelyan Papers, Trevelyan is referred to as 'the fellow of the *Shish Mahal*'. The *Shish Mahal* was the central pavilion in the garden.

(7) Blake was murdered in Jaipur in 1829. Thomas Metcalfe's house is described below.

(8) I have seen this in pre-Mutiny prints of Delhi.

(9) Parks, F., *Diary*, II, pp. 193 and 196. Mr Walter George, the well-known architect of Delhi, tells me that it is modelled on a church in Venice.

(10) The main authority for the description of Kashmir Gate is the unpublished autobiography of Lady Clive Bayley. [Hardcastle Papers.]

(11) Roberts, Emma, *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindustan* (2nd ed.), II, p. 228.

(12) Roberts, Emma, *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindustan*, II, p. 229.
(13) Hardcastle Papers. As late as 1904 in Upper India old-stagers used the *hookah*. (Information supplied by Col. Sir W. L. Sleeman.)
(14) Orlich, L. von, *Travels in India*, II, p. 16. He speaks of a *Taikhana* belonging to Capt. Dyke—'like many of those inhabited by Europeans'.
(15) Archer, Major, *Travels in Northern India*, I, p. 108.
(16) It was in a bath such as this at Trichinopoly that Bishop Heber met his end.
(17) Now Lloyds Bank, just off the Chandni Chowk and behind the Baptist church.
(18) Now the Hindu College. The bath-room is used as a staff-room.
(19) The Begam Samru's *new* palace, now a Roman Catholic school. This is the best example and is open to inspection by visitors.
(20) Hoffmeister, Dr W., *Travels in Ceylon and Continental India*, pp. 277–8.
(21) *Khaskhas*, a fragrant grass (*Andropogon muricatum*).
(22) Hoffmeister, Dr W., op. cit. p. 277.
(23) Bentinck Papers. Draft reply of Lord William Bentinck. November 1833.
(24, This method is decribed in detail in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.
(25) This description is condensed from that given by Fanny Parks, *Diary*, I, pp. 78–82.
(26) Selections, North-West Province, I, p. 13. Report of A. A. Roberts, 17 July 1847. The total number of inhabitants is given as 239, of which 158 were non-cultivators.
(27) Hardcastle Papers. Clive Bayley MSS. p. 12.
(28) Edward Colvin. He became Lieut.-Governor of the North-West Province and died at Agra during the Mutiny.
(29) E.g. Lady Clive Bayley had normally four, and Bishop Heber six bearers.
(30) Mrs F. A. Steel in her novel, *On the Face of the Waters*, gives a vivid picture of the *bhangi* fraternity.
(31) Hardcastle Papers, loc. cit. pp. 11–12.
(32) The cantonment of Nasirabad, Rajputana. Ochterlony was given the title of Nasir-ud-daulah by Shah Alam.
(33) E.g. at Karnal. The house is now owned by the younger branch of the Nawabs of Karnal.
(34) Bishop Heber, *Narrative* (ed. 1844), II, pp. 29–30. For Dame Rumour's version, see II, pp. 19–20.
(35) Thompson, E., *Charles, Lord Metcalfe*. For a sketch of this

villa (now much decayed) I am indebted to Dr A. Batty, late of Delhi.

(36) Hardcastle Papers, loc. cit. p. 81.

(37) Hardcastle Papers. Metcalfe Letters. Enclosures with a letter of 1 Sept. 1821.

(38) Hardcastle Papers, ibid. 1 Sept. 1821.

(39) Ibid. 27 Aug. 1837.

(40) Ibid. 27 Feb. 1839.

(41) Hardcastle Papers. Clive Bayley MSS. pp. 20 seq.

(42) Ibid. p. 33.

(43) Ibid. p. 23.

(44) Ibid. p. 34.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Bentinck Papers. Charles Metcalfe to Lord W. Bentinck 13 March 1831.

(47) Ibid. 20 Feb. 1832.

(48) *Selected Delhi Reports.*

(49) Jacquemment, V., *Letters from India*, I, p. 346.

(50) Ibid. II, p. 253.

(51) Fraser, Baillie, *Military Memoirs of Col. James Skinner.*

(52) A letter from Skinner to Lord W. Bentinck in the Bentinck Papers is full of Persian turns of phrase and grammatical errors.

