GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Central Archaeological Library
Archaeological Survey of India
JANPATH, NEW DELHI.

Accession No. 14123

Call No. 954.0237
Sa.2.

Fall of the Mughal Empire

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

SIR JADUNATH SARKAR, Kt., C.I.E.,
Honorary Member, Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain.

14123
D4225(a)
(1754-71)
Vol. 2.

VOLUME II
1754–71

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY
D4225(a)
Library Reg No
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY
D4225(a)
25/35
154.0237
Sar

M.C. SARKAR & SONS, LTD.
CALCUTTA
1934
INDIA.

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.
Acc. No ..... 14123 .....
Date ..... 13.1.1961 .....
Call No..... 954.0237/Sar.....

WORKS OF SIR JADUNATH SARKAR

		Rs.	As.
1.	*History of Aurangzib*		
	Vols. 1 & 2 together, 2nd ed., ...	5	0
	Vol. 3, 3rd ed., ...	3	8
	Vol. 4, 2nd ed. (rewritten), ...	4	0
	Vol. 5	4	0
2.	*Shivaji and his Times*, 3rd ed., (rewritten) ...	5	0
3.	*A Short History of Aurangzib*, 511 pages ...	5	0
4.	*Mughal Administration*, 2nd ed., (greatly enlarged)	3	0
5.	*Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, 18 essays ...	2	8
6.	*Anecdotes of Aurangzib* (Eng. tr.), 2nd ed., ...	1	8
7.	*Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*, (Persian text of 6), 2nd ed.,	1	0
8.	*India Through the Ages*, six lectures ...	1	8
9.	*Fall of the Mughal Empire*		
	Vol. 1 (1739-1754), 560 pp.	5	0
	Vol. 2 (1754-1771), 572 pp.	5	0
10.	*Chaitanya: his Life and Teachings*, 3rd ed.,	2	0
11.	*Economics of British India*, 5th ed., (in prep.)		
12.	*Studies in Maratha History*: House of Shivaji		
13.	*India of Aurangzib*: Statistics, Topography and Roads (out of print)		
14.	*Studies in Mughal India* (excluding Aurangzib)		

CALCUTTA: M. C. SARKAR & SONS, LD.
LONDON: LUZAC & CO.

Taraporevala (Bombay.) Natesan (Madras.)

PREFACE TO THE SECOND VOLUME

This volume covers eighteen eventful years in the history of India of which the dominating theme is the great Afghan-Maratha contest for the lordship of Delhi, followed by the abrupt rise and still more abrupt fall of the Jat kingdom of Bharatpur within the space of a decade only. This period witnessed the deposition and blinding of one Emperor, the murder of another, the twelve years' banishment from capital and power of a third, and the ten months' reign of yet another crowned puppet in Delhi. Horror is piled upon horror almost throughout the epoch; but at its end the worst is over and we begin to emerge into light. The Sikhs have now established their rule over much of the Panjab and given to the people of that province internal security and the promotion of agriculture in a degree unknown for sixty years past. At the opposite corner of India,—in Bengal, Bihar and Oudh up to Allahabad, British peace has been established, and trade, industry and tillage are on the threshhold of an unprecedented revival after the unbroken anarchy of one full generation and appalling natural calamities. Soon the indigenous culture which had been quenched in blood in the capital cities of the empire was to revive and Indo-Persian historical literature to take a new birth under alien patronage at Allahabad and Benares, Patna and Calcutta. When Shah Alam II first rode into the capital of his fathers on the 6th of January 1772,—the point at which this volume ends,—we are within three months of the beginning of the governorship of Warren Hastings, the creator of British India.

The many dark corners in the history of this period have been lighted up by the profusion of Marathi records and several contemporary Persian works here used for the first time. Material in the European languages, English and French, the work of actual actors in the Indian scene, here grows increasingly important, and just after the close of this volume takes the first place among our sources of information, while the recently printed Marathi records come up close behind. The problems of the Delhi empire now (1772) change their character and the historian stands at the dawn, a misty dawn, I admit,—of a new age of which the noontide splendour was to be seen in the 19th century.

Darjiling,
September, 1934

Jadunath Sarkar

CONTENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY ... ... xii-xv

CHAPTER XIII. REIGN OF ALAMGIR II —A GENERAL SURVEY ... 1-49

Character of Alamgir II, 1—wazir Imād-ul-mulk, 5—Imād's policy and movements till 1758, 9—in 1758 and 1759, 12—Raghunath Dada near Delhi (1754), 14—in the Doab, 18—Marathas levy tribute (1754), 20—exactions from Delhi people, 23—lawlessness in capital, 26—sufferings of people (1754), 31—bankruptcy of State, 33—humiliation and sufferings of royal family, 36—rebels and usurpers, their location, 37—Intizām conciliated by Imād, 41—Mian Qutb Shah rebel, 42—Turki soldiers mob wazir at Panipat (1755), 45—events of 1755-56, 47.

CH. XIV. THE PANJAB, 1753-59 ... 50-81

Mughlani Begam regent, her character, 50—rebellions of her chiefs, 52—Khj. Mirza usurps Lahor Government, 54—Khj. Abdullah subahdar of Lahor, 56—Imad seizes Mughlani, Sayyid Jamil-ud-din made governor, 59—Abdali conquers Panjab (1756, 62—how Abdali treated Mughlani Begam, 64—Timur Shah, the Durrani subahdar of Panjab, 66—his administration breaks down, 68—Raghunath Dada conquers Sarhind, 71—and Lahor (1758), 73—Adina Beg, Maratha subahdar, dies, 77,—Sindhias hold Panjab, 78—Abdali finally conquers Panjab (1759), 79.

CH. XV. THE AFGHAN INVASION OF 1757 ... 82-109

Ahmad Abdali invades, 82—hesitation and negligence of Delhi wazir, 83—panic in Delhi, fruitless peace efforts, 86—Durranis enter Gangetic

Doab, 89—Imād submits to Abdali, 92—Durranis occupy Delhi, fate of Alamgir II, 94—Ahmad Abdali in Delhi, 97—oppression and extortion, 98 & 105—agony of Delhi under Afghan terror, 101—massacres, 106—Ali Quli Kh., poet, his daughter Gannā Begam, 108.

CH. XVI. ABDALI'S CAMPAIGN SOUTH OF DELHI, 1757 ... 110-136

Antāji Mānakeshwar's skirmishes with invader, 111—is crushed at Faridabad, 113—Suraj Mal's dealings with Abdali, 114—Abdali captures Ballabhgarh, 116—Jat stand at Chaumuha, 117—Afghans massacre and sack Mathura, 118—attack on Gokul, 121—plunder of Agra, 122—atrocities of Afghan troops, 124—cholera in Abdali's army, 125—Ahmad Shah retreats, 126—marries Hazrat Begam, 127—his booty and prisoners, 129—two Delhi princes' campaign in Doab, 132—fails, 134.

CH. XVII. RAGHUNATH RAO'S NORTHERN EXPEDITION, 1757-1758 ... 137-170

Marathas recover Gangetic Doab, 137—disturbed condition of the country, 139—party formed against Najib, 141—Marathas reach Rewari and Agra, 142—Najib's defence of Delhi, 144—Raghunath attacks Delhi, 146—Najib evacuates Delhi, 151—sufferings of Delhi people in 1757, 153—movements of Raghunath and Malhar Holkar (1757-58), 155—results of Raghunath's expedition, 158—criticized, 159—Ali Gauhar's campaign in Rohtak, 161—Imād plots against him, 164—attacks him in Delhi, 165—Ali

Gauhar's wanderings, 166—Imād and Emperor's campaign in west of Delhi (1758), 168.

CH. XVIII. RAJPUTANA, 1751-1760 ... 171-198

Rajput-Maratha relations during 1751-53, 171—Jayapa Sindhia invades Marwar, 175—how he thwarts Peshwa's policy, 177—Maratha successes in Marwar, 178—murder of Jayapa, 180—Dattaji Sindhia restores Maratha supremacy, 182—defeats a Jaipur army near Didwana, 185—Jaipur and Marwar Rajahs submit, peace terms, 188—Raghunath's invasion of Rajputana in 1757, his failure, 189—Dattaji and Jankoji Sindhia in Rajputana (1758), 194—Malhar Holkar's campaign (1759), captures Barwada, 196.

CH. XIX. DATTAJI SINDHIA'S CAMPAIGNS IN THE NORTH, 1759-1760 ... 199-234

Dattaji's policy towards wazir Imād, 199—Marathas loot Delhi suburbs, 200—rupture with Najib, 204—Najib's entrenchment at Shukartal described, 205—Dattaji's siege of Shukartal, 207—Govind Bundele's raid on Najibabad fails, 208—Abdali reconquers Panjab and expels Sabaji Sindhia, 211—Alamgir II murdered, 213—Dattaji raises siege of Shukartal, 215—battle of Thaneshwar, 218—Dattaji's retreat to Delhi and defence plan, 220—battle of Barāri-ghāt, death of Dattaji, 222—flight of Sindhia contingent, Malhar joins Jankoji, 224—Abdali against Suraj Mal, 226—Malhar Holkar routed by Jahan Khan, 228.

Peshwa's North Indian policy in 1759, orders to Dattaji, 231—Malhar not responsible for Dattaji's death, 233.

CH. XX. SADASHIV BHAU'S DELHI EXPEDITION, 1760 ··· 235-297

Apogee of Maratha greatness in 1760, 235—Peshwa sends army to Hindustan under Sadashiv Bhau, 237—Bhau's forces and equipment, 239—his march from Sindhkhed to the Chambal, 241—Maratha position in Gangetic Doab, 245—Bhau consults Malhar, 248—forms plan of campaign, 249—condition of Delhi, 249—Bhau captures Delhi, 252—Suraj Mal abandons Bhau, 255—Bhau's character and policy criticized, 258—his financial distress, 261—his income and expenditure correctly estimated, 263—Bhau's doings in Delhi, 265—captures Kunjpura, 267—reaches Panipat, 271—Abdali encamps in the Doab, his policy, 272—Shuja induced to join Abdali, 274—Abdali's distress, Najib's help, 279—Abdali crosses Jamuna at Baghpat, 282.

Relative strength of the two armies at Panipat, 285—organization of Maratha and Durrani armies contrasted, 290 and 372—their discipline, 295 and 371.

CH. XXI. THE BATTLE OF PANIPAT, 1761 ··· 298-372

First intentions of the rival armies, 298—early skirmishes and minor battles (1760), 301—battle of 7 Dec., fall of Mehendele, 304—Maratha supplies cut off, 307—condition of Panipat city, 309—Govind Ballal Bundele's Doab raid, he is slain, 310—Barve's raid into Oudh fails, 313—Maratha treasure convoy from Delhi cut off, 314—Bhau's despair, 315—his peace proposal rejected, 316—Maratha army's outbreak, 318—

Bhau marches to battle, 319—Abdali's battle arrangements, 321—Durrani military superiority explained, 322—Bhau's plan of battle, 324—soldiers of Holkar and Sindhia demoralized, 326—battle begins, 327—Gardi charge on par-Ruhelas, 328—it fails, 332—Bhau charges Durrani centre, 333—Abdali reinforces his centre, 336—Bhau's desperate fighting, Durrani encircling tactics, 337—death of Vishwas Rao, 341—Bhau's last charge and death, 342—Maratha right wing, flight of Holkar and Sindhia, 343 and 372—pursuit, 345—massacre after battle, 347—spoils taken, 348—Maratha casualties, 349—Bhau's conduct criticized, 351—sufferings of fugitives, 353—consequences of Maratha defeat at Panipat, 354—Rājwāḍé refuted—death of Peshwa Balaji, 359.

Peshwa's responsibility for defeat at Panipat, 361—Holkar's conduct in battle examined, 365—historical sources on Panipat, 367—military notes, 371.

Plans of the battle, 331 and 339.

CH. XXII. NAJIB-UD-DAULAH, DICTATOR OF DELHI, 1761-1770 ... 373-416

Abdali in Delhi after Panipat, 373—he leaves India, 376—how Najib got possession of Delhi, 377—peace congress at Mathura, foiled by Marathas and Suraj Mal, 379 - survey of Najib's career, 382—visits Shah Alam, 388—defeats Jawahir, zenith of his career, 390—sack of Buānā, 391—of Bhiwani, 393—lifelong contest with Sikh raiders, 394—his manner of warfare illustrated,

398—his movements, 1765-67, 401—Najib's breakdown, resigns charge of Delhi, 403—transfers his government and army to Zabita Khan, 404—Najib placates the returned Marathas (1770), 406—conflict of policy among Maratha sardars, 408—Mahadji Sindhia's vindictiveness towards Najib, 409 and 411—Marathas re-enter Doab, Najib joins them, 410—Najib's double-dealing, rupture with Marathas, 412—Najib's haughty tone, 413 and 414*n*—death, 415—character, 415.

CH. XXIII. THE JATS, DOWN TO 1768 ... 417-480

Local distribution of Jat race, 417—Jat character, comparison with Sikhs and Marathas, 419—Bharatpur Jats, problems of their rulers, 422—early history of Bharatpur royal family, 425—Badan Singh's initial difficulties, no State, no tribal union, no recognized authority, 426—his policy and stages of successful growth, 428—gains of plunder, 430—Badan Singh's harem and children, 432—Suraj Mal's birth and early career, 433—his wars, 434—patronized by Delhi wazir, 435—sack of Ghasira, 436—defence of Kumbher, peace with Marathas, 437—treaty with Emperor (1755), 438—rebellion of Jawahir Singh, 439—Suraj Mal's conduct from 1757 to 1760, 441—captures Agra fort, 443—makes fresh conquests, 445—relations with Najib Khan, 445—Mewati brigands harboured by Baluch chiefs, 447—Suraj Mal captures Farrukhnagar (1763), 449—rupture with Najib, 449—battle on the Hindan, death of Suraj Mal, 451—his character and achievements, 453—his revenue and army,

455—Jawahir Singh's accession, 457—prepares for a war of revenge on Najib, 458—Jawahir marches on Delhi (1764), 460—battle of 15 Nov., 461—battle of 16 Nov. on east bank, 461—bombards Delhi, 463—Sikh allies arrive, Jawahir insulted, 464—Jawahir forced to make peace with Najib, 467—he crushes all rich Jat nobles, 469—captures Vaer fort, 470—Nāhar Singh joins Malhar, 471—Jawahir defeats Malhar's detachment, 472—he assists Rana of Gohad against Raghunath Dada, 473—crushes his disloyal Gosain generals, 474—conquers Kalpi district (1767), 475—marches to Pushkar, 477—fights Kachhwa army at Māonda, 478—his last days and death, 480.

CH. XXIV. THE PANJAB AND RAJPUTANA, 1761-1771 ... 481-524

Sikhs disturb Abdali's officers (1760), 481—Abdali and Ala S. of Patiala, 483 & 487—Charat S. defeats Abid Kh., 483—Sikhs besiege Niranjanis at Jandiala, 484—massacre of Sikhs (*Ghalla-ghara*), 486—Abdali demolishes Amritsar, 487—conquers Kashmir from diwan Sukhjivan, 488—Sikhs attack Zain Kh., 490—Zain Kh.'s misgovernment, 491—Sarhind sacked, 492—Sikhs first raid Gangetic Doab (1764), 493—capture Lahor, 494—proclaim independence, 495—Ahmad Abdali's last invasion (1767), 496—Jahan Kh. defeats Sikhs in Doab, 499—Repercussion of Panipat on Rajputs, 502—anti-Maratha risings, 504—Malhar captures Gagroni, 505—defeats Kachhwas at Mangrol, 507—Madho S.'s terror, 508—Marathas

absent (1762-64), 510—Jawahir's Sikhs raid Jaipur, 512—Mewar, internal quarrels, 515—Maratha tribute, detailed figures, 516—Ari S. *vs* Ratan S., Mahadji Sindhia besieges Udaipur (1769), 518—quarrels with Tukoji Holkar, 519—tribute settled, 520—Marwar, Bijay S.'s weak character, 521—dealings with Marathas, 522—reflections on Rajput decadence, 523.

CH. XXV. SHAH ALAM'S WANDERINGS, 1758-1771 ... 525-555

Shah Alam's character, 516—causes of his failure, 527—Imād's character, 529—Shuja-ud-daulah's character, 531—Shah Alam's movements after leaving Delhi in 1758, 533—first invasion of Bihar (1759), 534—second invasion of Bihar (1760), crowns himself, 537—raid on Bengal fails, 541—third invasion (1761), 542—joined by Shuja, invades Bundelkhand (1762), 544—marches to Sikandrabad (1763), meets Najib and other Afghans, 544—fourth invasion of Bihar (1764) and alliance with the English, 545—grants Diwani of Bengal (1765); terms, 547—why he was eager to go to Delhi, 548—alliance with Marathas, (1771), terms, 552—his march to Delhi, 554.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Persian

TALS.—Tārikh-i-Alamgir Sāni, Br. Museum Persian MS. Or. 1749, Sir H. M. Elliot's MS. (Elliot and Dowson, viii. 140).

DC.—Delhi Chronicle, the name given by me to an anonymous Persian MS. containing a detailed chronology of Delhi events and reports received, from 1738 to 1798. Described by me in the *Proceedings* of the Indian Historical Records Commission, vol. ii (1921.)

Miskin—Memoirs of Tahmāsp Khan (pen-name *Miskin*), titles Muhkam-ud-daulah Itiqād Jang, wr. 1780. (E. and D. 100), Br. Mus. Pers. 8807.

Husain Shahi.—Tārikh-i-Husain Shāhi by Sayyid Imam-ud-din Husaini, wr. 1798.

Nur.—Sayyid Nur-ud-din Hasan's *Life of Najib-ud-daulah* (Br. Mus. Pers. MS. 24,410), fully translated by me in *I. H. Q.* and *Islamic Culture* (1933), wr. *c.* 1773.

Ch. Gulzar.—Chahār Gulzār-i-Shujāi, by Har-charandas, completed in 1784. (E. & D. 204.)

Siyar.—Siyar-ul-mutākhkharin, by Sayyid Ghulām Husain Tabātabāi, completed 1782. (E. & D. 194.) Calcutta ed. of 1833 cited.

Muz.—Tārikh-i-Muzaffari, by Md. Ali Kh. Ansāri of Panipat, wr. 1800. (E. & D. 316.)

Shīkir.—*Tazkira* of Shīkir Kh., son of Lutfullah Kh. B. Sādiq of Pānipat. (Br. Mus. Addl. MS. 6585.)

Mujmil.—Mujmil-ut-tawārikh ba'd Nādiriya, by Ibn. Md. Amin Abul Hasan Gulistāni, ed. O. Mann (Leyden, 1896), wr. 1782.

Manāzil.—Manāzil-ul-fatuh, by Md. Ja'far Shāmlu, (Br. Mus. Persian MS. Or. 1895.) (E. & D. 144.)

Kāshiraj—Persian account of the battle of Pānipat and the events leading to it, wr. in 1780. I have used a MS. copied in 1785 (prob. for Col. Browne) and not Browne's unreliable translation,

reprinted (from *Asiatic Researches* 1799) by Ox. Univ. Press in 1926. My new translation printed in *I. H. Q.* 1934.

Samin.—Shaikh Ghulām Hasan (pen-name *Sāmin*)'s narrative, tr. by W. Irvine in *Indian Antiquary*, 1907.

G-I-R.—Gulistan-i-Rahmat, by Mustajab Kh., wr. 1792. (E. & D. 301.) Eng. tr. Elliot cited (Dates often incorrect.)

Imād.—Imād-us-sādat, by Sayyid Ghulām Ali Naqvi, wr. 1807. (E & D. 394.) Lucknow litho ed.

Ghulam Ali.—*Shah-Alam-namah*, by Ghulām Ali Kh., son of Bihkari Kh. and quite a different person from the author of *Imād-us-sādat*. First volume (to 1761) printed in Bibliotheca Indica [marginal dates and notes in English mostly incorrect.] Second and third volumes from I. O. L. MS. (E. & D. 393.)

Muna Lal.—*Tarikh-i-Shah-Alam*. (E. & D. 393), wr. 1811, O. P. L. MS.

Ibratnamah by Faqir Khair-ud-din Md. of Allahabad, wr. 1806 (E. & D. 237). O. P. L. MS.

Tārikh-i-Lāhor, by Rāi Bahādur Kanhaiyā Lāl (in Urdu, litho), very useful for topography, but the early history is merely traditional.

Marathi.

Number of letter is cited, unless *page* is definitely mentioned.)

Raj.—*Marāthānchyā Itihāsāchin Sādhanen*, ed. by V. K. Rājwādé and others, 21 vols.

SPD.—Selections from the Peshwas' Daftar, ed. by G. S. Sardesai, 45 vols.

V. V. Kharé—*Aitihāsik Lekh Sangraha*, vol. i (1897.)

Purandaré Daftar, ed. by K. V. Purandare, vol. i.

Chandrachud Daftar, ed. by D. V. Apte, vol. i.

Vad.—*Selections from the Satara Rajas' and Peshwas' Diaries*, ed. by G. C. Vad and others.

Aiti. Patr.—Aitihāsik Patren Yādi wagaire Lekh, 2nd. ed., by G. S. Sardesai and others, 1930.

Holkarānchi Kaifiyat, ed. by K. N. Sané, (1886), and *Bhāu Sāhebānchi Bakhar*, ed. by same (3rd ed. 1900), mostly traditional, (see pp. 367-368 *ante*.)

Hindi &c.

Sujān Charitra, or life of Suraj Mal Jāt, by Sudan, (only 7 episodes, 1745-1753), 2nd. ed. (Benares, Nāgri Prach.)

Vamsha Bhāskar, by Suraj Mal Mishran, 8 vols. wr. 1841.

G. H. Ojha—*Rājputānė Kā Itihās*, Pt. iii. (1929.)

European Languages.

Jean Law, *Mémoire sur l'Empire Mogol*, ed. A. Martineau (1913.)

Emile Barbe—*Le Nabab René Madec.* (1894)

J-B-J. Gentil—*Mémoires sur l'Indoustan.* (1822.)

F. X. Wendel—MS. account of the Jat kingdom of Bharatpur, wr. 1768, (India Office, Orme MSS. O. V. 216.)

CPC.—Calendar of Persian Correspondence [of the English East India Company, in Calcutta], 5 vols. covering 1759-1780. (Calcutta, 1911-1930.)

George Forster—*Journey from Bengal to England* (in 1783), 2 vols. (1798.)

A. Broome—*History of···the Bengal Army*, vol. I. (1850).

G. R. C. Williams—*The Sikhs in the Upper Doab*, in *Calcutta Review*, vol. 60 (1875), pp. 21-36 and vol. 61, pp. 39-55. (Hijera years sometimes wrong.)

E. M. Lloyd—*Review of the History of Infantry* (1908).

J. D. Cunningham—*History of the Sikhs*, 2nd ed. (1853).

Atkinson's *N. W. P. Gazetteer*, *Panjab District Gazetteers*, *Gazetteer of the Province of Oudh*, 3 vols. (1877),—all original editions.

Corrections and Additions to Vol. I.

P. viii, l. 1, *for* I tell it *read* I tell it, it.
„ ix, *add* D.C. or a Persian MS. chronology of Delhi from 1738 to 1798 (my MS.), and *Tarikh-i-Mahabat Jang*, Br. Mus. MS. add. 27, 316.
„ l. 18, *for* Abu...Husain *read* Imam-ud-din.
„ 18, last line, „ is Persia „ in Persia.
96, l. 19, „ tappa···division „ 12 m. n. of Nya Dumka.
130, l. 17 „ thus „ this.
189, last line } „ Azuddaulah „ Azd-ud-daulah.
191, l. 22 }
208, *f.n.*, *Read thus*—Hazrat Ishan, a saint honoured by Jahangir, lies buried close on the west of Begampura, 2 m. from Lahor city, north of the Shahbagh Road.
214, l. 19, *for* such a Panipat *read* such as Panipat.
225, l. 3, „ Nadir army „ Nadir's army.
240, l. 4, „ headship „ headship of.
245, l. 22, The dates of the two battles require further study.
256, l. 15, *for* 1734 *read* 1735.
262, *add to f. n.*, Baji Rao visited the Water Palace on 4 Feb. [*Roskird.*]
267, l. 14 to 19, *omit* At the close &c. to operations.
269, l. 13 & 16, *for* Pilaji *read* the Maratha general.
283, *f. n.*, „ about 1835 *read* in 1841
290, l. 25, „ his diwan „ Sindhia's diwan.
295, *add to f. n.*, except Rajwadé vi. pp. 291-2 and 648-9, and *Purand Daft.*, i. 185 and 196.
296, l. 12, *for* 1747 *read* 1748.
309, l. 14, *omit* his local agent.
319, l. 9, *for* 1754 *read* Oct. 1753.
368, l. 17, *add Purand Daft.*, i. 228.
381, l. 18 *for* resisting *read* resting
401, l. 21 „ paying &c. „ promising 7 lakhs.
424, l. 22-23, „ to bring···restore „ for bringing... restoring
425, l. 9, „ bread grow „ beard grow.
440, l. 18-19 „ If we &c. to murdered. „ All evidence agrees in pointing out that.
446, l. 23, „ June 1737 „ Feb. 1736 [Ashub, i. 364.]
542, l. 26, „ of the head „ of the dead.

FALL OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

CHAPTER XIII

Reign of Alamgir II—A General Survey

§ 1. *Character of Emperor Alamgir II.*

The successor of Ahmad Shah on the throne of Delhi was an old man of fifty-five. He was the youngest son of the Emperor Muiz-ud-din Jahandar Shah, and therefore a grandson of Shah Alam I. Born at Multan on June 6, 1699, he had lost his father at the age of fourteen, in the civil war which gave the crown to Farrukhsiyar. Since then he had passed his days in poverty and neglect, mewed up in the rooms of the "Emperors' grandsons" (*deorhi-i-salatin*) within the Delhi fort. He had been denied any opportunity for learning war or administration, or acquiring practical experience of the open outer world, but had wisely guarded himself from vice by devoting his time to study and meditation. He had chosen for his ideal the Emperor Aurangzib (Alamgir I), whose title he adopted on ascending the throne. Like Aurangzib he loved to read books on history and shunned the usual diversions of royalty, such as dance and song. Like Aurangzib, too, he made it a point to

say his five daily prayers in the outer palace mosque and the Friday afternoon prayer in full congregation in the Jāma' Masjid of the capital. He knew by rote the administrative rules and practice of the great Aurangzib, and his aim was to follow these to the letter. Condemning the slack and undignified conduct of his two immediate predecessors,—who used to sit in an open sedan chair held up on men's shoulders when granting audiences,—Alamgir II laid it down that he would hold only regular *darbars* seated on the imperial throne in the Hall of Audience. Imitating the strenuous life of Aurangzib, he used to read all petitions, and even passports, and sign the orders on them. [*TALS.* 4*b*-5*a*, *Mux.* 98.]

A renewal of the first Alamgir's policy of temple destruction and levy of poll-tax on 'the infidels' was rendered impossible by the Maratha grip* on the throat of his namesake, but the Islamic 'heretics' did not escape so easily. The Shias form a very small minority among the Indian Muhammadans and they had now no protector at Court. Their former leader Safdar Jang had been the mortal enemy of the all-powerful new

* On 25 Oct. 1754, the Emperor issued orders abolishing the taxes on Hindu pilgrims at Gaya and Kurukshetra. [*DC.*] He transferred them to the Peshwa, who appointed his Delhi agent Dāmodar M. Hingané as his tax-collector there, 9 Feb. 1755. [Rajwade-vi. 328.] But Benares and Allahabad were under the control of the subahdar of Oudh, who clung to his levy at these holy places.

wazir Imād-ul-mulk. It was by beating the big drum of Sunni orthodoxy that Imād had been able to rally the Ruhelas and Badakhshis to his standard and overthrow the Shia influence which had dominated the imperial Court since 1743. He now took his revenge on the defeated sect by reviving Aurangzib's regulation against Shia processions in Muharram. The news of Safdar Jang's death reached Delhi on 11th October, 1754, and nine days later (on the 3rd of Muharram) this decree of prohibition was issued. "Since the reign of Farrukhsiyar, by reason of the rise of Shia *umara*, the practice of making tombs of the Imāms, which had been forbidden by the former Sunni Emperors, was revived, till it reached the extreme point of display. In every lane and market-place countless stages were built and kettle-drums beaten. The Emperor Alamgir II forbade the making of the tombs of the Imāms and stages. But the practice had been going on for 40 years and could not be stopped." [*TALS.* 25*b*-26*a*.]

But unlike Aurangzib, his great-grandson had no contact with the soldiery, no love for outdoor exercises, such as marching, reviewing troops, or even hunting. His age and the sedentary habits of 55 years made it impossible for him to take to a strenuous life of activity all of a sudden, and he remained a bookworm immured in his closet or harem. The second Alamgir fell short of his illustrious namesake in another signal respect. Alamgir I

the Sayyid Brothers. It was not the case that he had no army or treasure. His own Badakhshi brigade (over 12,000 in number) were the best fighting force in the empire in that age, if only they could be punctually paid and worthily led; and he had, in addition, the Maratha myriads at his beck and call. His parsimonious father's hoarded treasure was worth a *kror* or more, and by enforcing order and good government in the provinces round the capital, the new wazir could in a few years have ensured the regular and full flow of revenue from them to the central exchequer for meeting the daily expenses of the State. But Imād had neither the capacity nor the character required in the regenerator of a fallen State, and during his five-and-a-half years' dictatorship the Delhi empire drifted on to ruin beyond hope of recovery. He was personally incapable, and his pride and selfishness would not allow others to restore the monarchy.

There has never been a wazir of Delhi whose rule was so barren of good result and so full of misery to himself and to the empire, to his friends and foes alike, as Imād-ul-mulk's. His nominal master Alamgir II was a mere shadow, never daring to assert his own will or express his own judgment, but leaving everything to his wazir's discretion even more absolutely than Farrukhsiyar or Muhammad Shah had done to the Sayyid Brothers'. But Imād's whole reign—for that is the correct description of his chancellorship—was

marked by utter futility, public misfortune and administrative breakdown. His violent seizure of the wazir's office brought him no glory, strength, or even security. He was subjected to the grossest humiliation ever borne by any wazir, having been dragged through the streets of Panipat by his own soldiers (May, 1755) and seen the women of his harem outraged and exposed to the public gaze by the brutal Ruhelas (August 1757.)

The highest officer of the empire, he ever lived on a bed of thorns. After his accession to office, his first fear sprang from his deposed predecessor. Intizām-ud-daulah had been robbed of the wazirate, but had not been crushed. He continued to live in the Delhi mansion of his father and grandfather (each the premier peer of the realm in his time), defending it like a castle with a garrison of 600 soldiers within; and whenever the two wazirs, past and present, rode out into the streets in the same hour, their armed retainers scowled at each other like the Montagues and Capulets in the streets of Verona, and a clash between the two parties seemed imminent. Such an ever-present enemy might overthrow Imād any day by joining some powerful ally and securing the Emperor's blessing on his enterprise. The Maratha alliance had been bought by Imād at a ruinous price, but he could not, by reason of his frequent default of payment, count upon their support, and he was on two occasions so unwise as to embark on a futile anti-Maratha policy. The other elements of power in the

State were Suraj Mal, Shujā-ud-daulah and Najib Khan. The first of these Imād had antagonized by trying to wreak vengeance on him for his support of Safdar Jang in the civil war of 1753. Shujā hankered after his late father's wazirate with no less intensity of desire and far greater strength of resources than Intizām, and he had a hereditary friend in Suraj Mal. Najib had been Imād's retainer since the war with Safdar Jang, but the upstart Ruhela had insulted and bullied the wazir and publicly flouted his authority even before 1757, when Abdali made this Indo-Afghan chief his supreme agent at Delhi. Najib also usurped the wazir's *jagirs* and the Emperor's Crownlands in Saharanpur and Mirat in defiance of the Delhi Government. After Abdali's retreat in April 1757, Najib became the foremost Muslim potentate in Northern India and used to overshadow the official wazir in the Delhi Government. He subjected Imād to a humiliation which the meanest Indian would resent to the end of his days, by violating his seraglio during his absence.

The tragedy of Imād's wazirship in the midst of hostile forces beyond his control, was deepened by his want of political foresight and absence of a wise diplomatic policy. He had originally (*i.e.*, since June, 1754) clung like a helpless infant to the breast of the Marathas, but Deccani armed aid was a very costly thing, 13 lakhs a year being payable for every 5,000 soldiers posted in Delhi,—while Imād's administrative

incapacity and military impotence prevented the regular payment of the cash nexus on which alone Maratha friendship depended. His changes of alliance were equally ill-judged and ill-timed, and in their result left him weaker than before. Through weakness of will or error of judgment he agreed to Abdali's project of ousting the Marathas from the Doab and Shujā from his two subahs (April-June, 1757.) This drew Shujā, Suraj Mal and the Marathas together, and left Imād utterly friendless during the absence of Abdali from India. Worst of all, he offended the dread master of the Durrāni legions more than once.

§ 3. *Imad's policy and movements till 1758.*

We shall here trace in outline the devious course of Imād's policy during the reign of Alamgir II. For the first seven months after that monarch's accession, Imād's preoccupation was to raise the fabulous subsidy so heedlessly promised to the Marathas when hiring their arms to place him on the wazirate. An agreement was at last patched up and by February 1755 the Maratha hordes marched away from the Delhi region to their southern homes. The next few months of 1755 saw the wazir making an effort to reconquer the country north of Delhi from rebel usurpers, but the attempt was nipped in the bud by his cowardice and the mutiny and consequent disbandment of his Turki soldiery

(May 1755.) On his return to Delhi from this inglorious and barren expedition, Imād was harassed by suspected palace-intrigues for overthrowing him and making Shujā wazir (June), the repeated open defiances of his authority by Najib, and the eternal bankruptcy of the State. His military and financial helplessness kept him quiescent throughout the second half of this year.

In March 1756 he undertook the ill-judged Panjab adventure which ultimately drew down upon his head the wrath of Abdali in January next. In the second half of the year (July-September 1756), the wazir planned an attack upon the trans-Ganges Afghans of Rohilkhand and Shujā-ud-daulah, but his utter lack of money and the mutiny of his starving soldiery foredoomed the attempt to failure from the outset. In October 1756 came the Durrani conquest of the Panjab and in January 1757 the invader's occupation of Delhi which subjected Imād to dismissal, spoliation and public humiliation at the hands of the Afghan king. But he bought the patronage of the Durrani wazir Shah Wali Khan and was restored to his office. He was, however, too weak to disobey Abdali's order to accompany two Shahzadas of Delhi and march for the conquest of the Maratha possessions in the Doab and the refractory Shujā-ud-daulah's provinces, and if successful in this expedition to conquer Bengal and Bihar afterwards. Vain delusion! This

ambitious programme was to be carried out with the aid of Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, a lame invalid who could move about only in a litter and who had not money and clansmen enough to oppose even 5,000 Maratha light horse. When in the middle of June 1757 fresh Maratha hordes poured into the Doab, the wazir's expedition at once collapsed; his Bangash and trans-Ganges Afghan allies hastened back to their homes, his escort of mercenaries under Jangbāz Khan left him to exact the promised peace contribution from the Oudh ruler, and Imād with his two Shahzada puppets had to beat a hurried retreat towards Delhi (July.)

There was no help for him but to make it up with the Marathas; he sent *diwan* Nāgar Mal to the Maratha camp to buy their pardon and alliance at any price, and some days later personally visited Raghunath Rao near Delhi (11 August) to cement an alliance for ousting Najib from power. This open reversal of the policy laid down by Abdali and accepted by Imād made the breach between him and Najib complete. The Ruhela at once took ferocious vengeance on Imād's unoffending wives and daughters who were within his reach in their Delhi mansion, and after this outrage there could never be friendship between Imād and Najib. In September 1757 the Marathas enforced the evacuation of Delhi by Najib and appointed Ahmad Bangash imperial Paymaster General *vice* Najib, but that Ruhela chief retired

to his own jagirs in the upper Doab with all his troops and property and remained a potent source of danger ever after. Imād's new ally, Ahmad Bangash, was more dead than alive, and the empire and the imperial family passed helplessly under Maratha control. From August 1757 to May 1758 large Maratha armies halted in Hindustan and established their nominee at Lahor, but in the middle of June they withdrew from Northern India.

§ 4. *Imad turns against Shah Alam and Alamgir II. His downfall.*

Meantime, like the abortive expedition of the two Shahzadas into the Doab in the east, two other attempts to restore imperial authority and collect revenue in the Rohtak-Mewat region in the west, under princes Shah Alam (June 1757—June 1758) and Ali Jah (July—August 1757), had ended in total failure. Indeed, Imād's selfish ambition would not allow any prince the chance of recovering a province and thus acquiring wealth, armed strength, and public prestige; he coerced the tame Emperor into starving and thwarting their enterprises. And his hostility to the eldest and ablest of the Emperor's sons, Ali Gauhar (Emperor Shah Alam II of the next reign) broke out in an attack on that prince in his Delhi mansion on 19 May 1758. But

the latter boldly cut his way out, took shelter with a Maratha general Vithal Shivdev for some time, and when Vithal left him to join Raghunath, Ali Gauhar went into the wilderness in utter destitution and helplessness. By way of the trans-Ganges Ruhela homes he reached Lucknow on 2 January 1759 and with Shujā's help tried to conquer the province of Bihar. But the English defence of the master of Patna and the Emperor's official disavowal of Ali Gauhar's acts (dictated by the wazir) doomed the prince's attempts to utter failure.

About May 1758, Imad was foolish enough to renew his dream of an anti-Maratha coalition, of which we get the only details in the Marathi State-papers recently published. It ended in nothing. The wazir next (1 August—22 November 1758) led an expedition into the Rewari-Hisar region, dragging the sick Emperor with himself, in order to chase away Ali Gauhar and thereafter to plunder villages and exact revenue. [*TALS.* 182*a*, 188*a*.]

When in January 1759 the Maratha hosts returned to Delhi under Dattaji Sindhia, Imād kept aloof from them and shut the gates of Delhi in their faces, putting the capital in a state of siege. The Marathas established their direct rule over Lahor (April-June), plundered the upper Doab in Najib's hands, and broke with Imād by demanding an impossible ransom for Delhi. So Imād shut himself up within the walls of Delhi through-

out this year and gave Dattaji no support in his investment of Najib at Shukartal (July-November.) He even planned to play off Malhar against Dattaji, preferring the polite and accommodating spirit of the former to the brusque and exacting manners of the latter. His administrative failure and daily increasing poverty impotence and humiliation through insolvency, drove him mad, and when he learnt that his sole remaining hope the Marathas had failed to crush Najib after five months of exertion and had also lost the Panjab, and that Abdali was coming again, he in utter desperation murdered his master Alamgir II (29 November 1759.) The reign ended and with it Imād's office as wazir, though he desperately clung to the name for some years after.

§ 5. *Raghunath Rao's doings in Hindustan, 1754-1755.*

We shall next follow the doings of the Marathas during their expedition to the Delhi region at the commencement of this reign.* Raghunath Rao, the Peshwa's younger brother, had begun his march from the Deccan with a large army in September 1753, and after crossing the Mukandara pass had entered Rajputana at the end of October. Here he moved about for the

* *SPD.* xxvii. 79 (important itinerary), 92. *TALS.* 16*b*-21*a*, 30*b*-35*a*. *DC.*

next two months and a half, collecting promises of tribute from Jaipur, Kota, Bundi and other States. Then from January 16 to May 22, 1754 he was involved in war with the Jat power, especially in futile attacks on Dig and Kumbher. Peace having been at last made with the Jat Rajah, the Maratha army moved on to Mathura (May 23.) From this place their vanguard under Malhar was sent across the river to surprise the Emperor's camp at Sikandrabad (which was effected on May 26.) Raghunath himself with the main army crossed the Jamuna near Mat (10 miles north of Mathura) on May 25 and marched up the east bank of the river to Patparganj, 6 miles s. e. of Delhi, on June 1. Here his presence lent support to Imād-ul-mulk in changing the Emperor and seizing the wazirship. Raghunath next set himself to realize the money promised by Imād.

This was no easy task, and after five months had been wasted in talk, only partial success was achieved. During the interval Raghunath moved round the capital, encamping for a few weeks at different villages in the environs of Delhi, till he had eaten up the available provisions and exhausted the grass trees and even house-timber of each region. His lieutenant was Malhar Holkar, who encamped at some distance from him in order to distribute more widely the pressure on the forage supply. Bapu Mahadev Hingané, the Peshwa's resident envoy at Delhi, who resided near Jai Singh's Observatory in Jaisinghpura

(one mile s. w. of the Ajmir gate), was the medium through whom all proposals about the Maratha contribution, all complaints of aggrieved citizens and officials, and all intrigues of nobles like Intizām were conducted. He took the men first to Malhar and then with Malhar to Raghunath for final decision ; this was the procedure.