(53) Fraser, Baillie, op. cit. I, p. 103.

(54) Hardcastle Papers. Clive Bayley MSS. p. 46.

(55) Ibid. pp. 33 and 39.

(56) Ibid. p. 28.

(57) Ibid. p. 38.

(58) Jacquemment, V., op. cit. II, p. 271.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

(1) Hardcastle Papers. Metcalfe Letters. Charles Metcalfe to his sister. 9 June 1827. Fernhill was the name of the family seat in England.

(2) Trevelyan MSS. The meeting is also mentioned by Jacquemment in his letters.

(3) Trevelyan Papers. Trevelyan to Lord W. Bentinck. 1 May 1830.

(4) Ibid. p. 98. Trevelyan to the Chief Secretary.

(5) Ibid. Appendix III to letters of 1 May 1830.

(6) The trial was complete (except for judgement) on 1 August 1829, when orders arrived to suspend it. But for this Bakhtawar Singh would have been branded on the forehead—an illegal punishment. Trevelyan Papers, p. 138. Letter from Commissioners to the Chief Secretary, Calcutta. 4 December 1829.

(7) Trevelyan Papers, p. 100. 2 August 1829.
(8) Ibid. p. 26.
(9) Ibid. p. 90. Colebrooke to Murray. 10 July 1829.
(10) Ibid. p. 42.
(11) Bentinck Papers. Ravenshaw to Lord W. Bentinck. 9 Dec. 1830.
(12) I.O. Bengal Political Consultations. 23 July 1830. Nos. 39 and 40.
(13) Ibid.
(14) *E.I.C. Affairs*, III, p. 169, qu. 2041, evidence of W. H. Trant.
(15) I.O. Bengal Political Consultations. 13 Nov. 1829, no. 21. Minute of Sir C. Metcalfe.
(16) This section is based on the Resolutions of Government in the Political Dept. 29 Dec. 1829. These give the charges and the Commissioners' conclusions thereon. See Trevelyan Papers, pp. 105–38.
(17) Rais-ud-Din and Hari Ram, Rs. 20–30 each; Mr Colebrooke (jun.) and Mr Dean, all the silver; Ram Gopal the remainder. The defence was that the money was given as charity, and so in a sense it was.
(18) It was proved that an article worth Rs. 714 was knocked down to Rs. 214.
(19) Trevelyan Papers, p. 123. Charge 10. The various payments were 'abundantly' proved. The chiefs were Raja Balwant Singh, Rs. 3000; the Rani of Bharatpur, Rs. 13,000.
(20) I. O. Bengal Political Consultations. 13 Nov. 1829, no. 21 and 12 Jan. 1832, no. 26. Minutes by Sir C. Metcalfe.
(21) Trevelyan Papers, p. 117. Charge 8.
(22) Ibid. p. 115. Charge 6.
(23) Ibid. p. 58.
(24) Ibid. p. 67.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IX

(1) Jacquemment, V., *Letters from India* (1828–31), II, p. 265.
(2) Bentinck Papers. Sir Charles Metcalfe to Lord William Bentinck. 1 Nov. 1833.
(3) Sleeman, W. H., *Rambles and Recollections*, II, p. 215.
(4) Ibid., pp. 209–32.
(5) Ibid.
(6) N.A.I. Miscellaneous Political Series, vol. 320.
(7) N.A.I. Misc. Political, 320, nos. 8–12.
(8) Not the house on the Ridge still known as Hindu Rao's, which Fraser himself occupied.

(9) Clive Bayley MSS. 'In Great Grandmother's days,' p. 63.

(10) Bosworth Smith, R., *Life of Lord Lawrence*, I, pp. 75–8 (3rd ed. 1883). Lawrence began his official career at Delhi in 1831 and was in charge of the Panipat district of the Delhi Territory from 1834 to 1837. Bosworth Smith's account of the incident follows generally that of Sleeman, apart from the contribution of Lawrence himself.

(11) There are minor discrepancies between the accounts of Sleeman and Bosworth Smith. The former does not mention Lawrence, who was the hero of the whole episode in the eyes of the latter. The main outline is, however, clear.

(12) For the murder of Pandit Shastri in 1872.

(13) Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Asar-us-Sanadad* (1843).