The course of the negotiations for the military contribution will be detailed later along with the history of the events inside the capital. We shall here briefly follow the movements of the Maratha army outside. From Patparganj, Raghunath recrossed the Jamuna and by way of the south and west sides of Delhi, removed to the Shalimār garden, some 6 miles north-west of the Lahor gate (June 17.) From this place he sent off (23 June) Jayapa Sindhia with 4,000 Government troops, besides Jayapa's own contingent, to Marwar for assisting Ram Singh against Bijay Singh. In the northern suburbs of the city Raghunath spent three months, roving from the Shalimar garden to Basai, the Idgah, the hermitage of Majnun faqir, and Wazirabad, till the middle of September, when he removed his camp to the south of the city and lived there from Sep. 17 to December 9, ranging over the country from the Badarpur *nala*, to Tughlaqabad, Kishandas's tank, Islampur (3 m. w. of Humayun's tomb), Mehrauli, Barapula and Chaharbagh. When changing camp from the western to the northern suburbs of Delhi (August 31), the unruly Maratha soldiers plundered and

molested the villagers on that side. The suffering yeomen-farmers of the Dahiya clan (a branch of the Jats) living in Jalalpur and other villages near Narela, retaliated, often surprised the foraging parties of the Deccanis, and carried off their mares and other property. So, Malhar fought them, and assaulted and sacked three villages,—Jalalpur, Nahra and Nahri—where their leaders dwelt. But many innocent villages shared the same fate, and the booty carried off from them was offered by the Marathas for sale in Delhi. "The aggrieved villagers assembled under the *jharoka* window of the palace and complained to the Emperor, who sent them to the wazir, but they got no redress." [*TALS.* 17*a*.]

On 12 Nov. Malhar took leave of Raghunath near Badarpur and moved with his own troops to the south-west of the city,—Harin-minar, the Jinsi Topkhanah, Palam, and the outlet of the canal. On the 17th he arrived at Tālkatora, where Raghunath joined him in the evening, alighting near the Hauz-i-khas, in the Chahar Bagh garden of Nāzir Fattu, while Malhar encamped near Shah Mardān and Haidarganj. Here Intizām visited them.

§ 6. *Raghunath Rao in the Doab. His retreat from the North.*

On 9 December Raghunath and Malhar moved from the shrine of Shah Mardān to Jitpur, on the west bank

of the Jamuna, two miles east of Badarpur. Their troops forded the river, * plundering the houses and men at the ferry and even the Brahmans who had come to bathe in the sacred river. They robbed every traveller they met with on the way up to Patparganj (8 m. n. of Jitpur) and other villages on the east bank, fought the imperial collector of pargana Luni, and took away four elephants of the wazir which were out grazing near Ghaziabad. Raghunath himself crossed over at Chhalera (4 m. s. of Patparganj and due east of Okhla) and encamped there for a fortnight. "Destruction descended upon both the marts and the surrounding country; the grain that used to come to Delhi from these places was cut off, and scarcity raged in the capital." Two of the Hingané brothers were sent by the wazir to pacify Raghunath. On 14 December the wazir's captain, Shāhdil Khan Afghan, had a severe conflict with the Marathas in withdrawing his outpost from Khurja, the casualties on the two sides together mounting up to 2,500. [*TALS.* 36*a*.]

On 25 December Malhar came back from the east bank to Hauz-i-khas, while Raghunath, who had moved up from Chhalera to Ghaziabad, started on the 27th by way of Dasna for Garh Mukteshwar, where he bathed in the Ganges (30 Dec.-13 Jan. 1755.) While halting here, he settled the contribution of the Ruhelas, whose

* Raghunath in the Doab and return :—*TALS.* 35*b*-41*a*; *DC. SPD.* xxvii. 79, 106.

chief manager Hafiz Rahmat Khan had arrived on the opposite bank for negotiating. Raghunath obtained a sum in cash and written undertakings for the balance, then turned south to Palwara, Basi (on the Ganges) and Ahar (on the Ganges, 23 miles east of Bulandshahar city), and finally struck due west through the Bulandshahar district, by way of Jahangirabad, Ladhané, Utsar (on the Kali Nadi) and Nagalé, to the Motipur ferry on the Jamuna, due east of Faridabad, arriving there on 2 February. "Everywhere his Deccanis plundered as they moved on. Wherever he went, if a man voluntarily paid something, his village was spared, otherwise it was looted. At his near approach, grain in Delhi became dearer still."

At Motipur Raghunath crossed the Jamuna (8 Feb. 1755), and by way of Badarpur and the southern side of Gurgaon city (14 Feb.), marched rapidly through the Jhajjar district, Kanaud, Narnol, Singhana and Sambhar to the Pushkar lake, where he arrived on 3rd March. Meanwhile Malhar Holkar, who with other Deccani generals had received on 21 Dec. robes of farewell from the imperial Court—16 for the men and 6 for the ladies—had come back to Hauz-i-khas (25 Dec.) and thence moved *via* Naraina, s. w. of Delhi (7 January) to the Rewari and Pataudi districts, levying tribute from the Gujar and Baluch landlords throughout the month of January. Early next month, being reassured by Raghunath's safe return from the Doab and the recon-

ciliation of Intizam (a Maratha protégé) with the wazir, Malhar set out for Rajputana, and quickly reached Lohagarh in Shekhawati, whence he began to dun Mādho Singh of Jaipur for the long overdue Maratha tribute. Thus at the end of the first week of February 1755, the Delhi region was freed from the Maratha army of occupation and grain again became cheap in the imperial city.

§ 7. *Money contribution levied from Delhi by Raghunath Rao, 1754.*

The first and most pressing problem of Alamgir II's reign was how to keep the wazir's word to his Maratha allies. They had been induced to come to Imad's help, leaving the profitable Jat enterprise in which they were engaged, only by the promise of a large reward, in addition to the subsidy already due for their support during the late war against Safdar Jang. The Peshwa's lack of money was daily growing more and more unbearable. The Jat campaign had yielded only two lakhs in cash after keeping the entire Maratha army of the north* locked up in that kingdom for over four months. In Malhar's surprise of the imperial camp at Sikandrabad, the gain of the Marathas had been insignificant, a few elephants only, as all the other property had been

* At that time the monthly pay of a Maratha trooper was Rs. 12 (*i.e.*, Rs. 10-15.) Hence, 20,000 horsemen cost 12 lakhs in the five months of the Jat campaign. *SPD.* xxvii. 81.

quickly seized and carried away by plunderers, especially the Jats, whose homes were nearer and who were present there in vaster numbers than the small Maratha contingent detached on this raid under Malhar. Therefore, after that surprise, Malhar refused to release the captive ladies of the imperial harem, unless the outstanding dues of the Marathas were paid. Imad and Aqibat Mahmud stood security for this money, amounting to forty lakhs, as the only means of saving the honour of the imperial family. [*SPD.* xxi. 60, xxvii. 90.]

The Peshwa's instructions to his brother were to squeeze as much money as possible out of the Delhi Government,—75 lakhs or at least 50 lakhs. Imad, on being appointed wazir (2 June 1754), was agreeable to paying 25 lakhs as the customary *nazar* for this high office. But Raghunath's insensate greed overreached itself. After long discussions, through Malhar Holkar he fixed the Maratha dues at the impossible figure of 82½ lakhs, out of which forty lakhs were promised to be paid down and the balance after some time. Both parts of the undertaking were impossible of realization in the then condition of the Delhi empire. By methods which will be described later, about nine lakhs were actually collected and paid to the Marathas at the end of September and bankers' bills were given for 17½ lakhs more, but the remaining 13½ lakhs of the first moiety remained absolutely unsecured and without the least hope of its being provided in the near future.

The realization of the second moiety, 42½ lakhs, was out of the question. As the resident Maratha envoy at Delhi wrote to his master (Oct. 1754), "For these 13½ lakhs we are daily dunning the wazir. There is no money in the Emperor's house, there is not a pice with the wazir, their soldiers are dying of starvation, daggers and knives are being plied every day. In such a state of things we are pressing for our money. No cash, no jewel is available. In the last resort the wazir is asking us to take assignments for 13½ lakhs on the revenue of the lands round Delhi which were set apart for feeding the Emperor and the wazir."

This second alternative had to be followed. On 25 October the Emperor issued written orders giving to the Marathas assignments totalling Rs. 42½ lakhs on the revenue of Bengal, Barily, Bairat, Sambhar, Kora and some other mahals. [*DC.*] But as these bills were not honoured, lands in the Gangetic Doab were ultimately alienated to the Marathas and the unwelcome presence of their predatory army removed from the environs of the capital, at the beginning of February 1755.*

§ 8. *Exaction of money in Delhi city, 1754.*

We shall now turn to the events within Delhi during the first year of this reign. The task that confronted Imad-ul-mulk immediately after his becoming wazir was to find money for paying the subsidy of 40 lakhs

* *SPD.* xxvii. 89, 90. *DC. TALS.* 5*b*-6*b*. 12*a*. 27.

promised to his Maratha supporters and the salary of his own troops and the Emperor's artillery-guards and personal servants, which had fallen into arrears for three years. But the treasury and palace-stores had been exhausted during the last reign. The first victims of the new sovereign's rapacity were the brother and sister of the ex-Queen-mother Udham Bai and their children, who had been raised to princely wealth and rank during her son's rule. Their jagirs were confiscated, their ladies were squeezed out of their cash and jewels, pressed to reveal the hiding places of their treasure, and finally driven out of the palace to live in Khawaspura, where the widows of former sovereigns were lodged in poverty and neglect. The fallen wazir Intizam-ud-daulah was similarly deprived of his jagirs and of such other property as lay outside his fortified mansion. In this way three lakhs of Rupees was collected and sent from the palace, secretly at night, to the wazir and paid to the Marathas 10 June.

This was a mere drop in the ocean. The immediate dues of the Marathas and the imperial soldiery exceeded one *kror*. Plans were formed for collecting this huge amount by forced contributions * from the nobles and the public servants. The very proposal raised a tumult in the capital; the rich were too powerful to be fleeced, and nothing could be collected. Then Nāgar Mal (the

* Contribution from the Delhi people: *TALS.* 9*b*-11*b*, 17*a*-19*a*, 25, 27*a*. Also *DC.*

diwan of Crownlands), in consultation with Bapu Rao Hingané, attempted to levy the money from the traders and the common people of all the markets. On this question, Nagar Mal and his head assistant Majlis Rai quarrelled and almost came to blows in the camp of the Marathas, but Malhar managed to pacify them. The wazir posted guards to control the exit from every rich man's house and ordered a levy on the traders and artisans. The bazars were closed in protest, thousands of citizens assembled under the palace balcony (*jharoka*), crying to the Emperor against the oppression. The Emperor was powerless ; he sent word to the wazir to redress the wrong, but Imad would not listen to him. Two days passed in this way, and then the Emperor threatened to starve himself to death unless justice was done to the people. Then the wazir withdrew his demand for money, and the trouble ceased for the time (end of June.)

But how were the Maratha claims to be satisfied ? By the end of August, the wazir's utmost effort had produced only 9 lakhs paid in cash to the Marathas and a promise of 17 lakhs payable from the revenue of Bengal and the *nazar* expected from the two new Bakhshis,—which actually yielded nothing. The Marathas lost patience, and "the wazir made a hot effort to raise money from the people of the city, the Emperor yielding his consent to the measure on condition of the poor not being touched." The exaction at last began

on 7th September, under Samsām-ud-daulah (the Mir Bakhshi) and other officers, and the city was divided among the collectors and lists made of the houses to be taxed. This attempt also ended in failure, though the people suffered greatly.

"Some fools had persuaded the wazir that if only Rs. 2 was realized from every person, a *kror* would be yielded. But though in the actual collection Rs. 5 or even Rs. 10 was taken from each man, not even one lakh was collected, because nothing was taken from any person who was in any way connected with the wazir, but only the shopkeepers and artisans were taxed! Then a new collection was ordered. From the rich thousands of Rupees were demanded, but the heirs of the rich founders were now beggars and could pay nothing. Many people were seized and beaten. A great tumult raged throughout Delhi. All the grain marts and bazar shops were closed. Thousands of common people and the head merchants of the city and of the marts in the suburbs assembled under the Emperor's window, clamouring for justice and saying that they had been forced to pay three times already and yet another demand for contribution was now being made...with intolerable beating.... At last on 20th October the wazir was induced to call off the levy and peace was restored to the citizens." [*TALS.* 25.] The forced contribution ceased, and the wazir had to satisfy the Marathas by alienating to them 22 villages in

Saharanpur and some others from the Crownland and privy purse estates.

§ 9. *Constant lawlessness and military roudiness in Delhi.*

This surrender of territory allayed only one evil. It did nothing to meet the just demands of the palace servants and the imperial soldiery whose salaries had remained unpaid for three years. Men with arms in their hands and trained to act in concerted bands cannot be expected to starve in silence in the midst of a wealthy and masterless city. Anarchy reigned in Delhi after Alamgir II's accession in a worse form than before. The Marathas had been paid lakhs and lakhs, but the Mughal army could not actually get even half a month's salary in three years, in spite of the solemn promises of the wazir, and this fact exasperated the imperial soldiery beyond endurance ; they daily plundered houses in the city on their own account. The powerful nobles put their mansions in a posture of defence, and the middle class,—especially the Hindu officials and traders, —alone suffered. [*TALS.* 20*b*.]

Only three weeks after the Emperor's accession, the wazir's artillerymen made a row for their pay in his mansion, stopping ingress and egress and dragging out his chief manager, Aqibat Mahmud Khan, whose dress they tore off. Only an order on a banker could pacify them (21 June, 1754). Imad blamed Aqibat

for having brought this public humiliation on him, because that all-powerful servant used to control all his affairs and receive and dispose of all his revenue without his master's knowledge. So, he called Aqibat in the evening (of 24 June) for a consultation, severely censured him, and had him stabbed to death by his Afghan captains. The ex-favourite's corpse was thrown down on the sand-bank below the wazir's garden.* The same day the captive Ahmad Shah and his mother were blinded. With the approval of Imad, his rogue of a Kashmiri henchman Aqibat had forged a letter purporting to have been written by the ex-Emperor and sealed with his private seal, calling upon Intizam to rescue his former master from prison, take him to the Rajputs and with their help restore him to the Delhi throne, when the wazirship would be conferred on Intizam again. After repeated pressing, the reluctant consent of Alamgir II was secured and his rival was blinded soon after nightfall. But the moving spring of this atrocious deed had himself been killed two hours before! Divine justice sometimes acts with lightning speed. The next day, the other soldiers of the wazir assembled before his house, clamouring to be paid their arrears as the artillerymen had been. The streets were blocked and the city gates had to be closed on account of the crowd and tumult.

* Murder of Aqibat Mahmud.—*TALS.* 60, *DC. Mirz.* 101. Blinding of Ahmad Shah: *TALS.* 80; *Mir.* 99, *DC.*

There were many similar scenes of rowdiness by the starving soldiery* throughout this reign, *e.g.*, on 10 August 1754, when half a month's pay was promised, but even that pittance could not be actually paid; on 14 Aug., when the High Diwan Nāgar Mal was stoned by the Emperor's personal servants and had to be carried away to safety under cover of his followers' shields; on 5 September, when the musketeers of the fort garrison closed both of its gates, stopping all traffic; on 2 October, when the Badakhshi cavalry of the wazir made a violent demonstration, their officers claiming from the wazir's diwan lakhs of Rupees as their due, but refusing to bring their troops to the muster or to render accounts of the rents they had already realized from the jagirs assigned to them in lieu of pay, and the tumult was pacified only by putting their insolent commander Zāhid Beg in prison; on 23 October, when the Badakhshis again assembled, surrounded the wazir's mansion, mobbed their bakhshi and dragged him out of his *palki*, while the wazir sneaked into the fort by a back door; on 18 November, when these Mughlia troops again rose in lawless violence, occupying the Jāma Masjid and the Qudsia Masjid all the day and looting the bakers' and sweetmeat-sellers' shops, and could be dislodged only by opening fire upon them from the fort-walls with some slaughter. Their crowning act of

* Rowdiness of unpaid soldiery,—*TALS.* 8*a*, 12*b*, 13*b*, 18*a*, 22*b*, 26, 32*a*, 29*b*-30*a*, 37*b*, 75*b*-79*a*. Also *DC.*

outrage was mobbing the wazir and dragging him on foot through Panipat city on 3 May 1755, as will be described at the end of this chapter.

The wazir's artillerymen, who had been promised payment in eleven days as the result of their clamour on 21 October 1754, again crowded before his mansion after the expiry of the term, entered it, fought a eunuch who barred their path and plundered his property. One day they stopped the visit of Sholapuri Begam, the wazir's grandmother, and insulted the wazir himself. "The trouble daily increased. Another day the mutineers entered the wazir's mansion and carried away the food lying cooked ready for him and his family. Many people's property was looted during these disorders." "On 28 December Rs. 5 per trooper and Re. 1 per foot-soldier, [*i.e.*, only one week's pay] were granted to the fort artillery, this being the first payment ever made in the seven months since the Emperor's accession. No other regiment got anything." On 23 July 1756 we read of a similar tumult created by the troops of the deceased Mir Bakhshi Samsām-ud-daulah, whose burial they hindered till their dues were promised. At the same time the wazir's musketeers posted in the fort, took forcible control of it, stopped ingress and egress, and defied their master. Then taking some light pieces out of the ramparts, they planted them under strong pickets at many places in the city, such as the Jāma Masjid, and held the city gates in force.

The Emperor was then at Luni ; two of his wives, whom he had summoned from Delhi fort, could only evade the artillerymen holding the gates by walking on foot covered with common *burqas* (like servant maids) from their *harem* to outside the fort-gates ; then they crossed part of the road mounted on bhishtis' bullocks and disguised in bhishti-women's robes, and from the city went to Luni in more worthy vehicles. The Persian chronicler adds, "The Emperor was greatly delighted to hear of this [trick]. The shame of it was not felt by him. In the end the affair could not be kept a secret and became known to the public." [*TALS.* 76*b*-78*a*.]

At last on 29 August 1756, the artillerymen, despairing of getting their dues by any other means, "absolutely closed all the entrances into the fort. So, the supply of grain, meat, vegetables and water to the inmates of the palace-harem was cut off from the morning.... After noon they opened the back gate, allowing some people to come in and stopping others at their caprice. At last the son of Jagjivandas (the Delhi agent of Jagatseth of Bengal) and Bālgovind Sāhukār personally undertook to satisfy their claims, by Najib-ud-daulah's mediation.... Their accounts were produced and their dues admitted to be for ten months and a few days." Taking an advance from Balgovind, the Mir Atish cleared the dues of the men employed *within* the fort and the gates were fully opened on 12 September. But the artilleryists *outside* Delhi fort, under their

captains Rao Mān and Harjiu Singh, at not getting their own dues, mutinied and tried to block the fort-gates from outside. Then they were paid in part, and the tumult ceased. [*TALS.* 78-79.] The sickening tale need not be carried any further.

§ 10. *Sufferings of the people of Delhi from lawlessness and anarchy, 1754.*

Within the capital itself the Badakhshi soldiers of the wazir plundered the houses of the rich citizens without fear or check. In August 1754, Kishanchand Sud, a high accounts officer, was carried off by Bāqi Beg Khan, a captain of this Turki corps, to Mughalpura, put to torture by being suspended from a beam and asked to pay five lakhs. He underwent this treatment for fifteen days, but none sought to rescue him. He ultimately secured his release, we know not at what price ; but on 7 June next year his house was plundered by the wazir's troops, though he contrived to escape by a back door.* On 14 Nov. 1754 Nāgar Mal, the High Diwan, abandoning his own house in the city, fled for refuge to Bāpu Hingané in Jaisinghpura. Imād sent a party to escheat the property of the fugitive, but the

* *TALS.* 16*b*, 54*b* ; *DC.* He appropriated all power as mustaufi of the Emperor and naib diwan of khalsa, after Abdali's departure in April 1757, and caused great discontent by transferring the jagirs of the smaller mansabdars to the Emperor's sons, for which he was murdered in the streets, 16 April 1757, by some of these officers. (116*a*-117*a*.)

Marathas who had been sent to guard the house resisted the invaders. From Jaisinghpurā Nāgar Mal sent a small Maratha force to bring his family away from their asylum in Samsām-ud-daulah's house. But the wazir's Badakhshis opposed these men, slaying twelve and wounding many of them and taking away their arms and mares. Then the victors went to Nāgar Mal's house, expelled the Maratha guards from it, and finally cleared Pahārā Mal's garden house, which was the residence of many Marathas, of every Deccani found there. Thus, not a Maratha was left within the walls of Delhi or in the marts around it. [*TALS.* 30*b*-31*b*. *DC*.] The wazir immediately took away Nāgar Mal's two diwanships, but when he returned to Court a month later restored these offices to him.

We read that in September 1754, the wazir's soldiers were engaged in plundering the house of every man whom their informers represented as well dressed and well fed. They seized the householder and his women and would release them only after the payment of a ransom. No redress could be had even by appealing to the highest authority. "One day the wazir's Afghan captain Subhān Khan with his company began to loot the house of Hakumat Rāi, the father-in-law of the daughter of Thākurdās (the head assistant of the Emperor's harem superintendent). Thākurdās complained to the wazir, who sent Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan to stop it; but this officer entered into a concert with

Subhān Khan, severely beat Hakumat Rai, and even threatened to dishonour Thākurdas himself, and the house was plundered of all its contents." [*TALS.* 20.]

A Muslim victim fared better. On 3 September, Imād caught some Badakhshis in the act of robbing the house of the brother-in-law of Muzaffar Khan. He cut off the nose of the leader of the gang, who happened to be a sergeant in the regiment of Bāqi Beg Khan. At this the other Badakhshis of the corps were displeased. Next day, as the wazir was entering the fort, a Badakhshi musketeer fired at him from his post before the gate. The wazir reprimanded all the captains of this force. [*TALS.* 17*b*-18*a*.]

§ 11. *Delhi Government turns bankrupt.*

The utter bankruptcy of the Government makes us only wonder that it did not collapse even earlier. All the provinces except Bengal had long ceased to send any revenue to the central Government, some having become independent under their subahdars and others having been usurped by Afghans Jats and Marathas. Thus, the territory still obeying the Emperor's authority was reduced to a belt round the capital, *viz.*, the upper Doab or the Mirat Division on the east and the Rohtak and Gurgaon districts on the west. Here, as nearest and most easy to control, the Emperor had originally reserved to himself the rent of a number of villages for meeting the salaries of his household servants and palace

guards (especially the Delhi garrison artillery) and the cost of clothing and feeding himself, his family, and State pensioners like the captive offsprings and widows of former Emperors. These lands formed his Crownlands (*khalsa*) and privy purse estates (*sarf-i-khas.*) But, because they were nearest the capital and their revenue was least irregular and easiest to collect, they roused the greed of his wazir, whose cowardice and incompetence prevented him from subduing and administering his jagirs more distantly situated.

The main prop of the empire's centre was the newly recruited body of Central Asian mercenaries, called Badakhshis or popularly *Sindagh*. They were 12,000 strong, large-limbed, well-fed, well-accoutred men, mounted on powerful high-priced horses of Khurasan breed, and cost much more than double the salary of a similar number of Indian soldiers, their pay-bill amounting to eight lakhs of Rupees a month. When their pay fell into arrears they took to plundering houses and holding rich men to ransom in Delhi, with the wazir's permission, as is asserted by the Court chronicler of Alamgir II. They constantly demanded their pay and refused to bring their troops to the muster or to render accounts of the revenue they had already collected from the landlords in Mewat and other parganahs where they had been sent for rent-collection. In the very presence of the wazir they abused his finance manager, while their commander Zāhid Beg Khan drew

his dagger and wounded one of Imād's generals. Zahid Beg was put in prison and the tumult ceased for the time, (2 Oct. 1754). The wazir, in order to stop this constant clamour, made some of the privy purse mahals over to the Badakhshis. [*TALS.* 41*b*, 22*b*, 29*a*.]

"The parganahs in the province of Delhi and some other provinces, which had been made Crownland, and out of whose revenue the Emperor's personal servants received their pay, had now gone out of his hands. Saharanpur, whose revenue had been assigned to jagirdars, was seized by Najib Khan Ruhela : the Jat Rajah had seized the mahals near Agra ; Madho Singh of Jaipur had taken possession of Narnol and that side. Not a single mahal remained under the *khalsa* (Crownlands department.) In addition to this, the wazir used to give the mahals of the privy purse in lieu of payment now to the Badakhshis, now to the Marathas... So, there was no money for the Emperor's own meals and those of the ladies of his harem, whose only source of maintenance was the rent of the privy purse estates. The Emperor repeatedly pressed [this point] on the wazir, who signed orders for the release of these lands, but at heart wished to devote their revenue to the payment of his own troops. So he released Mirat and Luni only. Wafā Beg Khan (a Mughalia captain) enjoyed parganah Bāghpat, and now Mirat and other privy purse mahals were given to the Marathas. The wazir ruined the whole realm." [*TALS.* 22, 28-29.]

The wazir brought the Emperor and his family to the point of starvation by alienating the privy purse estates to the Badakhshis and the Marathas. But there was nothing left for giving relief to the other sections of the army, such as the fort artillery, the musketeers of the guard (men from Oudh and Baksar), and the personal retinue and household officers of the Emperor, whose pay was equally overdue. These latter struck work and rioted in the city and the fort, creating scenes of the greatest humiliation and suffering to the Emperor and his wazir.

§ 12. *Humiliation and sufferings of the imperial family.*

The hopeless poverty of the Emperor subjected him to deepening distress and insult. Only a month and a half after his accession, he had no conveyance left for the State procession to the place of the Id prayer.* The contrast between his miserable plight and the magnificence of his ancestors became painfully manifest when he held his birthday Court in the Diwan-i-am. The Peacock Throne of Shah Jahan, resplendent with gold and gems, had been lost, and its place was taken by an imitation in wood, with the figures of gold chasing and gems represented by paint !

"All the palace stores were empty. Three years'

* 22 July 1754. [*TALS.* 15*b*.] Again, on 10 May 1758, on account of his having no mount, the Emperor had to walk on foot from the harem to the Stone Masjid of the fort. [*DC.*]

salary carried forward from Ahmad Shah's reign was due to every officer from the mansabdars to the menials. In the present reign, which was now six months old, they had not received a *dam*. The [starving] troopers had sold their horses, the infantry had no clothing on their backs...The animals [of the imperial equipage] could not be given fodder and hence they grew lean or died. The soldiers remained in their own houses, none attended in the Emperor's retinue when he rode out. Sometimes even the royal band and standard did not accompany him." [*TALS.* 15*b*, 23*b*, 52*a*, 28*b*, 41*b*.] Shakir Khan, the diwan of Prince Ali Gauhar, narrates how when he took a mug of broth from the pauper-charity-kitchen to the prince for official inspection, the prince asked him to give it to the palace ladies, as no fire had been kindled in the harem kitchens for three days! We read, in the Court chronicle of this reign, how one day the princesses could bear starvation no longer, and in frantic disregard of *parda* rushed out of the palace for the city; but the fort gates being closed they sat down in the men's quarters for a day and a night, after which they were persuaded to go back to their rooms. [*TALS.* 190.]

§ 13. *Rebels and usurpers triumph over the imperial Government.*

While such was the condition of the city and the palace, the countryside fared no better. The new

assignees on the districts north and east of the capital, namely the Badakhshis and later the Marathas, were resisted by the parties already in possession, such as Najib's agents and former grantees with more legitimate titles than these Ruhela usurpers; and though the Marathas established themselves by main force after some fighting, their position in these regions fluctuated with each invasion or retreat of Ahmad Shah Abdali and the repercussion of such military movements on the Maratha power in Northern India. The Great Anarchy had already begun at the core of the empire.

Even in the districts immediately bordering the capital, so weak and despised was the power of the central Government that smaller usurpers set up their ownership and administration in several places,—which aggravated the evil of Imad-ul-mulk's alienation of Crownlands and privy-purse estates to the soldiery. The Jat and Gujar encroachments in the south and south-east of Delhi will be described in chapter 22. In the region north and west of the capital, *i.e.*, the modern Karnal and Rohtak districts, the usurpers were Afghan and Baluch captains. Northwards, Kunjpura (80 miles north of Delhi and commanding a ford on the Jamunā) was held by Nejābat Khan Ruhela. Then, in the west, Kāmgār Khan Baluch (r. 1747-1760), the official governor of Farrukhnagar (30 m. s.w. of Delhi), held a vast territory embracing the whole of the present districts of Hisar and Rohtak and parts of Gurgaon, Jhind and

Patiala. His son and successor was Musa Khan. Another Baluch chief was Bahadur Khan, who had once been a servant of Kāmgār but had later entered the service of Imād-ul-mulk and risen to be colonel of one of his regiments and to be granted the barony of Bahādurgarh (20 m. due west of Delhi.) He was succeeded in 1760 by his brother Tāj Muhammad Khan, who ruled till 1775.* Other minor chiefs of this race were Hasan Ali Khan (of Jhajhar) the son of Kāmgār Khan's brother, Asadullah Khan of Tauru (18 miles east of Rewari), Auliyā Khan Baluch of Nizāmgarh (in the Saharanpur district), and Qutb Shah, wrongly called Ruhela, who had formerly been a collector in Saharanpur but later usurped parts of the Pānipat and Sarhind districts west of the Jamunā.

Above them all was Najib Khan Ruhela, who had been paid for his armed aid in 1753 by the grant of some jagirs in the upper Doab, but had illegally extended them by seizing many villages in the Saharanpur and Mirat districts. After 1760 Najib made himself the general protector of all the Afghan and Baluch landlords of these regions against their Jat and other enemies. Thus, the country north and west of Delhi was, for a semicircle 80 miles wide, dotted with a number of rebels' dens like the castles of the robber barons of mediæval Italy.

The Emperor being well-read in history, wanted to revive the good old practice of sending his sons out to

* *Rohtak Dist. Gazetteer*, ed. 1883, pp. 18-19.

the provinces for the purpose of subduing and administering them, and thus restoring the empire to strength and prosperity. But mere wishing was not enough for achieving this end. These princes had so long lived amidst the vice sloth ignorance and isolation of their palace-prisons, and lacked the education necessary for commanding men and administering countries. Nor was any capable and devoted old noble any longer available to act as their guardian and tutor (*atalíq*) during their apprenticeship as provincial governors. Finally, there was neither any reliable force nor adequate treasure for supporting them in the arduous task of recovering lost dominions from long-established usurpers or guarding them against attack. While the Emperor and his household were starving, it was impossible to fit out any expeditionary force for his sons. Alamgir II's plan could not be given a trial even, because of the opposition of his selfish wazir, who feared that his own dictatorship would be gone if any of his master's sons developed capacity and secured the control of an army. Thus, every path of reform and revival was closed to the empire of Delhi.

§ 14. *Imad's quarrel with Intizam ended.*

The Maratha forces having retired from Delhi at the beginning of February 1755, Imad was free to settle his score with his enemies near at hand. His first dread after becoming wazir was lest his deposed

predecessor Intizām-ud-daulah* should intrigue successfully for the recovery of the chancellorship. This possibility had kept Imād's heart throbbing with anxiety throughout Raghunāth Rao's stay near Delhi with Intizām as a refugee in his camp. On 2 September 1754, Intizām had posted musketeers round his own mansion and that quarter of the city to resist the wazir's levy of a property tax for paying the Marathas. On 4 Oct. Holkar's diwan, Gangādhar Chandrachud, made an unsuccessful attempt to effect a compromise between the two rivals. About this time Raghunāth, in despair of getting the promised subsidy from Imād, discussed the alternative of making Intizām wazir again if he was more likely to yield the money, but he soon saw that it would not be a change for the better.

On 22 November Imād sent a message to Intizām, who had absented himself from Court ever since the accession of the new Emperor, saying, "If you are a servant of the State, come to the darbar. If you are not, vacate your official mansion." Intizām's reply was to go away immediately to the Maratha camp south-west of Delhi and take up his residence there, while his house in the city was guarded by his mother Sholāpuri Begam. But the Maratha chiefs declined to go to war with the Emperor and his wazir for Intizām's sake and even censured him for this rash act of defiance.

---

* *TALS* 17*b*, 38*b*-39*a*. *DC*.

On 12 December Imād's agents opened negotiations with Raghunāth and Malhar, requesting them to make a settlement between him and Intizām in any way they could. At last Malhar's pacific efforts bore fruit, and on 17 January 1755 (the day of the Hindu spring festival) Imād paid a visit to Intizām's tents at Bādli, and induced him to return to his own house in Delhi and to attend Court a few days later.

§ 15. *Expedition against Qutb Shah.*

So, this trouble ended. The Marathas being gone and Intizām pacified, the wazir turned to reassert the authority of the Government on its own subjects. The first rebel to be attacked was Qutb Shah, who was not a Ruhela by birth, but was popularly known as such by reason of his being a constant associate and honoured religious guide or *pir* of the Ruhelas, (whence his title of *Shah* or Lord Spiritual). He had, soon after Alamgir's accession, obtained an imperial grant for some lands in the Saharanpur and Mirat districts, east of the Jamunā. But when six months later the wazir transferred these villages to the Marathas, Qutb crossed the river, entered the Sarhind district, and began to seize villages there without any legal title. The wazir sent his Sindāgh regiments to drive him away, but these lawless soldiers merely plundered the innocent people of Panipat and other towns as they advanced. On 11 March 1755,

they reached a place four miles north of Karnal and attacked Qutb.* The small rebel force (about 2,500) was on the point of being routed by the superior numbers of the Turks (11,000), when a sandstorm blew into the faces of the Sindāgh men, the Afghans promptly charged the confused enemy ranks and signally defeated them. The wazir's men fled away in panic to Sonipat, abandoning their baggage and tents to plunder. The victorious rebel, laden with his spoils, marched towards Thāneshwar, putting a strong garrison in Karnal and taking tribute from the richer villages on the way. At his approach, Sadiq Beg Khan, the faujdar of Sarhind, was deserted by his Afghan troops, and fled away to Adina Beg in the Panjab. Qutb by a forced march reached the masterless city and established his own rule over it and the surrounding district. "He did not molest the poor, but repressed the strong refractory men, so that within his jurisdiction the roads became safe and his followers were held back from practising oppression." [*TALS.* 44*b*.]

Then he crossed the Satlaj above Rupar and attacked Adina Beg (11 April), but was signally defeated by superior numbers and put to flight, himself being severely wounded and most of his captains slain. Adina Beg advanced to the east of the Satlaj and took over the

* I here follow *Mux.* 107-108, against *TALS.* 42*b*, which says that Qutb attacked the Sindagh by surprise after keeping them deluded with peace talk.

administration of the Sarhind district, as far as Thāneshwar, Mustafābād and Kohram. The wazir recognized his rule in return for a tribute. Meantime, the news of the rout of the Sindāgh troops on 11th March had reached the wazir in Delhi two days later. He pressed the Emperor to start with him at once against the rebel. Though there was no equipment transport or servant fit for an imperial march and no money to provide these, he dragged the Emperor with himself to one stage north of the capital (15 March.) "No servant, no tent had arrived there. The Court underwent great hardship. The Emperor's food was sent to him there after being cooked in Delhi fort. The unpaid servants of both Emperor and wazir were starving and refused to go out of Delhi." [*TALS.* 43*b*.]

But the wazir was a coward; with fourfold odds in his favour he merely discussed plans for recovering the lost territory without fighting. He halted outside Delhi for four weeks, and called to his aid Kāmgār Khan Baluch (of Farrukhnagar) and Najib Khan, both of whom urged him to advance and make a demonstration of force against the rebel, but in vain. At last the wazir began his onward march on 13 April and reached the garden of Fakhru, outside Sonipat, where he learnt of Qutb's defeat at the hands of Adina Beg, and then moved on with the Emperor to Pānipat (19 April.)

§ 16. *Imad mobbed by his Turki soldiers at Panipat.*

In this last-named city the worst mutiny of the unpaid soldiery took place. The Badakhshi captains had been severely censured for their cowardly flight before Qutb's handful of men and they had been sent to Delhi in disgrace. They were now recalled from Delhi to Pānipat and ordered to bring their troops to the muster and receive payment according to the actual number of the men under arms. To this they had a rooted aversion as it would stop their dishonest gains. On 3rd May some two hundred and fifty of these Turki soldiers* gathered before Imād's residence (the family mansion of the late Nawab Lutfullah Khan Sādiq), made a row, and seized the gate. When the wazir on hearing the noise came out of his harem to inquire, they suddenly made a rush, mobbed him, and dragged him on foot, half-dressed as he then was with only a waistcoat on, amidst every kind of insult and abuse, through the bazar and streets, exposed to the gaze of high and low. When they reached the tent of their captain Hasan Beg Khan, two miles away, further insult was heaped upon the chancellor. Thousands of Badakhshis crowded round him, tore his garment to pieces, and even dealt

* Sindagh mutiny at Panipat: *TALS.* 48*b*-51*a*. *DC.* Shakir 79 (present); *Muz.* 109-110. *Siyar*, iii. 52. *Chahar Gulzar* 437 ('their disbandment a fit retribution for their faithless desertion of Safdar Jang in his war with Imad.')

some blows to his person. They forced him to sit down and shouted to him to call for their due salary from his house and pay it then and there. The infuriated soldiery would not listen to the messengers repeatedly sent by the Emperor entreating them to desist. After he had undergone this torment for two hours, the wazir was taken out of their hands by Hasan Beg Khan, who seated him on an elephant and conveyed him back to his mansion.

Arrived there, Imād changed into a decent suit and promptly riding out with all his household troops and the contingents of Najib and Bahādur Khan Baluch, attacked the Badakhshis, proclaiming that his followers would be allowed to retain whatever plunder they took in the mutineers' camp. The Badakhshis fled away before the Ruhelas, abandoning all their property to plunder. Next day a force was sent to Delhi to arrest slay or expel every Badakhshi found anywhere and to seize their houses. The same confiscation was decreed against the Badakhshi officers posted in the jagirs assigned to this regiment. Thus, the Sindāgh, the best troops of the empire, were broken up and the wazir was left utterly without the means of making a stand against Najib Khan or any other enemy in future.

§ 17. *Imad's doings in 1755 and 1756.*

The humbled wazir made a prompt return to Delhi. Here he smelt out a plot for removing him from his

high office and giving it to Shujā-ud-daulah with the connivance of the captive Emperor, who was sick of the impotence and poverty to which Imād's domination had reduced him. The intermediary of the secret negotiations was Ali Quli Khan Dāghestāni, and the instruments of the change were to be Suraj Mal and Ahmad Bangash. The wazir at once struck at the alleged conspirators found in Delhi and expelled even the suspected eunuchs from the palace. Next, in the Emperor's name he ordered Najib to expel Suraj Mal from his recent acquisitions in the Doāb. Negotiations begun by Nāgar Mal for a peaceful settlement delayed Najib's departure; but they naturally failed through Suraj Mal's insistence on retaining all that he had usurped, and at last Najib was given formal leave to march on 17 June. Peace was, however, made through Nāgar Mal's efforts, about 10 July, on terms which are described in chapter 22. [*TALS.* 546-586].

In December 1755, Imād marched up the Doāb from Luni to Shamli, Kairana, and Rāmra-ghat. From the last place he sent to demand tribute from Nejābat Khan, the zamindar of Kunjpurā. At the end of this month, the wazir, taking Prince Ali Gauhar with him, crossed the Jamunā and marched towards the Panjab by way of Pānipat and Ambāla, arriving at Sarhind on 7 Feb. 1756. Here he halted, while his ally Adina Beg Khan took possession of Lahor by driving away the Abdali agent. His betrothed Umda Begam, the daughter of Muin, was

brought to his camp from Lahor on 4 March, and her mother Mughlāni Begam on 28 March, as we shall see in chapter 14. [*T.A.S.* 64, 66*a*, *D.*] Completely successful in his Panjab enterprise, the wazir turned back from Machiwārā on the Satlaj on 1 May and reached Delhi at the end of June.

A fortnight later, he moved to Luni with the Emperor to force the Ruhelas of the Trans-Ganges country to pay their long withheld tribute; but nothing came of the plan, as the wazir's artillerymen made a row for their arrears of pay and closed the ferry from Delhi to Luni, while the musketeers of the Delhi palace garrison seized the fort and completely stopped all ingress and egress. This trouble raged throughout the month of August and the first half of September, detaining the wazir and the whole Court at Luni. Afterwards the expedition was abandoned and the Emperor and his wazir had to sneak back to Delhi. [*TALS.* 75*a*-79*a*.]