(14) Parks, F., *Diary* (ed. 1850), II, pp. 193–4.

(15) For this and other information on the subject of Fraser's tomb, I am indebted to the courtesy and kindness of Dr H. N. Randle, formerly Librarian of the India Office Library.

(16) This passage was kindly supplied to me by Mr Ashfaque Ali of the Delhi Fort Museum.

(17) Garcin de Tassy, *Description des Monuments de Delhi en 1852*. This work is largely based on that of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

(18) This book is not traceable in the British Museum Library or the former India Office Library, but it is clear from its reprint in 1876 under the title of *Delhi and its Environs* that it was written before the Mutiny.

(19) Hearn, G., *Seven Cities of Delhi* (1st ed. 1906), pp. 136–7. His description is based on that of Fanny Parks.

(20) Sleeman, W. H., op. cit.

(21) List of Muhammedan and Hindu monuments of Delhi Province. Government of India, II, p. 281.

(22) Fanshawe, H. C., *Delhi Past and Present*, pp. 81–2.

(23) Clive Bayley MSS. loc. cit. The note refers to Alex. Taylor's life.

(24) Jacquemment, V., op. cit. II, p. 240.

(25) See the *Cambridge History of India*, III, pp. 197–8.

(26) I.O. Public Proceedings. 25 March 1835 (Papers, Collection G , no. 54.

(27) Trevelyan Papers, p. 84. Colebrooke to Trevelyan (n.d. but some time in the summer of 1828)

NOTES TO CHAPTER X

(1) Most recently by Hesketh Pearson, *The Hero of Delhi*. The best individual accounts are by Lord Roberts, *Forty-one Years in India*, and Sir H. Norman (printed in F. C. Fanshawe's *Delhi Past and Present* and in Sir G. W. Forrest's Delhi volume of his *Selections from State Papers preserved in the Military Department, 1857–8*). The standard description of the siege will be found in Kaye and Malleson's *History of the Indian Mutiny* and T. R. E. Holmes's *History of the Indian Mutiny*.

(2) They were by Munshi Jiwan Lal and Main-ud-din Khan; in C. T. Metcalfe's *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*.

(3) Orlich, L. von, *Travels in India*, II, p. 4.

(4) Anon, *Observations on India*, p. 107.

(5) *Selections. North-West Provinces* (1849), I, p. 13. Report of A. A. Roberts. 17 July 1847.

(6) *Delhi Residency and Agency*, p. 169. Report of T. Fortescue. These existed in the memory of people still living in 1820.

(7) A good description is provided by F. A. Steel, *On the Face of the Waters*, Bk. II, ch. 5.

(8) *Bahadur Shah* (1870), pp. 249–50.

(9) *Delhi Settlement Report 1882*, Appendix XI, p. xxxi.

(10) Cf. Andrews, C. F., *Maulvi Zaka Ullah of Delhi* (1928). The author's charming picture of pre-Mutiny Delhi needs some correction on this point.

(11) D.R.R. Pol. and Misc., Case 19. Statement dated 10 July 1854.

(12) Ibid.

(13) Ibid. Case 54. Petition of Hindus to the Lieut.-Governor, North-West Provinces. 22 July 1854.

(14) N.A.I. Foreign Dept. Misc. Political, 361. Précis of Palace Intelligence (1851–4). 20 September 1852.

(15) Andrews, C. F., op. cit. pp. 4–7 and 9. Ivory paintings formerly to be seen in the Ivory Palace near the Jama Masjid portrayed the royal processions. A contemporary painting of these processions can be seen in the Cambridge Brotherhood House, Delhi.

(16) Andrews, C. F., op. cit. p. 42. The books included, in poetry, Goldsmith's *Traveller* and *The Deserted Village*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Pope's *Essay on Man*; in prose, Richardson's *Selections*, Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and Burke's *Essays and Speeches*.

(17) Ibid. pp. 39–40.

(18) E.g. Ambala. For the *chapatis* and their place in the popular mind see *Two Native Narratives*, Mainodin's account and C. T.

Metcalfe's introduction, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account in I.O. Home Misc. 725, and the Evidence of Sir John T. Metcalfe in *Bahadur Shah*, p. 122.

(19) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 122. Evidence of Sir John T. Metcalfe.

20) Ibid. pp. 104–5 and 121. Evidence of Hakim Ahsanullah Khan and Sir J. Metcalfe.

(21) Ibid. pp. 102–11, especially p. 106. Evidence of Muhammad Darvish, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan and Jat Mal

Hasan Askari acquired influence over Bahadur Shah by praying over him at the time of his critical illness in 1853. He professed inspiration, told dreams and predicted the future. He was said to have assigned twenty years of his life to prolong that of the King. 'He repeated incantations over the King, and, after praying, breathed on him....He was frequently audibly addressed from heaven.' He prophesied that the Persians would drive out the British and restore Bahadur Shah to power. He disappeared during the Mutiny.

(22) Ibid. p. 118. Evidence of Makhan, *Chobdar*.

(23) Ibid. pp. 38–41 and 136. Evidence of Ghulam Abbas and the *Hakim*. According to Ghulam there were six or eight horsemen, according to the *Hakim*, about twenty. Ghulam was also known by his title, *Saif-ud-daulah*.

(24) E.g. I.O. Home Misc. 725, p. 149. Defence of Muhammad Bakhtawar Shah.

(25) The Gujar village of Chandrawal had been moved to the north to make way for the House. The village temple still stands close to the entrance gates by the river. It was in this temple that the caricatures of Lord Brougham and Lord Sefton were found after the Mutiny, doing duty as idols. Hardcastle Papers. Clive Bayley MSS. p. 9.

(26) *Mutiny Papers*. There are a number of references to Sikh troops, who were organized into a regiment, during August and September.

(27) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 38–41 and 252. Evidence of Ghulam Abbas and Ahsanullah Khan.

(28) Ibid. p. 40.

(29) We have only the *Hakim's* word for this after the Mutiny. Such a statement was of course in his own interest, but it is supported (1) by the reliability of the *Hakim's* evidence in general, and (2) by the charges brought against the *Hakim* a few days later, for which there is independent testimony. See *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 165–6, Evidence of Munshi Lal, news-writer, and *Two Native Narratives*, p. 92. Munshi Jiwan Lal's narrative.

(30) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 87. Narrative of Munshi Jiwan Lal. On 12 May the King was freely addressed as 'ari Badshah' (you King), and 'ari buddha' (you old fellow).

(31) Ibid. Narrative of Munshi Jiwan Lal. For the *Hakim's* account, see I.O. Home Misc. 725, pp. 36–7.

(32) Ibid. p. 58. Mainodin Hasan Khan states that colonelcies were given to Mirzas Jiwan Bakht, Khizr Sultan, Sohrab Hindi, Sidi Beg, Bakhtawar Shah, Abu Bakr and Abdulla. Chuni Lal (*Bahadur Shah*, p. 161) adds the name of Khair-ud-din.

(33) Ibid. See Mainodin's narrative and introduction.

(34) *Bahadur Shah*. According to Kishen Singh (p. 132) the room was formerly used as the office of the Professor of Muslim Law. According to the Judge-Advocate-General (p. 227) and Hakim Ahsanullah Khan (p. 139) it was an old kitchen. Its dimensions were 40 × 12 × 10 feet and it had neither plaster nor brick flooring.

(35) I.O. Home Misc. 725, p. 51. The *Hakim's* account. His version agrees with those of others in general, but there is some discrepancy in dates.

(36) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 59. Mainodin's narrative.

(37) Ibid. p. 93. Munshi Jiwan Lal's narrative.

(38) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 151. Evidence of Mukand Lal (Secretary to Bahadur Shah).

(39) Ibid. p. 143. Mrs Aldwell escaped with her children by feigning to be a Kashmiri Muslim.

(40) Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account, p. 46. I.O. Home Misc. 725. The appointment was on 18 May, but carried with it no authority over the army.

(41) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 36, no. 57, items 539–41. There are numerous references from July onwards. A summary of the regulations governing its conduct is given by Dr S. K. Banerji, in his paper 'Bahadur Shah II and the Administration Court of the Mutineers', *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, XXIV, p. 47.

(42) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 61, no. 60.593.

(43) Ibid. p. 147, no. 74.128 and 273; no. 111.59.

(44) Ibid. p. 69, no. 60.771.

(45) See Cunningham, J. D., *History of the Sikhs*, and Garrett, H. L. O. and Grey, C., *European Adventurers in the Punjab*.