Imad's plan was to detach Ahmad Khan Bangash from Shujā-ud-daulah by transferring to the former Shuja's province of Allahabad by an imperial letter-patent. Shujā, on hearing of it, strengthened the defences of Allababad fort and took post on his frontier with a vast force and a large park of artillery, to oppose his enemy's crossing. At this Ahmad Bangash "did not venture to issue from his own city of Farrukhabad and gave

up the idea of going out to assume the subahdari of Allahabad." [*TALS.* 79*b*, 83*a*.] Nāgar Mal and Najib Khan now intervened, the former keeping Suraj Mal back from going to Shujā's assistance and the latter inducing Ahmad Bangash to publicly disavow all desire for the Allahabad province. So, peace was made, *c.* 11 November 1756, when Abdali was already thundering at the western gate of India. These internal dissensions ceased, but no attempt was made by the chiefs of the empire to unite and oppose the alien invader.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Panjab, 1753-1759.

§ 1. *Mughlani Begam as regent of the Panjab.*

With the death of Muin-ul-mulk, the last imperial governor of the province, in November 1753, dissolution began in the orderly administration of the Panjab. True, even in his lifetime the peace of that frontier province had not been as extensive and unbroken as under Zakariya Khan ; but Muin had succeeded in keeping his capital and a large belt of land around it intact, there had been no open defiance of the subahdar's authority by his subordinates, and he had persistently fought the Sikh brigands and pruned their growth with the edge of his sword. By his attention to the equipment and comfort of his soldiery, his liberal rewards to his captains, and above all by his personal sharing of campaigns and comraderie with the Turki soldiers (his own tribesmen) he had preserved his power and the respect of his people. His final defeat by the Abdali king and acceptance of Afghan vassalage had been, no doubt, a blow to his prestige ; but this humiliation he had halved by sharing it with his master the Padishah, and the Abdali suzerainty meant in effect only the sending of the provincial tribute to Qandahar instead of to Delhi.

During the four months' viceroyalty of his infant son Muhammad Amin Khan (January—April 1754), matters passed from bad to worse. The deputy governor, Mir Mumin Khan, though an experienced civil administrator and universally respected noble, could do nothing as all real power lay in the hands of the regent mother Mughlāni Begam. All evidence agrees that the widow lost her character along with her husband and was led by her eunuchs, the instruments of her pleasure.* Her wilfulness and caprice discredited the administration, while her profligacy roused deep resentment and shame among her military officers who came from the same Central Asian stock as her husband and her father. Rebellion against such a degraded authority became a point of honour, no less than an object of personal ambition, with her Turkish captains.

The visible break up of the Delhi empire and its utter impotence against the Afghan invaders had stripped it of the last shred of respect or claim to loyalty. Each general of Muin now thought of carving out a principality for himself and maintaining it by calling up new recruits from the homeland of Bukhārā or hiring the swords of the Sikh myriads near at hand.

* Ghulam Ali, i. 26, Miskin 98-99, 120. On 28 March 1756 her name was connected with that of the youthful page Miskin under the same circumstances as those of Aisha and Safwan ibn Muattal during the return from the Banu Mustalik expedition in year 6 of the hijera. [Miskin 122.]

They felt that their own rule would be worthier and more conducive to the safety and happiness of their retainers and subjects than the anarchy which prevailed in Lahor from Mughlāni Begam's follies and vices.

§ 2. *Rebellions against Mughlani Begam in the Panjab.*

The earliest to rebel against her authority was Bihkāri Khan (Raushan-ud-daulah, Rustam Jang) who had been "the centre of all affairs of the province in Muin-ul-mulk's time" and his dearest friend, and who had secured a rescript for the deputy governorship of the province from the imperial wazir, which the Begam refused to recognize. But she succeeded in seducing his followers and putting him in confinement in her palace in charge of Khwājah Mirzā Said Khan Qipchaq, about January 1754.*

The next officer to raise his head in ambition was Qāsim Khān, an immigrant Turk, who had risen high by devoted personal attendance on Muin and had been the first to side with the Begam against Bihkāri Khan. For this service, Mughlāni had conferred upon him the faujdari of Pati in the Manjha country and lovingly called him her son. He recruited 300 foot-soldiers from

* Bihkari Khan : Miskin 89-92, 107 (murdered). *TALS.* 59*b*, 66*a*. Murder, Ghulam Ali 26, *Siyar*, iii. 61. *Husain Shahi* 34. Qāsim Khan : Miskin 65 (enters service), 93-96. Khwājah Mirzā : Miskin, 91. 99, 102-106. *TALS.* 60*a*.

the Badakhshānis newly arrived to seek their bread in the Panjab, and 100 Turki cavalry, besides a force of a few thousand foot and horse and some pieces of cannon placed under him by the Government. In his advance towards Pati, he encountered the Sikhs, gave up all his 300 Badakhshānis and many other followers to slaughter, and fell back towards Lahor in shameful retreat. But this disaster did not damp the foolish man's ambition. He planned to win over 8,000 Sikh fighters by friendly negotiation and pay, seize Lahor with their help, and then after enlisting more troops take Delhi and make himself Padishah! He was profuse in offering in anticipation high posts in his future empire to his friends, such as the chancellorship to a fugitive penniless ex-faujdar of Sarhind and the imperial Paymaster-Generalship to the page Miskin, a lad in his 15th year. Qāsim Khan distributed thousands of Rupees worth of matchlocks and other arms and material to his Sikh allies. This exhausted his treasury and his soldiers began to dun him for their arrears of pay. At last in utter despair they cut his tent ropes, seized and dragged him to the Begam, who kept him under strict guard within her palace enclosure.

Soon afterwards, her infant son Md. Amin Khan died (early in May 1754) and she threw caution and shame to the winds in the pursuit of pleasure. It now became eunuchs' rule at Lahor. "The diwan, bakhshi and other *sardars* of the Government used to go in the

morning to the subahdar to offer their *salams* and then proceed to the office (*deorhi*) of the Begam's palace and receive her orders through the eunuchs. Three eunuchs took the lead in these discussions and became her chief confidants in all affairs great and small. But the three never agreed among themselves and constantly quarrelled, so that the affairs of the State daily declined. . .The public blamed these eunuchs for everything that happened." [Miskin, 98.]

In the midst of this confusion and decay, the captive Bihkāri Khan took counsel with Khwājah Md. Said Khan. "As a fissure had appeared in the family honour of the late Nawab," the only remedy that these two favourites and confidants of Muin and guardians of his memory could think of was to invite Khwājah Mirzā to come instantly, take the administration over in person, and better the state of things at Lahor before the evil and shame became irremediable.

This Khwājah Mirzā Khan, an Uzbak captain, had been the most trusted and successful lieutenant of Muin in his campaigns and had often been sent out by him in independent command against the Sikhs. With him were 300 of his closely related clansmen. After Muin's death he had at first sided with Bihkāri Khan but had been won over by the Begam with the faujdari of Yaminabad and had helped her to undermine Bihkāri's power and to arrest him. At Yaminabad he had succeeded in asserting his authority, inflicted some

defeats on the Sikhs, and annexed the lands near about. Now, on receiving Muhammad Said's appeal, he came to Lahor by one night's forced march, rode straight up to the Begam's palace at dawn, cut down the two porters who disputed his entrance, and went inside. His Mughalia troops, in concert with the resident Turki guards (previously corrupted by Md. Said), looted the palace all day long and carried away lakhs of Rupees in cash and things. The very servants and officials of Mughlāni Begam did not escape this general spoliation. She betook herself to another house in utter helplessness (about December 1754.)

Bihkāri Khan now pacified Khwājah Mirzā and formed a pact with him, by which Mumin Khan was to remain the nominal subahdar of the Panjab as before, but the deputy governorship of the province would be held and the entire administration conducted by Bihkāri Khan. Khwājah Mirzā called off his Mughalia soldiers from the plunder, but "not a piece of furniture or any other article was left in the palace by this time." The Begam was brought back to her official residence and a guard of Khwājah Mirzā's men posted at its gate. Next morning the Purbia (Oudh) artillerymen of the State, in a body seven thousand strong, marched out of their barracks to attack Khwājah Mirzā. But the Turki guards promptly shut the gates of the palace and kept the assailants back, thus gaining time for the other Mughalia troops in the city to assemble and beat

the Purbias back. Mughlāni Begam was now removed to her sister's house on the city wall and confined there under guard.

Khwājah Mirzā declared himself subahdar of Lahor, put on regal robes, gave titles of Khan (lord to his chief followers, and called upon all the leading men of the city to come and pay court to him. But he could not effectively control the administration, nor secure the necessary revenue. In a short time the other Turki generals, who regarded themselves as his equals, defied his authority, and anarchy reigned in the capital of the Panjab, while the districts were resigned to the local magistrates or rebel leaders.

§ 3. *Khwajah Abdullah Khan seizes the government of Lahor.*

Mughlāni Begam, finding herself really a captive of the usurper, sent out secret letters to Imād-ul-mulk the wazir of Delhi and to Ahmad Shah Abdali at Qandahar, appealing to them to liberate her. Her mother's brother, Khwājah Abdullah Khan (the younger son of the former governor Abdus Samad Khan, Saif-ud-daulah I) had gone to the Durrani Court and secured an order on Amān Khan, Ahmad Shah's agent in Peshawar, to accompany Abdullah to Lahor with a force of 10,000 men of Kabul and Peshawar (but very few Durrānis or Qizilbashes) and restore the Begam to power. Khwājah Mirzā could make no stand against this force, and was

treacherously imprisoned with most of the Mughalia captains, by Amān Khan during a visit to that Afghan under a promise of safety.* Amān Khan now entered the defenceless city of Lahor and by beating all the substantial men and conducting a ruthless general plunder, collected a large sum, and then left for Peshawar, after installing Mughlāni Begam as subahdar and Khwājah Abdullah as her deputy and handing Bihkāri Khan over to her. She at once had him beaten to death by her harem servants, crying out, "The blood of the two (my husband and son) is on you. This is your due recompense for it!" This happened about April 1755.

The Mughalia captains who had been the cause of the disorder and misrule in Lahor ever since Muin's death, were now dragged away to prison in Qandahar. But it did not bring peace back to the Panjab. "Khwājah Abdullah disliked having to obey a woman. He began to act of his own will and collected 15 to 20 thousand troops." The Begam too made preparations for a conflict and seduced many of these recruits. But her troops, "led by eunuchs, nay by eunuchs' servants," could make no stand against Abdullah and fled away after a short street encounter. Mir Mumin and the Durrāni Resident at Lahor (Hādi Khan) then mediated between niece and uncle, appeased the tumult, and safely conveyed the Begam to her mother's house,

* Khj Abdullah: Miskin 106-110, *TALS.* 60*a*. *Mur.* 82.

posting 50 Durrāni soldiers to protect her there. Abdullah now became the undisputed master of Lahor (July 1755.)

In the meantime, the news of the death of Muhammad Amin Khan (early in May 1754) had reached Delhi, but the Emperor Ahmad Shah was then in the midst of his fatal entanglement with Imād-ul-mulk and could not attend to Panjab affairs. After the accession of Alamgir II, the death of the titular subahdar was formally communicated to the new Emperor and an imperial rescript was issued appointing Mumin Khan subahdar with the title of Mumin-ud-daulah, (probably in July 1754.) But, as we have already seen, this officer was ousted by the Begam, and she by Khwājah Mirzā, and the last-named by Khwājah Abdullah. [*DC. TALS.* 59*b*-60*a*.] Abdullah's rule was tyrannical. His most pressing need was that of money, and for it he left no kind of oppression unattempted. "Closing the gates of the city, he plundered much from the inhabitants of Lahor, both Hindu and Muslim, on the plea of their having been associates of Bihkāri Khan, and slew many people. Vast numbers were ruined. Grain and other stuffs became very dear."

§ 4. *Khwajah Abdullah expelled from Lahor and Mughlani Begam made captive by Imad, 1756.*

But his authority did not last beyond six months. Mughlāni Begam, finding her rival installed by Durrāni

arms in her lawful seat, appealed to Imād-ul-mulk, who had now become the all-powerful wazir of Delhi, to rescue her and marry her daughter Umda Begam, who had been betrothed to him by her father. The wazir, too, coveted the province of the Panjab. So, at the end of the year 1755, he set out for Lahor and reached Sarhind on 7 February 1756. In the meantime Adina Beg Khan, the faujdar of the Jalandar doab under the Government of Lahor, had made himself an independent power by raising a vast army (rumoured to be one lakh of horse and foot), including many Sikhs, with a strong park of artillery and swivel-guns. After defeating Qutb Shah, the usurper of the Sarhind district, in a battle at Rupar (11 April 1755), he had occupied Sarhind and the country up to Thaneshwar. The wazir was glad to leave him in undisturbed administration of this country, as he realized that only the strong arm of Adina Beg could keep order in that tract, so full of refractory landowners, while the wazir's own military force and resources were quite inadequate for the purpose. And now, at the beginning of 1756, while the wazir was marching on Lahor, Adina wrote to him not to advance beyond Sarhind, but to send only a small party of his followers whom Adina would strengthen with 10,000 troopers of his own under Sadiq Beg Khan and help to capture Lahor by stratagem.

This force reached Lahor by rapid marches, rode through the city in full military pomp to the Begam's

residence (her mother's house), and next paid a visit of courtesy to Abdullah, who however guessed out their object and at nightfall fled away to the Jamu hills, abandoning the city (middle of January 1756.) Next morning Mughlāni Begam, beating her kettle-drums, rode in triumph through the city, reoccupied her official residence, and took up the government of the province once more. After a month, on completing her preparations she sent her daughter with an escort of 3,000 troopers and dowry and presents worthy of her high rank, to Imād's camp near Sarhind, where she arrived on 4th March.*

Mughlāni Begam's triumph, however, was short-lived. Imād could not tolerate her doings. She was, after all, a Muslim woman, but used to do the work of a provincial governor in the manner of males, before the public gaze. This part of a virago that she played, quite apart from the stories about her loss of character, was felt as a personal disgrace by Imād, because she was his mother's brother's wife and also his prospective mother-in-law. His family honour demanded that she should be removed from Lahor, where she was enjoying unbridled liberty of action. A more sordid motive is said by some writers to have mingled with this feeling, namely greed for the hoarded wealth of her late husband.

---

* *TALS.* 47*a*-48, 66*a*, 69*a* ; Miskin 114-119. *DC.*

So, Imād sent Sayyid Jamil-ud-din Khan with 10,000 horsemen and ten eunuchs to kidnap her. This Jamil-ud-din had been a favourite lieutenant of Muin-ul-mulk, and had commanded the contingent sent by that governor to Delhi to assist the Emperor in his war with Safdar Jang in 1753. He had won the good opinion of Imād by devoted service under his eyes. And now, by a continuous rapid march, Jamil-ud-din reached Lahor before any one could know of his approach, encircled the Begam's mansion, forced her upon an elephant, and sent her off to the wazir's camp at Machhiwara, where she arrived on 28th March. All her property was seized. Mir Mumin, 'the leading nobleman of Lahor', was again appointed subahdar of the Panjab, with Sayyid Jamil-ud-din as his deputy and actual governor. The Sayyid was an honest God-fearing and experienced man; he administered the province justly, in strict accordance with the Islamic Canon Law, punished offenders without fear or favour, and tried to maintain peace as far as he could with the actual muster out of the 5,000 Mughal soldiers assigned to the province on paper. He sought to lower the unfairly enhanced price of grain by publicly flogging the headman of the markets, and led some expeditions against the Sikhs, whom he defeated after severe fighting.*

* *TALS.* 69*b*. Miskin 120-124. *Mux.* 106. Shakir 79-80.

§ 5. *Abdali conquest of the Panjab, Oct. 1756.*

His rule too did not last more than six months. Khwājah Abdullah, who had fled away before Adina's troops, went to Qandahar and brought away a strong Afghan force under Abdali's general Jangbāz Khān, by promising to recover the Panjab from the hands of the Delhi Government's agents and restore it to the Abdali. With him came Khwājah Mirzā and other Turki captains of Muin who had so long been held captives in Qandahar.

Strengthened by a force of Afghans of Peshawar under Abdus Samad Khan, the detachment arrived near Lahor. Sayyid Jamil-ud-din appealed to Adina Beg for reinforcements, but in vain. Adina durst not provoke the Durrāni power by standing up against it, and so the governor retreated from Lahor to join Adina. A wild terror seized that city ; the inhabitants remembered the atrocities of the former Afghan occupation. Every one who had anything to lose fled away, abandoning his property, as transport animals and porters were very scarce. The fugitive population swelled the train of their governor till they reached Adina Beg's camp in the Jalandar doab, because a rumour had spread that Ahmad Shah himself was coming to wreak vengeance on the Delhi wazir for having carried off Mughlāni Begam, whom the Durrāni king used to call his daughter and whom he had posted as his agent in Lahor. The invaders entered the city on 4 October 1756. Many

of the Lahor fugitives deemed it unsafe to stay anywhere nearer than Delhi. [Miskin 125-128. *T.A.L.S.* 80*a*.]

Thus Khwājah Abdullah was again installed in authority at Lahor by Durrāni arms, with Khwājah Mirzā Khan as his lieutenant. His Afghan allies roamed through the city, plundering whatever they could lay hands on, without any check. While an envoy of the Durrāni Shāh named Qalandar Beg Khan visited Delhi (end of October) to demand satisfaction for Imād's attack upon his master's authority at Lahor, the main Afghan army set out to invade India once more. In the middle of November Ahmad Shah himself reached Peshawar,* his vanguard led by Timur Shah arrived at Hasan Abdal and pushed a detachment on to the city of Gujrat to collect provisions for the main army about to follow. Delhi itself was known to be Abdali's objective this time.

The Afghan invaders, passing through and plundering Yaminabad and Batala, advanced upon Adina Beg's camp at Jalalabad (25 m. s. e. e. of Amritsar.) The Beg fled away with his family and Jamil-ud-din and Sadiq Beg, abandoning his camp and baggage to plunder; by way of Nurmahal, Sodra and Thara he reached Hansi, while the Afghan commander-in-chief Sardār Jahān Khan occupied the Jalandar doab up to

* Abdali crosses the Indus at Attock (26 Nov.), plunders Batala and Adinanagar (13 Dec.), and enters Lahor (20 Dec.) *DC. Raj*, vi. 365, *TALS.* 85*a*.

the bank of the Satlaj without a blow (early in December.) "From Lahor to Sarhind not a village was left tenanted, all men, high and low, having fled away." Towards the end of this month, an Afghan detachment under Hasan Khan crossed the Satlaj and occupied Sarhind, which had been vacated by its inhabitants. Jahān Khan, with the vanguard, arrived near that city about 5 January 1757 and then pushed on towards Delhi by way of Panipat. From Lahor Ahmad Shah sent threatening letters to the Rajah of Jamu, who made peace by paying a large sum. The Afghan king then crossed the Satlaj, about 10 January, and, marching two stages behind his van, arrived before Delhi on 23rd January, 1757.* His doings there will be narrated in chapter 15.

§ 6. *Timur Shah appointed as Abdali's governor of the Panjab, 1757.*

Gorged with the plunder of Delhi, Mathura and Agra, Ahmad Shah set out from Delhi at the beginning of April, on his return homewards. During his stay in India Mughlāni Begam had risen to his highest favour. She had been chosen by the Delhi Emperor and his wazir as their mediator with the Abdali; she had divulged to the invaders the secrets of all the nobles of Delhi, guiding the Afghans to the hiding

* Abdali's conquest of the Panjab (1756): *TALS.* 85*a*-88*b*. Miskin 125-129.

place of every noble's treasure and giving information as to the exact amount of wealth that could be squeezed out of each ; and she had been Ahmad Shah's agent in procuring the virgin tribute that was exacted for him from the imperial family. She had presented him with costly jewels on her own behalf. There was nothing that the Afghan king could refuse to her. In high delight he had cried out, "Hitherto I had styled you my daughter ; but from today I shall call you my *son* and give you the title of Sultan Mirzā." He presented to her the very cap, aigrette, coat and other vestments that he was then wearing ; there could be no more exalted *khilat* than these.

At the same time, the Afghan king promised to Mughlāni Begam the Jalandar doab, Jamu and Kashmir as her fiefs. She sent agents to these places to establish her own government, and invited Adina Beg to come out of his retreat and administer the Jalandar doab as her deputy. But she was soon undeceived. Ahmad Shah had annexed the Sarhind district as the dowry of Alamgir's daughter Muhammadi Begam, who had been married to his son Timur Shah, and at the time of withdrawing from India he decided to leave this prince as his viceroy in the Panjab.* An independent

* Timur Shah's first viceroyalty of Lahor : Miskin, 145-170.

As Adina Beg defaulted in paying the tribute of Jalandar doab, Timur Shah's wazir threw Dilārām (the agent of Adina at the Lahor subahdar's Court) into prison. Mughlāni Begam stood

authority like Mughlāni could not be allowed to hold the Jalandar doab and thus interpose a break between Lahor and Sarhind, nor could the Panjab province be shorn of its northern hill territories, Kashmir and Jamu. He, therefore, revoked his gift and told Mughlāni to take instead jāgirs worth Rs. 30,000 a year elsewhere from Timur Shah. This she refused to do, but followed Ahmad Shah to the bank of the Chenāb, vainly imploring him to give her the territories first promised. Thence, by way of Siālkot she returned to Lahor, where this unreasonable woman passed some time, dunning Timur and exasperating his wazir Jahān Khan by the violence of her wrangling. Her obstinacy only humiliated her and brought down upon her head poverty and scorn in a city which she had once ruled with sovereign power. A beggar cannot dictate the nature of her alms.

The young prince Timur Shah was left in Lahor as viceroy with his father's ablest general Sardār Jahān Khan as his guardian and wazir. The backbone of his armed force consisted of 10,000 Persian troops of his

---

security for the payment of the six lakhs due from Adina and thus effected Dilārām's release. Then she advised Dilārām to flee from Lahor at night, go to Adina and procure the money, as his life at Lahor was made intolerable by the Afghans constantly beating him for payment. But Adina did not pay the money, and then the Afghan wazir beat the Begam with sticks with his own hand severely! For 2 days she was kept confined in a small room and unspeakable oppression was done to her. [Miskin, 170.]

father's army. But Jahān Khan enlisted India-born soldiers on the lower scale of pay prevailing in this country. This military strength and the terror of the Abdali king who stood behind his son, imposed peace and order on that unhappy province after the late chaos. "Justice was done in the capital and the districts, and the roads became safe for traffic once more." Timur had the wisdom to lease out the government of the Jalandar doab to Adina Beg for 32 lakhs of Rupees a year, conceding to him the privilege that he would not be required to attend the viceregal Court at Lahor but would be represented there by his former *wakil* Dilārām. In fact, Adina Beg had administered that doab for such a long time,—ever since Abdus Samad Saif-ud-daulah's regime,—and established such local influence there, especially by his understanding with the Sikhs, that it was recognized on all hands that he was the only man who could keep that territory in order and extract any revenue from it. [Miskin, 167.]

After thus settling the new administration, Jahān Khan planned to cut off a large body of Sikh rebels who had assembled at Amritsar for a religious bath, and, as was their usual practice, had taken to plunder and violence. Two divisions, under Hāji Atāi Khan and the wazir, were ordered to converge upon the city and attack the Sikhs simultaneously. But Atāi Khan delayed his march, so that when Jahān Khan approached Amritsar with 2,000 horsemen, he was unsupported

and had to meet the full force of the Sikh attack. "Many of our men turned to flee, but the Sikhs had left them no path to escape by, and they had to return to our group. We fought in desperation. Then Hāji Atāi arrived and put the Sikhs to flight. The victors gave chase, occupied Amritsar, and slew five Sikh infantrymen who were standing on guard before a screened door"—evidently the shrine of their Holy Book. [Miskin, 162.]

§ 7. *Timur Shah's administration breaks down. Its causes.*

Timur governed the Panjab for one year, from May 1757 to April 1758. But this fair prospect of the reign of law and order in the Panjab was soon overcast. Two Afghan troopers when coming from Sarhind to Lahor, were killed in the territory of the fort of Budha Rāmdās. Jahān Khan at once sent some bailiffs to compel the headman of the place to produce the culprits. These men, following the Persian practice, beat him so hard that he was brought to death's door, and saved his life only by escaping at night to some unknown village. The entire Sikh community felt insulted by this outrage on the headman, who was a notable religious guide (Bābā) and a rich revenue farmer too. "From that day the peace and orderly rule which had been recently established in the country disappeared and the Sikhs rose in rebellion on all four sides."

The mischief was only aggravated by the attempt to allay it. Adina Beg had accepted the governorship of the Jalandar doab on the express condition of not being required to present himself before Timur Shah. But now the viceroy, in despair, pressed him to come to Lahor and devise means for subduing the Sikhs. Adina flatly refused, and when threatened for his contumacy, fled away to the Balwān (? Balsan) hills. "In consequence of it, utter disorder spread throughout the Panjab. The wazir Jahān Khan sent Sarāfrāz Afghan of Attock and Ghufrān Khan as governors to Jalandar and Kashmir respectively, but both of them returned defeated in the course of a month. Utter lawlessness prevailed. Every force that was sent out by Timur was defeated. Even the environs of his capital were not safe. Every night thousands of Sikhs used to assemble and plunder the suburbs lying outside the walls of Lahor ; but no force was sent to repel them, and the city gates were kept closed by way of precaution!"* This was the sad state of things from November 1757 to February 1758. "The Sikhs gathering together, by our [*i. e.*, Maratha] advice, began to upset Abdali's rule ; from some place they expelled his outposts. They defeated Sadat Khan Afridi, plundered all the Jalandar doab, and forced him to flee to the hills. By order of the subahdar, Khwājah

* Miskin, 165-170. Adina antagonized.—Ghulam Ali, i. 54.

Ubaid Khan came from Lahor with 20,000 horse and foot to fight the Sikhs. In the end he was defeated, many of his captains were slain, all his camp and baggage were plundered; all the artillery left behind by Abdali was captured." [*SPD.* ii. 83.]

§ 8. *First Maratha invasion of the Panjab, 1758.*

Adina Beg had no doubt succeeded in repelling Timur Shah's general Sarāfrāz Khan in his invasion of the Jalandar doab. But his armed force was only 10,000 men, and he doubted if he would be able to defeat fresh attacks by superior forces of Durrāni troops, or save his people from the atrocities of these ruthless foreign soldiery. So, in helplessness, he opened negotiations with Raghunāth Rao, the Peshwā's brother, then posted near Delhi at the head of a vast army, and called the Marathas to his defence, promising to pay them one lakh of Rupees for every day of marching and half that amount for each day of halt during their presence in his faujdari.*

In August 1757 a large Maratha army under Raghunāth Rao with Malhar Holkar and some other generals had arrived near Delhi as the ally and master of the wazir Imād-ul-mulk. They fought and drove

* Raghunath Rao's invasion of the Panjab : Miskin, 171-182. Ghulam Ali, i. 55-57. *TALS.* 151*b*, 164*b*-165, 178*a* (return.) *SPD.* ii. 41, 78. xxi. 111, 116, 150. xxvii. 148, 220, 218, *Mux.* 128. *Husain Shahi*, 44-45.

Najib-ud-daulah out of Delhi (6 Sep.), and for the next four months roved through the country round Delhi plundering the markets and exacting contributions from the landowners. Their success in taking away Najib's jagir of Saharanpur emboldened them to talk of advancing to Lahor and wresting that province from Abdali's son. On hearing of it, Abdus Samad Khan Mohmand, a native of the Peshawar district and Abdali's faujdar of Sarhind, collected a large force and advanced to Thāneshwar, where he was joined by Najib's son; but the Deccanis shrank from advancing into the Panjab or even fighting him where he was (Oct. 1757.) Then, after raiding many places in the Gangetic doab, Malhar recrossed the Jamunā (end of December) and laid siege to Kunjpurā (75 miles north of Delhi), plundering the country from Delhi up to Thāneshwar.

This close approach of the Marathas to Sarhind greatly alarmed Abdus Samad Khan. He was at that time absent from his headquarters on a punitive expedition against Alā Singh. At the end of March 1757, when the front division of Abdali's army under Prince Timur was transporting the plundered wealth of Delhi to Lahor, this Alā Singh in concert with other Sikh robbers had barred his path at Sanāwar (between Ambala and Patiala) and robbed him of half his treasures, and again attacked and plundered him at Māler Kot. So great had been the success of these brigands that rumour had magnified it into the prince's captivity

and even death at their hands. When, next month, Abdali himself with his main army retreated by this route, Alā Singh had shrunk from provoking him. In December Abdus Samad invaded Sunām (40 m. s. w. of Patiala) in the territory of Alā Singh, and imposed a fine on him. Hearing of Malhar's approach the faujdar quickly settled that business, hastened back to Sarhind (12 January 1758), and set himself to repairing its fort walls and digging defensive trenches round the city. But Malhar turned back from Kunjpurā after exacting five lakhs, and Sarhind was saved. Just at this time, when Malhar's women were on a visit to Thaneshwar and Kurukshetra for a religious bath, a local force of Abdus Samad besieged them in Shāhābād, but the Maratha escort fought well, slew many of the Afghans, and captured their horses (middle of January.)*

A month later the Maratha invasion of the Panjab began. Their main army under Raghunāth and Malhar,—whose strength rumour swelled to two lakhs of men,—reached Sarhind and laid siege to it, while their raiding bands spread all over the district, plundering the villages around. Adina Beg with his own troops and a hired force of professional Sikh freebooters from the west of the Satlaj, crossed that river and joined the Marathas before Sarhind. After a few days' exchange of gunfire, Abdus Samad found his position untenable. In trying to escape he was wounded and

* Rajwade, i. page 85. *TALS.* 150*b*-151*a*.

captured, along with Jangbāz Khan and other Afghan captains, but well treated by Raghunāth (21 March. *DC.*) "The Marathas and Sikhs so thoroughly looted Sarhind city that none of its inhabitants, high or low, male or female, had a cloth left on his person. Pulling the houses down, they carried off the timber and dug the floors up for buried money." [*T.L.S.* 164*b*. Miskin, 173.]

Flushed with this easy victory, the allies advanced towards Lahor. In the meantime, at the first news of the defection of Adina Beg and the movement of the Marathas, Jahān Khan had got a force together and advanced to Batālā in eight days. From this place he detached 2,000 horse under Yusuf Khan to enter the doab and scout for intelligence, each day roving 20 miles on the right or left side of the road, or in front. After some weeks this force learnt that Sarhind had fallen; they rapidly withdrew from the doab, and in two days recrossed the Biās at Rahila ghat, and joined Jahān Khan. That general fell back on Jalalabad, where he halted for eight days, but on learning that the Marathas had crossed the Satlaj and entered the doab, he made a forced retreat to Lahor in four days.

§ 9. *Marathas occupy Lahor and expel Afghans.*

It was impossible for Timur Shah to defend Lahor against the myriads of Marathas; the fort was out of repair and insufficiently provisioned with food and material; the Sikh population throughout the province

was hostile, his reliable troops, Afghans and Persian Turks, numbered only a few thousands, and there was no hope of relief from Ahmad Shah who was troubled by risings in Khurāsān and had to go there in person with all his forces. So Timur decided on flight (*c.* 19 April.) Setting up a temporary camp on the other bank of the Rāvi, he and his Durrāni followers loaded their property in carts and sent it by repeated trips from the city to this camp. Every one was busy in preparing for the exodus ; none thought of making a stand or guarding the city. Next day news came that the vanguard of the invaders under Adina Beg and Mānāji Pāygudé had crossed the Biās and arrived twelve miles north of Lahor. That day at noon Timur abandoned his capital and crossed over to the camp, his wazir following him. Throughout that day of evacuation, utter confusion and terror reigned in the masterless city ; but Tahmāsp Khan (pen-name *Miskin*), a former page of Muin-ul-mulk, on his own initiative shut the city gates and patrolled the streets all night.

At about nine o'clock next morning, 500 Maratha horsemen and a hundred Mughalia troopers of Khwājah Mirzā under 'Āshur Ali Khan, appeared at the Delhi gate of Lahor. Miskin at once opened the gate and entrusted the city to their care. A day later Khwājah Mirzā himself arrived with 1,000 Mughalia and 10,000 Maratha horse. But early in that morning Timur Shah had marched away from his camp towards Kābul, after

setting fire to the heaps of apparel and other things that he could not carry off, and leaving behind him a small rear-guard under Mir Hazār Khan. Khwājah Mirzā crossed the Rāvi and attacked this force, which fled while fighting, but was enveloped by the cloud of Maratha light horse and its leader taken prisoner. At this Timur quickened his pace. Jahān Khan at first halted at Sarāi Kānchi, 36 miles north-west of Lahor; but Khwājah Mirzā, whose force had now been trebled by reinforcements from Lahor, came up with him. Lack of artillery prevented him from storming the sarāi, and taking advantage of this respite, Jahān Khan slipped out of the place, and found safety by crossing the Chenāb near Wazirabad. The depth of the river and the hurry of the flight prevented Timur Shah from taking to the other side any but his Durrāni clansmen. All his other troops,—Uzbak, Qizilbāsh and Afghan, as well as his entire camp and baggage, were left behind on the eastern bank of the Chenāb and fell into the hands of the Marathas and their Panjabi allies. "The spoils were shared between the Marathas and Adina Beg. Khwājah Mirza and his troops thus became very rich. Every day some Central Asian horses came to hand. He enlisted the captured Uzbak and Qizilbāsh soldiers and officers in his own army." [Miskin, 179.]

The Marathas did not venture to carry the war across the Chenāb, because the river was too deep for fording and the country beyond it was mostly tenanted by

Afghan supporters of the Durrāni cause.* Lahor was captured about 10th April 1758. Raghunāth passed one entire month there. He wisely realized that as his own troops could not be induced to garrison a province so distant from their home and subject to such severe winter, and as the universal rebellion of the Sikhs made its direct administration by Maratha officers impossible, the only means of keeping the Panjab in nominal allegiance to the Maratha power and getting any revenue out of it was to entrust it to Adina Beg, who had a very old understanding with the Sikhs and possessed the experience of many years' successful administration of that country. So, Adina Beg was given the viceroyalty of the Panjab on promising on annual tribute of 75 lakhs of Rupees. After this settlement, the Maratha chiefs and their soldiers marched back towards Delhi, arriving at Sonepat on 14th June. Adina Beg went back to his home in the Jalandar doab, leaving his son-in-law Khwājah Mirzā Khan to govern Lahor as his deputy.†

* Not a single Maratha soldier crossed the Chenāb. The assertion that the Maratha standards were carried up to the Indus at Attock, is an ignorant boast.

† *SPD.* xxvii. 218. *Mis.* 128. From this point the historian loses the primary source for Panjab history, namely, the autobiography of the 'Eye-witness' Miskin, who now left Lahor in the company of Adina Beg and henceforth wrote of Lahor affairs only on hearsay.

Death of Adina Beg and administration of Khwājah Mirzā: Miskin 182, 194. *TALS.* 190*b*-191*b*. *SPD.* ii. 96.

But this nominal Maratha domination gave no peace to the Panjab. Adina Beg Khan enjoyed his highest glory for five months only. On 13 October 1758 he died after a prolonged illness and in the fulness of years. Immediately afterwards, confusion broke out in the Panjab at the disappearance of the strong and clever hand that had held the realm in order for so many years. The wazir Imād-ul-mulk tried to escheat the dead subahdar's property to the State, but he was prevented by a Maratha force which the retreating Raghunāth had hurriedly sent up from Malwa (November.) At Lahor, Khwājah Mirzā Khan now engaged in governing the province as substantive subahdar. "The Sikhs were such rebels and robbers that the governor could not cope with them." Maratha armies one after another reached Lahor and its districts and took up their posts. Beyond the Jhilam some Afghans and Gakkhars in concert looted the Gujrat pargana and crossed over to the east bank of this river. Khwājah Mirzā with a band of Sikhs came up from Lahor, defeated and drove them back across the river. He followed them to the other bank and entrenched. But the Afghans and Gakkhars reappeared in vaster numbers and defeated him there. On hearing that Maratha armies were marching up from Lahor to his aid, the Afghans shrank from coming over to the eastern bank of the Jhilam again, (evidently in December 1758.)

The Sindhias in the Panjab, 1759.

But Khwājah Mirzā's worst enemies were at home. "The Qizilbāsh captains of Timur's army whom he had captured [and afterwards enlisted] made a coalition with the Marathas. From among them, their leading captain, Mirzā Ahmad Khan, made himself subahdar of Lahor, and the second highest, Sālih Khan, that of Multān. They paid some money to the Marathas in cash and promised more, and placed Khwājah Mirzā and his brother Khwajāh Said Khan in confinement." [Miskin, 194.] This anarchy in the Panjab and ruin of the Maratha interests there induced the Peshwā to send a strong force to that province under the able and spirited Dattaji Sindhia. This general reached the eastern bank of the Satlaj in the first week of April 1759 and halted at Machhiwārā for about three weeks. Here Adina Beg's son came and saw him and paid some money on account of the tribute due from his father. By his advice, Dattaji sent Sābāji Sindhia* with an army to Lahor to take over the governorship of the province directly into Maratha

* A Marathi letter from Delhi [*SPD.* ii. 100] written 2 May says that Jankoji recalled Sābāji from Lahor and ordered Naro Shankar there. But we find Sābāji actually serving as governor of the Panjab till the expulsion of the Marathas in October next. *TALS.* 205*b* says that Jankoji crossed the Satlaj and entered the Jalandar doab; but the Marathi records prove that he turned back from Machhiwara to Delhi without crossing the Satlaj.

hands. "On finding that in Lahor and around it the Sikhs were predominant and commanded a vast force, making the conquest of the Panjab difficult, Dattaji turned back towards Delhi." [*TALS.* 205*b*.]

§ 11. *Final Abdali conquest of the Panjab.*

This second Maratha occupation of Lahor lasted barely six months, but the terror of the vast forces of Dattaji lying within easy call of Sābāji, caused that governor to be obeyed by all the chiefs and landholders of the province. At the end of August Sābāji beat back an invasion of Jahān Khan from Peshawar. The Afghan general lost his son and many of his troops in killed and wounded, and himself retreated with wounds across the Indus. [*DC.*, but Raj. vi. 378 credits the Sikhs with achieving this victory.] But the scene changed early in October next, when news came that a strong Durrāni army under Jahān Khan as commander-in-chief had crossed the Indus and was marching towards Lahor. By this time Dattaji was inextricably involved in the siege of Shukartāl, 70 miles east of Pānipat, and Sābāji finding himself too weak to confront the Afghans fell back from Lahor. The advance of the invaders was rapid and unopposed. Arriving at Wazirabad, Jahān Khan sent out his troops to raid on all sides. The capital of the Panjab was without a governor or a garrison. Jahān Khan sent 3 or 4 of his men ahead to Surat Singh, a banker of

Lahor, with a letter bidding him stamp coins and read the *khutba* in the name of Timur Shāh and issue a proclamation warning all people not to oppress any citizen.

Sābāji with his main force fell back precipitately, by way of Batālā, Jalandar and Sarhind towards Shukartāl, without halting anywhere.* Consternation and flight raged in Sarhind. Sadiq Beg Khan, who had been the Maratha faujdar of Sarhind, and Adina Beg's widow and sons fled away from their places to Delhi at the report of the advance of the Afghans.

The entire province of the Panjab was abandoned to the Afghans, but not without a severe loss of men to the Marathas. Though Sābāji did not stand up to a fight, his detachments, dispersed throughout the country, could not be withdrawn in absolute safety; a general and several soldiers of the Marathas who had lagged too long behind near Lahor, were overtaken and cut off by the Afghan vanguard. One corps of 6,000 Maratha horse and foot posted in Multan retreated to the east of Lahor without loss. But in the Jalandar doab the disappearance of all authority tempted its

* *TALS.* 211*b* and 213*b* and *SPD.* ii. 116 say that he retreated without halting or fighting. But an encounter between his troops and the Durrāni vanguard is mentioned in Govind Pant Bundelé's letter of 8 Nov. (Raj. i. 142) and *Mux.* 175. Miskin (202) shows that it was the Maratha rear-guard that was cut off by the advancing Afghans.

notoriously lawless peasants to rise against these fugitives. When only a part of this force had crossed the Satlaj the villagers fell upon those left behind and plundered them of 4,000 camels (worth Rs. 40 each), and of most of their horses, treasure and other property. Only a thousand horses and ponies escaped capture, and 500 well-born Maratha cavaliers had to march on foot through this loss of their mounts. But though the Marathas failed, the Sikhs opposed the invaders, and in a severe battle with them the Afghans triumphed only at the cost of 2,000 of their own men. [Raj. i. 146.] After establishing his government in Lahor, the Abdali king resumed his march and entered Sarhind on 27 November 1759. Thus, the Panjab was finally lost to the empire of Delhi.

CHAPTER XV

The Afghan Invasion of 1757.