(46) *Mutiny Papers*, no. 34.

(47) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 47. Petition of the Raja of Ballabgarh. 22 May 1857.

(48) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 179, no. 93.51 and p. 393, no. 188.6.

(49) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 170. Diary of Chuni Lal, newswriter.

(50) *Mutiny Papers*, e.g. p. 80, no. 61. 245; p. 158, no. 111 (*c*) 31, 32, 43.

(51) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 71–74 for the treasuries of Hansi, Sirsa, Hissar, Bulandshahr; p. 36 for Palwal; C. T. Metcalfe, op. cit. p. 103 for Rohtak.

(52) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 134 (Jiwan Lal's narrative).

(53) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 147, no. 74.112 and p. 6, no. 18.6 and 19.2. *Bahadur Shah*, p. 59.

(54) Ibid. p. 196, no. 102.34.

(55) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 58, no. 2 and p. 63, no. 11.

(56) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 113, Jiwan Lal's narrative, and *Mutiny Papers*, p. 373, no. 146.9 and 10.

(57) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 66–7, nos. 15 and 16, and p. 61, no. 5.

(58) *Two Native Narratives*, Jiwan Lal's narrative, pp. 176–7, 200, 215.

(59) Ibid. p. 216.

(60) Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account, p. 138. I.O. Home Misc. 725.

(61) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 225, no. 110.15, 17, 28, 33.

(62) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 28–9, no. 42.

(63) *Two Native Narratives*, Jiwan Lal's narrative, p. 121 (14 June) and p. 143 (8 July).

(64) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 407, no. 199.246. For full text see *Bahadur Shah*, p. 31, no. 44.

(65) Ibid. p. 74, no. 61.61–2, and p. 81, no. 61.296 and 307–8.

(66) Ibid. p. 338, no. 130.183 and p. 86, no. 61.426.

(67) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 61. Mainodin's narrative.

(68) Ibid. p. 186. Jiwan Lal's narrative. Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account, p. 101. (I.O. Home Misc. 725.)

(69) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 15–16, no. 25.

(70) Ibid. pp. 21–2, no. 33.

(71) *Mutiny Papers*, p. 84, no. 61.372.

(72) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 59. Mainodin's narrative.

(73) Journal of L. Kedar Nath. I.O. Home Misc. 725, p. 29.

(74) *Two Native Narratives*, pp. 109–10. Jiwan Lal's narrative.

(75) Ibid. p. 117 (Jiwan Lal's narrative), and p. 63 (Mainodin's narrative).

(76) Ibid. pp. 118–9. See also F. C. Fanshawe, *Delhi Past and Present*, pp. 114–25.

(77) *Two Native Narratives*, pp. 133–4. Jiwan Lal's narrative. See also the note by G. H. M. Ricketts, p. 133. *Bahadur Shah*, p. 31, no. 45. Badr-ud-din Ali Khan, seal-engraver, was ordered to execute a seal 'in the best style of finish and design'

for 'the Adviser of the State, the Respected of the Country, our own special slave, Muhammad Bakht Khan, Lord Governor Bahadur, Controller of all matters military and civil'.

(78) Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account, p. 83. I.O. Home Misc. 725.

(79) This account is based on Hakim Ahsanullah Khan's account, pp. 101 seq.; *Two Native Narratives* (Jiwan Lal's account), pp. 186 and 191; Kedar Nath's account, 7–8 August. I.O. Home Misc. 725; *Mutiny Papers*, p. 362, no. 135.167–70, etc.

(80) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 31–2, no. 46.

(81) Literally 'jump up in disgust'.

(82) Fanshawe, F. C., *Delhi Past and Present*. (Norman's account.)

(83) I.O. Home Misc. 725, pp. 138–47. Hakim Ahsanullah's account.

(84) Fanshawe, F. C., op. cit. p. 184. Maulvi Rajab Ali was Head of the British Intelligence Department in Delhi.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XI

(1) The absence of violation was an honourable feature on both sides during the Mutiny. The rumours evaporated as one approached the scene of action. See W. H. Russell, *My Diary in India* (1860), I, pp. 92 and 117. The recent assertion of C. L. Reid, *Commerce and Conquest* (1947), p. 235, with regard to Delhi finds no support in contemporary evidence.

On this subject the memorandum of W. Muir, dated 30 Dec. 1857, is authoritative. I.O. Home Misc. 725, pp. 633–50 (Kaye Papers). The origin of the rumours is explained by the occurrence, in some cases only, of mutilation after death. This memorandum quotes one doubtful case in Delhi.

(2) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 71. Narrative of Mainodin.

(3) I.O. Europ. MSS. E. 187. Mrs Saunders. 25 Oct. 1857. [Saunders Papers.]

(4) Saunders Papers. Saunders to his parents. 15 Nov. 1857.

(5) Saunders Papers, vol. III, pt. I. W. Muir to John Lawrence. 12 Dec. 1857. The observer was Dr Farquhar.

(6) Ibid. John Lawrence to Saunders. 12 Dec. 1857.

(7) *Bahadur Shah* (1870), p. 294. (Trial of Hajee, evidence of Medha, *Chokidar*, and Hajee.)

(8) *Delhi Gazetteer* (1883–4), p. 30.

(9) Trotter, L. J., *India under Victoria*, II, p. 31.

(10) *Delhi Gazetteer* (1883–4), p. 30.

(11) Ibid.

(12) Saunders Papers. J. Lawrence to Saunders. 24 Oct. 1857.

(13) Ibid. 30 Sept. 1857.
(14) *Two Native Narratives*, p. 73. Mainodin's account.
(15) Saunders Papers, loc. cit. 24 Sept. 1857
(16) Ibid. loc. cit. 6 Oct. 1857.
(17) Ibid. W. Muir to J. Lawrence. 12 Dec. 1857.
(18) *Delhi Settlement Report of 1882* pp. 157 seq.
(19) Trotter, L. J., op. cit. ii, p. 31.
(20) E.g. F. C. Cooper.
(21) Chief Commissioner. File 182. Egerton to Saunders. 24 March 1859.
(22) *Delhi Province*, p. 61.
(23) Ibid. p. 17. Chief Commissioner, File 196.
(24) Chief Commissioner, File 196. Davies to Lepel Griffin.
(25) E.g. Fergusson, J., *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (ed. 1910), ii, pp. 311 12.
(26) Chief Commissioner, File 182. Major R. C. Lawrence to Sect. to Government of Punjab. 13 Jan. 1860.
(27) Ibid. Advocate-General to Assistant Secretary to Government in Foreign Department. 4 Dec. 1863.
(28) Ibid. Deputy-Commissioner to Commissioner, Delhi. 24 Feb. 1860. Commissioner, Delhi, to Military Sec. to Gov. Punjab. 28 March 1860.
(29) Ibid. See note (27) above.
(30) Ibid. A fuller account will be found in *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, xxv, pp. 8–10. Spear, T. G. P. 'Report on the Records of the Chief Commissioner's Office'.
(31) *Bahadur Shah*, pp. 1–2.
(32) Buckler, F. W., 'The Political Theory of the Indian Mutiny', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (4th ser.), v. pp. 71 seq.
(33) *Bahadur Shah*. The Judge-Advocate-General's address, pp. 210–45, especially pp. 231–45.
(34) Supra, ch. x.
(35) *Bahadur Shah*, p. 136.
(36) Supra, ch. iii.
(37) Aitcheson, Sir C., *Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sunnuds, etc.*, vols. i and ii. The *Farmans* of 1764 and 1765 were not in form treaties between sovereign states but the grant of privileges by the Emperor to a subject.
(38) *Cambridge History of India*, vol. v, ch. xxxii.
(39) *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (4th ser.), vii, pp. 131–65. Reply of D. Dewar and H. L. O. Garrett, and F. W. Buckler's rejoinder.
(40) See ch. iii.

(41) Hakim Ahsanullah's account (end). I.O. Home Misc. 725. Saunders Papers. J. Lawrence to Saunders. 29 Dec. 1857

(42) Roberts, Lord, *Forty-One years in India* (ed. 1897), I, p. 249. See also Russell, W. H., *My Diary in India*, II, pp. 62–5, and 70–1.

(43) Chief Commissioner, File 184, Part III. Lieut. E. S. Ommanney to Saunders. 9 Oct. 1858)

(44) I.e. Hookah.

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