§ 1. *Abdali invades the Panjab, Imad fails to organize defence.*

Early in the autumn of 1756, Ahmad Shah Abdali set out from Kabul on the invasion of India. On 4th October a detachment of his troops entered Lahor and reinstated Khwajah Abdullah as governor. His envoy Qalandar Beg Khan reached the Court of Delhi and was first received in audience on 31st October, and though the wazir Imād-ul-mulk kept him in play for a month, he could not be detained for ever and took his congé on 9th December, without receiving any satisfactory reply.

Meantime the Afghan king, after a halt at Peshawar, had resumed his march on 15th November and crossed the Indus at Attock eleven days later. His vanguard under Sardar Jahan Khan had preceded him by some weeks and expelled Adina Beg from the Jalandar doab. Abdali himself entered Lahor on 20 December and spent some twelve days there in arranging for the government of the province and exacting tribute from the Rajah of Jammu, reputed to be the richest feudatory of the Panjab. The way having been cleared by Jahan

Khan, who had crossed the Satlaj and occupied the country beyond it up to Sarhind by 6th January 1757, Abdali himself crossed that river (*c.* 10 January) and reached Sarhind, while Jahan Khan made a further advance to Panipat (12 January.)

We shall now see what the Government of Delhi had been doing all this time. The news of the Afghan occupation of Lahor (4 October) and the flight of its leading men to Sarhind had been followed a fortnight later by the arrival of the Afghan envoy at Delhi (end of October.) The popular report was that Abdāli himself would follow his vanguard and wreak vengeance on Imād for having insulted and plundered Mughlāni Begam whom the Afghan king used to call his daughter. The danger was great, but Imād did not know what to do. The disbandment of the Sin-dagh risala had left him utterly without troops, except for a few hundred men under Bahadur Khan Baluch. He called to his side Salabat Khan Zulfiqar Jang, ex-Bakhshi of the last Emperor, who had been living in unemployment and disgrace at Agra. But this last great noble of the age of Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah was now an aged phantom only, and sank into the grave on 6 June 1757. Imād next appealed to Najib Khan for help, but the Ruhela demanded the unpaid salary of the troops he had been entertaining for the wazir's service, and an acrimonious discussion between the two chiefs resulted. On 8th November Najib visited the wazir with a large force, and

on his way back at night looted five or six shops in the wazir's camp bazar, "none daring to oppose him." [*TALS.* 81*b*.]

Najib having failed, the next master of a respectable force was Suraj Mal Jat, and to him the imperial chancellor now turned. Through Nāgar Mal he sought to placate Suraj Mal, whom he had been vindictively pursuing since October 1753 for his partisanship of Safdar Jang. At his call Suraj Mal came to Tilpat, south of Delhi, and met the wazir's envoy as well as Najib Khan. But the negotiations broke down on a conflict of policy: the Jat Rajah rightly argued that the best defence of the empire was for the wazir to take a personal lead in the war, combine the Ruhelas, Jats, Rajputs and old Mughal nobility in an anti-Maratha campaign, confine the Deccani spoliators to the south of the Narmada, and after thus ensuring the safety of their homes lead their united forces into the Panjab for expelling the Afghan invader, as had been done in 1748. But the sole prop of Imād's power were the Marathas and he would not cast them off. So Suraj Mal, finding further discussion useless, went back to his forts in disgust, leaving Imād to his fate. [*TALS.* 82*b*-84*a*.]

§ 2. *Afghan invaders approach Delhi. Fruitless peace efforts. Panic and flight from Delhi.*

The month of November 1756 wore out in holding such futile talks and the putting off of any decision, as

is the facile habit of men without strength of will. With December came alarming news. On the 9th of that month the capital learnt that Abdali had crossed the Indus 13 days before. There could now be no mistaking his intentions, "it became known that he wanted to come to Delhi."* Ten days later came reports of the nearer approach of the danger; Abdāli's troops had penetrated plundering up to Batālā and Adinanagar. That day "the wazir sent off letters summoning the Marathas, the Jat Rajah, and Shujā-ud-daulah. The great men of the capital

* Ahmad Shah Abdali in Delhi, 1757 : the most detailed and authentic sources are *DC.* (invaluable) and *TALS.* 80-102, with graphic touches in the narrative of Shaikh Ghulam Hasan Samin, tr. by W. Irvine in *Indian Antiquary*, 1907, (which has many inaccuracies of date due to its having been written 25 years after the event.) The Maratha letters, so valuable and accurate at other times, fail us during this period, as Antāji Mānakeshwar fled away from Delhi on 19th January and Bāpu M. Hingané on 7th Feb., and what they wrote afterwards was distant hearsay ; so also were the private newsletters received at Jhansi or Aurangabad and communicated to the Peshwa. Antaji's gasconade and reviling of Bāpu must be taken with a grain (or rather an ounce) of salt. The two 18th century histories of Abdali, *viz.*, *Mujmil* and *Tarikh-i-Husain Shahi*, are meagre about this period and the latter work is often confused and inaccurate. *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* and Shakir's *Memoirs* are very brief, and *Siyar-ul-mutakhkharin* is only a secondary and very distant compilation of a quarter century later. Miskin only tells us of Mughlāni Begam's doings and his own sufferings (129-139.) Nur-ud-din is short but useful.

made preparations for flight" [*DC*.] Next day (20 Dec.) Aghā Razā Khan was sent off with gifts worth two lakhs of Rupees to placate Abdali and turn him back from coming to Delhi. But this very day it was learnt at Delhi that the invaders had occupied all the country up to the western bank of the Satlaj, that Adina Beg had abandoned the Jalandar doab without a blow and fled away none knew where, and that "from Lahor to Sarhind not a place was left tenanted, all men, high and low, having fled away. A great distraction fell on Delhi also, the upper classes sent their families to Mathura and Agra in the jurisdiction of Suraj Mal, or to other places. The wazir, who wielded the empire without a sharer in his power, took no step to meet the danger; he refused to go to Sarhind to oppose the invasion, but consulted darvishes how to overcome the enemy through their prayers without fighting. He would not spend money for raising an army. He only wrote letters summoning the Marathas, but they too demanded money. Najib Khan, in spite of the measureless favours shown to him by the wazir, planned to go away, crossing the Jamuna, to Saharanpur." [*TALS.* 85*b*-86*a*.]

Feeble minds find their easiest refuge in consultation. The wazir held a council of the chief men in Delhi on 25 December. They all advised him to march against the invaders taking the Emperor at their head. But the only effective force in Delhi was that of Najib, who

was known to be an enemy partisan. On the 29th, the wazir brought to the Emperor's audience Yaqub Ali Khan (a cousin of Abdali's wazir Shah Wali Khan, but long resident in India.) This man was created a 6-*hazari* mansabdar and sent in company with Shāh Fanā, a faqir greatly honoured by Abdali, to go to the Afghan king and induce him not to invade the Delhi region. [*TALS.* 86*b* ; Raj. i. p. 437.]

Further advance of the invaders was soon reported. Their vanguard (under Hasan Khan) had occupied the deserted city of Sarhind. "At this news great alarm prevailed in the capital, and an exodus began ; the families of Khushhālchand, Lachhmi Nārāyan, Nāgar Mal and Diwāli Singh migrated to seek refuge in Mathurā." Even Muhammadans did not feel safe. The wazir himself sent his family away to Rajputana. Antaji Manakeshwar, at the head of 3000 horse, hitherto paid by the wazir, came from Gwalior at his call and halted on the eastern bank of the Jamuna opposite Delhi (30 December.) The wazir now ordered him to stop the flight of the panic-stricken citizens. He barred thei path south of Delhi ; "at this the fugitives wanted to return to Delhi, but the Marathas would not let them unless they gave up all their money and belongings for paying the soldiers who would in future be appointed to guard them. The people paid more or less, and came back to Delhi. The imperial Lord Chamberlain Ziā-ud-daulah's family was similarly obstructed, during

their flight, in the Old Fort, but the wazir secured their release on 5th January 1757. Antaji's men acquired much money and jewellery. Passage out of Delhi was entirely stopped. The people who had emigrated before, mostly took up residence in Mathurā, because during Nādir Shāh's invasion they had found safety there through the friendliness of the Jāts. But this time, on the contrary, the Jāts took money from the fugitives at every outpost from Badarpur to Mathurā. Mathurā itself was so crowded that few could obtain any residence. Theft became very prevalent." [*TALS.* 87*a*-88*a*.]

On 9 January came the news of the main Afghan army's arrival at Sarhind and of their dread lord marching close behind them. Next day another council of State was held, but the wazir would not agree to offer battle, as a muster taken showed only 3,000 men actually present and only six bullock-carts for transport! So, at midnight Imād by abject entreaty induced Mughlāni Begam to start for Abdali's camp, for disarming his anger, and making terms which would avert his coming to Delhi. Next day (11th Jan.) the wazir found his mansion blockaded by his own troops (under Shāhdil Khan Afghan) clamouring for their arrears of pay! Such was the state to which the defence of the empire had been reduced under Imād-ul-mulk's ministry.

On the 14th, the baffled envoy Āghā Razā returned from Abdali's camp with the doleful message that the Afghan invader had demanded two *krores* of Rupees

in cash, the hand of the Emperor's daughter, and all the territory from Sarhind westwards, as the condition of his going back, and that he had severely censured the Delhi Government for provoking his invasion when they could not fight but were bent on making terms. "On hearing these words, the people of the city became very much alarmed; so that, on that very day the family of Rajah Jugalkishor set out for Mathurā. Nearly 500 carts loaded with the people of the city, consisting of the Bhātiwāl and other classes, accompanied them." "The Emperor and wazir, powerless to fight, powerless to raise this ransom, sent Āghā Razā again (15th) with piteous entreaties to the Afghan king." [*DC. TALS.* 90*b*.]

§ 3. *Afghan vanguard occupies the Doab.*

By the 12th of January the Afghan vanguard (under Jahān Khān) had arrived at Pānipat and his master at Karnāl, 20 miles behind him. Here the invaders changed their route and plan of campaign: while a small body of fleet skirmishers was pushed on towards Delhi to feel the way and establish contact with the Ruhela traitors within, Jahān Khān himself with the full vanguard crossed the Jamunā near Pānipat, entered the Doab, and pushed on down the east bank of the river, by way of Kairānā, Jhanjhānā, Shāmli and Kāndhla, driving out the Maratha collectors from these places and slaying the governor of Shāmli who had

offered resistance. He then encamped at Luni, daily sending out foragers on all sides. On 16th January, in the afternoon, these enemy bands were first sighted from the walls of Delhi fort, plundering and driving their horses on the river bank opposite. The eastern bank having been thus secured, the central division left behind at Karnāl under Abdali and his wazir pushed on due south towards Delhi and encamped at Narela, where they were joined (16 January) by Najib's Ruhelas, who had been posted outside the north gate of the capital. The invaders' front skirmishers penetrated to the northern suburbs like Wazirabad, Kalipahari, etc.

§ 4. *Imad's helplessness and submission to Abdali; he is made prisoner.*

We shall now turn to the city and the movements of the wazir. On the 15th he urged for the first time the raising of a rampart round the city! "Men from the Old City, Mughalpura and other places outside the gates went, some to New Delhi (*i.e.*, Shah Jahan's city), some to the Old Fort, some to the Arab Sarai or the shrine of Nizam-ud-din Auliya. During this alarm the soldiers of Antaji Maratha began to plunder on the river bank (*reti.*)" [*DC.*] Next day (16th) at noon the wazir went with a few men out of the palace to the Lahor gate of the city. It was reported that Abdali's forces had reached Narela, where the Ruhelas of Najib had joined them. "The other captains with their troops

got ready and joined the wazir, who merely sat down in the Masjid Pari beyond the Lahor gate, being overcome by terror and cowardice, conscious of his inability to oppose Abdali and incapable of fighting in desperation like a hero."

"In the morning of the 17th, Jahān Khan's foragers again appeared on the other side of the Jamuna and stayed there till noon. The wazir went to the sandy bank of Rajghat, and planted some guns, but there was no cannonier! So, he stood under the *jharoka* balcony, on the river bank, in battle array, merely gazing* at the enemy troopers on the other side, for some hours! All people advised him to go out and fight at least one battle, so as to remove the brand of infamy from their foreheads; the only pacifist was, (characteristically

* Imad defended himself before Sayyid Sher-andaz Khan, envoy from Ahmad Bangash to Abdali, thus:—When the [Durrani] Shah drew near to Delhi, I told Najib Khan, 'We must deliver one battle against the Shah.' His answer was, 'Pay me this day two *krores* of Rupees, cash down, and I will fight.' I replied, 'Nothing is due to you by the State for your arrears and pay, seeing that... I have handed over to you more than one-half of the [Doab] territories. At a day's notice whence can I produce such a sum of money?' Najib Khan and his followers raised a tumult and for a whole day barred exit from and ingress to my house. That very same day a letter came from the Shah inviting Najib Khan to his camp. At midnight Najib came out of Delhi and marched off to the Shah's camp... I saw that in the realm of Hind there was no defender, I was left alone. [*Ind. Antiquary*, 1907, p. 44.]

enough,) a Kashmiri, named Ibādullah Khan. In the evening, after the invaders had retired [to their camp], a party of Marathas and other soldiers crossed the river and roved from Patparganj to Mir Zebā's garden, but there was no Abdali troop there at that time, and they came back to Delhi at sunset." [*TALS.* 91*a*-92*b*, *DC.*]

That very night (17-18 January), Najib Khan crossed over from Wazirabad to Jahān Khan's camp at Luni. His mask was now thrown off; he was openly known to be in concert with the alien invaders. It is impossible for the historian to apportion between Najib and Imād the responsibility for the atrocities endured by the Delhi Mathura and Agra people during this Afghan invasion; if one was a double-dyed traitor, the other was an arrant coward; both were extremely selfish and incapable of patriotism, because India was not their *patria.*

In the morning of the 18th Aghā Razā and Yaqub Ali came back from Abdali with the message that he desired the Emperor and his wazir to visit him, when the peace terms would be directly discussed. So, three hours before the next morning (19th January), Imād secretly left his mansion on horseback followed by only four attendants, and reaching Badli in 4½ hours entered the camp of Abdali's wazir Shah Wali Khan, by whom he was most kindly received, and next day (20th) presented to Abdali. The Afghan monarch was wrathful with the Delhi wazir for his having married a dancing-girl's daughter (Gannā Begam) in preference to his

betrothed, the nobly born Umda Begam, whose suit had been pressed by Abdali for the sake of Umda's mother, Mughlāni Begam. The conqueror also asked with surprise and contempt how the first officer of the empire of Hindustan could make an abject submission without striking even one blow to save the nation's credit. Imād explained how he had to marry Gannā in order to keep his earlier promise to that girl's family, whereas Mughlāni Begam had insisted on his divorcing his other wife as a condition of marrying Umda. As for resisting Abdali by arms, it was a task beyond Imād's power, owing to Najib's defection, as "except that noble there was within the empire no other renowned commander with an army." Ahmad Shah then told Imād that his rival Intizām had offered two *krores* of Rupees as a consideration for giving him the wazirship, but that Imād could retain that post if he agreed to pay one *kror* only. Imād replied, "This slave cannot lay his hands upon even one *lakh*. Whence can I produce a *kror*? . . . I cannot collect even a *kror* of broken pebble-stones in Delhi. What chance then of getting Rupees?" So, he then and there resigned the chancellorship of a State that had no army and no treasure. Abdali now issued a rescript conferring the post on Intizām, and carried Imād about in his train as a captive, because he was sure to call his Maratha allies back to Delhi if set at liberty.*

* Imād in *Ind. Antiquary*, p. 45; (some confusion of dates

§ 5. *The invaders occupy Delhi; Alamgir II deposed.*

The encampment of the invaders in the immediate north of the city made it easy not only for Najib's Ruhelas but also for Shāhdil Khan and two other Afghan captains of Imād to go over to their invading fellow-clansmen. The Sindāgh *risala* (or Central Asian troopers numbering 12,000) whom Imād had disbanded in 1755 and the Delhi artillery division of cannoniers and musketeers recruited in Oudh and Baksar, 11,000 strong, who were still in open mutiny for their heavy arrears of pay, now sent to Najib, begging him to save them from unemployment and starvation by enlisting them in the Shah's service. A contingent of Qasur Afghans, about 5,000 in number, led by Usmān Khan Khweshgi, had joined the invader on the way. Thus an Indian force of 25,000 men was added to the 30,000 troops of his own country that Abdali had brought with him.*

Any opposition from Delhi being clearly impossible,

and therefore of the order of events, corrected from *DC.* and *TALS.*) *SPD.* xxi. 96.

* "The correct number of Abdali's troops is 30 to 35 thousand men, not more." "The Pathan has 20,000 men of his own and has engaged 25,000 troops in Delhi" [Marathi reports in Feb. *SPD.* xxi. 100, 108.] Nur-ud-din Hasan's *Life of Najib.*

The home of the disbanded Sindāgh risala (or Turki troops) was Mughalpura, a suburb north-west of Delhi city. They later negotiated for service under the Marathas. Another captain of Abdali, named Jangbāz Khan Bangash, commanded a force of 3500 or less, out of whom only 600 were Durrāni soldiers, the rest being Indian recruits.

the Afghan division under Jahān Khan worked its way down the Jamunā from Luni and crossed over to the west bank, some miles south of the capital on 21st January. A small force detached 13 miles further south to Faridabad to bar the trunk road at that point was cut off by Antāji Mānakeshwar, and for a week or ten days the Afghan advance to the south was stayed. But Najib's army crossed into the Doab (24th) and Abdali himself entered Delhi on 28th January.

We shall now see how the imperial city fared in the claws of the rapacious foreigner. The capital of an empire which, in name at least, embraced the entire Indian continent, was now absolutely without a single defender or caretaker. In the morning of 19th January 1757, the desertion of Najib Khan, the flight of the wazir, and the withdrawal of the last Maratha soldier became known, and at midnight Rajah Nāgar Mal (the imperial diwan) and the few remaining great men fled away. Next day five military policemen (*nasaqchi*) from Abdali's army entered city and made its police prefect proclaim the Shāh's order that none should molest the poor. This assurance stopped a fresh exodus that had begun.

On Friday the 21st, while the Emperor was saying his afternoon prayer in the palace mosque, Abdul Ahad Khan (the Third Paymaster) and Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan Kashmiri (the brother of Aqibat Mahmud) went to Raushan-ud-daulah's mosque,—with its bloody memories

of Nādir Shāh's massacre,—"called the Chief Sadr, the imperial Qāzi, and the *muftis* there, and caused the *khutba* to be read in the name of Ahmad Shāh Durrāni. The same thing was done in the Jāmi' Masjid. Not one theologian or scholar refused to read the *khutba* in another prince's name, while the Emperor of the Age was living in the citadel of the capital and had not been slain or made prisoner or expelled!" There is no evidence that this step was ordered by the Abdali king; it was the work of the native sycophants who wished to gain the conqueror's favour by this proof of zeal in his cause! "Alamgir, then seated in the chapel of the fort, heard the news, washed his hands of kingship, vacated the royal chambers (the Rangmahal, the Khwābgāh, &c.), the private portico, and the lower portico, for occupation by his successor, handed over their keys to an officer of Najib, and moved with his entire family to the Shāhburj quarter. Two days later he was ordered to vacate even this refuge, and return to the small commonplace rooms in which he used to lodge before his elevation to the throne. "It was found that these last-named quarters were totally in ruin and unfit for habitation." [*TALS.* 93*b*-95*b*.]

§ 6. *Ahmad Shah Abdali enters Delhi fort.*

On 23rd January Ahmad Shah himself reached Wazirabad and a detachment of his Qizilbāsh troops took over the charge of Delhi fort from Najib's hands.

For some days the palace chambers were cleaned and carpeted for the residence of Abdali. In the night of 25-26 he sent Jahān Khan to the suppressed Emperor, telling him, "I bestow the empire of Hindustan on you. Visit me tomorrow in full royal state." Next morning (the 26th) the few nobles, high and low, still left in Delhi, marched with their sovereign lord to Wazirabad and were welcomed and feasted by Abdali. Intizām was now presented and invested with the robe of wazir. The entire Delhi Court returned to the capital the same evening.*

Next day (27th January) arrangements were completed under Jahān Khan's care for the conqueror's visit to Delhi. It was proclaimed that along his route through the bazar to the fort no Indian should stand in the streets or on the terraces of houses for looking at his *cortege*, and all shops should be kept closed. Early in the morning of Friday the 28th of January, Ahmad Shah rode into the fort, his soldiers lining the route on both sides and firing a salute from their matchlocks. The Emperor advanced up to the Fathpuri mosque in order to welcome his august visitor. Abdali's women,

* "Alamgir II issued from Delhi mounted on a *takht-i-rawān*, with a cloth awning over it, one elephant and one horse carrying his kettle-drums." That was what the full pomp of the 'king of kings' had now shrunk to. Abdali welcomed the Padishah by advancing a few steps, seated him on his own carpet, and then the two exchanged turbans [in sign of brotherhood] and presented robes to each other. [*TALS.* 96, *DC.*]

mounted on camels and horses, also came with him and occupied the palace rooms vacated by Alamgir. The escort of the Shāh dispersed through the bazars and lanes, looting many places, while the rich and spacious market of Badalpurā was set on fire in addition to being plundered. The Afghan camp and baggage dismounted in the city round the fort walls. On the 29th the two sovereigns held a Public Audience seated side by side. Abdul Ahad Khan (created Abdul Majid Khan) was appointed diwān of *khalsa* and *tan*. A bridge was ordered to be thrown without delay over the Jamunā below the city, and the Hindus were ordered, on pain of fine, to put paint marks on their foreheads to distinguish them from the invader's brethren of the faith.

§ 7. *Abdali's oppression for extorting money at Delhi.*

Secure in the possession of Delhi, the conqueror began the exaction of a money tribute. Before this, stray groups of his soldiers had robbed houses and wayfarers here and there, but that was unauthorized occasional looting and a few of the looters had been brutally punished by way of example. Now a methodical official spoliation of the fallen capital was ordered. Abdali was pressed for time. He must realize the spoils of war as quickly as possible, in order to avoid the Indian summer and also to allow the Marathas no time for assembling and bringing up a large army from

the Deccan. He expected a vast sum, worthy of the richest capital in Asia.* While Intizām was urged to collect the two *krores* promised by him, the screw was put on other rich men also. Imād was ordered to deliver to the Shāh all the jewels he had removed from the palace stores during his two and a half years of dictatorship, and on his pleading poverty he was abused and subjected to "an extreme degree of dishonour." [*DC.*] His house had been escheated from the first and he naturally replied, "I have given you all I possessed. Whence can I produce more ?" At this, Abdali's officers rebuked and insulted him, beat his head servants with sticks as only heartless Afghans know how to beat, and dishonoured them in many ways. They also bastinadoed Sangi Beg and Abdur Rahman Khan, the chief officers of Intizām's household, and Basant Khan, the eunuch in charge of the Emperor's harem. Other palace eunuchs and noblemen's servants were subjected to similar violence to make them yield money.

But even this did not bring in any large sum. So, the torture was extended from the servants to the

* Abdali's exactions and atrocities in Delhi,—*DC.*, *TALS.* 99-102*a*. Imād in *Ind. Antiq.*, 1907, 47-48. *Husain Shahi* 36-37. *SPD.* xxi. 99, 104, 118, xxvii. 144.

Imād secured as his patron Shah Wali Khan the Durrani wazir (one of his female relatives being in the latter's harem.) Intizām bought the support of the Durrani sardar Jahān Khan, the rival of the wazir. When Intizām failed to pay his promised tribute, Jahān Khan felt humiliated before his master and therefore severely chastised Intizām. [*Husain Shahi*, 36. *Ind. Ant.* 45.]

masters. Intizām-ud-daulah, who had recklessly promised two *krores* for the wazirship, was taken to the Shāh's presence, shown a wooden triangle fixed in the ground, and told that unless he produced one *kror* that day he would be tied down to it and bastinadoed. At that time, beyond the ring on his finger he had not even one Rupee to dispose of. So, he stood trembling by the side of the triangle, his face white as a sheet. When asked to point out the hiding place of his father's hoarded treasure in his mansion, he replied that his mother Sholāpuri Begam alone knew the secret. This old lady, the daughter-in-law of one grand wazir, the widow of another, and the mother of a third, was summoned and told that unless she showed the spot, iron pins would be driven in underneath the nails of her fingers. She fainted at the threat, and on recovery pointed out the room of the buried hoard. After six hours of digging by a hundred pioneers, 16 lakhs in coins, besides golden silver and gem-studded vessels, were found under the floor (4th February.) A search was conducted in the new wazir's harem under Jahān Khan's supervision and these august ladies were stripped and hustled like beggar-women (6 Feb.) The mansion of Samsām-ud-daulah (late Paymaster General) was similarly dug up in search of buried treasure (7 Feb.) and the city kotwal's house was robbed of all its wealth (13 Feb.). "The Afghans broke open the houses of the people who had fled away from the city,

including that of Hirānand Jauhari, the prince of merchants, and appropriated everything they found there." [*DC.*; *TALS.* 100*b*, Samin in *Ind. Antiquary*, p. 47.]

§ 8. *Agony of Delhi under the Afghan terror.*

As for the common people, a levy house by house for the entire city was decreed, the town was divided into sections for convenience of assessment, offices for collection were opened, and the entire work put in charge of Yahiya Khan, a son of the celebrated Zakariyā Khan of Lāhor and for a short time his successor as subahdar of that province, but living in unemployment and poverty since 1748. "The richer men were summoned by name by means of letters. In every ward of the city a *kalaposh* sardar was stationed with his troops. Counting the houses, he demanded from each householder more than he could possibly pay. Great beating and extortion went on. Men, in fear of torture, wanted to sell their ornaments utensils and clothing, but found no buyer. Gold sold at Rs. 8 to 10 a *tola* [=180 grains], pure silver at 2 tolas a Rupee, and alloyed silver at three. Utensils [of copper or brass] sold at 3 seers to the Rupee. Many citizens took poison on account of their poverty, many died under torment from wounds or burns being inflicted on their bodies. Even men who paid the levy, had their floors dug up and their houses plundered. Not a man

in the city could escape this calamity. This trouble raged from the 4th to the 20th of February, when at last a rumour arose that the Shāh was about to march away, and the collectors were urged to speed up the collection. Then they made a second demand on those who had paid already and the beating and slaying began again ! Many houses that had at first escaped were now plundered." [*TALS.* 100*b*-101*a*.]

Mughlāni Begam, the widow of Muin-ul-mulk of Lahor, acted as Abdali's informer regarding the secrets of every Delhi noble's family and property and the beauty of the inmates of the imperial harem. Thus, the conqueror's desire for Hazrat Begam, the youthful daughter of Muhammad Shāh, was kindled. As a Marathi newsletter reports, "In Delhi many men have been slain and many women ravished. Some of the females have committed suicide [with daggers], others have drowned themselves. Wherever handsome Hindu women were reported, Abdali sent his men and brought them away to his quarters." [*SPD.* xxi. 104, *TALS.* 100*b*-101*a*. *DC.*]

The gold and silver thus collected was coined in the mint with Abdali's name on them. The first fruits of the spoliation of Delhi were loaded on all kinds of transport and promptly sent out of Delhi towards Afghanistan, in charge of Abdali's son Timur Shāh, who had been married to Alamgir II's daughter Zuhra Begam (also called Gauhar-āfroz or Muhammadi Begam)

a few days before.* In commandeering the transport needed by him, a fresh plunder of the citizens took place.

§ 9. *Abdali marches south from Delhi.*

Abdali on 19th February made further changes among the Delhi ministers. Intizām was found to be of little use, and so the wazirship was conferred upon the Emperor's eldest son Ali Gauhar, with Intizām as his deputy, while Imād, who had now been pardoned through the intercession of Shāh Wali Khan and Mughlāni Begam, was given a most dignified sinecure as *Wakil-i-mutlaq* (or Supreme Regent), "with no business to do and no power," Najib Khan was created Mir Bakhshi or head of the army of the empire, Yaqub Ali Khan Lord Chamberlain, and Badr-ud-daulah Chief of Artillery and commandant of the Delhi palace. Finally, in his camp near Mathurā, on 18 March the Afghan king restored Imād to the wazirship in recognition of his courage and zeal shown in the Jat campaign.

Najib had crossed over to Dankaur with his followers on 24 January, and now moved down the east bank of the Jamuna to protect Abdali's left flank during the campaign south of the capital. In the night of

* *DC.* says that he was married in the night of 30-31 Jan. and began his return march on 10 Feb. But *TALS.*, 101*b*, gives 14 Feb. as the date of the marriage. Timur's retreat: *SPD.* xxi. 98, 108.

20-21 February, Ahmad Shah in his own presence married Imād to Umda Begam* and next day left Delhi on a campaign in Agra and the Jat country. On Friday the 25th of that month, the *khutba* was once more read in the name of Alamgir II. [*TALS.* 103. *DC.*]

Even the departure of the Afghan king from Delhi did not bring full security to the miserable capital. "On 22 February Ahmad Shah marched out towards Khizirabad, but the exactions continued in the city as before, and a host of people were ruined. Next day Alamgir went to the Shāh and entreated him to spare the Delhi people from the ravage of his soldiery. Abdali sent back 200 horsemen with the Emperor to the city to beat and drive out to his camp all *kalaposhes* found anywhere in Delhi. This brought peace to the city in the afternoon (23 Feb.)

§ 10. *More oppression and extortion at Delhi by the Afghans.*

The peace, however, was shortlived. The main Afghan army had withdrawn, but bands of soldiers from it

* At first immediately after entering Delhi, Abdali had angrily ordered that Imād's wife Gannā Begam should be marched away from Delhi and taken to Balkh, and she actually reached Bādli on this exile. But on 22 February, he, at the entreaty of Imād, recalled her from the way and placed her under the orders of her rival Umda Begam. [*Ind. Ant.* 1907, pp. 46-49.] But *DC.* records under 21 Feb. that Imād, after his marriage with Umda, divorced his other wives and handed over Gannā to Mughlani Begam to be treated as a bond-maid. *See Appendix.*

continued to revisit the city under orders to secure transport, guns, or provisions for the Shāh's camp in the south, and utilized this opportunity and the absence of their master to rob on their own account. On 15th February the Delhi chronicler records, "The Mughalias and *nasaqchis* engaged in plunder, and all day and night cries of distress were heard." Next day, "the same state of things continued; many wards of the Old and New cities were burnt and some remained safe. Intizām and Jahān Khan went out and set fire to Khori-ganj and other places." On the 19th, "Three Turks and Peshwari-*bachchas* entered the female apartments of the people in search of horses, opened the chambers, and carried off whatever furniture they could find. They even seized the householders and pressed them to find out and supply porters [for the Shāh's march], but afterwards set them free on receiving money." [*DC.*] Again, "on 28th February a thousand *kalaposhes* came to Delhi fort for removing four large cannon to the Shāh's army. They seized the bullocks of the passers-by and thus collected about a hundred cattle. Then going to the river-bank they plundered the people who were coming across the river and the washermen of their clothes. Wherever they heard of ropes, bamboos, or wooden beams in any shop bazar or house, they took them away... The plundering by the *kalaposhes* had stopped the coming of grain from Shahdara to Delhi.... On 5th March the *kalaposhes* left the city, and much grain having come

from Shahdara, wheat sold at 9½ seers against 7 seers before. The cheapness increased daily." [*TALS.*, 104-105*b*.]

§ 11. *Afghan massacres all over the country.*

The week from 28 February to 6 March was the period of the Spring Carnival (*Holi*), when in every Hindu house there is rejoicing and playful bombardment with coloured powder and water, singing and dancing day and night. Even the Emperor and his wazir used to disport themselves in this festive season. "But this year," as the Court historian of the reign writes, "not one man celebrated these rejoicings. Every one was sunk in grief and misery." [*TALS.* 105*b*.] *Holi* was no doubt played in Mathurā and Vrindāvan, but there the dye so profusely poured was the life-blood of Hindus. But before we follow the invader in this southern campaign, we shall trace the course of the war in the country around during the period of his stay in the capital. From Delhi as a centre Ahmad Shah continued to send out parties to forage in the Doab on the east and the Faridabad district on the south, the bridge of boats thrown over the Jamunā below Delhi facilitating the crossing and quick return of these detachments. In the middle of February the desolation created by them in the Sikandrabad district (modern Bulandshahar) is thus described by the eye-witness Ghulām Hasan Sāmin of Bilgrām :—"Sikandrabad was full everywhere of fugitives

from the environs of Delhi. Thence to Anupshahar (a four days' march) in every village that we passed, not a sign of an inhabitant was to be seen, and along the route unnumbered dead bodies were lying. Anupshahar too was crowded with fugitives from Delhi, to such an extent that it was difficult to force a way through its lanes... The Shāh had ordered a general slaughter in parganah Dāsna, the zamindari of Rai Bahadur Singh." [*Ind. Ant.*, 1907, pp. 15-16.]

The same scene of slaughter and rapine met the eye in the region south of Delhi after Antaji Manakeshwar's opposition had been crushed at Faridabad on 1 February. A traveller who reached Delhi from Agra on 8 Feb. reported, "All the nobles of Delhi who had fled to Agra, have migrated from that city also, on hearing rumours of the coming of the Durrāni troops; all places from Delhi to Faridabad are without a lamp, the Jāts are plundering the caravans of the fugitives, and near Faridabad 2,000 corpses are lying on the ground stripped of all their clothing." [*DC.*] From each halting place of the Afghan vanguard lines of skirmishers spread out, right left and in front, in the shape of a fan.* Their superb Khurāsāni horses easily covered 50 or 60 miles a day, and after scouting and foraging they fell back on their camp in the evening. Thus the path of advance was cleared for the invaders.

* When Jahān Khan reached Agra (21 March), one corps under Sarwar Kh. penetrated further south of Dholpur, while

APPENDIX

Ali Quli Khan, Zafar Jang, popularly called the Six-fingered, from that excrescence on one of his hands, was sprung from an Abbaside princely family of Daghestān (a Persian province south of the Caspian.) His father's paternal uncle Fath Ali Khan rose to the chancellorship under Sultan Husain Safavi, and his father, Md. Ali Khan, held the high office of Beglar-begi of Irwān. Ali Quli (born at Isfahan in 1712) displayed a fine vein of poetry from early youth, and having fallen in love with Khadija Sultan (the daughter of his paternal uncle Hasan Ali) when at school with her, he addressed passionate odes to her,* which were collected in a volume of some popularity named *Masnavi-i-Wāla Sultān*, his pseudonym being Wala. During the Afghan usurpation of Persia his fair cousin was snatched away before he could gain her hand, and she was afterwards taken into Nadir Shah's harem. So, in despair, Ali Quli migrated to India in 1734, and was appointed second Mir Tuzuk by the Emperor, with the title of Zafar Jang. In the next reign he became Khan-i-Zaman, and in that of

---

Najib held Mathura, and Abdali lay at Gokul [text reads 'at *Vrindāvan*'.] *SPD.* xxi. 111.

* When the bashful maiden entreated him to spare her blushes by not naming her in his odes, the enraptured poet wrote back :—

"Thou sayest, 'Link not my name with thy verses.'

But the verse that enshrines not thy name, of what use is it ?"

Khazinah-i-Amira, 446-450 (from personal knowledge), *Mir.* 129-131 (incorrect), *Ind. Antiquary*, 1907, p. 44.

Ali Quli edited an anthology of Persian poetry named *Riyāz-ush-Shu'ra*, besides his own *Masnavi*.

Alamgir II a seven-*hazari* noble. In 1753 he migrated from Delhi to Oudh with Safdar Jang, and died at Delhi on 31 March 1756, when on a mission from the Court of Oudh.

In India Ali Quli married a highly accomplished poetess who had, alas, begun life as a professional dancing-girl. Their daughter Ganna Begam inherited the poetical talent and artistic culture as well as the beauty of her Hetera mother, and her hand was sought by the highest nobles in the land, such as Shuja-ud-daulah the Nawab of Oudh and Imad-ul-mulk the imperial wazir. After her father's death, when at Agra on her way to Lucknow to be married to Shuja, she was surrounded by the men of Jawahir Singh Jat, who wanted to kidnap this famous beauty ; but she contrived to escape to Farrukhabad. Here her family friend, the Nawab Ahmad Khan Bangash, induced her mother to prefer the suit of Imad, to whom she was married later in the year. But this brought down on her head the vindictive fury of Mughlani Begam, whose daughter Umda Begam had been betrothed to Imad in their childhood. The Abdali king during his occupation of Delhi forced Imad to marry Umda Begam (21 Feb. 1757) and hand over poor friendless Ganna as a bond-maid to her rival ! She lies buried at Nurabad, 13 miles north of Gwalior, her epitaph being, *Ah, gham-i-Ganna Begam !* 'alas ! weep for Ganna Begam',—which gives the year of her death, 1775 A. D.

CHAPTER XVI

Abdali's campaign south of Delhi, and events up to June 1757.

§ 1. *Antaji Manakeshwar's doings near Delhi in January 1757.*

Abdali had marched from Attock to Delhi without a sword being bared against him, such was the degradation of the empire. The first opposition that he met with came from Antaji Manakeshwar. This Maratha retainer of the wazir, on being summoned to the defence of the capital, had arrived near Shāhdara (opposite Delhi) on 30th December 1756 and been employed by the wazir to prevent the flight of the citizens from Delhi. * On 7th January he had been presented to the Emperor with his two sons and some of his captains, and he now crossed over to the Delhi side and encamped on the sandbank below the fort. On 15th January, during the panic raging in the city at the news of the Abdali troops' arrival near Bādli, he had pursued the congenial game of robbing the helpless people running about in confusion. He was next sent

* Antaji in Delhi —*SPD.* xxi. 55 ; Raj. vi. p. 437 ; *DC.* His fights with the Afghans and rovings,—*SPD.* xxi. 95 (29 Jan.), 96 (30 Jan.), 99 (*c.* 10 Feb.), 105. Raj. i. 63. Imad in *Ind. Ant.* pp. 48-49 (crushing defeat.) *DC.*

with a light force to the north of the capital to scout for news of the invaders' exact position and strength. Najib's Ruhelas, nominally in the Emperor's service, were posted at Wazirabad, 6 miles north of Delhi, but their loyalty was more than doubtful. On the 16th Antaji advanced 12 miles north of the Kashmir gate and had his first brush with the front skirmishers of the Afghan wazir's contingent; after losing a hundred men and horses, Antaji fell back four miles and halted. The retreating Marathas were attacked by Najib's men, supposed to be their comrades; but Imād rode up to the place in the afternoon and restored peace for the time.

The position of the small Maratha squadron, unfurnished with artillery or stores and wedged in between the Durrānis and the treacherous Indian Ruhelas, was absolutely untenable. So, when in the morning of 19th January it was learnt that a few hours earlier the imperial wazir himself had gone out to submit to the invader and "half the population had fled away from Delhi to the Jats," Antaji had no help but to fall back on his base in Delhi city. His retreat was severely harassed by the Durrānis and Ruhelas from two sides; but after a great sacrifice of men and horses, the Marathas cut their way out, reached their camp on the sandbank below Delhi palace, collected all their families baggage and elephants in a few hours, placed these in front, and constantly fighting rearguard actions with the

pursuing Afghans, reached Faridabad, 16 miles south of the city that night. The contest was severe, but Antāji firmly kept his force together without allowing its order to be broken, and thus saved it from annihilation. The baffled pursuers turned back from Khwājah Sarāi.

Clearly foreseeing the fate of Delhi, Antāji sent off his camp, baggage and accumulated booty under escort of 2,000 horse to Mathura (20 Jan.), while he himself turned back with a light force from Faridabad to Sarāi Badarpur, 10 miles south of Delhi. Here next day (21 Jan.) he encountered Sarwar Khan, a general of Abdali's wazir, who had been sent with 4,000 horse to establish a block house (*nāka*) at Faridabad. The Afghans had no artillery, and the Marathas being unencumbered with baggage could pursue their Parthian tactics with success. After three hours of fighting, Sarwar Khan was completely defeated, 400 of his Durrāni soldiers and the same number of horses fell on the field, and 400 more horses were captured along with his standard and kettle-drums. The broken survivors fled back to Bārāpulā. Then for nine days no Afghan force advanced against Antāji.

§ 2. *Antaji Manakeshwar crushed by the Afghans, 1 Feb. 1757.*

In that interval, Ahmad Shah had come to Delhi, established his control over the city and the empire, thrown a bridge of boats across the Jamunā, and sent

Jahan Khan's army corps from the Doab to Khizirabad on the west bank, some 8 miles south of the capital. Thus, a force of 20,000 men threatened Antāji immediately in his front. Since his victory of 21st January, Antāji had been swiftly roving in the south, west and north-west sides of Delhi, "practising raids (*qaxxāqi*)," because everywhere government had broken down and anarchy was raging, and every strong man, native or alien, had taken to plundering the panic-stricken defenceless population. At last, on 1st February a crushing blow was delivered on Antāji. A picked Afghan force,—which Antāji put at 20,000—guided by Najib's Ruhelas with their local knowledge, marched on Faridabad in three columns. Two of these by a wide detour turned Antāji's flanks unperceived and closed upon his rear, while the third delivered an attack on his front at noon. The Maratha force, less than 3,000 strong, was completely encircled and outnumbered; all its paths of escape were closed; Antāji's camp was encumbered with the many men wounded in his earlier battles, but he fought desperately for four hours, facing the enemy on all sides, and giving up to slaughter a thousand of his soldiers (of whom 200 were men above the common rank) and 800 horses. "No one had the time to remove the corpses." At last towards sunset he cut his way out. He boasted of having killed 750 men and 350 horses of the enemy. But they pursued him for eight miles till darkness compelled them to

retire, and in this running fight Antāji lost 250 more horses. The victors sacked and burnt the small town of Faridabad and next day returned to Delhi with 600 severed heads of poor people, representing them to be Marathas and Jats. The Shah rewarded them at the rate of Rs. 8 per head brought in.

The defeat was decisive ; Antāji's little army was annihilated ; there was nothing left for him but to flee to his camp at Mathurā (arrival on 4 Feb.) where Trimbak Mukund subahdar was holding an entrenched village near the holy city. Henceforth, though Antāji Mānakeshwar lingered for two months more in that southern region, (chiefly at Palwal), he used to maintain a safe distance of 40 or 50 miles from Delhi and never stood a battle again. Thus, at the beginning of February, the Maratha opposition to the invasion ceased even in appearance.

§ 3. *Abdali marches against the Jat country south of Delhi.*

Three weeks after this last battle, having settled all his business in Delhi and given Alamgir II his throne again, Ahmad Shah Durrāni, on 22nd February began his southward march for exacting tribute from the Jat Rajah. On the invader's first arrival near Delhi, Suraj Mal had sent envoys to him professing submission and he had also joined Najib Intizām and other enemies of Imād in petitioning Abdali that if he removed Imād

from the wazirship as the sworn brother of their common enemy the Marathas and kept him in prison in Qandahar, then these Indian chiefs would raise 50 lakhs as tribute for him. When on 4th February the vanquished Antāji reached Mathura, Suraj Mal visited him, but positively refused to unite with him in a war against the Afghans, saying, "The Irān Pādishāh at the head of 50,000 troops has captured the Pādishāh of Hind, and no one has fired a shot at him, no one has died in resisting him. What then can I do?" [*SPD.* xxi. 96, 99, 100.]

A little later, Abdāli wrote to Suraj Mal calling upon him to (*a*) surrender his recently usurped territories, (*b*) pay a tribute, (*c*) present himself at the Abdāli Court, and (*d*) serve under his banner. It was impossible for Suraj Mal to fight against such overwhelming odds, and yet he durst not place himself within Ahmad Shah's reach lest he should share the fate of Imād. So, he pursued the policy of gaining time by sending an envoy to the invader's camp to discuss terms and bribe the Afghan minister with two lakhs. If a Maratha army arrived for the defence of the north in a few weeks, he would (as he told Antāji) join it with his men and money and fight Abdāli; otherwise he would make his submission. From Mathurā, he went for refuge to his strong fort of Kumbher, while his gallant son Jawāhir Singh stayed behind for the defence of that holy city.

§ 4. *Abdali captures Ballabhgarh.*

Leaving Delhi in the afternoon of 22nd February, Ahmad Shah marched down the west bank of the Jamuna, by way of Khizirabad (two days' halt) and Badarpur (25th Feb.), to a place about 6 miles south of Ballabhgarh. His objectives were Suraj Mal's strongholds of Kumbher and Dig, and at first he left Ballabhgarh untaken in his rear, as a negligible fortalice. But as his foragers, spread over a vast area, approached this place, the Jat garrison attacked them, slaying and wounding many [*TALS.* 103*b*, *DC.*] The reduction of Ballabhgarh was immediately decided upon. The head of the Durrāni artillery came to Delhi for taking away four guns of heavy calibre from the palace defences (27 Feb.); draught bullocks, ropes and beams were seized from private houses in order to transport the guns and munitions to the Shāh's camp. But, after all, these heavy guns were not needed. Ahmad Shah personally directed the siege, and his five mortars, firing with a high muzzle elevation a kind of shell (consisting of two iron hemispheres welded together, which broke and spread on impact with the ground) and constantly shifting their angle, inflicted such a destructive bombardment on Ballabhgarh and so completely overpowered the swivel-pieces and muskets which formed the only fire of the defence, that the place became untenable in a few hours. In the silence of the night the garrison (including Jawāhir Singh) slipped

out and escaped by the Jamunā side (3 March.) The Afghans broke the gates open, and put all the inmates to the sword. The spoils taken included Rs. 12,000 in cash, pots of silver and copper, gilt idols, 14 horses, 11 camels and a great store of grain and clothing.*

§ 5. *Jahan Khan fights the Jats, battle of Chaumuha.*

Here the Shah halted for two days more. Meantime, as early as the night of 26-27 Feb., he had detached Jahān Khan and Najib with 20,000 men, telling them, "Move into the boundaries of the accursed Jāt, and in every town and district held by him slay and plunder. The city of Mathurā is a holy place of the Hindus ;... let it be put entirely to the edge of the sword. Up to Agra leave not a single place standing." The Shah also conveyed a general order to the army to plunder and slay at every place they reached. Any booty they acquired was made a free gift to them. Any person cutting off and bringing in heads of infidels should throw them down before the tent of the chief minister, wherewith to build a high tower. Five Rupees for each enemy head would be paid from the Government funds. [Sāmin, in *Ind. Ant.*, 51.]

The alien generalissimo and the Ruhela soldier of fortune carried out their dread master's command to

* Capture of Ballabhgarh,—Samin in *Ind. Antiquary*, 58-59, *T.I.L.S.* 103*b*-105*a* (no detail.) *DC.* (dates only.)

the letter. They fir st swooped down upon Mathurā. But the fabled birth-place of the Divine Preserver was not to fall without a struggle. True, the Marathas, after sucking the Delhi-Agra region and the Doab on the other bank dry for three years, had fled away. Not a single Maratha bled in defence of the holiest of Vaishnav shrines; their pan-Indian suzerainty (*Hindupad Padshahi*) did not involve the duty to protect. But the Jāt peasantry were determined that it was only over their corpses that the ravager should enter the sacred capital of Braja. Outside the village of Chaumuhā, eight miles north of Mathurā, Jawāhir Singh barred the invader's path with less than 10,000 men and offered a desperate resistance (28th February.) From sunrise the battle raged for nine hours, and at the end of it "ten to twelve thousand infantry lay dead on the two sides taken together; the wounded were beyond count," and the broken remnant of the Jāt army took the road to their homes. *

§ 6. *Afghans sack and massacre at Mathura.*

The Hindu Bethlehem now lay utterly prostrate before the invaders. Early at dawn on 1st March the

* *TALS.* 106*a*. Raj. i. 63 quotes a report from Delhi *via* Aurangabad, "A Jat force of 5,000 came out of Mathura and fought Abdali's army stoutly, but was defeated by superior numbers. Three thousand Jats fell and 2,000 fled away." *DC.* does not record this battle.

Afghan cavalry burst into the unwalled and unsuspecting city of Mathurā, and neither by their master's orders nor from the severe handling they had received in yesterday's fight, were they in a mood to show mercy. For four hours there was an indiscriminate massacre and rape of the unresisting Hindu population,—all of them non-combatants and many of them priests. Even the few Muslim residents could not always save themselves by taking their trousers off and showing that they were really followers of the Prophet. "Idols were broken and kicked about like polo-balls by the Islamic heroes." [*Husain Shahi*, 39.] Houses were demolished in search of plunder and then wantonly set on fire. Glutted with the blood of 3,000 men, Jahān Khan laid a contribution of one lakh on what remained of the population and marched away from the smoking ruins the same night.

After the tiger came the jackal. "When after the massacre Ahmad Shah's troops marched onward from Mathurā, Najib and his army remained there for three days, plundered much money and buried treasure, and carried off many beautiful females as captives." [Nur-ud-din Hasan, 15*b*.] The blue waves of the Jamunā gave eternal repose to such of her daughters as could flee to her outstretched arms ; some other happy women found a nearer refuge from dishonour in the dark depths of their household wells. But for those of their sisters who survived there was no escape from a fate

worse than death. A Muslim eye-witness thus describes the scene in the ruined city a fortnight later: "Everywhere in lane and bazar lay the headless trunks of the slain, and the whole city was burning. Many buildings had been knocked down. The water of the Jamunā flowing past was of a yellowish colour, as if polluted by blood. The man [a Muslim jeweller of the city, robbed of his all and fasting for several days] said that for seven days following the general slaughter the water flowed of a blood-red colour and then the water had turned yellow. At the edge of the stream I saw a number of huts of Vairāgis and Sannyāsis (*i.e.*, Hindu ascetics), in each of which lay a severed head with the head of a dead cow applied to its mouth and tied to it with a rope round its neck."*

Issuing from the ruins of Mathurā, Jahān Khan roamed the country round, slaying and plundering everywhere as directed. Vrindāvan, seven miles north of Mathura, could not escape, as its wealth was indicated by its many temples. Here another general massacre was practised upon the inoffensive monks of the most pacific order of Vishnu's worshippers, (*c.* 6 March.) As the same Muhammadan diarist records after a visit to Vrindāvan, "Wherever you gazed you beheld heaps of slain; you could only pick your way with difficulty,

* Massacre and sack of Mathura,—Samin in *Ind. Antiquary*, 60-62. *Husain Shahi* 38-39, *TALS.* 106*a* and 109*b*. *DC.* Nur-ud-din. *SPD.* xxi. 107; xxvii. 152. Raj. i. 63.

owing to the quantity of bodies lying about and the amount of blood spilt. At one place that we reached we saw about 200 dead children lying in a heap. Not one of the dead bodies had a head . . . The stench and effluvium in the air were such that it was painful to open your mouth or even to draw breath."

§ 7. *Abdali's attack on Gokul.*

Moving a fortnight behind his vanguard, Abdali himself came upon the scene. He had stormed Ballabhgarh on 3rd March and halted there for two days. On the 15th he arrived near Mathura, and wisely avoiding that reeking human shambles crossed over to the eastern bank of the Jamuna and encamped at Mahāvan, * six miles south-east of the city. Two miles to his west lay Gokul, the seat of the pontiff of the rich Vallabhāchārya sect. Abdali's policy of frightfulness had defeated his cupidity ; dead men could not be held to ransom. The invader's unsatisfied need of money was pressing him ; he sought the help of Imad's local

* According to Samin in *Ind. Antiq.*, p. 61. *TALS.* 109*a* says that on 20th March his camp was at Sarāi Kola, 3 *kos* from Mathura. *Koila* is 6 miles south of Mathura and opposite Mahavan. *DC.* records that on 18th March the news reached Delhi that Abdali had marched from Mathura to Vrindāvan. Raj. i. 63 says that from Mathura he detached a force to sack Gokul-Vrindāvan. I believe that in both the above works Vrindāvan is an error for *Gokul*, which stands 12 m. south of it and on the opposite bank of the Jamuna.

knowledge as to the most promising sources of booty. A detachment from his camp was sent to plunder Gokul. But here the monks were martial Nāgā sannyāsis of Upper India and Rajputana. Four thousand of these naked ash-smeared warriors stood outside Gokul and fought the Afghans, till half of their own number was killed after slaying an equal force of the enemy. Then, at the entreaty of the Bengal subahdar's envoy (Jugalkishor) and his assurance that a hermitage of faqirs could not contain any money, Abdali recalled the detachment. "All the Vairāgis perished, but Gokulnāth (the deity of the city) was saved," as a Marathi newsletter puts it. [Raj. i. 63.]

§ 8 *Jahan Khan plunders and fines Agra.*

Jahan Khan and Najib were now recalled to Abdali's camp from their roving commission of raid and slaughter, and sent to levy contribution on Agra, thronged with the richest fugitives from the capital. The Afghan king's plan was to advance from Agra as a base and capture the Jat forts or compel Suraj Mal to pay a large tribute. Jahān Khan at the head of 15,000 horse made a raid on Agra in the morning of 21st March. A deputation of bankers met him outside the gates and promised to ransom the city for five lakhs ; but it was impossible to collect the money promptly, and the Pathan losing patience entered the city and plundered four wards of it, up to the Blue Cupola. Some massacre

took place here also, the victims being estimated at 2,000. But his progress was stopped by the walls of Akbar's fort from which Mirza Saifullah (the son of the imperial *qiladar*) opened fire, thus preventing the invaders from showing their heads near it. Jahān Khan therefore halted for some days to exact the money from the bankers of the city. Only one lakh, out of the promised five lakhs, was raised by the local imperial officials (the qiladar, subahdar and city kotwal) from Sāmaldās the agent of Jagat Seth of Bengal, and paid, when Jahān Khan received a peremptory order to return to his master (23 March.) He set off at sunset and rejoined Abdali near Mathura on the 24th, and finally on the 28th the retreat to Afghanistan began. [*TALS.* 109*a*; *Mus.* 121; Samin in *Ind. Antiq.* 65; *SPD.* xxi. 111, xxvii. 146, 152. Raj. i. 63.]

§ 9. *Atrocities of Abdali's troops.*

This sudden change of plan needs explanation. We have seen how Ahmad Shah had reached Mahāvan (opposite Mathura) about 15th March. His track had been marked by the same desolation and havoc.* "From

* Father X. Wendel wrote ten years afterwards, "Suraj Mal looked from a distance at this catastrophe to his Braja, which was totally set on fire and bloodshed by the barbarity of the Durranis, joined to the Ruhelas, who gave quarter to none. It was on this occasion that the environs of Agra, and that city itself were desolated more than ever. We see, even at this hour, the sad marks of it." [P. 75.]

Agra to Delhi not a man was left in any hamlet . . . Along the route by which Abdali has come and gone back not two seers of grain and fodder can be had." [*SPD.* xxi. 99, 111.] The Muslim eye-witness thus describes the Afghan atrocities :—

"The Shah [*c.* 3 March] issued an order for slaying and plundering. His soldiers were assured that everyone would be allowed to keep whatever plunder he took and would be paid Rs. 5 for every enemy head [brought in.] It was midnight when the camp-followers went out to the attack. One horseman mounted a horse and took ten to twenty others, each attached to the tail of the horse preceding it, and drove them just like a string of camels. When it was one watch (3 hours) after sunrise I saw them come back. Every horseman had loaded up all his horses with the plundered property, and atop of it rode the girl-captives and the slaves. The severed heads were tied up in rugs like bundles of grain and placed on the heads of the captives. . . Then the heads were stuck upon lances and taken to the gate of the chief minister for payment. It was an extraordinary display ! Daily did this manner of slaughter and plundering proceed. And at night the shrieks of the women captives who were being ravished, deafened the ears of people. . . . All those heads that had been cut off were built into pillars, and the [captive] men upon whose heads those bloody bundles had been brought in, were made to grind corn, and then their heads too were cut

off. These things went on all the way to the city of Agra, nor was any part of the country spared. In addition to all this, five thousand Ruhela foot-soldiers joined the army. Each man procured some thirty to forty buffaloes. The plundered goods, such as jewels and clothes, they loaded upon these buffaloes, and established a market of their own within the camp, where they sold all these things at low prices .... Copper and other vessels that had been broken up were strewed along the route of the army and no one stooped to pick them up. Excepting gold and silver nothing was carried away."

§ 10. *Cholera epidemic in Abdali's camp at Mahavan.*

Such were the unspeakable sufferings of the harmless peasants and traders, whose only crime was their supposed wealth. Then outraged Nature rose up in wrath. Abdali had encamped at Mahāvan 13 miles downstream of Vrindāvan. The river, its level now very low at the height of the dry season, was choked with the half-burnt and unburnt bodies of suicides and slaughtered persons; and in three weeks' time the Indian sun did its work. The water reached Abdali's camp after washing Vrindāvan Mathurā and other places, all upstream, which had been turned into slaughter-houses by his order. A cholera epidemic broke out at Mahāvan and daily 150 of his soldiers began to die of it. There was no remedy, no medicine available; "it cost Rs. 100 to buy a seer of tamarind, a

drink made of tamarind being prescribed with benefit." The loss of horse-flesh was equally heavy in the Afghan army. His surviving soldiers clamoured for returning home. Abdali's hands were forced. He wrote to the Emperor (on 26th March) that he was about to turn back, and he sent off fast riders to recall Jahān Khan and Najib from Agra.* These two rejoined him on the 24th. A second domiciliary visit was paid to Vrindāvan to realize the contribution laid on that city after the raid of the 6th. And in these four days a last despairing effort was made to get something out of Suraj Mal. He had promised a tribute of five lakhs to the Shah and a gift of two lakhs to his ministers, but, thanks to the unlooked for epidemic, he evaded "paying even a *kauri*." As Abdali's real intentions were not finally known for some time, Suraj Mal's envoys accompanied his camp parleying up to the north-western suburb of Delhi, and when from that place the Afghan army unmistakably set out for their home, fast camel-riders brought the happy news to Suraj Mal, and he unceremoniously turned out of his fort the two negotiators of tribute (Jugalkishor, and an Afghan officer) whom Abdali had left there.

§ 11. *Abdali retires from India, April 1757.*

In his return march Ahmad Shah reached Faridabad on 30th March, Najib Khan moving parallel to him

* *TALS.* 114*b*, 109*b*. Samin in *Ind. Antiq.* 64-65. Wendel, p. 76. *SPD.* xxi. 111, xxvii. 147, 155, ii. 71,72.

along the east bank of the Jamunā and crossing over at Rājghāt to the Delhi side. From Faridabad the Afghan king and his army proceeded rapidly to the northern suburbs of Delhi,—the plain beyond Sarāi Basant and Sarāi Suhail, avoiding the city and marching along the river bank between the fort and the Jamunā. At this place he halted for three days (31 March—2 April) in order to secure his virgin tribute from the imperial family, and here he received a farewell visit from Alamgir II. Then by way of Sonepat (10 April) he reached Tirauri (13th), and after taking 20 lakhs from Ināyet Khan the zamindar of Kunjpurā, pursued his way to Lahor and Afghanistan. Jahān Khan who had been detached (end of March) to demand tribute from the Baluch zamindars of the Rohtak district (near the Najafgarh jhil) and had returned unsuccessful, now led his vanguard. [*SPD.* ii. 71.]

§ 12. *Abdali's booty and prisoners from India.*

The plunder that Abdali carried away from India was valued by contemporary reporters differently, at 3, 4, 9 and even 12 krores of Rupees. The human booty of war included Hazrat Begam (the maiden daughter of Emperor Muhammad Shah.) This princess, on reaching her 16th year, in February 1756, had excited the passion of Alamgir II., who had shamelessly demanded her hand in marriage, but the girl had replied, "I prefer death to [such a] marriage." And now this tender lamb

was to be pounced upon by a fierce Afghan of grandfatherly age, whose two ears had been docked and nose was rotting from a leprous carbuncle. At Abdali's demand for her hand, there was wailing and alarm in the imperial harem. The two Dowager-empresses cried out, "We shall slay her and then kill ourselves, but we will not give her to an Afghan." Fruitless efforts were then made to save her, by bribing Mughlāni Begam to report to Abdāli that the girl was really not handsome enough for him, and later by Alamgir II falsely swearing that she had been betrothed to a Delhi prince.

But there was no escape for her. On 5th April she was taken, decked as a bride, to Ahmad Shah's tents; Mālika-i-zamāni and Sāhiba Mahal (widows of Muhammad Shah) and Muhtaram-un-nisā (a daughter of the late Emperor Ahmad and a nursling of Mālika-i-zamāni from her infancy) accompanied the weeping bride in exile out of India. Other Delhi princesses present in the retreating Afghan camp were Alamgir II's daughter Gauhar-un-nisā the wife of Timur Shah, and Aiffat-un-nisā the daughter of Dāwar Bakhsh and great-grand-daughter of Aurangzib whom Nādir Shah had married to his son Nasrullah in 1739 and whom Ahmad Abdali had taken to his bed after the murder of Nādir. With this party went 16 other ladies of the Delhi harem, but 400 maidservants who were being dragged away with their mistresses escaped from the way and dispersed to their homes. A Marathi letter

reports, "The Pathan has taken away the handsome wives of the amirs and of [other] people, and sent them off to Lahor." [*TALS.* 109*b*—111*b*, 113*a*, 112*a*, 114*b*. *DC. SPD.* xxi. 118, 98, xxvii. 152. Raj. i. 63.]

The humbler captives fared better. At his farewell interview with the conqueror at Sarā Suhail (2nd April), Alamgir II entreated the Shah to release the poor men and women whom his soldiers had taken into slavery during their Indian campaign. The prayer was granted and thus several thousands of Indians, male and female, were sought out in the Afghan camp and sent back to Delhi with the returning Emperor. Next morning (3rd April) all whose relatives could be found were handed over to their care, the friendless were set free to go wherever they liked. "Among these captives there was no man or woman of any respectable family; they were all villagers." [*TALS.* 112*b*.]

The imperial capital did not escape a second plunder during the retreat of the Afghans. On 31st March, we read, "In spite of the Shah's prohibition and his appointment of Najib Khan to protect the city, the vast concourse of his *kalaposhes*: could not be prevented from looting and exacting money on some new pretext every day. The people were oppressed." Again, on 8-10 April while Sāhiba Mahal was on a final visit to Delhi to remove her belongings, the 2,000 Durrāni musketeers who formed her escort

took to plundering the Delhi bazars. [*TALS.* 111*a*, 115*a*.]

The immensity of the booty taken away from India can be understood from the enormous size of the transport required for it. "Abdali's own goods were loaded on 28,000 camels, elephants, mules, bullocks and carts, while 200 camel-loads of property were taken by Muhammad Shah's widows who accompanied him, and these too belonged to him. Eighty thousand horse and foot followed him, each man carrying away spoils. His cavalry returned on foot, loading their booty on their chargers. For securing transport, the Afghan king left no horse or camel in any one's house, not even a donkey. The guns he had brought for taking the Jāt forts, he abandoned because their draught-cattle had to be loaded with his plunder, and the Jāt Rajah took these guns away into his fort. In Delhi not a sword was left with anybody." [*SPD.* ii. 71.]

By Abdāli's direction, the Emperor conferred on Imād-ul-mulk the full powers of wazir, *vice* Shah Alam (3rd April), while Najib Khan was appointed his supreme agent in India and the real master of the Delhi Government. [*TALS.* 115*b*, *DC.*]

§ 13. *Abdali sends two Delhi princes to recover the Doab and Oudh.*

Ahmad Shah Abdali was throughout life determined not to make India his home, nor to personally conduct

the government of Delhi. He therefore sincerely desired to restore the Mughal Emperor to real power and wealth by winning his provinces back from the refractory governors and placing them in charge of loyal officers who would support their sovereign with the provincial revenue and troops. Shujā-ud-daulah, who held the rich *subahs* of Oudh and Allahabad, was the hereditary enemy of the Emperor, his wazir Imād and Abdali's agent Najib Khan alike, and the hereditary ally of the hated Marathas and the ever-rebellious Jāt Rajah. He had kept aloof from Abdali during this invasion of 1757. His dominions also barred the way to the still richer lost provinces, Bihar and Bengal. Abdali's first scheme of wresting Shujā's provinces by means of Ahmad Bangash was dropped on account of Ahmad's manifest incapacity and military impotence. Then, by the advice of Imād, it was decided to transfer these eastern provinces to two of the Emperor's sons* and send them with a small Afghan force to occupy the country, because it was hoped that the prestige of the blood imperial would deter rebellious chiefs from opposing them by arms.

The Emperor was requested to send to Ahmad Shah's camp near Mathurā two of his sons, after formally

---

Expedition of the two Shahzadas with Imād into the Doab :—Samin in *Ind. Antiq.* 1907. 64-69 (unreliable), *T.I.S.* 106*b*, 109*a*. 117*b*-118*b*. 121*a*-124*a*, 127*b*. *DC. SPD.* xxvii. 146. 160-190. xxi. 111-138. *Gul-i-R.*. 52-54.

appointing them subahdars of Oudh (*cum* Allahabad) and Bengal (*cum* Bihar.) On 14th March he gave leave of departure to his son Hedāyet Bakhsh and his nephew and son-in-law Mirzā Bābā with letters-patent for the governorships of Bengal and Oudh respectively, but nothing else. They reached Abdali's camp on the 19th with a poorer retinue and escort than even the lowest nobles of former times. They had no money for raising an army, and Abdali could not spare any large detachment of his own troops to support this adventure. He therefore planned that the princes should first go to the Doab (the Bulandshahar district), join Ahmad Bangash the Nawab of Farrukhabad, drive out the Maratha posts there, establish their own revenue collection, and with the resources thus gained enlist more men, advance further east, oust Shujā from his provinces, and then proceed to the golden land of Bengal. To them Imād-ul-mulk was attached as guardian and diplomat, and Jangbāz Khān as commander of the escort with a miscellaneous force of 3,000 men stiffened by 600 Durrāni soldiers, and Najib's brother Sultān Khan and son Zābita Khan.

This party arrived at Agra on 23rd March ; Jahān Khan left that city for his master's camp that very night, and the princes, after being welcomed by the imperial officers of the locality, crossed the Jamunā on the 25th, and by way of Firuzabad (28th) reached Mainpuri on the 31st. Here Ahmad Bangash respect-

fully waited on them (4th April) and took Mirzā Bābā with himself to Qādirganj in the north-west, while Hedāyet Bakhsh moved south-eastwards to Etāwa, from which the Maratha collector fled away. "The Durrāni contingent merely plundered the ryots of the place instead of establishing a settled administration there, because Ahmad Shah's soldiers knew nothing but looting. The prince gained no revenue there. Mirzā Bābā remained at Qādirganj till the 20th, Ahmad Bangash supplying his shameful want of tents dress and other materials. Then came the news that Shujā-ud-daulah had sent a force under Anupgir Gosāin against the two princes and that this force was coming to loot Farrukhabad. So, Ahmad Bangash hastened back to his own city and Mirzā Bābā arrived there soon afterwards and Hedāyet from Etāwa on 6th May. The trans-Ganges Ruhelas too came in a large body under Hāfiz Rahmat Khan and encamped on the other side of the river, opposite Qādirganj. . . The wazir Imād tried hard to win Hāfiz over and gain his armed support. He crossed the river and visited Hāfiz on the 30th, and the two princes did the same next day and enjoyed Hāfiz's hospitality for four days."

§ 14. *Failure of the princes' expedition. Marathas reappear.*

But the negotiations for an offensive alliance dragged on for a long time and promised no agreement, because

the Ruhelas shrank from provoking another attack of Shujā and the dreaded Marathas for the sake of a master who was impotent to help them. Sadullah Khan, the successor of Ali Muhammad Ruhela, was a personal friend of Shujā and worked at cross purposes with Hāfiz. Imād returned to the princes' camp after a visit to the Ruhela headquarters for talking their leaders over.

Meantime Shujā-ud-daulah himself had arrived on the scene "with a numerous army and countless guns"; he declared that he was a loyal servant of the princes, and would only attack his enemies Imād-ul-mulk and Ahmad Bangash if they did not leave the Shāhzādas' side. The princes marched towards him on 8th June and Shujā too crossed the river Garrā near the village of Sāndi and formed an entrenched camp 14 miles from the position of the princes. While negotiations for a tribute went on between the princes and Shujā, and Jangbāz Khan fought two skirmishes with the Oudh vanguard, the situation was suddenly changed by the arrival of a new Maratha army under Sakhārām Bāpu at Kāsganj, only two marches from Farrukhabad, on 17th June. Immediately the nascent coalition collapsed; a settlement was speedily made with Shujā: "the matter was settled at 15 lakhs, five of which were to be paid down and the balance after a year; half of these five lakhs was to be paid to Jangbāz Khan for his expenses, and the other moiety was to be divided into five equal shares of Rs 50,000 each, for the two princes, the wazir, the

Bangash Nawab, and Yahiya Khan (the Paymaster of Mirzā Bābā's force.) *

Ahmad Bangash, taking Mirzā Bābā with him, hastened back to his capital (24th June) ; the wazir and Hedāyet Bakhsh followed the next day. Shujā and the Ruhela chiefs went back to their homes. At Farrukhabad the two princes had to dismiss all the soldiers they had recently enlisted for the purpose of controlling the subahs assigned to them. Their adventure ended in utter failure and great loss of money, without gaining an inch of territory or a Rupee of revenue. Even the war-indemnity promised by Shujā was not paid beyond the first lakh. Jangbāz Khan, exasperated at not getting the means for meeting his soldiers' dues during these three months of campaigning, ravaged the country,† and going to Barily extorted the balance of the indemnity from Rajah Mān Rāi, the diwan of Sadullah Khan, who had been Shujā's intermediary in the late peace talks.

---

* *TALS.* 122*b*-123*b*. The Maratha envoy with Shuja estimates the Oudh army at 15-16 thousand men and 3-4 hundred guns (9 June), and again at 25,000 men and 7-800 guns (19 June.) We learn from a Marathi despatch that the Peshwa's envoy with the wazir forced peace on the two sides by leaving the settlement to the Peshwa's arbitration (25 June.) *SPD.* xxi. 127, 130, 132.

† "Jangbāz Kh. after settling the tribute of Shuja, took a bond for 2½ lakhs from Hafiz and other Ruhelas, and remained on the further side of the Ganges [for realizing the money.]" Report received in Delhi about 21 July. *TALS.* 127*b*. *Ind. Ant.* p. 69.

On 4th July the princes started from Farrukhabad on return to Delhi, in the same humble guise and abject poverty in which they had set out from the capital on 15th March. By way of Aligarh (15 July) and Sikandrabad (21 July) they arrived within eight miles of Delhi on the 23rd, but by that time so great was the Maratha predominance along the Jamunā that Najib had to issue from the capital and make a demonstration of force on the west bank to ensure the safe crossing over of the princes! They had absolutely nothing to show as their achievement. Within a few weeks of their starting from Agra they had lost even that imperial city. When Abdali set out on his return, Suraj Mal finding the field clear, re-established all his outposts by sending back his men, who had fled away before the Afghan advance, to occupy them. The Jat detachments even re-entered their old posts on the eastern bank of the Jamunā, along the edge of the Doab. And the Marathas, secure in the friendship of the Jats in their rear, asserted their predominance in the Doab once again. This second expansion of Maratha power will be treated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

Raghunath Rao's northern expedition and events during 1757-1758.

§ 1. *Maratha recovery in the Doab ; their difficulties.*

We have seen how by the month of May 1756, all the forces of the Maratha Government had vacated Rajputana and Hindustan north of the Chambal. There was left near Delhi a body of 5,000 horse under Antāji Mānakeshwar, but they were the Emperor's servants whose salary of 13 lakhs a year the wazir had taken it upon himself to pay. There were, besides, small bands of escort with the Maratha managers of Antaji's jagirs in the Doab, (Phaphund, Shukohabad and Etawa), the Hinganes' jagirs further north (in the Bulandshahar and Mirat districts), and the Peshwa's tribute-collectors in the south-east (Kora and Jahanabad.) But all their generals and regular armies had gone back to the Deccan. Raghunath himself had reached Puna on 10 August 1755 after two and a half years of campaigning ; and in October 1756 we find him as well as Malhar Holkar at Puna and Dattaji Sindhia due to return there from Ujjain after the Diwāli ceremony. At the end of this year Malhar and some weeks later Raghunath were again despatched to the north.

Raghunath reached Indor on 14 February 1757, and at first talked of marching on Delhi, which was in Abdali's occupation. But we shall see in Chapter 18 why he could not for nearly four months afterwards leave Rajputana nor make any attempt to restore the Maratha power and prestige in the Doab. At last about the middle of May, he detached a force of 20,000 men under Sakhārām Bāpu, with Vital Shivdev, Tātyā Gangādhar (Holkar's diwan), Antāji Mānakeshwar and the Household troops (*huzarāt*.) They first reached Agra, where they came to terms with the Jats. Suraj Mal, on promising to pay the outstanding balance of the indemnity of 1754, was left in possession of his usurpations in the Agra district and the western border of the Doab (Dankaur &c.) Then the Maratha vanguard crossed the Jamuna and reached Kāsganj on 17th June. As the Maratha horse approached, everywhere there was a panic flight of the agents of the wazir and the Bangash Nawab. The Marathas recovered their former outposts in the Doab with hardly a blow. Antāji Mānakeshwar went to Anupshahar about 2nd July, and a strong Maratha force occupied the Sikandrabad district. It was only at Mirat that Najib's agents (his cousin and his *bakhshi*) offered fight at the head of 3,000 men, but their opposition was swept away with heavy loss on both sides after two battles (*c.* 10-15 July) with Antaji. A Ruhela contingent, 1,000 strong, which was coming from beyond the Ganges to uphold

Najib's power in Mirat, was scared away from the way by Antaji's lieutenant who held Hapur. [*SPD.* ii. 79, 76, xxi. 61. 126. *T.L.S.* 124*b*-125*b*. Raj. i. p. 134. *DC.*]

Saharanpur, Mirat, Sikandrabad, Shukohabad, Phaphund, Etawa and even southwards as far as Kora-Jahanabad, were all freed from the agents of the Delhi Court or of Najib. The wazir Imād-ul-mulk kept the diwan Nāgar Mal at Anupshahar to entreat the Marathas to make friends with him again. Shujā-ud-daulah had readily agreed to the Maratha proposal to remain neutral during this war in the Doab, as Maratha encouragement had stiffened his opposition to the wazir's recent attempt to dispossess him of his two subahs by means of the Shāhzādas. But the financial gain of the Marathas was insignificant. Though the Muslim usurpers had been driven away from the region, the normal maintenance of order and the peaceful collection of revenue could not be restored so easily. Thanks to the last four years' constant change of legally authorized owners, usurpations, political revolutions and foreign invasion, the whole of the Doab had become a No-man's land, seething with disorder. The eclipse of the legitimate government during Abdali's invasion and the Ruhela-Maratha contest had tempted every ambitious man to come out with his band, renounce all masters and encroach upon his neighbours' lands. The Gujars spread in lawless activity through the Dāsna sub-division. The Rajput landlords of this region were a sturdy

rebellious lot; almost every village had been fortified with mud walls,—as the English found to their cost in suppressing the Mutiny in 1858,—and the petty Rajahs with their armed bands had seized as much land as they could. Two thousands of such mud-forts were reported in the Doab by the Maratha agents, and their conquest by force would have taken years and a full-sized army and exhaustless gun-munition. [*SPD.* xxvii. 195, 196, 168, 169, 170. ii. 76.]

Hence, the Marathas on their return to the Doab found neither peace nor money, and had even to beg for funds from the Punā Government to save their soldiers from starvation. At the same time the Peshwa was issuing assignments on the hypothetical Doab revenue to every one of his creditors and generals in North India and censuring his local officers there for default of payment. Both Antāji and Bāpu Hingané were accused of peculation of their master's dues and their properties were escheated! The art of maintaining an empire eternally on credit has not been discovered by any human brain.

§ 2. *Plan for ousting Najib Khan from Delhi.*

Najib had been the right-hand man of Abdali during the late invasion and had been left by the conqueror as his supreme agent in Delhi, thus replacing the official wazir as the Emperor's keeper. "The Emperor, after Abdali's departure, had placed all the districts round

the capital under Najib, authorizing him to appoint any collector he liked, provided that the rents came to the imperial exchequer. But Najib appropriated everything, even the yield of the princes' estates and gave their owners one-fourth or one-fifth of what he collected." For instance, for the *sāir* (transit) duties of this rich and important region he paid only Rs. 25,000 per annum into the public treasury. [*TALS.* 120*b*, *DC.* under 11 May.] The Emperor found that he was no better off under Najib's dictatorship than under Imad's, while the Ruhela upstart treated him with a roughness unknown to the nobly-born wazir. He sighed for his old bondage. Imad, too, after the collapse of his recent anti-Maratha coalition under the Abdali's blessings, humbly made peace with the Marathas and turned them against Najib. The plan of the newly reconciled allies was to expel Najib from Delhi and restore Imād to power there as a creature of the Marathas, so that the imperial Government would again be subservient to every Deccani plan of expansion in North India. Moreover, half the indemnity promised by the imperial Government in June 1754 still remained unpaid, while the annual cost of 13 lakhs for Antaji's subsidiary troops had fallen into arrears. Therefore, Raghunath himself turned his face towards Delhi. On 7th June, Bapu Mahadev Hingané, the Peshwa's resident wakil at Delhi, at last came back from his hiding place in Kumbher; he was presented to the Emperor and given the

superlative title of *Mahārājū-dhirāj* (15th June.) The Delhi Court thus openly abandoned the recent anti-Maratha policy, and made ready to welcome Raghunath for expelling Najib. [*DC. SPD.* xxi. 120.]

§ 3. *Raghunath Rao marches from Rajputana to Delhi.**

While Sakhārām Bapu took post at Patparganj, facing Delhi fort, (middle of July) and thus dominated the eastern bank of the Jamuna, Raghunath at last began his march upon Delhi at the end of July. Shamsher Bahadur with the artillery and the advanced division reached Rewari (*c.* 27 July.) His orders were to hold this city to ransom and occupy the Crownlands in the district around, but he found that the land was not in the possession of the Crown but "everywhere under Jat control, with the exception of a few villages held by Kamgar Khan Baluch and Sitārām of Kaliānā's widow Satbhāni,—both of whom were already on the side of the Marathas." Prince Ali Jah (the Emperor's second son), who had come a few days earlier to Rewari for wresting the district from the hands of usurpers, was invited by Shamsher Bahadur to a meeting in a garden outside and treacherously made prisoner with his women, (30 July.) The attempt to levy contribution from the Baluch zamindars of this district was fruitless. Raghunath and Malhar, who had left Jaipur territory

* This section is based upon *TALS.* 121*a*, 124*b*-125*a*. 129*a*-130*a*. *SPD.* xxvii 193, 197, 158.

at the end of July, moved rapidly to Rewari, absorbed Shamsher's contingent, crossed the Najafgarh *jhil* to Kharwā (7 August), and arrived at Khizirabad (south of Delhi city) on 11th August, and the investment of the imperial capital immediately began.

Meantime, when the dreaded Abdali was known to be out of India and the prospect of his return seemed remote, Raghunath from Jaipur had called upon Najib Khan (*c.* 10 June) to pay the customary *chauth* as in the reigns of Muhammad Shah and his son, on the ground that the lands assigned to the Marathas in lieu of *chauth* having been occupied by Najib he was responsible for the amount in cash. This letter was accompanied by the arrival of their vanguard consisting of detachments from the contingents of Naro Shankar (from Jhansi) and Sakharam Bapu (from Jaipur) in the Agra district. These men, on coming to the fort of Wer, demanded tribute from Suraj Mal, who agreed to pay it. The subahdari of Agra had been given by the Peshwa to Malhar Holkar, who nominated Vital Shivdev as his deputy there (*c.* 27 May.) From Agra as a base, the Marathas crossed the Jamuna and sent a network of detachments to occupy the Doab up to the bank of the Ganges (June and July), as we have seen in Ch. 16. Though the Marathas avoided Delhi at first, their coming caused great trembling and scarcity of grain in the capital. The wazir joined them. To the demand for *chauth* the Emperor had replied that the Afghan

plunderer had left him nothing for payment to the Marathas. Najib advised him to prepare for boldly opposing the Marathas if they offered force.

§ 4. *Najib's measures for defending Delhi.*

On 16th July from the walls of Delhi fort a Maratha force was sighted on the opposite bank, plundering the grain dealers engaged in bringing supplies from Shāhdara to the capital. The Maratha headquarters under Sakhārām Bāpu (Raghunāth's diwān) and Tātyā Gangādhar (Holkar's diwān) were established at Patparganj. Then the ferries over the Jamuna from Wazirabad in the north of the capital to Khizirabad in its southern suburbs, were closed, "none could come from either bank, and grain in Delhi became very dear," (2 Aug.) Najib Khan had at first sent a part of his own troops (under his brother Afzal Khan and captain Mullā Āmān Khan) with some artillery across the Jamunā to defend the Doab, but recalled them after four or five days on seeing the Maratha occupation of that tract complete, and even wrote to his collectors there to retire peacefully before the Maratha advance. Thus, the Doab was surrendered, and Najib concentrated his forces on the defence of the capital. *

Najib had also run a line of trenches at Khizirabad outside the city, to bar the line of invasion from the south, but he had not enough troops to hold these in force

* *TALS.* 125*b*, 128*a*-130*a*. *DC. SPD.* xxvii. 198.

and therefore wisely withdrew most of his men from the Old City to the New. A garrison of 2,500 of his own Ruhelas under Mullā Āmān and Qutb Shāh was put in Delhi fort (21 July) and the artillery was planted below the fort, under the walls of Kalāni Bāgh, to oppose the Maratha advance by that open side.

The rest of the month of July and the first week of August passed in this state of watching for developments. Then, at the report of Raghunāth's near approach to the capital, the Marathas on the east bank of the Jamunā began to cross over to the Delhi side by boat near Okhlā in small parties and formed another post some 20 miles south of the city. Patrols sent out by Najib had a brush with their most advanced foragers and drove them back with loss (6th August.) But the invaders returned in greater strength and plundered the neighbourhood of Safdar Jang's tomb and the Mānkhān quarter of the Old City, and advancing still further looted the houses of Jaisinghpurā and even the horses of Bāpu Hingané. Najib, at the same time, sent his wakil Meghrāj (4th August) to Imād and the Maratha generals at Patparganj, proposing terms, but the latter obstinately demanded the removal of Najib's troops from the fort and his own evacuation of the city, saying that they had no quarrel with the Emperor himself. So, there was nothing left for it but to fight it out.

§ 5. *Raghunath attacks Delhi, 11 August 1757.*

It broke out on 11th August, when Raghunath with his lieutenants reached Khizirabad. Sakhārām crossed over from the Doab and joined him. They sent their troops towards the city.* One division, marching towards the Lāl Darwāza, entered the Old Fort and slew Najib's *qiladar* of the place, a Pathan named Bakhtāwar Khan, who was a disciple of Qutb Shāh, the popular spiritual guide and fighting ally of the Ruhela clan. Advancing further, they penetrated into Old Delhi and engaged in plunder. Narsinghdās Kāyath's son bravely withstood them, and with the help of 200 Ruhelas sent out by Najib under Karam Khan, fought for some time, till overcome by sheer weight of numbers and driven in flight up to the Delhi Gate of the New City. Thus Old Delhi was plundered and all its inhabitants scared away.

A second Maratha division attacked the river bank south-east of the city, near the garden of Jāvid Khan. Najib sent Qutb Shāh with 2,500 men to oppose it. But Qutb merely fired at the invaders from the Blue Bastion of the city wall, instead of venturing into the open. Najib himself watched the action from the roof of the Delhi Gate. About 3 P.M. the firing ceased, Qutb retired, and went away with Najib's permission to sack the wazir's Delhi mansion, in order to avenge the

* Raghunath's attack on Najib in Delhi :—*TALS.* 130*a*-135*b*. *SPD.* xxi. 136, xxvii. 199, 194, *DC.* (very useful.) Nur-ud-din.

slaughter of so many of his disciples and troops in the Old City. The infuriated Ruhelas found the wazir's gates closed from within and guarded by 600 men. They entered by way of the thatched sheds projecting from the walls, slew the defenders, and plundered everything in the house, stripping and dishonouring Imād's women and servants. At last Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan (the brother of Aqibat Mahmud Khan Kashmiri) pacified Najib, and going to Imād's house removed the miserable ladies to the shelter of Rajah Nāgar Mal's vacant house. Some of these grand dames were placed in the few covered waggons and litters (*dolis*) that could be secured; all the rest had to walk on foot through the public streets and bazars, with *burqas* thrown over their persons. This was the greatest outrage that could be done to any Indian householder, not to speak of the hereditary grand wazir of the realm, and it made a reconciliation between Imād and Najib for ever impossible.

Imād from the eastern bank crossed over to the Maratha camp in the evening and visited Raghunāth and Malhar for cementing his alliance with the invaders. Next day, a Maratha force again approached the river bank below the fort and retired about 3 P.M., after being fired at from the city walls by Najib's men in the Blue Bastion. Then active operations ceased for a few days.

After these futile cavalry attacks on the impregnable

stone walls of the capital from the south, bands of Maratha light horse (under Malhar) were sent round the city, towards Nāraina and Sarāi Khwājah Basant (in the west) and other suburbs. Najib closed all the city gates and posted artillery and troops at each of them. The Triple Archway in front of the Lahor and Kashmir Gates was built up with stones and earth, leaving only a narrow passage for traffic. "The grain supply of the city was entirely stopped, and there was a great scarcity of food and consequent suffering. Wheat sold at six seers to a Rupee."

§ 6. *Malhar assaults Delhi from the north.*

Malhar Holkar, with Vital Shivdev and other lieutenants and the wazir's troops under Bahādur Khan Baluch and Jamil-ud-din Khan, described a semi-circle round the western side of Delhi and entrenched opposite the Kashmir Gate in the north-east. "A vast force was assembled in this quarter. They took possession of the country up to Sabzi Mandi, the Horse Market, and Wazirabad. Many places in this region were plundered." Mānāji Pāygudé was ordered to entrench opposite the Kābul (or north-western) Gate; he negotiated for hiring the Turki troops of the Sindāgh (4,000 musketeers), who were living in unemployment in the Mughalpura suburb.* The main Maratha camp was

* They asked for an advance of money and some guns and artillerymen. The negotiations did not mature. (*SPD.* xxi. 136.)

now removed to the imperial Artillery Arsenal (Jinsi Topkhānah) near the Idgāh.

On 25th August the fighting was renewed. Two hours before dawn, a Maratha force, accompained by Bahādur Khan and Nāgar Mal, entered the Qudsia Garden, planted their guns, and attacked the Ruhelas posted in the mansions of Jafar Khan and Ali Mardān Khan. The exchange of fire continued all day, the defenders losing many men.* In the end the Ruhela trenches outside were carried, and they fell back inside the walls. The Qudsia Garden and the Begam Bāgh were captured. The victors occupied the ground won ; Bahādur Khan entrenched himself in the garden of Jafar Khan, and Malhar sat down close to the Kashmir Gate. These advanced positions were well within the range of the big guns which Najib dragged to the northern ramparts during the night, and next day, 26th August, seven hundred of Bahādur Khan's contingent were killed by this fire.

There was again a suspension of fighting. Najib's force had now been reduced to less than 2,000 men ; he had not a single friend in the city, and the Emperor was secretly intriguing against him. He sought to make terms by sending his wakil Meghrāj day after day to Malhar, whose agent was Mujirām (a *bania.*) The Marathas demanded that Najib should resign the post

* From Salimgarh two large guns were fired on the assailants, but their shots fell short.

of Paymaster-General, which had been promised to Ahmad Khan Bangash, vacate the fort, go to his own jagirs, and pay an indemnity of 50 or 60 lakhs. Najib declined to resign his post or leave the capital unless Imād did the same on his part, and he offered only five lakhs. He preferred death in fight to the dishonour of accepting his enemies' exorbitant demands; he abused the Emperor for his cowardice and treachery and intercepted his letters to Imād. The Emperor was helpless, "neither side would listen to him." Imād continued to fume over the Ruhela outrage on his harem, and Raghunāth grumbled at his august personality being ignored and Najib negotiating with Malhar, whom Raghunāth hated.

§ 7. *Renewed attacks on Najib in Delhi.*

So the war broke out afresh on 30th August. Raghunāth fought against the Delhi Gate (in the south) and Imād against the Lahor Gate (in the north-west.) In the night of 29-30 August, the Marathas opened fire from all sides of the city. "Their cannon-balls reached the Hayāt Bakhsh Garden, the Diwān-i-khās, the Diwān-i-ām, and the imperial Wardrobe, within the palace. Two bastions of the Delhi Gate were demolished. The 31st also passed in this kind of artillery attack from all sides of the city. The Ruhelas made a sortie from the Lahor Gate, drove away the men of Imād and Ahmad Bangash who had advanced from the Idgāh, and

returned after plundering the Tobacco Mart and carrying away everything there, even the timber of the houses." They made another sortie from the Turkomān Gate, killed some soldiers of the wazir's diwan Dilel Singh, and captured his banner.

§ 8. *Peace made with Najib, 3 Sep. 1757.*

But the defenders were hopelessly outnumbered. Famine was raging within the city, and "many men dispersed and only a few remained true to Najib." At last he bowed to the inevitable. The next two days (1 and 2 September) passed in peace parleys; Malhar tried to soften Raghunath and Imād, while Majd-ud-daulah (Abdul Ahad Khan) pressed Najib hard. At last Najib consented to visit Malhar and accept any terms that the Maratha general might dictate.* On 3rd September first Qutb Shah visited Malhar to settle the preliminaries, and, then about 3 P. M. Najib himself went to Malhar's camp at Qudsiabad by boat and was

* Najib's message conveyed by Abdul Ahad Khan to Malhar ran thus: (1) I am your [adopted] son and I shall act as you bid me. You have done me many favours and it is not proper that you should [now] bare your sword against me. If you say so, I shall go away across the Jamuna, and you can entrust Delhi and the empire to the control of whomsoever you please. (2) Bid me and I shall go to the Abdali Shah and arrange a peace between you by delimiting your respective boundaries, which would be respected in future by both parties, so that there might not be war again. (3) I shall depute my son Zābita Khan to serve you

welcomed. He accepted all the terms and returned to the city at night.

The peace became operative on the 6th. Najib issued with his property and war material from Dārā Shukoh's mansion, left the city and entered his tents pitched at Wazirabad. His Ruhela soldiers vacated the fort, with all their belongings, and the Marathas took post as guards at the gates of the capital. Raghunath set free the captive followers of Najib; the ferries over the Jamunā were opened to traffic and grain again began to come to the city from the marts on the other bank. The triumphant wazir now replaced Najib's agents by his own men as *qiladār* of the palace-fort, superintendent of the Private Audience, *peshkār* of the Emperor, and superintendent of the canal. Ahmad Bangash was made imperial Paymaster-General *vice* Najib. The completeness of the Maratha supremacy over Delhi is seen from the entry in the official history of the reign, "The Emperor, as requested, sent robes of honour to Malhar to make new appointments at his own discretion"; "the persons thus inducted to office,

---

with a contingent of 5 or 7 thousand men, as a proof of my fidelity. (4) If you do not agree to these terms but are bent on fighting me, I shall unite the Pār Ruhelas and others and give you a good battle. He will rule the whole realm whom God gives the victory. *SPD.* ii. 77, supported almost verbatim by *TALS.* 136*b* and Nur-ud-din.

Peace negotiations,—*TALS.* 132*b*-137*a*. *DC.* Ghulam Ali, i. 33.

after putting their *khilats* on, made their bows to Raghunāth Rāo in his tent."*

Thus Delhi and its sovereign once more exchanged one master for another. Najib's reign of five months was over. Fighting against all the other forces of the realm, Hindu and Muslim combined,—except the trans-Ganges Ruhelas and the governor of Oudh,—his handful of troops had yielded only to famine, but established their reputation as the most indomitable warriors in India. He avoided paying any money indemnity, and went back to his estates, where he lived in open defiance of the Delhi Government and kept constantly writing to Abdali to come back to India and expel the Deccani infidels from Delhi. [Nur-ud-din.]

§ 9. *Sufferings of the Delhi people during 1757.*

The Afghan conqueror's haughty agent had been expelled from Delhi, but the agony of the imperial city showed no sign of ending. It had been squeezed dry of its wealth twice by Abdali and his troops in the first quarter of the year 1757 ; Najib's war requisitions had kept up the strain in July and August, and Maratha cannon had damaged its palaces and bastions ; the high price and scarcity of foodstuffs had continued

* *TALS.* 138*a*-139*a*. *DC.* Najib's halting place was "the plain of Jahānnumā, close to the *Bārādāri* of Abhay Singh." *i.e.*, in Jaswantpurā. Antāji Mānakeshwar was appointed imperial faujdar of the environs of the capital.

throughout, and now during the two months of September and October "a shaking fever raged with violence through the entire city, and left the eyes affected. Then came an epidemic of brain fever * in the following March and April. Grain became very dear, *mung dāl* was so scarce that only half a seer could be had for a Rupee, *māsh dāl* 5 seers, and wheat 9 seers ; even medicines became very dear and scanty on account of the exactions of the Marathas." [*DC.*] Inside the walls, "theft and dacoity prevailed greatly owing to the break-down of the Emperor's administration. Respectable men like Sayyids, Mughals &c., who formerly used to earn a living by service as soldiers, now found no employment, while those in service could not get their salaries. The jāgirdārs received nothing from their jāgirs, which other men had usurped. Every one [of these classes] took to burglary in the houses of the city, collecting large gangs armed with muskets. Their leaders were two Turki soldiers. The head of the city police was accused of shielding the burglars and sharing their spoils ! To crown this long-drawn agony came a visitation of earthquake on 21st November, 1757. The first shock, felt about one o'clock in the afternoon, was a severe one, followed by six lighter

* "Boils known as *Kanphora* became epidemic. When the boils appeared, their pus passed into the patient's stomach and killed him." Shakir, 90.

tremours. Then, about 9 P. M. "it was so violent that Doomsday seemed at hand." | *TALS.* 148 ; *DC.* |

During the three weeks' war with Najib, Raghunath was not free from anxiety that the Abdāli forces in the Panjab might attempt to relieve their ally in Delhi. He again and again urged the Peshwā to send Dattaji Sindhia to the north with instructions to keep his eye constantly fixed on Attock for news of Abdāli's return. At the same time one of his officers, Mānāji Pāygudé, scouted north of Delhi up to Thāneshwar to find out if any Afghan force was coming from Sarhind.

§ 10. *Further movements of Raghunath and Malhar from Sep. 1757.*

After Delhi city had been placed in the friendly hands of Imād, Raghunath and Malhar on 18th September 1757 moved rom Barāri Ghat in the north of the city, westwards to the Bāsi hillocks, liberated their captive Prince Ali Jāh, and sent to Musā Khan Baluch (son of Kām gār demanding tribute for his possessions in the Rohtak district. The latter paid a sum through his manager Satbhāni (the widow of Sitarām Khazānchi of Kaliānā) and took a lease signed by the Maratha chief for the possession of the villages. The Marathas now planned to conquer the Panjab from Abdali's men. But on hearing that Abdus Samad Khan, the governor of Sarhind, had collected a large force to bar their way and that Najib's son, after being ousted

from Saharanpur and other places in the upper Doab by the Marathas, had joined Abdus Samad, Raghunāth gave up the plan of conquest, "knowing a war with Abdali's troops to be beyond his power." [*TALS.* 142*b*-146*a*.]

Backed by Abdāli, Qutb Shāh the right-hand man of Najib had expelled the Marathas, early in 1757, from the Saharanpur district and taken possession of it. But in May, the wazir's partisans Kāmgār and Bahādur Khan Baluch defeated Qutb in the Gohānā pargana and drove him wounded and with broken forces east of the Jamunā to Kairānā. After the Dasaharā celebration (22 October) Raghunāth and Malhar marched into the Doab, crossing the Jamunā at Khizirabad and withdrawing their outposts from the environs of Delhi and Shāhganj. "Some sort of composure came to the city." On 26th November they crossed the Hindan and encamped on its eastern bank. From this place, six days later Raghunath himself marched to Garh Mukteshwar to bathe in the Ganges, plundering all places on his route as during his first pilgrimage of January 1755; none of Najib's local officers ventured to oppose him. Similarly levying ransom and plundering villages all along, Malhar with his own division advanced north through the Doab, by way of Luni, Bāghpat (Rs. 20,000 levied), Barāut (Rs. 17,000 ransom), and the Saharanpur district. Najib retreated before the flood of invaders, sending his family camp

and baggage from Saharanpur to the eastern side of the Ganges. The whole of the Saharanpur district, villages and towns, was mercilessly sacked as being Najib's jagir. At the plundering of Jhunjhānā many men were slain. [*TALS.* 120*a*, 147-150*b*.]

Turning from the desolated villages round Saharanpur, Malhar crossed the Jamunā at Rāmrā Ghat, looted Karnāl and Tilāuri, and sat down before Kunjpurā demanding tribute. Nejābat Khan, the zamindar of this fortalice, was helpless, as the country outside had been devastated as far as Thāneshwar. He agreed to pay five lakhs,—three lakhs to Malhar, one to Ahmad Bangash, and half a lakh to Dilel Singh, the wazir's diwan.

Then the Maratha general crossed the Jamunā back into the Saharanpur district with Ahmad Bangash. It was now near the end of January 1758. [*Ibid.*, 150.]

Raghunāth and Malhar next met together and adopted the plan of withdrawing their forces from the Doab, abandoning a part of that tract to the wazir, and concentrating their efforts on the conquest of the Panjab. Crossing the Jamunā again from Saharanpur and plundering Thāneshwar on the way, they took Sarhind (21 March 1758) and finally Lahor (*c.* 20 April), as we have seen in chapter 14. During their absence, Najib drove out the wazir's agents and recovered Barāut, Saharanpur and other places which had formerly belonged to him! As Najib had failed to pay the five

lakhs promised on 3rd September 1757, the wazir imprisoned his envoy Meghrāj on 8 May 1758, and two days later issued an imperial rescript appointing Vital Shivdev faujdar of Saharanpur *vice* Najib, in the vain hope of thus supplanting the Ruhela! [*TALS.* 151*b*, 164*a*, 165*b*, 177*b*, *DC. SPD.* xxvii 225, 224.]

§ 11. *Raghunath and Malhar return from the Panjab and leave for the south, 1758.*

After the conquest of Lahor, Raghunath left the old and experienced local magnate Adina Beg Khan as his governor of the Panjab and set out for Delhi. "During their return march, Raghunāth and Malhar, as was their wont, demanded money from every village and revenue-collector on the way, and plundered the place if it was not paid. They reached Sonepat on 14th June and two days later turned south-westwards to Buāna, and thence to Farrukhnagar and Rewari (arrival 20 June), *en route* to Mālwa and the Deccan.* Thus the main Maratha armies retired from Delhi and the northern provinces, a year after their arrival in June 1757, with the following gains to their credit:—

(*i*) the restoration of the former Maratha possessions in Etāwa and other places in the lower Doab, but not Sikandrabad nor the country north of it,

* Raghunath bathes at Thāneshwar (5 June 1758), leaves Navlāi, 32 m. s. w. of Ujjain, for Maheshwar ghāt on the Narmada (19 August), crosses the Kāsāri-ghāt and reaches Punā (*c.* 16 September.) *DC. SPD.* ii. 95, xxvii. 229.

(*ii*) the nominal ownership of the Panjab with the promise of an annual tribute of 75 lakhs from Adina Beg Khan,

(*iii*) a friendly settlement with Suraj Mal, by which the Jāt was confirmed in his annexations and also allowed to hold the fort of Agra, on condition of punctually paying the instalments of his old promised tribute,

and (*iv*) the Emperor's agreement to pay 13 lakhs annually on condition of the Marathas keeping 5,000 horse in Delhi for his protection, this subsidy to be paid only so long as the subsidiary force was present there. *

§ 12. *Raghunath Rao's acts and policy critically examined.*

This long expedition of Raghunath Rao caused the wildest exultation among the ignorant sycophants of the Maratha Court, and their baseless praise has been echoed by equally ignorant historians of that people in our own days, as "carrying the Hindu paramountcy (*Hindu-pad-Padshahi*) up to Attock." On a calm examination Raghunath's vaunted achievement is found to be politically a hollow show and financially barren. The

* *SPD.* xxi. 148. The Peshwa had fixed Rs. 12 as the monthly salary of a trooper. But Antaji Manakeshwar, who commanded the contingent, rightly pointed out that, considering the high prices in Delhi, a cavalryman could not feed himself and his charger there on less than Rs. 25 a month. If therefore the full strength was maintained, the 5000 men would have consumed 15 lakhs, leaving no surplus to be sent to the Puna treasury.

full force of the Maratha State, with the exception of the Peshwa's personal retainers and the Sindhia family contingent,—had been concentrated in Northern India for two years under him, and Raghunath came back from this enterprise without having secured a pice for the Punā treasury but saddled with a debt of 80 lakhs to bankers, besides the arrears due to his troops. Politically, his failure was even more fatal. His reckless annexation of the Panjab made a war *a l'outrance* with Abdali inevitable. At the same time he estranged Najib Khan beyond hope of reconciliation, and for the sake of whom? The impotent and faithless Imād-ul-mulk and the invalid poltroon Ahmad Khan Bangash! This was the most ruinous diplomatic alignment of forces possible, and it was due mainly to Raghunath's folly. He scornfully rejected Malhar's advice to keep Najib in hand by following a policy of "live and let live" in the Doab; and he paid no heed to Najib's offer to act as a friendly mediator and make a permanent settlement by amicably marking out the Maratha and Abdali spheres of influence in Northern India. The blame must be shared by the Peshwā in an even greater degree, as the supreme anthority. The provocatively advanced frontier which he sanctioned, required a large well-equipped force to be kept constantly on the spot to defend it; and yet the Peshwa did not realize that suzerainty involves such a responsibility. No Maratha soldier could stand the winter of Lahor, and no first-rate

Maratha chieftain (like the Peshwa's brother or cousin) was regularly posted as Warden of the North-western marches ; no, not even a secondary general like Holkar or Sindhia. This policy bore its natural fruit on 14th January 1761.

§ 13. *Prince Ali Gauhar's campaign in the Rewari-Rohtak districts, May 1757—March 1758.*

Prince Ali Gauhar (entitled Shah Alam II)* was the eldest and ablest of the Emperor's sons, and the fortunes of the Delhi royalty would probably have been restored if he could have had a free hand in reforming the administration and collecting an army and treasury of his own. But the disloyal selfishness of the wazir Imād-ul-mulk would not let him do so, and indeed pursued him with such deadly hostility for over a year that at last the heir to the throne was driven out of the neighbourhood of Delhi and had to "set his face towards the wilderness." Abdali had at first (19 Feb. 1757) appointed this prince Chancellor of the Empire, but the latter "had been given no territory for his maintenance and hence he had no money and no troops. He got no control over the administration and could effect no improvement in the collection of revenue or the transaction of public business." So, after a few days Abdali set him aside for Imād.

*TALS. 108*b*, 119*b*, 126, 143*a*-145*b*. *DC.* Ghulam Ali, i. 30, 37-42. *Siyar*, iii. 59.

In May 1757 the prince went to the Baluch settlements south-west of Delhi to get something out of his jagirs in that region. At Jhajhar its zamindar Hasan Ali Khan (a nephew of Kāmgār) evaded payment of tribute to him. The prince sent a force against Kaliānā, the seat of the late Sitārām Khazānchi's widow Satbhāni and sons (Devidat and Shambhunath.) They submitted and signed undertakings to pay tribute for their estate. Hasan Ali now followed their example. The prince next advanced northwards to the Hisār district; but the villagers evacuated their homes and took refuge in the hills in order to escape from his soldiery who lived solely on plunder. As the result of it, utter want of provisions forced his troops to disperse. The prince turned aside to Kanaud (16 m. n. of Nārnol), put a small garrison there, and came to Nārnol which was vacated by the Jaipur Rajah's officers. But his plunder of this unresisting town excited indignation and the Jaipur troops cut off the prince's outpost at Kanaud. Reinforcements, 4,000 strong, now came from Jaipur to the local officers, and they hemmed Shah Alam in in a fortalice in the neighbourhood. The prince fled to Rewari and Farrukhnagar abandoning his artillery because the draught-oxen were seized by the Rajputs, and his own followers deserted him to return to Delhi. Musa Khan Baluch (the heir of Kāmgār) who had paid to the Marathas and taken a

lease from them, was forced to promise revenue to the prince also !

Shah Alam next attacked Auliya Khan Baluch of Dādri (in the Rohtak district) and secured a promise of 50 lakhs as tribute (6 March 1758) ; he then came to Jhajhar to restore his outpost which the local Baluch zamindars had driven out in his absence. Meantime, the wazir had made the puppet Emperor issue orders for recalling the prince and counteracting his measures in that district. The news of this official antagonism emboldened the Baluches still further, and they robbed the prince's baggage outside Jhajhar, while his soldiers plundered the villages around. A sort of compromise was then made and on 16th March Shah Alam started on his return to Delhi with all his hopes ruined, his only gain being the doubtful one of the town of Jhajhar, while its fort still held out against him. [*TALS.* 152*b*-154*a*.]

§ 14. *Imad's plots against Ali Gauhar.*

Near the *jhil* of Masaudabad (Najafgarh) the despairing heir to the throne was visited by Vital Shivdev, a lieutenant of Raghunath, whom he bribed to support his cause with his contingent (26 March.) The two proceeded to Khizirabad and thence to Patparganj. The news alarmed Imād, who sent a force under Bālābāsh Khan Badakhshi to bring the prince away in any way he could. A battle followed, in which many

of the Badakhshis were slain and Bālābāsh fled away to the garden of Jugalkishor. This reverse utterly bewildered the wazir; in impotent rage he abused the Emperor as the secret instigator of Shah Alam's disobedience. He put all the other princes in confinement within the fort and strictly forbade every communication between the palace and outside. "The Emperor remained a helpless and silent spectator of it." In fear of an attempt to wrest Delhi fort from his hands with Maratha aid, the wazir brought Intizām-ud-daulah away from his mansion (30 March) and kept him under surveillance in the fort. Many other nobles were watched with similar jealousy, so that even Ahmad Bangash, the head of the imperial army, had to enlist new troops for defending himself against any coup intended by his friend and patron the wazir! He paid his official visits to the Court only under full escort. [*TALS.* 154*b*-158*b*.]

At the same time, Imād kept negotiating with Vital Shivdev, through Rajah Dilel Singh, to tempt him to abandon Shah Alam's cause. Vital was promised six lakhs and solemnly assured that the prince would be left unmolested in his jagirs of Jhajhar and Kaliānā. So, the two returned from Sikandrabad, after plundering Bulandshahar, to Khizirabad (21 April.) The treacherous Imād continued to write to the prince through the passive Emperor, bidding him visit the fort. But the bird refused to enter the snare; Shah Alam marched

round the capital to Wazirabad in the north (8 May.) At last, deluded by the oaths and assurances of the wazir's envoys, the prince came inside the city and took up his residence in Ali Mardan Khan's mansion (14 May), but he kept all his followers, 2000 in number, with him, while Vital encamped in Qudsiabagh, north of the Kashmir Gate. "The Emperor (in fear of the wazir) durst not send any servant to inquire after his son's health and comfort, though he had taken up his residence in the capital." [*Ibid.*, 162-166.]

§ 15. *Imad attacks Ali Gauhar in Delhi, 1758.*

After neutralizing Vital Rao with a large bribe, the wazir at last on 19th May, 1758, got all his troops under arms on the pretext of escorting him during a pilgrimage to Qutb-ud-din Auliya's shrine, but sent the force under Bālābāsh Khan to invest Ali Mardan's house and arrest the prince. * The battle raged from 3 P. M. throughout the night, Shah Alam making a spirited defence under his own command and checking the assaults with the fire of long flint-locks from the roof. The big guns of Salimgarh cannonaded the besieged house. One division of the wazir's army, led by Sayyid Jamil-ud-din, was routed. But numbers at last told on the small body of exhausted defenders; several

* Imad's attack upon Ali Gauhar in Delhi,—*TALS.* 167-170. *DC.* Ghulam Ali, i. 43-49. Shakir 93-94. Miskin 199. *SPD.* xxvii. 220, 224. *Siyar*, iii. 60.

captains of the prince were slain, and next morning (20th May) the wazir's troops forced their way in. But Shah Alam with only a hundred devoted followers charged them sword in hand, slashed right and left, cut his way out through the mansion of Jafar Khan, Qudsiabad and Jaswantpurā, and found safety in Vital's camp. A charge of the Marathas drove his pursuers back, but all his property and war material left in Ali Mardan's house were plundered by the wazir's men and he was reduced to absolute penury. Next day, the wazir, yielding to Vital's threat, restored the small portion of the plunder which had reached his hands, or could be traced by the police in the city, and also paid Vital the six lakhs promised. Then the wazir, through his helpless tool the Emperor, proclaimed Shah Alam a rebel in arms against the lawful Government!

§ 16. *Ali Gauhar's wanderings after escape from Delhi.**

From the northern suburbs of Delhi the prince, still accompanied by Vital Shivdev, marched again to the Baluch country in the south-west. At Farrukhnagar he fought (30 May) Mirzā Khan and other relatives of the zamindar Musā Khan Baluch and routed them.

---

* *TALS.* 175-192*a*. *DC. Siyar*, iii. 60-61. Ghulam Ali 47-53, 59-66. *SPD.* ii. 95.

Then, taking a promise of Rs. 2,60,000 from the defeated party, he went to Pataudi, where he received many gifts and provisions sent by Suraj Mal Jāt in charge of his son Ratan Singh. * During the first half of June 1758 Shah Alam with Vital's help continued roving in that region,—Farrukhnagar, Rewari, Nāhra, Dādri,—plundering the villages and levying contribution wherever he could. On 16th June Vital parted company with him at Dādri, under strict orders of recall from his chief Raghunath, who had been won over by Imād to oppose Shah Alam's interests.

Vital had received orders to bring the prince away with himself; but he left him with a small escort under his own son and told him to go wherever he pleased. "Shah Alam, after bidding farewell to Vital Rao, marched beyond Dādri on 16th June, turned his face to the path of the wilderness in sole reliance on God, and told his followers that they were free to accompany him or not as they liked. Most of them left him." By way of Churkhi he went to Hisār, where he found the Bikānir Rajah's reply refusing to give him an asylum in his kingdom, a refusal softened by a purse of Rs. 10,000. At Hisār he gathered many military adventurers and some money, and resuming his march on 25th July reached Kunjpurā on the 31st. Then crossing the Jamunā, he reached Muzaffarnagar and was conducted

* The wazir sent Nāgar Mal to the Jāt camp at Palwal to induce Suraj Mal not to side with Shah Alam (3 June.)

by Najib's brother and eldest son with all honours to Jansath and lodged there. Here many Bārha Sayyids joined him. Najib himself welcomed the prince at Miranpur (*c.* 20 August) and gave daily subsistence to his troops, but he refused to go to war with the wazir and the Marathas for the sake of his master's son. Unable to effect his purpose here, the prince, after making an addition to his harem, marched from Miranpur across Ruhelkhand to Oudh, where Shujā-ud-daulah received him with full ceremony on 2nd January 1759. Shah Alam's adventures in concert with this ally will form a separate chapter, because they did not affect the history of Delhi or of the imperial Court, but concerned only an outlying and lost province.

§ 17. *Imad's campaign in the west of Delhi, 1758.*

We may complete this episode of Delhi history by briefly describing the wazir's activities during the period.* When Shah Alam, abandoned by Vital Shivdev, entered the Hisār district, Imād decided to oppose him by arms. But his Maratha allies having left for the Deccan, the wazir was compelled to fight the prince out with his own resources. He dragged the Emperor along with himself in order to give validity to his acts and also to prevent the capture of the Emperor's person by his enemies during his absence. A long time was lost in making a start from Delhi, as nothing was

* *TALS.* 182*a*-188*a*.

ready for a campaign for want of money. At the end of July 1758, the Emperor reached Kot Kalān (4 miles from Jhajhar) and the wazir Bahādurgarh. But by that time their prey was already beyond the Jamunā. So, the wazir set himself to exacting tribute from the villages and fighting them in case of default. From 10th August his troops began to range through Jhajhar, Dādri, Kaliānā and other places on the Rohtak—Gurgaon border, and collected over two lakhs of Rupees, till they reached Hisār on 22nd September. In this region the sturdy villagers from behind their mud walls, frequently offered stout resistance, and fought the wazir; they could be subdued only by turning artillery upon them. On 19th September, when the Emperor and wazir were separated during their march by following two different routes, the people of Bhiwāni, matchlock in hand, shut their sovereign out of their village, while the local robber population carried off many of the carts laden with baggage from both divisions of the imperial army.

The wazir next attacked Bhatner, the seat of Muhammad Amin Khan Bhatti. But Amin Khan, strong in the strength of his fortress, the river Ghaghar, dense jungles, and abundance of soldiers,—continued to defy him. Every day the Khan's men sallied forth from their fort and plundered all people who had occasion to leave the wazir's camp. Thus the invaders suffered from great dearth of food and drinking water.

Then Ālā Jāt came, waited on the wazir, and supplied provisions. The Bhattis even made a night attack on the Delhi camp, slaying and wounding many men and carrying away much property. The sufferings of the miserable imperialists were aggravated by a great storm of hail and rain which burst upon their camp at 3 P. M. on 30th October and continued far into the night. The Emperor's residential tent fell down from the weight and he was buried under it. No servant was present to erect it; so he cut the canvas with his dagger and crawled out, crying out to his still buried sons, who shouted back to indicate exactly where they were. At last all the camp gathered round the tent, the Emperor and his sons were rescued and took shelter in a large waggon (*rath*), but, horrible to relate, men and women were mingled together! Then the wazir patched up some sort of peace and returned towards Delhi. At Bhawāna, the Emperor's tent caught fire, but he at last reached his capital on 22nd November 1758.

CHAPTER XVIII

RAJPUTANA, 1751-1760.

§ 1. *Rajput-Maratha relations during 1751-1753.*

By the middle of the year 1751 the three dynastic wars in Rajputana had ended in the victory of the claimants, as we have seen in Chapter 7. In Jaipur and Bundi the Maratha nominees had been installed, while in Marwar alone the new Rajah Bakht Singh had gained the throne unaided by any Deccani mercenary.

These wars had left the Rajput States under a heavy load of debt due to the Marathas as the price of their armed support. It is possible to form an exact estimate of the monetary claims of the Marathas in Rajputana at this time. The fine of ten lakhs imposed on Kota by Baji Rao in January 1738 seems to have been paid in full. Leaving aside the absurd sums of one *kror* or even half a *kror* so recklessly offered to the Marathas by Maharana Jagat Singh II in his frantic desire to win for his nephew Madho Singh the Jaipur throne or at least half of that kingdom, we find that in 1748 Madho Singh promised them a *nazar* of ten lakhs. To this sum must be added the indemnity of two lakhs imposed on him for the massacre of the Maratha visitors to his capital in January 1751. So, the dues from

Madho Singh were twelve lakhs in all. It was laid down by the Maratha king that out of the actual collection made here every year, half a lakh was to be paid to him, and the balance to be shared equally between his two generals Holkar and Sindhia posted there. At Bundi, Ummed Singh during his contest for the throne had bound himself to pay his Maratha allies ten lakhs, out of which two lakhs were paid in 1749 and the remaining eight lakhs were yet to be realized. In Marwar, Bakht Singh was under no obligation to the Marathas; but his defeated rival Rām Singh, immediately after the loss of his realm (July 1751), sent his priest Jago to hire a Maratha army and thereafter became entirely a creature of the Deccanis.

No part of these contributions was paid * by the Rajput princes during 1751 and 1752, for it was long before the Marathas were in a position to enforce their claims by arms, and without the threat of war nothing could be collected. Throughout 1751 and the first four months of 1752 the Maratha forces in Northern India

* *Bundi*,—in 1754 five lakhs remained unpaid, but Rs. 60,000 was actually paid in that year. *SPD.* xxvii. 86. *Marwar*,—Vad, iii. 143 and 129. *Udaipur*,—the Mahārāṇā in 1747 repudiated his promise to Baji Rao I (made in 1737) to pay Rs. 1,60,000 annually, and he required to be coerced. In 1753 the Marathas planned to take from him bonds for 5 lakhs. *SPD.* ii. 34. Nathji, an aspirant to his brother's throne, offered to pay 15 lakhs after his installation. xxi. 58.

were entangled in Safdar Jang's war with the Afghans, and no troops could be spared for Rajputana. When that war ended, their main army under Malhar Rao Holkar started for the South to instal Ghazi-ud-din II in the seat of the Nizam of Haidarabad, as we have seen (Chap. 8, § 10.) This plan ended abruptly in the death of the Maratha nominee by poison on 16th October, 1752. Thus, Rajputana remained denuded of Maratha forces from February 1751 till the end of May 1752, when a body of 5,000 horse under Jayapa Sindhia, detached by Malhar from Delhi with Ram Singh's envoys, reached Ajmir for attacking Bakht Singh. This force was quite inadequate for defeating the flower of Rathor chivalry under a most gallant and capable chief. The invaders, after reaching Ajmir, sacked that city, burnt many of its houses, slew all who resisted, and then took to plundering the neighbourhood. Bakht Singh, on hearing of the invasion, had arrived with his full tribal levy and encamped about eight miles from Ajmir, guarding his frontier, but not advancing to the defence of Ajmir. He at first bided his time, and then in July struck his blow. Mounting guns on a hillock and planting strong block-houses (*nakas*) to hold the paths, he bombarded the Maratha position. His fire slew many of the raiders, including one captain ; the Deccanis were checked and fled away to the South, accompanied by the discomfited Ram Singh. [*TALS.* 38*b*, 101*a* (regnal year corrected to *fifth*.)]

§ 2. *Jayapa Sindhia invades Marwar on the side of Ram Singh, 1754.*

After this, Marwar enjoyed respite for a year and a half. But the hope of preserving that country from Maratha aggression vanished with the sudden death of Bakht Singh only two months after his victory at Ajmir. He had planned to go to Delhi in company with the Jaipur Rajah and there concert measures with the imperial Government for keeping the Marathas confined to the Deccan, when he died of cholera. His son, Bijay Singh, was quite unable to cope with the Deccanis.

Not a farthing having been realized from Rajputana, the Peshwa sent a vast army under his brother Raghunath Rao with Malhar Holkar to that country. This chief crossed the Mukundara pass and entered Kota territory on 30th October 1753. Thence he proceeded through Jaipur to the Kumbher district of the Jat country (arriving there on 20th January 1754.) He was nowhere opposed; Kota and Bundi were old allies, while Madho Singh averted the desolation of his kingdom by sending his diwan Haragovind Natani (16 Dec. 1753) and agreeing to a contribution of 16½ lakhs of Rupees,*—15¼ lakhs being the outstanding tribute, and 1¼ lakhs a present to Raghunath for the

* Out of this sum, Jago Pandit, the Jaipur minister, paid to Jayapa Sindhia (April 1755) Rs. 7,35,074 in cash and three lakhs in orders on bankers, leaving a balance of Rs. 6,14,926 still due. *SPD.* xxvii. 108. Interviews,—xxvii. 79.

honour of his visit! On 17th December, Ram Singh, the ex-Rajah of Marwar, waited on Raghunath and begged his help in recovering his paternal throne. But Raghunath could not be diverted from his main purpose, which was to go to Delhi and support Imād-ud-mulk in getting control of the Emperor. After losing four months on the way in a vain attempt to subdue Imād's enemy Suraj Mal Jat, the Maratha army arrived opposite Delhi on 1st June 1754. Next day Imād made himself wazir and set up an Emperor of his own creation, and Raghunath had nothing more to do than realize the subsidy promised by Imād and establish Maratha revenue collectors in the districts ceded in the Gangetic Doab and elsewhere.

So, on 23rd June, Raghunath detached Jayapa Sindhia from his side to Marwar, with orders to restore Ram Singh to the throne. The Gujrat division of the Maratha army, 10,000 strong, was told off for this task. On the way, Jayapa brushed aside the Rathor opposition at Kishangarh, 18 miles north-east of Ajmir. Bijay Singh wisely decided to fall back from the far advanced post of Ajmir to his old frontier fort of Merta, which he held in full strength with a large park of artillery. Here Jayapa arrived on 6th August and was joined by Ram Singh's adherents. That prince set himself vigorously to enlist his clansmen and soon assembled 12 to 15 thousand Rathors, besides tempting numbers of Bijay Singh's followers to desert.

Bijay Singh now issued from Merta and entrenched himself opposite the invader's camp and engaged in daily skirmishes and cannonading. At last on 15th September a battle at close quarters took place. Rajputs of the same clan and even of the same family were ranged on the opposite sides and fought with the blind fury of civil war. "Father slew son, brother killed brother." This unnatural contest raged from 9 o'clock in the morning till sunset. By nightfall Bijay Singh had been completely defeated. The vanquished king spent that night and the next day in Merta, loading what property he could for removal, and then fled away to Nagor. On the 17th Jayapa and Ram Singh entered Merta, looted the city for three hours, and then proclaimed safety to the unhappy citizens. The victors immediately pushed on to Nagor and laid siege to it; but the siege was destined to last for a year and to cost the Marathas dear. *

§ 3. *Peshwa's policy in Marwar how thwarted.*

From the beginning of this campaign the Peshwa kept assuring Jayapa of his full confidence in his valour and wisdom, but urging him not to carry matters to an extreme, as the Marwar Rathors were a race of famous swordsmen, justly proud of their having never yet suffered defeat from the Marathas. He advised his

* Jayapa goes to Marwar,—*Aiti. Patren*, 122, 124. *TALS.* 21*a*. Raj. i. 37, 39. *DC.* Tod, ii. (details of battle.)

general to conclude the Marwar business as quickly as possible by tact and compromise, giving to Bijay Singh his father Bakht Singh's appanage and to Ram Singh his paternal dominions, or even dividing the Marwar kingdom equally between the two. For, there was a far more important and lucrative undertaking before the Marathas in Hindustan than changing the succession in a poor and barren Rajput State. Safdar Jang had recently died, and his son Shuja-ud-daulah had succeeded him in the rich provinces of Oudh and Allahabad ; now was the time to get a large sum out of him and also to secure the transfer of the holy cities of Allahabad and Benares to the Peshwa. The force accompanying Raghunath near Delhi was too small to exact these gains and to enforce the payment of the vast tribute promised by the wazir Imad-ul-mulk. And money was sorely needed by the Peshwa ; he was helpless before his creditors and unpaid officers ; "my Government is eternally in the grip of that consumption, the malady of debt." Fifty lakhs of Rupees if realized from Hindustan would be most welcome to him now. For achieving this object it was fatal to disperse the Maratha troops over a vast area. Jayapa was again and again ordered to free himself from the Marwar entanglement by any means whatever, to satisfy Ram Singh somehow by placing four or five Rathor chieftains under him as his supporters, and to avoid the extremely hard task of crushing Bijay Singh altogether, which would have

kept the Maratha army engaged in Marwar till eternity.*

But Jayapa would not listen to his master, and even less to his local chief Raghunath or to his colleague Malhar. He was obsessed by the idea of capturing Bijay Singh's forts and winning the whole kingdom for Ram Singh.

§ 4. *Early successes of Jayapa Sindhia in Marwar, 1755.*

At first fortune seemed to favour him. The strong fort of Ajmir was stormed by a Maratha division (under the local tribute-collector and not by Jayapa), on 21st February 1755. And shortly before this, the city of Jalor, where Bijay Singh's hereditary hoards were deposited and which was regarded as his safest refuge in a day of adversity, fell into the hands of a body of Ram Singh's partisans. A mixed Rathor-Maratha force under Jagannath Purohit and Santaji Bābhlé had invested Jodhpur itself and their sap was approaching the walls of the Rathor capital.

At the same time, the rigour of the blockade of Nagor began to press its garrison hard. In March 1755 one tank of water within that fort dried up and there remained only one other to keep the defenders and

* *Aiti. Patren*, 125, 127 (*kshay-rogā samān karz-rog*), 131 (partition proposed). Raj. vi. 327, 341.

other inmates alive. Famine raged in the beleaguered city; salt sold at 1½ seers per Rupee, rice at 13 seers, and opium—so indispensable to the Rajput, at Rs. 20 per seer, while firewood and grass were totally unobtainable. Men began to escape from Nagor whenever they could. Bijay Singh opened negotiations for terms through a holy abbot, Gosain Bijay Bhārati, but Jayapa demanded the impossible sum of fifty lakhs. At the same time, Jayapa finding his own water-supply failing with the approach of summer, wrested from the enemy's possession a well-watered village, Tausar, seven miles south of the fort, and shifted his camp there.

Hence, there was every prospect of his being able to capture Nagor and end the war in a few weeks. So, when, towards the close of February, Malhar and Sakharam Bapu, now free from their campaigns in the Doab and Mewat, offered to come to Nagor to reinforce him, Jayapa told them that it was unnecessary as he would successfully conclude the Nagor business in a few days, and that they had better go and attack Rupnagar. Raghunath Rao, too, was put off with exactly the same reply when he reached Pushkar (3rd March) and proposed to come to Nagor and personally effect a reconciliation between Jayapa and Bijay Singh and do what he could for reinstating Ram Singh on the throne of Jodhpur.

Thus, the Maratha cause in Marwar, and in consequence of it, throughout Northern India too, was

for the time being ruined by the selfish insubordination of one over-proud officer. And soon things began to turn against him. In March Jalor was recovered by Bijay Singh's men. Jodhpur held out, and so did Nagor in spite of deepening privation hunger and thirst.* But Jayapa clung to his trenches with blind obstinacy. He wanted to wipe out the disgrace of his repulse by Bakht Singh in July 1752, and after his recent boast to the Peshwa and Raghunath he had not the face to turn back from the walls of Nagor without taking it.

§ 5. *Murder of Jayapa Sindhia, 24 July 1755.*

The exasperation grew bitterer on both sides, and at last the storm burst on 24th July, 1755. Peace-talks had been opened on behalf of Bijay Singh by Gosāin Bijay Bhārati some time ago, but no settlement was reached. The negotiator and his associates used to go and come between the city and the Maratha camp. On 24th July the Gosāin came to Jayapa's tent with Rāj Singh Chauhān and Jajneshwar from Nāgor. They were joined by Rāwat Jait Singh Sisodiā, who was living in the Maratha camp as the Mahārānā's ambassador, to lend his services as a neutral mediator. That day the discussion was prolonged and feelings ran

* Raj. i. 44. *SPD.* xxi. 67 (for *Dānāghāṁ* read *Ināṇāṁ*), 69. xxvii. 106, 108, 105 (Ajmir captured.)

high.* The Rathor envoy asked the Maratha general, "What do you mean by coming to our territory and demanding tribute? What do you take yourself to be?" Jayapa haughtily pointed to his sword as his authority. The Rathor pleaded, "Do not be too proud of your swordsmanship and strength of arm. Know that God alone can grant one man supremacy over another." But these words only heightened Jayapa's fury. After abusing the Rathor Rajah and his agents as cowards, he thundered out, "By the stroke of my shoes I shall collect tribute from you." This was more than the ancient peers of Hindustan, claiming descent from the Sun and the Moon, could bear from a Brahman's hereditary slipper-bearer. In an instant the Rathor's dagger leaped out of its scabbard and was plunged again and again in Jayapa's bosom; his companions completed the work with their swords. At once the alarm was sounded, and a wild tumult swept through Jayapa's camp. The Marathas flew to arms; the three envoys of Bijay Singh were cut down, and the innocent

* Murder of Jayapa,—*TALS.* 59*a* and *Chahar Gulzar* 400*b* both assert that Jayapa abused Bijay S. and the Rajputs in general during the last discussion. *Aiti. Patren*, 139, 141. (I have rejected 143 written in 1799). *SPD.* xxvii. 116, ii. 148. *DC.* under 26 July.

The above are the authentic contemporary accounts. For the opium-eaters' tales concocted later, see Tod, i (Personal Narrative) and *Vamsha Bhaskar*, iv. 3649-3652 (10 lakhs fine for the murder) and their echoes in Marathi in *Bhāu Sahebānchi Bakhar*.

A beautiful cenotaph was built at Nagor over Jayapa's ashes.

by the Marathas and its provision supply cut off, so that grain sold in the beleaguered city at 2 seers a Rupee. While keeping his grip on Nagor unslackened, Dattaji sent out smaller detachments to every village where the Rathors had raised their heads.*

Then a Jaipur force under Anurudh Singh Khangārot with allies from Shāhpur, Rupnagar, Kerauli and Harawati, making a total of 25,000 men, and strong artillery, was reported as coming to the relief of Nagor [*SPD.* xxi. 74, 77.] The Jaipur army had at first marched in two divisions, under Anurudh and Jagannath Sah, against Naraina and Ramgarh respectively, but in fear of the Maratha detachment under Ranoji Bhoité advancing against them they had united at Ramgarh. Dattaji countered this move by pushing up to Bhoité a strong reinforcement of 6,000 men, partly composed of his own Marathas and partly of Ram Singh's Rathor partisans. Anurudh was completely cowed by this superior force, and saw these Maratha generals on 10th October, asking for peace and agreeing to go to Dattaji for settling the terms. But on hearing that Bijay Singh's retainers and a party of Bikanir troops under diwan Bakhtawar Mal were coming to his aid, in a body of some 2,500 fresh

* *Godawas*, on the Sukri river, 32 m. n. e. of Jalor. *Didwana*, 55 m. . e. e. of Nagor. *Nagor*, 43 m. n. w. of Merta. *Daulatpur*, . of Didwana. *Naraina*, 8 m. s. of Sambhar town. 3 m. n. of Naraina and 38 m. e. of Didwana.

men, he broke off negotiations, and on 15th October set out from Ramgarh towards Nagor. Next day, from Datia he crossed the frontier and entered the Marwar territory. But during the preceding night a light force of Marathas under Bhoité, Narsingh Rao Sindhia, and Khanaji Jadav, had made a forced march from their halting place, and they now overtook and attacked the rear of the Jaipur army three hours after dawn. An obstinate combat raged for four hours. The Deccani moss-troopers galloped upon the cumbrous artillery of Jaipur, cut down the gunners, and in the end gained a complete victory. Anurudh lost seven to eight hundred men slain, and a thousand horses, 50 camels, two guns, and six tumbrils of munitions given up to plunder (16th October.) But a still greater disgrace befell him; his dead were not allowed to be removed for cremation. The Maratha losses were only two killed and forty-three wounded among the men and 70 horses.

Severely shaken by this defeat, the Jaipur general turned his face towards Didwana, moving by regular marches, his baggage placed in the centre of the column and his artillery in front. Constantly harassed and robbed of horses and transport cattle by the Maratha bands roving round him and his men and beasts worn out by want of water, he could not advance more than five miles a day. In this sorry plight he reached Didwana, 38 miles from Ramgarh on 20th October. During the last day of this march he

had to pass twelve hours absolutely without any water, the Marathas having blocked up the wells and seized the tanks along the entire route in advance. The enemy, by repeatedly charging his rear and flanks, killed 300 of his men and took 125 of his horses and three of his guns, while large numbers succumbed to thirst.

He durst not move out of Didwana. Similarly his expected allies, the men of Bijay Singh, were cooped up at Daulatpur (5 miles e. of Didwana.) A convoy of food coming from Bikanir to the Jaipur army in Didwana was cut off by the Marathas near Daulatpur, a hundred men of the escort being killed and the rest put to flight. The greatest scarcity raged in the Rajput camps; rice sold at 3 or 4 seers the Rupee, while fodder was almost unprocurable. Anurudh saw all hope of succour vanish and the way for advance and retreat alike closed. He came out with 200 horse and saw the three Maratha generals facing him on 31st October, but nothing was settled. Bijay Singh, too, sent envoys from Nagor proposing to visit Dattaji for arranging terms of peace (about 5th November.)

§ 7. *Jaipur and Marwar Rajahs make peace with Marathas, Feb. 1756.**

In the mean time, on hearing of Jayapa's murder, the

---

section.—*SPD.* xxi. 70. 82. 83. 85. li. 54, 56, 62, 63, 65. *Aitt. Patras* 142.

Peshwa had ordered reinforcements to Marwar for retrieving the Maratha position there. The first to arrive was Antaji Manakeshwar, with 10,000 men (including Jat and Bhadauria allies), who had started from Kunch on the bank of the Jamuna on 4th September, and by making a safe detour through the hills by way of Indragarh, Khatauli and the Lakheri pass, had entered Jaipur territory near Nevai. Without coming to Nagor, he first ravaged the Kachhwa territory and then joined the Maratha force before Didwana (4th November), helping to make the blockade complete.

The year had been marked by drought, and even in the open Maratha camp grain was selling at five seers a Rupee, while fodder was so scarce that a Rupee's worth of grass a day did not suffice for one horse. The water level in the wells had sunk to 225 feet below the surface. The situation within the blockaded city of Nāgor was even worse. At last life there became well-nigh unbearable, and on 12th November Bijay Singh slipped out of Nagor with 300 foot and 100 horse, intending to join the Jaipur army at Didwana. But finding that place enveloped by large enemy forces, he quickly changed his route and fled in headlong haste to Bikanir, where he arrived after ten hours of ceaseless riding.

But the situation was no better at Bikanir. Around that city all the wells had dried up for 24 miles round, and Bijay Singh's attempts to raise a fresh army there

failed. So, early in December he returned to Nagor, and reopened peace parleys with Dattaji. Madho Singh decided to secure the release of his army in Didwana by promising five lakhs of Rupees to the Marathas.

The Maratha forces assembled in Rajputana were in overwhelming strength at this time (the end of 1755) and the Rathors could make no head against them. So, at last, Bijay Singh bowed to the inevitable and agreed to make peace on the following terms (end of February 1756) :

(*i*) Ajmir fort and district were to be ceded to the Marathas in full sovereignty.

(*ii*) A war indemnity of fifty lakhs was to be paid,—25 lakhs in the course of one year and the balance in two years more.

(*iii*) The city of Jalor and half the territory of Marwar were to be delivered to Ram Singh, while Bijay Singh would rule over the other half and the cities of Jodhpur, Nagor and Merta. None of these terms except the first one was ultimately fulfilled.

These negotiations having been concluded, at the end of February 1756, Dattaji halted before Nagor for some time, in the hope of collecting the money, and then moved on to Merta, and thence to Rupnagar, against which city he opened trenches on 22nd April. Here another division of the Maratha army under Shamsher Bahadur joined him on 5th May and completed the investment. Bahadur Singh, the usurping junior prince

of the Rupnagar State, submitted to the invaders and yielded his city to his elder brother Sāmant Singh, whom he had ousted and whose cause had been taken up by Rām Singh and the Marathas. Then Dattaji returned (early in June) to his own fief of Ujjain,* while Shamsher Bahadur went back to Malwa. Thus, the Marwar adventure of the Sindhia family, begun four years ago, at last ended.

§ 8. *Raghunath Rao invades Rajputana, 1757—his failure and sufferings.*

At the end of this year, 1756, first Malhar Holkar and some weeks later Raghunath Rao were again ordered by the Peshwa to Rajputana to exact the promised but long-delayed tribute. Raghunath reached Indor on 14 February 1757, and on being joined by Malhar there, at first proposed to march on Delhi, which was then being robbed by Ahmad Shah Abdali.

But such a task was really impossible for him. Apart from his own constitutional lethargy and

---

* On 15 October 1756 Antaji writes,—"Before this the Maharao of Kotā [Durjan Sal] died childless. On hearing of it Dattaji by rapid marches went to Kotā and secured promise of 40 lakhs as *nazar*,—20 lakhs were paid down and bonds given for the remaining 20 lakhs. He has come back to Ujjain." *SPD*, ii. 66. *Vamsha Bhaskar*, p. 3654-'5 places the death in July and gives 12 lakhs as the succession fine imposed on Ajit S. Hada, the new Rajah.

incapacity, he was severely handicapped by his utter lack of resources and his constant friction with his great lieutenant. The Peshwa had inherited from his dashing father Baji Rao vast territorial claims, but also a crushing legacy of debt, which he had only increased by following a policy of aggressive expansion during 15 years, and he looked to this north-Indian expedition as his only possible means of relief. He had therefore been unable to fit out Raghunath in proper strength. Raghunath's own force (led by Vital Shivdev) was 4,000 and Malhar's contingent 2,000, making a total of 6,000 men immediately under his banners. And even counting the scattered detachments of Shamsher Bahadur and Naro Shankar and Antaji's army (which last was really an imperial service corps), the full Maratha strength in the north did not exceed 16,000 men. But their leader had no money, nor any prospect of getting money soon ; the Rajput States were themselves impoverished and merely negotiated to gain time. In consequence, Raghunath and his soldiers were starving. Far from being able to remit tribute to the Peshwa, he constantly begged for funds from Puna, in order to subsist ! As he writes, "I am feeding myself only by looting villages. In this country most places are fortified, and not a grain of food can be obtained without fighting. I have no money, and cannot even raise a loan. My soldiers have been fasting for one or two days at a time." He laid on

Malhar the entire blame for the failure to clinch matters with the Rajput Rajahs and hasten the collection of tribute. [Raj. i 52, 67, 71.]

From Indor, through Mewar,—where he took a ransom of one lakh from Jāwad and plundered Ranikheda (March),—Raghunath Rao reached Jaipur territory, and while dunning Mādho Singh for payment, laid siege (April) to the fortalice of Barwada* belonging to the Shekhawats, who were the most stubborn fighters in the Kachhwa kingdom. Raghunath had no siege-materials and was long held up by this *garhi*. His insane pride and lack of business capacity prolonged the sufferings of his army. The Jaipur minister Kāniram offered to buy him off by paying the same tribute as agreed upon in the past; but "Raghunath would not listen; he demands 40 to 50 lakhs in cash and the cession of the 14 lakhs worth of jagir given by the Emperor to Jaipur some years ago as appertaining to fort Ranthambhor, in addition to Rāmpurā-Bhānpurā, Tonk-Todā, and Hinglājgarh. He is determined either to secure these gains by consent, or to remain here for four months and gain territory worth 40 to 50 lakhs by war." [*c.* 12 April, *SPD.* xxvii. 152*a*] Rajah Madho Singh wisely rejected these exorbitant terms and put his capital and other forts in a vigilant and active state

* Marked on modern maps under the expressive name of *Chauth-ka Barwara*, 20 m. w. of Ranthambhor fort and 16 m. n.w. of Sawai Madhopur Rly. station. Raj. i. 63. *SPD.* xxvii. 155. *Jawad*, 10 m. n., and *Ranikheda*, 18 m. n. w. of Neemuch.

of defence. The total Maratha force in that region, including Malhar's contingent now numbered 13,000. But Jaipur fort had a garrison of 17,000, and the Rajah's generals patrolled round it in strength day and night. Sanganer was held by Dilel Singh Rajawat, who was strengthened (10 May) with six tumbrils of powder and shot. Madho Singh called his feudatories one by one and made them swear on the sacred *bel* leaf to resist the southern invaders to the death. His determination to fight rather than accept Raghunath's humiliating terms became manifest to all. [*SPD.* xxi. 121 and 120 ; Raj. i. 71 differs from xxvii. 152*a*.]

But though there was no actual clash of arms, except for the ineffective siege of Barwada, the strong attitude of Madho Singh, forced Raghunath to lose more than three months and feed his huge army in idleness in Jaipur territory. At last he came to his senses and about 10th July agreed to accept eleven lakhs from Jaipur, six of which was paid down, and shared between Raghunath and Malhar in the proportion of 2 to 1. By this time Raghunath Rao had been reduced to a desperate state of destitution ; as he wrote to the Peshwa on 12th July in support of his prayer for a remittance, "I have no money, nor is any loan available. My troops are in debt. Prices here are very high. I am daily getting my food only by sacking the villages." [Raj. i. 71.]

[ear] ne Ahmad Shah had come and gone without

Raghunath lifting a finger to defend the holy places of Hindustan or to prevent the foreign invader from carrying away the treasures of the land and leaving it sucked dry for the Marathas who would come after him.*

Having thus at last settled the Jaipur business, Raghunath and Malhar waited for some days more in Jaipur territory for the arrival of Holkar's wife Gautami Bāi, and on being joined by her left Rajputana at the end of July 1757, and that country enjoyed peace for nearly a year after.

§ 9. *The Sindhias in Rajputana, 1758.*

The tribute of 50 lakhs which Bijay Singh of Marwar had been forced to promise to Dattaji Sindhia (in Feb. 1756), was beyond the resources of that desert land and remained unpaid for years after, keeping a source of friction perpetually open. During Raghunath's march through Rajputana in June 1757, the Marwar ministers had waited on him and begged him to abate these terms and dictate some reasonable compromise between their

* Raghunath assumed a despondent tone from the outset.

"Our troops are not yet assembled. I have no money. Abdali is strong ; it requires very great resources to chastise him. Send Dattaji Sindhia quickly to me from the Deccan" (Raghunath's letter, 16 Feb.)

On 16th Feb. his diwan Sakharam Bapu writes, "The month of Falgun (Feb-March) will be over before my contingent and that of Malhar are mustered. Abdali is a powerful enemy." [Raj. i. 52 and 53.]

Rajah and Sindhia. But Marwar had been assigned by the Peshwa as the special hunting-ground of the Sindhia family, and therefore Raghunath did not choose to interfere, even if he could have imposed his will on Dattaji, which was doubtful. [Raj. i. 66.]

So, Rajputana received another visit from the locust swarms of the south about the middle of 1758. In the July of that year Jankoji Sindhia was pressing Ummed Singh Sisodia of Shāhpurā for his tribute, and he paid a hurried visit to Raghunath Rao, then on his return journey from the Panjab to Maharashtra through eastern Rajputana and Malwa. At the end of that month Jankoji secured a promise of four lakhs from Shāhpurā and went to Kota, where the new Rajah had died. Here he imposed a succession fee on the late Rajah's successor, and here Malhar soon afterwards joined him (August) and helped to realize the money. The two Maratha generals now came to some sort of settlement of the long-standing rivalry between their families for sharing the Maratha acquisitions in Rajputana and Malwa. Jankoji then passed into Jaipur territory *via* Mālpurā. Rajah Madho Singh had entered into every anti-Maratha coalition since 1754, and he was now coerced into promising 36 lakhs, payable in four years, the present year's instalment of 9 lakhs to be enhanced by the addition of a *nazar* of three lakhs (September.) Since July last Jankoji had been receiving repeated letters from the retreating Raghunath Rao, urging him

to leave Rajputana for the present and march to Delhi, where a strong Maratha force was needed for defending their new gains in the Doab and the Panjab, as there were persistent rumours of Abdali's intention to invade India again. Jankoji halted during October and November on the eastern side of the Jaipur kingdom for the coming of his uncle and guardian Dattaji, who had at this time taken post in Rupnagar, "thinking day and night how to lighten the Peshwa's load of debt." At last uncle and nephew united, started for Delhi, and reached Najafgarh on 26 December 1758. *

The land being clear of the southern invaders, Madho Singh, who received a visit from Suraj Mal at Amber in March 1759 and probably concerted a defensive plan with him, soon afterwards expelled the Maratha outposts from his dominions. [*TALS.* 202*a*.]

§ 10. *Malhar Holkar's campaign in Rajputana, 1759.*

Soon after parting from Jankoji at Kota, Malhar returned to Indor (September 1758) and had a severe illness. On recovering, he made a journey to Puna, where he arrived in January 1759, after having been detained for some weeks at Sendhwa (midway between the Narmada and the Tapti) by a general Bhil rising in Khandesh. At the Maratha capital his tact and diplomacy

* *SPD.* ii 95, 94, 96. xxvii. 230, 236. Jankoji writes to the Peshwa that he was delayed long near Pushkar by his efforts to collect the promised tribute. (ii. 101.)

removed the Peshwa's recently kindled suspicions about him, and he was sent back to Malwa, reinstated in trust and power. In July he received orders from the Peshwa to go and put pressure on the Maharana of Udaipur, who had not paid a pice of his annual tribute for the last four years, nor the extra contribution laid on him by Jankoji in 1758. The Peshwa's need of money was most pressing and he wrote to his agents in Rajputana not to spare the Maharana's feelings, but to exercise every kind of harshness that was likely to enforce payment from the defaulter. [*SPD.* xxi. 167, 172.]

But the main task of Malhar was to realize the heavy contributions laid on the Jaipur Rajah,—namely 12 lakhs for 1758 and 9 lakhs for 1759. This was no easy task, because Jaipur was now the strongest power in Rajputana, and its master, safely sheltered within his strongly fortified capital, could laugh an invasion to scorn. Moreover, as Raghunath had found in 1757, in this kingdom most of the villages had protective walls and a martial population. Thus, the Maratha general could only occupy a portion of the country and try to starve the enemy out by stopping cultivation and commercial traffic. At last, in November the Rajputs came out in a body 4,000 strong, under Jot Singh Nathawat, to attack the Marathas. Malhar had been praying for such an opportunity of fighting in the open. With his superior numbers and artillery, he enveloped the Rajputs at Lakhori and completely crushed them, twenty

of their captains being slain. Thereafter the Rajputs ceased to confront him, and merely held their outposts at different places.

Malhar next laid siege to Barwara, which was defended by Vikramajit and other captains of the Rajawat and Shekhawat clans. Calling up his big guns from Rampurā, he pressed the garrison so hard that they cried for quarter and were allowed to go away with their lives only, and the Marathas occupied this fort renowned for its strength. Their signal success frightened the Rajput chiefs all around; from Uniara, Isarda, Sewarh, and Jhilara envoys came to Malhar's camp with offers of tribute as the price of peace. His aim was to make them restore the Maratha jagirs in Kota-Bundi lately usurped by them and then to confirm these local chieftains in the possession of their ancestral estates, on condition of their agreeing to pay tribute annually for the rest of the lands they held. But before these arrangements could be completed, he received, on 27th December, an urgent call from Dattaji Sindhia to come at once to his aid, as Abdali had crossed over into the Sarhind district and a decisive trial of strength with him was imminent. So, Malhar abruptly abandoned the Rajput business just at the point of maturing, and set off on 2nd January 1760 for Delhi, by way of Jhilāra (3rd January.)*

* *SPD.* ii. 113, 115, 117 (=xxi. 177). Raj. i. 150. *Jhilara* seems to be *Jhilai*, 23 m. n. w. of Barwara and 40 m. s. e. s. of Jaipur.

Thus, the Maratha interests in Rajputana remained unsettled and uncared for throughout the entire year 1760, that intervened between Malhar's departure and the battle of Panipat. It was only after the retreat of the Afghan king from India about the middle of 1761 that the Marathas were able to turn again to Rajputana and settle accounts with the Rajput princes who had been exulting over the debacle of Panipat.

CHAPTER XIX

Dattaji Sindhia's campaigns in the North, 1759—1760.

§ 1. *Dattaji threatens to attack Delhi and oust Imād.*

We have seen in Chapter 18 how Dattāji, with his young ward Jankoji Sindhia, had left Rajputana and reached Najafgarh, south-west of Delhi on 26th December, 1758. His arrival at the capital effected a complete reversal of Maratha policy in Hindustan. The smooth-spoken conciliatory practical politician Malhar Rao Holkar, who had so long guided Maratha diplomacy in the North, was replaced by the rough impatient hustling soldier Dattāji Sindhia. In addition, while Malhar had publicly befriended Najib Khan as his adopted son, Dattāji was under orders to crush Najib altogether as the sole remaining thorn in the path of Maratha predominance in the northern empire,—after which the Marathas would be free to send their main forces into the Panjab and Bihar and realize untold amounts of tribute from these provinces, in order to remove the Peshwā's crushing burden of debt which had been only increased by Raghunāth's barren expedition of 1757-1758. Dattāji was not the man to tolerate the delay or evasion of payment, which had now become a habit with the Delhi officials. Besides, every friend

of Malhar was a suspect and every arrangement made by Malhar was a mistake in his eyes. *

Arrived within four days' march of Delhi, Dattāji sent word that he had been appointed by the Peshwā to replace Malhar as the subahdar of Agra, and that the capital must pay its tribute or be put to plunder. Imād in great alarm strengthened the guards at the gates of Delhi in order to keep the Marathas out; the residents of the southern suburbs (or Old Delhi) took refuge within the city of Shah Jahan. The wazir opened negotiations with Dattāji, offering to pay 7 or 8 lakhs if he avoided the capital and made a detour round it in his march to Lahor. On 4th January 1759 the Maratha army reached Barāri Ghāt, some ten miles north of the city, and here the wazir had a long talk with Dattāji two days later. After 2 or 3 days a Deccani corps crossed over to the eastern bank of the Jamunā and raided Lūni and the country around. The wazir protested to Dattāji against these acts of hostility "at a time when there was friendship between your sovereign and mine," and Dattāji

* *Aiti. Patren*, 166, 167. *TALS.* 192-198. *DC.* Nur-ud-din, 21*b*.

Jankoji being the legal successor of Jayapa, all official letters were issued in his name and under his seal, and the writers of the time used the word *Jankoji* where *Dattaji* was the person really concerned. I have made the necessary change of name throughout as Dattaji was the executive head of the Sindhia's army and affairs in the north. The Peshwa aptly characterized Dattaji thus in a letter of 30 Aug. 1755, "Dattābā's nature is that of a [mere] soldier; hence he presses violently on at the wrong time and place." [*Aitihasik Patren*, 139].

recalled his men. He next detached a large force to the Saharanpur district, which was Najib's jagir, ordering them not to molest any village on the way. On 14th January, Dattāji came southwards, close to the northern gate of Delhi, but refused to see the wazir and spoke scornfully about him. So the wazir guarded the city more vigilantly than before, entrenching in the environs and posting artillery to meet any assault. Roving bands of Marathas threatened Shāhdara (from which all the rich men fled away) and robbed the villages in the north-west of Delhi and the wayfarers. The sturdy peasantry retaliated, "in many places lonely Maratha soldiers were robbed of their mares and bullocks by the villagers."

The Maratha headquarters had been shifted from Barāri Ghāt to Takia Majnun (19th January.) From this base, a large detachment appeared near Kāli Pahāri (beyond the Idgāh) and attacked the outposts of Phatak Misri Khan and Jinsi Topkhānah (near Sarāi Ruhelā.) The imperial troops in the trenches here made the mistake of sallying forth, with the result that they were defeated and driven back, suffering heavy losses. The exultant Marathas pursued them up to the city gate, burnt the carriage of the largest imperial cannon (named *Attock*), and plundered Sarāi Ruhela and other suburbs outside the Delhi Gate, "where the traders had stored grain and other merchandise beyond calculation." This sort of irregular fighting and plunder

of the western suburbs went on for four days, small Maratha bands and stragglers being occasionally cut off by the wazir's troops. On 23rd January Dattāji sent Antāji Mānakeshwar, Purushottam Hingané and other mediators to renew the peace negotiations, but no agreement was reached.

In the course of three or four days, the food supply of the Maratha camp failed altogether, "as the traders ceased to convey grain there for fear of plunder, and extreme scarcity appeared. Nine or ten thousand Deccani troopers, crossing the Jamunā, went to Ghaziabad, but the inhabitants opposed them with artillery and matchlocks. The Marathas, baffled here, went on and looted Dāsna, belonging to the wazir . . . They sent the captured grain and other provisions from that place to their own camp [near Delhi.] . . . The wazir protested to Dattāji against this outrage during peace negotiations, and the raiders were recalled. On 29th January, the Maratha army, which lived only by foraging, recrossed the Jamunā and went towards Shāhdara and Patparganj. A force sent by the wazir effectually guarded the markets in these two places, but some traders who were bringing grain to Delhi were intercepted on the way and robbed of their goods. Next day an agreement was reached as to the amount of money contribution payable by the wazir, and on 1st February Dattāji began his northward march, and peace returned to Delhi." [*TALS.* 197*b*-198*b*.]

§ 2. *Dattaji's policy after returning from the Panjab.*

The Sindhias next entered the Panjāb, and after effecting the reconquest of that province returned towards Delhi in May 1759. Crossing the Jamunā at the Rāmrā Ghāt (east of Pānipat), they halted at Shāmli and opened negotiations with the wazir. At the end of this month, Dattāji proceeded south to Bāghpat and induced Najib to pay him a visit.* It was at first agreed that Najib would support the Marathas with his troops in the invasion of Bihar by way of Oudh, if the Sindhias respected his possessions. It was necessary for Dattāji to keep Najib in hand, because he had decided to overthrow the false and incompetent wazir Imād, and take over the administration of the empire, in order to secure a more regular collection of tribute. On 1st June he sent Abdul Ahad Khan and Antāji Mānakeshwar to the wazir with an ultimatum calling upon him to resign his post and place the empire under his (*i. e.*, Dattāji's) control, as "Imād was unfit for the management of the empire and all his comrades were peculators." In case of refusal, the Maratha chief threatened war. But after some days, he was induced in return for a bond for the payment of an indemnity, to turn back from Bāghpat, and Delhi escaped an attack.

* Dattaji reaches Kairana, 23 May [*SPD.* xxvii. 239.] Najib's visit to him and rupture described in Nur-ud-din 22 and *TALS.* 208*b*. Dattaji's detailed plans for the future (letter to Peshwa, *c.* 15 May), *SPD.* ii. 104. *TALS.* 209*a*. *SPD.* ii. 102 (*c.* 22 April) gives important details.

§ 3. *Rupture between Dattaji Sindhia and Najib.*

But there could be no real union of hearts between Dattāji and Najib. The Ruhela chief was naturally unwilling to go away with his troops on the distant Bihar expedition, leaving his territories in the upper Doab within easy reach of the greedy and faithless Maratha local officers posted lower down that tract. An example of their unscrupulous rapacity had occurred in March 1759, when Govind Ballāl Bundélé in his northward march from Etāwa had wrested the outpost of Sikandrabad from Najib's agent, though the two sides were then at peace. On this occasion Dattāji had been induced (by Antāji) to restore the usurped territory, so as not to antagonize Najib, whose services he was then proposing to utilize. A shrewd observer like Najib could not but suspect the secret intentions of the Marathas in the Doab. He also came to fear that Dattāji, angry at his refusal to cede his jagirs, was planning to arrest him during a friendly interview. The plot failed before it could be attempted, because Najib's chief officers forced their way into Dattāji's tent along with Najib, brushing aside the opposition of the guards at the gate. The Marathas were cowed into quiescence and terminated the interview very quickly. On returning to his own camp, Najib remarked, "It is not safe to visit these men ; their looks seem malignant to me." So, he marched away to his own territory.

From Shāmli Najib returned to Saharanpur, while

Dattāji advanced to Mirat, and near that city attacked a fort built by Jetā Gujar. "The garrison, overcome by superior numbers, fled away. Thence Dattāji went and encamped near the home of the Barha Sayyids,* who were the hereditary enemies of the Ruhelas [end of June.] He asked Najib to cede some parganahs of Saharanpur, but the Ruhela offered to pay the fixed tribute only if the Marathas vacated his country, and he refused to alienate any of his villages. Dattāji did not agree to this; he sent detachments to the outposts of Najib, from which the Ruhela's agents retired without a blow." [*TALS.* 209, Nur-ud-din 22.] Thus, at last open war was precipitated by Dattāji's hustling tactics.

§ 4. *Najib Khan's defences at Shukartal described.*

The sagacious Ruhela veteran matured a masterly scheme of defence, which enabled his small force to withstand the myriads of Mahārāshtra for nearly six months and triumph in the end. Some sixteen miles due east of the city of Muzaffarnagar, there is a low place on the right bank of the Ganges, named Shukartal.†

* These Sayyids were Shias, while Najib was the Sunni champion. Moreover, he had snatched away many of their estates in the district round Mirānpur.

† *Shukartal*,—*N.W.P. Gazetteer*, iii. 444-446, 641-642 (description.) Siege,—*TALS.* 210-213. *SPD.* xxix. 56. Raj. i. 142-146; ii. p. 153. *DC.* Nur-ud-din, 22*b*-27*b*. Govind Ballal's raid east of the Ganges,—*TALS.* 210*b*. *Mux.* 171-174. Raj. i. 138-142.

Along the western side of it stretches the edge of the upland running north to south parallel to the river. North, east and south of Shukartal there are numberless tortuous ravines sloping down to the river, the loose sandy bed and sides of which render the terrain impossible for cavalry, while they afford excellent opportunity to foot musketeers to dig themselves in and form perfect ambushes. In the north of the place, a bend in the Salāni (a feeder of the Ganges) formed an effective natural cover, while the entire eastern flank for many miles above and below was protected by the mighty Ganges and its network of channels, parted by sandy islands. Najib completed this natural fortress by forming entrenchments and redoubts, and mounting guns and posting his sharpshooters towards the west and south-west, whence only an enemy could approach. Thus, a perfect sunken fort was formed which only starvation could have made untenable in the age before the invention of modern shells. But the fear of starvation was removed by Najib throwing a bridge of boats over the Ganges south-east of his entrenchments, in an absolutely safe position, unless the enemy could cross the mighty river and storm the fortified bridgehead on the left bank, which was impossible during the rainy season just then beginning.

Here Najib retired with his army at the end of June,

SPD. xl. 126. Nur-ud-din, 25-26. *Husain Shahi.* 47-48. *Siyar,* iii. 62.

and here the Marathas followed him up in a few days. Dattāji encamped two miles west of Shukartal. Finding the enemy's position impregnable to assault, he prepared to besiege it, and built a large redoubt of his own a mile from the first line of Najib's trenches. Skirmishes began on the debatable land between the two camps, accompanied by a fruitless exchange of gunfire.

§ 5. *Dattaji's siege of Shukartal : fighting.*

A severe engagement took place on 15th September, when the Ruhela skirmishers advanced too far into the Maratha lines, and Dattāji, after detaching a small force to keep them in play in front, made a detour with 7,000 select cavalry to cut off their retreat. But the eagle eye of Najib detected the manœuvre from the line of dust raised by these horsemen, and he prepared for it by posting ten thousand Ruhela infantry with loaded flint-locks in ambush in a dry *nālā* bordering the path of Dattāji's advance. The Ruhela skirmishers fell back towards their entrenchment and the front division of the Marathas gave them chase. Just then Dattāji arrived on the scene at the gallop, and "from the midst of the dust cloud the naked *pattas* (long swords) and spears of the well-mounted Deccani troopers flashed like lightning. As soon as they approached the Ruhela trenches and the artillery was turned on them with effect, they swerved aside towards the *nālā*. Two thousand muskets [at a time] were discharged at

them when only twenty paces from the ambush, so that in the force under Dattāji corpses were piled up in heaps. It came to such a pass that a Ruhela seized the bridle of Jankoji with one hand and slashed at him with his sword with the other, inflicting a wound on his arm. The assailant was cut down and Jankoji brought back to safety." The Bārha Sayyid allies fought with their customary valour in the van of the Marathas and were mostly cut off. Five hundred Deccani troopers and many good horses were killed, while the loss on Najib's side was 50 killed, and one hundred wounded. His manœuvre having failed, Dattāji retreated in order to his camp. "From that day the Marathas ceased to make assaults." * But skirmishing went on as before, with no result.

§ 6. *Govind Bundele's raid near Najibabad fails.*

The war thus dragged on indecisively during the height of the rains, throughout the three months of July, August and September. Then when the river level began to fall and the uppermost course of the Ganges became fordable, Dattāji (about 20 October) detached ten thousand horse under Govind Ballāl to cross the

* Nur-ud-din. 23*b*-24*b*, *TALS.* 210*a*. The former asserts that from that day assault was stopped, but the latter says that two or three pitched battles took place. The latter gives 15 September as the date of the battle, and *DC.* 1st September (evidently a mistake for 15 September, as the news reached Delhi on 19 September acc. to *DC.*)

river a little below Hardwār (32 miles north of Shukartal) and make a raid upon Najibābād, where Najib had built a city and fort and lodged his family as well as those of his followers and their property. Its only defender was his son Zābita Khan with a handful of troops, as all the military resources of Najib had been concentrated at Shukartal. The Maratha hordes, descending from the north-west, swept away the feeble defence of Sakalgarh, a half-way fort, and burst into the environs of Najibābād, plundering and burning. There was no field army of the Ruhelas to oppose them. But the Afghan clansmen of Rohilkhand proper, came forward under Sadullah Khan (Ali Muhammad Ruhela's successor), Dundi and Hāfiz Rahmat, and held Najibābād in full strength. So, the light raiders shrank from approaching the city, turned back from Jalālābād, 8 miles west of Najibābād, and swerved south-westwards to the bridgehead opposite Shukartal, ravaging the defenceless country on the way. They captured about a hundred horses and even destroyed two boats of the bridge,—no very serious damage.

Ten days passed in this way, and though Hāfiz Rahmat mediated for terms, Najib was not induced to abandon Shukartal for the defence of his home. During this raid the food supply of Shukartal was for a time cut off and wheat sold there at four seers a Rupee and the besieged mostly lived on peas boiled whole (*ghughni*) ; the Afghan garrison became alarmed for the

safety of their families left behind in the threatened villages, and began to give way to bewilderment and despair. But their veteran chieftain held on with a grim tenacity of will and reassured them, saying, "Remember God. Ahmad Shah is coming. From the first day of the siege, I have set my heart on death. Whatever is destined will happen. Seek no other course than fight." The military effect of Govind Ballāl's raid was therefore nothing.

Then, as the Maratha raiders, with no enemy in sight, were lying scattered and careless in fancied security, early one morning (*c.* 3 November) they were surprised by the vanguard of the Oudh army, 10,000 strong, under Umrao-gir and Anup-gir Gosain. Rumours about the approach of the main body of the Oudh army, (30,000 strong) under Shujā himself, magnified the terror felt by the raiders. They offered no resistance ; some fell under the enemy's sword, but most took the direct road to the river, and missing the ford, about half of their number was drowned, while the rest, abandoning all their provisions baggage and spoils fled northwards and found safety only on reaching Dattāji's camp, having "undergone great hardship and imminent risk to their lives," as their leader Govind Ballāl wrote. Five thousand Oudh horse under Umaraogir rode into beleaguered Shukartal over the bridge of boats and afterwards took post at a fortified camp of their own a little to the south of that place.

A few days after this, Shujā himself arrived on the opposite bank in full strength. The terror of the returned raiders infected the Maratha siege army. A rumour arose that Najib, thus reinforced and now secure about his eastern flank, was preparing to make a sortie. At the mere report of this, before a single enemy had been sighted, all the followers in the camps of the three Maratha generals crowded together and fled in uncontrollable confusion for eight miles to the rear. It was only when Dattāji overtook them after his morning reconnaissance that the panic was arrested and the army induced to halt.

§ 7. *Dattaji is compelled to raise siege of Shukartal.*

More alarming news now came from the west: Abdāli's troops in overwhelming force had again entered the Panjāb, and the Maratha governor of Lahor, Sābāji Sindhia, bowing before the storm, was hurriedly escaping to Dattāji's side after abandoning the Panjāb to the invaders. Who could say that the Afghans would stop at the Satlaj and not come to Delhi, as they had done in 1757 ?

The fugitive governor of the Panjab arrived in the siege camp on 8th November. Dattāji was utterly bewildered. His work in the Panjab had been undone at one stroke, and his five months' siege of Shukartal had proved barren of any result except a heavy loss of men and money to him. And now, if Abdali occupied

Delhi in his rear, with the unsubdued and reinvigorated Najīb in his front, his own army would be crushed between the two enemy hosts. And yet he could not show his face at Punā if he retreated from Shukartal without realizing any indemnity. It was Jayāpā's position before Nāgor once again.

Dattāji, therefore, held a council of war on 9th November, at which it was decided that the camp and baggage should be stationed at a safe distance, sixteen miles in the rear, while the general with his troops in light equipment should continue to hold the siege lines and present a bold front to the enemy. Shujā offered his good offices as a peacemaker, threatening to enter into the war on the side of Najib if any attempt was made to crush the Ruhela chieftain altogether. An indemnity of 25 lakhs was demanded from Najib, but no agreement was reached, and the war was resumed.

Dattāji turned to securing allies. A Jāt force of 5,000 men sent by Suraj Mal (under Ruprām Kothāri) joined him on 8th November. Ahmad Bangash, the Nawāb of Farrukhabad, too, arrived about the same time. Fast camel-riders were sent to hasten the coming of Malhar from Rajputana. Envoys were despatched to Delhi to urge the wazir to go to the siege-camp and join in the attack on Najib, their common enemy. Dattāji wrote to Imād, "In what sleep of negligence are you sunk ?... I am engaged here in fighting at your request, and you are planning to flee away to Bharatpur !" His

envoy was authorized to offer the wazir two lakhs for his travelling expenses if he would start for the Maratha camp. On 16th November, Imād took formal leave of the Emperor and went to Murādnagar on the eastern side of the Hindan, *en route* to Shukartal. Here he received definite news of the Afghan invaders having taken possession of the entire Panjab up to Sarhind and of the Marathas having everywhere fled away before them without striking a blow.

§ 8. *Imad murders Alamgir II. and Intizam-ud-daulah.*

Imād saw the danger of leaving the Emperor in Delhi, to be captured by Abdali and used as his tool against the wazir, as had been done in 1757. He got the harmless crowned puppet murdered on 29th November and his long powerless old rival Intizām-ud-daulah strangled the next day.

Zafarullah Khan (the brother of Ubaidullah) at the command of Mahdi Quli Khan (the chief adviser of Imād) tempted the Emperor Alamgir II to visit the Kohtila of Firuz Shah, by falsely telling him that a very saintly darvish possessed of miracle-working power had come from Lahor and taken up his residence there. When in the afternoon the party from the palace reached the spot, the Emperor entered a chamber under one of the bastions of the Kohtila, the door of which was guarded by a party of Central Asian troops of Bālābāsh

Khān, the wazir's captain. Only one eunuch was admitted with him and all his other attendants (including Prince Mirzā Bābā) were detained outside. Bālābāsh Khan stabbed the Emperor to death with his dagger, came outside, disarmed Mirzā Bābā, and seizing him by the wrist took him back to Delhi. The Central Asian troops plundered the horses and all other property of the imperial cortege, and flung the Emperor's corpse down on the river bank below the Kohtila, circulating a false story that he had died (like Humāyun two centuries ago) by an accidental fall from the wall of that ruined fort. The murder of Alamgir II was an insane and absolutely profitless crime, because, if Imād had spared that meekest of meek usurper's hoary head, it would not in any way have added to the number of his enemies, nor weakened his own strength, which was already reduced to nothing.

Alamgir II was buried at midnight in Humāyun's tomb. Mirzā Bābā was kept under guard by Bālābāsh in the Delhi palace, without food or drink all that night. The next morning the regicides crowned Muhi-ul-millat, the son of Muhi-us-sunnat and grandson of Kām Bakhsh (the youngest son of Aurangzib), under the title of Shāh Jahān II. Intizām the ex-wazir and Mirzā Lutfullah Beg, when engaged in reading the *fatiha* prayer in their prison in the artillery office within the fort, were strangled by these foreign mercenaries of Imād, and their corpses were thrown into the Jamunā

with heavy stones tied to their feet, from the Salimgarh gate. The murderers falsely gave it out that Intizām had secretly fled away. [*TALS.* 214*a*-215*a*. *DC.*] A reign of unrelieved weakness and misery for sovereign and subjects alike thus fittingly closed in a bloody sunset, amidst the ruin of the imperial family and the old nobility and invasion and chaos in the country. Even for the arch-traitor Imād, Delhi ceased to be a refuge after this.

§ 9. *Dattaji's position at Shukartal becomes untenable.*

Meantime Dattāji Sindhia had been dreaming the vain dream that when the Emperor and the wazir would arrive in his camp and strengthen his legal position with their prestige, he would detach a large force under that constant failure Govind Ballāl to Farrukhabad, with orders to absorb the feeble levies of the lame invalid Ahmad Bangash, throw a bridge over the Ganges at Farrukhabad, and sack and burn the Ruhela country east of that river. This was the very strategy that had failed at the end of October. But rumours about Shujā having decided to make a counter-attack by crossing the bridge below Shukartal and joining Najib, kept Dattāji in alarm and suspense and detained Govind Ballāl in his camp for some days. While the two sides were haggling for the amount of the war-indemnity, events moved apace. The murder of the Emperor hastened the advance of the justly incensed Abdali upon Delhi for

punishing the traitors and rebels. In the past two months the Afghan hold upon the Panjab had been fully established, the Sikhs brought under control,—at least along the main route,—and the conqueror was free to cross the Satlaj in person. On 23rd November, five hundred troopers, stripped of all their clothing above the waist and all their baggage,—the sole remnant of the six thousand Maratha soldiers posted in Multan,—straggled into Dattāji's camp, proving beyond any doubt that "a great disaster has befallen us."*

§ 10. *Abdali defeats Sindhia near Thaneshwar and crosses into the Doab.*

There was nothing left for Dattāji now but to raise his futile siege (8th December.) He effected the withdrawal of his camp in safety, because Najib, with his smaller army, wisely abstained from tempting Fate by coming out of his trenches† and meeting the Maratha horse in the open before he could be reinforced by the invincible legions of Abdali. From Shukartal, by way of Muzaffarnagar, the Bārha Sayyids' country, Dattaji marched northwards and crossed the Jamunā

* Letter of Govind Ballal, 24 Nov. [Raj. i. 146.]

† We find Najib at Shukartal up to 16 Dec., if not later. *SPD.* ii. 114*a*.

Dattaji after leaving Shukartal.—Raj. i. 147, 150, 157. *SPD.* ii. 109, 111 (at Kunjpura), xxvii. 243 (at Sonepat.) *DC.* Battle near Thaneshwar.—*SPD.* ii. 112 (= xxi. 178), 117. Nur-ud-din, 28*a*—29*a*. *Husain Shahi*, 49.

at Rāmra-ghat near Pānipat (*c.* 20 Dec.) Here he got the correct intelligence that Abdāli's vanguard under Jahān Khan, Shāh Pasand Khan, and Abdus Samad Khan had entered the Banur and Chhat district (16 miles north of Ambālā city) on the 15th, and that their front skirmishers had occupied Ambālā and "were advancing, daily foraging right left and in front, beating the jungle and shouting for 20 or 30 miles on each hand."

From Ambālā the Maratha position at Kunjpurā was only 48 miles south south-east, and the first encounter with the enemy could not be delayed beyond four days. Dattāji immediately divided his army into two bodies; he kept with himself one corps of 25,000 chosen and dependable troops, under noted and well-mounted officers, all lightly equipped, without tent or heavy baggage. The second corps was placed under Jankoji as a support twenty miles to the rear with the artillery and Imād and his contingent, while the camps of the wazir and the Maratha generals were stationed still further behind for safety. Govind Ballāl, who had been given leave for Etāwa at the end of November and then detained in the upper Doāb with the main army, accompanied Jankoji, crossed at Kunjpurā on 22 December, and was charged with the duty of conducting the camp baggage and families back to the South in the case of a disaster in the field.

This arrangement was completed on 22nd December, and Dattāji immediately advanced from Kunjpurā to

seek the enemy out, while Jankoji with the baggage took the road to Karnāl.* The Afghan vanguard was 20,000 strong, but their movements were completely hidden by a wide-spread screen of skirmishers. After some preliminary brushes between the rival scouts, the first battle was fought on 24th December. The scene of this encounter was not far from the historic plain of Tarāori (south-east of Thāneshwar) where six centuries earlier the Hindu chivalry of Delhi had first confronted the invader from Afghanistan. The most advanced troops of the Marathas were 5,000 horse under Bhoité with a thousand Turkish auxiliaries from the wazir's contingent led by Md. Said Khan Qipchāq. They charged and swept back the hundred front skirmishers of Abdāli's army. The practised Afghan horsemen fell back fighting, while the Marathas, in the pride of ignorance, pursued them shouting in tumultuous disorder. At the first news of the conflict, Abdali had pushed up 4,000 horsemen from his vanguard under Shah Pasand Khan, and "at the sight of that famous general's banner, the Mughalia [*i.e.*, Central Asian] troops of the wazir, who had often beheld battles with the Durrānis, slipped away." Shah Pasand opened a hot fire with his flint-locks in front, while a second squadron detached by

* Dattaji's plan was "to come face to face with the enemy, watch their tactics and strength and then decide whether to fight immediately or follow Fabian tactics. He would take his own steps according to the indications of Abdali's plan of war." *SPD.* ii. 109.

Abdāli took the Marathas in flank. Bhoité was outnumbered, outgeneralled and outclassed in weapons, and fled away utterly broken, after giving up four hundred of his men to slaughter. Their heads were severed and carried away to Abdāli, as the first fruits of his victory. Dattāji himself then rode up to the battle-field, and saw the headless trunks of his soldiers strewing the ground. But by this time the short winter day had come to a close, the battle which had lasted a little over two hours could not be renewed, and each side fell back on its own camp with twenty miles between. It was the first clear defeat of the Marathas in an open engagement.

Next morning (25th December) when the dust-screen lifted over the country, it was found that during the preceding night Abdāli with all his troops had forded the Jamunā near Buriā (18 m. n.w. of Saharanpur) and entered the Doāb. By moving along the foot of the Himalayas and striking the river shortly after its outflow from the hills, he had secured the easiest crossing possible. Najib, with whom he had been in constant correspondence and who had pressed this move upon him by letters, had already started from Shukartal and now joined his protector near Saharanpur. The Afghan invader and his Indo-Afghan ally marched down the east bank of the Jamunā towards Delhi. Najib acted as the guide ; he had his own revenue collector at every town in the upper Doāb, and the invader's food supply was assured.

§ 11. *Dattaji falls back towards Delhi; his defence plan.*

Thus Dattāji found that while his front was blocked by the Afghan conquest of the Panjāb and Sarhind, his right flank was uncovered by the enemy's occupation of the entire Doāb. The invaders might easily cross over to the western bank at Delhi, or further south near Mathurā, and cut into the Maratha rear. Dattāji quickly fell back upon Delhi, in order to avoid the very trap in which the Bhau was caught ten months later. Leaving Kunjpurā on 27th December, he reached Sonepat on the 29th and halted there for five days to observe the enemy. The wazir re-entered his mansion in Delhi on 28 December and set about entrenching the eastern face of the capital along the bank of the Jamunā. Ahmad Shah Abdali, who had now been joined also by Hāfiz Rahmat Khan, Dundi Khan, Mullā Sardār, Sadullah Khan and other Ruhela chieftains of Rohilkhand proper, encamped at Luni, six miles north-east of Delhi, on the other side of the Jamunā. So, Dattā fell back from Sonepat to Barāri, some ten miles north of Delhi, on 4th January 1760.

The Maratha chief now prepared for the worst. He was clearly outnumbered; his enemy's strength was daily growing by Indian adhesions, while his own followers had been thoroughly demoralized by the severe handling they had received at Taraori and their constant retreats without one victory over Najib or the Durrānis. Reinforcements under Malhar, which

had been urgently called for, would take at least a fortnight to join him. On 6th January Dattāji paid a visit to Delhi and started his camp, heavy baggage, accumulated spoils of a year's campaigning, and the families of himself and his officers,—including his pregnant wife Bhāgirathi Bāi,—for Rewari under proper escort. Thus freed from anxiety about his non-combatants and camp impediments, Dattaji set his face to the fight in the same formation as before,—himself with the light division of picked troops taking the front line, while Jankoji stayed some miles behind with the rest of the troops and the barely necessary baggage.

The fog of war hid the entire eastern bank of the Jamunā, where the Marathas had not a single friend or news-reporter. There was no knowing what step Abdāli would take next, or where he would cross the river. The Maratha general posted small parties to watch the fords of the Jamunā; seven hundred men under Sābāji holding the Barāri-ghāt, nearest to Dattāji's own position, with other bands at two or three places further down the river and nearer Delhi. In the depth of winter the river level was at its lowest and the Jamunā opposite Barāri had been parted into two channels by a broad island; the main volume of its water flowed by the eastern bed, while a shallow stream running along the western or Delhi bank had dried and left a marshy *nālā* behind it. The island was covered

with a jungle of the *jhāu* shrub and tall reed-bushes, "so dense that one horseman could not see another" in it.

§ 12. *Battle of Barāri-ghāt ; Dattāji slain.**

Here Sābāji was surprised at his post on 9th January 1760. Najib crossed the river unperceived and arrived at the western side of the island about three hours after daybreak, his own Ruhelas leading the van and the Durrāni supports bringing up the rear. The island was impossible for cavalry action ; the Ruhela chiefs came mounted on elephants, with their light artillery (swivel-guns) tied to the sides of these beasts for convenience of crossing. To the Maratha patrol at the Barāri-ghāt, the sky above the *jhāu* bushes on the western edge of the island suddenly became alive with the fluttering pennons of the Indo-Afghan infantry, every officer of which, however humble, carried a banner of his own. Sābāji immediately engaged the enemy, but was driven back by the pressure of numbers and the dominance of musketry fire over sword and spear, across the nālā to the Barāri side, with heavy slaughter. He had waged this losing combat for an hour, when reinforcements came up from the rear, three miles away, under Dattāji himself, to restore the battle. The new-comers charged at the gallop and forced the

* Last battle of Dattaji. —Raj. i. 156, 165, ii. p. 154 (list of the slain.) *SPD.* ii, 114, xxi. 181, 182, 185, xxvii. 247. *Mar.* 176. *Husain Shāhi* 50-51. Nur-ud-din, 29b-31a (very useful.) Miskin, 203.

victorious Ruhelas back over the *nālā*. A small band of Marathas advanced before the rest and pressed the counter-attack to the very edge of the island. At their head rode a very dark short and thickset man, barely forty years of age, who was foremost in darting his spear at the enemy. This seasoned warrior could no more restrain himself amidst the din of battle than an old war-horse that hears the trumpet note to charge. He was too good a target to be missed by the Ruhela sharpshooters lying concealed among the *jhāu* bushes with loaded muskets. As his horse was ploughing its way up the loose sand on the further bank of the *nālā*, the Afghan *jizails* rang out at point-blank range and Dattāji fell down with a bullet through his eye.* With him fell many of his brave companions. At this psychological moment, Najib charged with fresh troops into the mingled mass of Afghan infantry and Maratha horsemen in the bed of the *nala*. Once again the tide of battle turned against the Deccanis ; they fled away giving up their chieftain's body to crows and jackals ; Sābāji's entire contingent was destroyed, though he himself escaped. As Dattaji lay on the ground, Miān Qutb Shah cut his head off and took it to Abdali.

Roused by the fatal news, Jankoji hurried up with the reserve and tried to renew the fight. But there was

* According to Nur-ud-din, 306. But Raj. i. 165 has 'in the neck.' Purushottam M. Hingané at the same time received a bullet in his thigh. *SPD.* ii. 114.

no heart left among his troops. The Maratha army, 20,000 strong, stood in the background, looking at the fate of their vanguard, without venturing to advance to their support. Jankoji himself pushed on, but the story of spear against musket was repeated. After an hour and a half of renewed conflict, he received a bullet through the fleshy part of his upper arm and was dragged out of the field by his followers. The Maratha army now totally broke and fled towards Delhi; "the enemy gave chase and there was a heavy slaughter." Imād left Delhi for Bharatpur on hearing of the ruin of his ally.

§ 13. *Flight of Jankoji Sindhia to Kot Putli; Malhar Holkar joins him.*

From the fatal field of Barāri-ghat the Maratha army fled headlong towards the south-west, with the fresh Durrāni horsemen on their heels. The pursuit was kept up for about 24 miles. But Dattāji's wise foresight now bore abundant fruit: he had kept his fighting force lightly equipped and ready for rapid movement, and Jankoji soon succeeded in rallying them and bringing them in some sort of order to Paniālā, five miles north of Kot Putli (which latter is 25 m. south of Nārnol) in the Jaipur kingdom, on 14th January, after catching up on the way his baggage train, women and other non-combatants who had been sent off from Delhi four days before the battle. A day after his arrival here, he was

joined by Malhar Rao Holkar, who had started from Jhilāré in Rajputana on the 3rd. Some time was necessarily taken up by the funeral rites and condolence for the dead Sindhia chief and the discussion of the future plan of operations. It was decided to send off the baggage tents and non-combatants to the Deccan in charge of Govind Ballāl. This party started from Kot Putli on 23rd January, and after passing through the friendly territory of Kerauli crossed the Chambal river near Sabalgarh (48 miles due west of Gwālior) on 3rd February. The following night a posthumous son was born to Dattāji. *

Malhar and Jankoji, thus freed from encumbrances, undertook to follow the traditional Maratha system of war, by discarding artillery and tents and moving in light kit; so as to be able to rove round the enemy's flanks or make lightning raids on his distant and undefended grain-depots and revenue collection offices, or even, if favoured by the enemy's slowness or ignorance, to ravage the dominions of his Ruhela allies in the upper Doab and trans-Ganges. For such a task Malhar was eminently fitted by his lifelong experience and settled belief. It was also necessary for the Marathas to shape their mevements by watching carefully for indications of Abdāli's plan of action, because before the arrival of heavy reinforcements from the Deccan their forces in North India were too small and too

* Raj. i. 153, 156, 162. *SPD.* ii. 114, xxi 181.

demoralized to face the victorious invaders in a pitched battle. Jankoji, by reason of his youth and inexperience, remained safe in the rear, while Malhar took the command of the operating force, and began his advance on 24th January. He avoided a direct march on Delhi, but, passing through Kanaud (where he levied a ransom of Rs. 10,000), he hovered south-west of Delhi, in the broken Mewāt district, watching for opportunities.

§ 14. *Ahmad Shah Abdali proceeds against Suraj Mal.*

Meanwhile, after the victory of 9th January, Ahmad Shah halted for a few days to complete his arrangements for the temporary government of the kingless and wazir-less capital of the empire, and to secure his communications and regular provision supply. Then, skirting the city of Delhi, instead of entering it, he encamped at Khizirabad, south of the capital, on 14th January, and sent off letters to Suraj Mal Jāt and the Rajahs of Rajputana calling upon them to pay him tribute and present themselves before him. "If only his promise of safety could be relied upon, everyone of the Rajahs would gladly wait upon him," writes Badrinath (the son of Keshav Rao), so greatly were the blood-sucking leeches of the South detested by the Hindu potentates of the North. But in equal fear of the Afghan king's faithlessness and his military power, and not knowing how soon he would leave India and abandon them to the

vindictive fury of the Marathas, these princes decided to sit on the fence, prolong their negotiations with Abdāli for settling the amount of their tribute, and thus gain time till they could see how the decisive contest between him and the Marathas would end. It was, therefore, necessary for Ahmad Shah to visit the territories of the Hindu Rajahs if he hoped to get anything out of them. Najib Khan acted as his medium in his dealings with the Indian princes.

Leaving Khizirabad on 27th January, Abdali first marched * against Suraj Mal, by way of Shergarh (20 m. n. of Mathurā, 4 Feb.) to Dig (6 Feb.), which fort he invested but not very earnestly. From this base a detachment of his troops made a rapid march and completely defeated a Maratha force in their west by a night-attack (*c.* 11 Feb.) Abdali next moved into Mewāt, on the way to Nārnol, where Malhar was reported to be. But the Maratha vanished into the north and Abdāli proceeded to Rewari (*c.* 18 Feb.) On the 22nd he marched eight miles towards Delhi in ignorance of the elusive Maratha's position. But the Southern light horse again gave him the slip : Malhar was at Bahādurgarh (40 m. north of Rewari and 18 m. west of Delhi) on 22nd February, and two days later he appeared near Kālkā Devi (close to the Qutb Minār), and on the 26th-27th crossed the Jamunā into the

* Abdali's campaign against Malhar, Feb. 1760,—*DC.* (very imp.) *SPD.* xxi. 182, 186. ii. 118 (=xxvii. 251.)

Doāb. Abdāli marched to Dhankot (20 miles s. w. of Delhi) on 27th February, reached Khizirabad on the 29th, and sent Jahan Khan across to the eastern bank of the Jamunā the next day.

§ 15. *Malhar Holkar routed near Sikandrabad by Jahan Khan.*

The Maratha raiders under Malhar reached Sikandrabad on 28th February, sacked that large city totally, and halted for news of Abdali's movements. Here they learnt that ten lakhs of treasure sent from Najib's estates in trans-Ganges had arrived opposite Anupshahar on the way to Abdali's camp, as the Ruhela chief's contribution to the war-expenses of his protector. Malhar immediately sent out scouts to search for a ford near Anupshahar and halted for three or four days. This delay ruined him. Ahmad Shah sent a strong cavalry detachment under his best general Jahān Khan, who after a forced march surprised Malhar's vanguard, under Gangādhar Tātyā (Chandrachud), eight miles in front of Malhar's camp, at the dawn of 4th March. The Maratha resistance was short; they fled away "on unsaddled horses, giving up all their property to plunder." Three high officers,—Anand Ram Jādav, Shethyāji Kharādé and his son (named Faqirji in a Persian MS.),—besides many common soldiers, fell *

* **Malhar surprised near Sikandrabad,**—*SPD.* ii. 120, 121, xxi. 187, 188. Raj. vi. 403, i. 178 (false rumour of survival.) *Muz.* 178.

in the fight and the pursuit. Malhar himself fled away at a breakneck pace, and came to Agra after crossing the Jamunā, while Gangādhar reached Mathurā behind him.

The light foray plan of campaign even under Malhar Holkar, the ablest cavalry leader among the Marathas, had entirely failed against Abdāli. Returning to Bharatpur, Holkar called for Hāfiz's envoy and resumed the discussion of the peace terms proposed by that chief. As Purushottam Hingané wrote on 12th March, "Hāfiz offers to come and meet our sardār and set Abdali on the path of return, and then join us with his troops for humbling Najib. He promises never to help Najib. Our sardār has agreed not to cross his path, nor to molest his territory. This has been sworn to by both sides....When Malhar arrived about 30 miles from Bharatpur, Suraj Mal came and met him, and was given assurances of friendship and protection, sworn to on *bel* leaves and Ganges water. Then the Jāt Rajah was dismissed with robes of honour to Bharatpur, while Malhar marched to Sāroti [11 m. s. w. of] Bayana." [*SPD.* ii. 121.]

Jahān Khan followed up his victory by pushing on to opposite Mathurā, his master moving one day's march behind him. On reaching Koil (Aligarh), Abdali was

Nur-ud-din, 31*b* (Faqirji captured alive.) *Siyar*, iii. 65. Kharé, i. 17 and 20 (which speaks of Shethyaji, Anand Ram and Gangadhar's nephew as slain.) Miskin, 209.

advised by Najib,—his supreme confidant and guide on Indian questions,—to canton here for the approaching hot weather, which had been so fatal to the Afghan invaders in 1757, and the following monsoon. A large Maratha army was reported to be coming up from the Deccan to restore their lost predominance in the North and account must be settled with it before Abdali could leave India, unless he wished to abandon Najib to Deccani vengeance.

APPENDIX

I. *The Peshwa's North-Indian policy in 1759.*

The Peshwa's *letter to Rāmāji Anant* (the manager of the Sindhias), correct date 23 Feb. 1759 :—

Dattaji was to have realized a large sum from Marwar. What has he done there ?··· Lead an expedition into Bengal and Bihar; realize vast sums of money there for repaying my debts. Bengal is a province capable of yielding one *kror* or a *kror* and a half. It ought to be [your master's] determined aim to collect a large sum, clear my debts and sustain our troops. Occupy Bihar, it is a country fit to be retained. Dattaji himself and Jankoji with a strong force should go there, capture Patna and remain encamped there. From that place make your plans about Bengal. Raghunath Rao Dada will go to Hindustan when the rainy season is over. Thereafter he will march into Bengal and collect a vast sum. If, as in the past, the envoy [of the Bengal ruler] comes to you for making a compromise about the Bengal tribute, do not agree to any settlement. My debts would not be cleared unless a huge amount is extracted from Bengal. It is (therefore) necessary to march with a vast army and secure a *kror* or a *kror* and a half [from that province.] If without an expedition a tribute of 50 or 60 *lakhs* is promised, then accept it. If not, plan [your campaign] after Dada's arrival. For the present you should go to Bihar and seize Patna.

There are two or three undertakings to be achieved in connection with Shuja-ud-daulah. Take Benares, Ajodhya and Allahabad from him. He had promised to Dada [in

1757] to cede Benares and Ajodhya, but the case of Allahabad is still under discussion. If a settlement on the last point can be easily reached, make it.

Vital Shivdev had settled the tribute [of Bihar] at 12 lakhs only, because at that time we were not free [to lead an expedition there.] But now we have a grand opportunity of collecting money. If [the ruler of Bengal and Bihar] agrees to pay down 50 lakhs within one year at Delhi, then accept the settlement. He will not pay at the mere demanding; but if the generals mentioned above go in force up to Patna, then he will soften and pay a large contribution.

I have to repay a debt of one *kror* of Rupees. Half of my troops have been sent to their homes as without employment. I have retained 20,000 men for necessary services and must pay them. My creditors have received only 30 *lakhs*. You must extinguish 50 *lakhs* of my debt. I am relying upon Dattāji's assurance to me on this point, at the time of his taking leave to depart.

The Peshwa's *letter to Dattāji and Jankoji Sindhia*, dated 21 March 1759:

The wazir [Imad-ul-mulk]'s heart is not sincere. Mansur Ali Khan's son will pay 50 *lakhs* if he is given the wazir-ship. If I order you to make this change, effect it on your return from Lahor. Formerly, when Dada was near Delhi, Mansur Ali Khan's son had voluntarily offered to cede Benares to us. If he is now made wazir [by us], he must cede both Benares and Allahabad and pay 50 *lakhs*. If he refuses to make the above territorial surrenders and asks for 2 or 3 years to complete the payment [of 50 lakhs], do not give him the wazir-ship. But give it if he pays 50 lakhs and at least Allahabad.

You have written that if Najib is made imperial Paymaster-General he would pay 30 lakhs. But he is very

treacherous. He alienated Dādā in the past. If he is established in Delhi, know that an outpost of Abdali has been planted in that city. Advancing him is like feeding a cobra with milk. Crush him.

If you can go towards Bengal with the Emperor and the wazir after the rainy season, a great impression would be created; many Ruhela zamindars would join our side. From here Dādā will go towards Allahabad *via* Bundelkhand. You march through the Doab, and this our superior strength will enable you to seize Allahabad by surprise. Thereafter, if Shujā-ud-daulah, on being thus threatened from two sides, cedes Benares and Allahabad and pays a heavy *nazar*, do you persuade the Emperor and the wazir to give him the Bakhshi-ship. This is our second alternative plan.

The third course is that, if the wazir refuses to leave Delhi [for Bihar], then you should go and join Shujā, take from him Benares and Allahabad only but do not demand a money contribution, promise him half of Bengal and Bihar, make him accompany you, wrest Bengal and exact a large tribute from that province.

Out of these three plans, adopt whichever is found to be soundest.

Your going to the Panjāb, where there is heavy work to be done, has thrown this [Bengal] enterprise into delay. Take it in hand after the rains.

[*Aitihāsik Patren Yādi Wagairé*, 166 and 167. *Cf. SPD.* ii. 104, Dattaji's reply to the second letter above.]

II. *Was Malhar Holkar responsible for the disaster to Dattāji Sindhia on 9 Jan. 1760 ?*

No. That Malhar did not join Dattāji before this fatal battle was due solely to Dattāji's pride and miscalculation of enemy forces. When Datta first

heard of Abdali's invasion of the Panjab, he was at Shukartal and Malhar near Sawai Madhopur. This great distance between them and the fact of Malhar being then involved in the siege of Barwara and therefore unable to disentangle himself from his Rajput enemies and to march to Datta's assistance at a day's notice, should be carefully borne in mind.

Datta first asked Malhar to come to him, [*SPD.* ii. 115] and the latter sent his siege-guns back to Rampura and got ready to march away. "On the day he joined his van" he received a letter from Datta to say that there was no report of Abdali's coming soon, and that he was still holding the trenches against Najib. So, Malhar, "feeling reassured about that quarter," recalled his guns and laid siege to Barwara. But on 27th Dec. he, all of a sudden, received Dattaji's frantic call to come to his aid in the campaign against Abdali, and began his march towards Delhi five days later. [*SPD.* ii. 117.] He could not possibly have been in time to join in the battle of Barari-ghat. And, from the fact of the Marathas being hopelessly outclassed in weapons and outgeneralled by Abdali, I am convinced that if Malhar had joined Dattaji, he would have merely led larger hecatombs to the slaughter. What Malhar could have done by his guerilla tactics (*ghanimi*) was seen at Sikandrabad on 4th March 1760.

CHAPTER XX

Sadashiv Rao Bhau's Delhi Expedition, 1760.

§ 1. *Peshwa selects Sadashiv Bhau to lead his army to Hindustan.*

There was boundless exultation in the Peshwā's camp at Ahmadnagar in the night of 13th February 1760. His recent campaign against the ruler of Haidarabad had met with the completest success. The Nizām had been hemmed round during his advance from Udgir, defeated with heavy loss, and brought to an absolute standstill at Ausā on 3rd February, when still forty miles short of his refuge at Dhārur. He could save himself from annihilation only by agreeing to cede to the Marathas territories worth 45 lakhs of Rupees a year, with an additional 15 lakhs as *chauth* for his dominions, and transfer to the victors the two strongest forts in Mughal Deccan (Daulatābād and Āsir) and two cities (Burhānpur and Bijāpur) each of which was the capital of an imperial province, as well as Mulher, the chief fort of Baglānā. Ahmadnagar, the capital of a third Deccan subah and the largest depot of arms and munitions in the South, had been gained by bribery on the 9th November before, and the Peshwā had entered it with due pomp on the 29th of that

month. On 11th February the Nizām had signed formal orders to his local officers to hand these places over to the Peshwā's agents. The result of this campaign is best summarized in the words of a learned Muslim protégé of the first Nizām-ul-mulk, "The descendants of Asaf Jāh retained nothing more than the subah of Haidarabad, some portions of the Bijāpur province, and a little of Bidar, and that too on condition of paying the Marathas one-fourth of their revenues." [Azad Bilgrami.] The Peshwā's courtiers burst into the wildest panegyrics,—"His Highness was born under the same natal star as Alexander the Great. Wherever he casts his angry glance, his enemies are crushed into atoms. He has attained to the height of glory." It was, indeed, the *apogee* of Maratha expansion.

But there was a fly in the Peshwā's cup of honey. On 27th January he had received a letter from his officers in the Delhi region written on the 8th before, reporting that Abdāli had invaded India again, swept the Marathas out of the Panjāb, forced Dattāji Sindhia to raise the siege of Shukartal without securing any indemnity from Najīb Khan, and had himself crossed over to the Gangetic Doāb and effected a junction with the Ruhelas, while Dattāji had fallen back on Delhi, and that a decisive battle was expected to be fought on the next day. After this followed an ominous silence from Northern India for three weeks, while the Peshwā's anxiety went on deepening day by day. Then

news began to trickle through from the North-Indian correspondence of bankers received at Aurangabad, that Dattāji had fallen, Jankoji had fled away in headlong rout to Rajputana, and the Maratha army in Hindustan had ceased to exist. An official letter reached the Peshwā on the 15th (or 16th) of February to confirm this tale of disaster. At one blow all his gains in North India had been wiped out, and he must again fight for the Maratha control over the Delhi empire and build up his supremacy in Hindustan from the very foundations. [Raj. i. 155, 157, 164, 165. *SPD.* i. 83,9.]

There was no help for it but to promptly send a very strong army under a chief of indisputably high position,—such as a member of the Peshwā's own family, if he was to recover the lost ground at Delhi. A mere general and vassal like Holkar or Sindhia was not adequate for such a task. So, the Peshwā set out from Ahmadnagar on 19th February, after recalling his generals and armies from the Ausā region to his side. They met him at Patdur* on 10th March, and long consultations began as to the future plans.

---

* At the end of the Udgir campaign, the Bhāu had taken post at *Parli*, 40 m. n. of Ausa and 12 m. n.e. of Ambajogai or Mominabad. *Patdur* (spelt *Partur* in *Atlas* sh. 55) is 27 m. s.e. of Jalna and a railway station on the Hyderabad Godavari Valley Railway. *Sindkhed* is 26 m. n. of Patdur. *Ambad* is 30 m. w. of Patdur.

Almost up to the last moment the Peshwā had intended to give this command to his own younger brother Raghunāth Rao Dādā (aged 26), as he had conducted campaigns in Hindustan in 1754-55 and 1757-58. But in the inner council of 13th March there was a stormy scene. Raghunāth had brought back from his last Delhi expedition only a debt of 80 lakhs in addition to the unpaid salaries of his soldiers, and he had been taunted for this negative result by the Peshwā's chief manager, Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu, the son of Bāji Rao I's younger brother Chimnāji Appā. This Sadāshiv, though not yet fully thirty years of age, had already gained a high reputation and popularity with all classes of suitors and civil officers by his close attention to finance and the punctual transaction of administrative business, while his quick and complete overthrow of the Nizām in the recent campaign had made him suddenly spring to fame as a great organizer of victory. The hero of Udgir alone was believed to be capable of restoring Maratha glories in the north. Raghunāth Rao sulkily declined the command, and it was finally decided that the Bhāu should lead the northern expedition. But lest he should set up an independent principality of his own in Hindustan when enjoying supreme command there without a partner, a brake on him was devised by sending the Peshwā's son Vishwās Rao (a lad of seventeen) with this army as its nominal

commander-in-chief, while the Bhāu was to act as his guardian and the executive manager of all his affairs, like the experienced nobles joined under the name of *Atāliqs* to the young princes of Delhi in their first campaigns. [Raj. i. 168, 167. Kharé, i. 14.]

§ 2. *The Bhāu's troops and munition supply.*

From Patdur the Bhau moved to Sindhkhed, 26 miles northwards, on 16th March. Two days later at an auspicious moment he made the formal commencement of his journey by entering into his marching tents pitched four miles in advance of that village, and halted there for some days in order to complete the necessary preparations for his campaign. He had to organize an army in its entirety in view of the long distance he was to march and the powerful enemy he was to meet. The Peshwā had begun the Udgir campaign with 40,000 horsemen of his own, and 12,000 French-trained sepoys under Ibrāhim Khān Gārdi, a former officer of Bussy. From this total must be deducted the wastage of the recent war and sickness. Even then all the remnant could not be spared for the northern expedition. The Nizām had to be watched; he was exulting over the fall of Dattāji and trying to evade the fulfilment of the severe terms of peace that he had signed under compulsion. The Peshwā, with 10,000 troops of his own and a similar contingent of the Nāgpur Rajah, stayed near Aurangabad for some days till the Nizām brothers should

go back to their capital. Another division of 10,000 was detached to the Karnātak under Visāji Krishna Biniwālé. So, the Bhāu could be supplied with only 22,000 Marathi troops (namely 10,000 of the Household Cavalry called *Huzarāt* or *khās pāgā*) and 12,000 men from the forces of his subordinate generals), in addition to 8,000 disciplined sepoys under Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi, —a total of 30,000 regular troops.

The munitions sent with him from the Ahmadnagar arsenal consisted of 8,184 cannon balls of large size (against 19,000 required), 160 maunds of lead, 800 maunds of gunpowder, 99,150 flints for muskets, and a quite inadequate quantity (65 sheets against 2,000 requisitioned) of European paper for charging the muskets. *

The expedition for the reconquest of the Maratha dominion in Hindustan could not even make its start without overcoming great difficulties. The Udgir campaign had cost much money, but not a pice of the promised indemnity had been actually realized. The Bhāu's soldiers were in arrears and required an advance (*nālbandi*) to equip themselves for the coming

* Raj. i. 168, 169. Kharé, i. 14 (misprinted as 11), 21 (this last letter gives 20,000 *Deshche faug*, evidently meaning Pindharis, in addition to the above 30,000.) The civil officers attached to the Bhāu were Nānā: (*i. e.*, Trimbak Sadāshiv) Purandaré, Balwant Ganesh Mehendélé, Mahipat Avji Chitnis, Shivarām Khāsgiwālé,— and to Vishwas Rao, Sakhārām Bāpu and Krishna Rao Parasnis. *SPD.* ii. 122 (munitions sent.)

campaign properly. Some of them who had lost their horses in the Sindhkhed campaign of two years ago, had not yet been paid the price of new remounts. However, after a halt of some days near Sindhkhed, the Bhāu distributed advances to his troops and put them in proper trim for campaigning.

§ 3. *Sadashiv Bhau's march from Sindhkhed to the north bank of the Chambal.* *

Leaving Sindhkhed about 25th March the Maratha grand army reached Burhānpur on the Tapti on 4th April, crossed the Narmadā at Handiā on the 12th, and by way of Sihor (*c.* 24 April) and Bersiā (*c.* 28 April) arrived at Sironj on 6th May. Here he received from the Peshwā bankers' bills for Rs. 1,88,000 payable at Ujjain and Indor, and halted for some days to cash them and also to receive intelligence from the north by which to shape his future movements. He had started on this campaign almost at a day's notice; he had not studied this scene of action before; he had never served in Northern India and had no knowledge of its people and

* Bhāu's northward march,—Raj. i. 171, 174, 176, 180 (Sironj), 186 (Araun), 187, 188 (*Mālwā*, misprint for *Miānā*), 194 (Gwāliar), 195, 196, 199 (north bank of the Chambal), 202 (*Bodsia*, misprint for *Bersia*.) *SPD.* ii. 125. *Aiti. Patren*, 183 (across the Narmada.) Kharé, i. 18, 22 (does not mean that the Bhāu himself went to *Kaniadhan*, which was off his route.)

Sihor, 20 m. w. of Bhopal. *Bersia*. 25 miles due north of Bhopal. *Sironj*, 37 m. n. e. of Bersia (which last is 24 m. w. of Bhilsa.)

their manners, the climate and face of the country, its leading men and political problems. He was quite in the dark even as to the respective positions and strength of the rival forces north of the Chambal, beyond the bare fact that Abdāli was sitting astride the Jamunā, in possession of the upper Doab and Delhi city, while the remnant of the Maratha army of Hindustan was dispersed somewhere in the Jāt kingdom and the Etāwa district in the middle Doab. He could not even decide for himself what was the best route to take across Mālwa, or where to strike the Chambal, or whether he should first enter the Agra district west of the Jamunā or the Doāb east of that river.

On all these points he was helplessly dependent for his guidance on the advice and information called for from Malhar Holkar the general and Govind Ballāl Bundélé the revenue-collector, these being the Maratha officers best experienced in North Indian affairs and now present on the spot. As for his plan of campaign, it could not be determined without a personal discussion with Holkar. The Bhāu had, therefore, at first sent only general directions to Govind Ballāl to beat up for local allies everywhere, enlist the armed support of all the Rajahs of Rajputana and Bundelkhand, make an offensive alliance with the Nawāb of Oudh by promising him the wazirship of Delhi with Maratha support after the expulsion of Abdāli, and recruit two to three thousand musketeers of the Bundelā and Rajput races in the Doāb.

In addition, there was the eternal insistent demand for money in every letter from the Bhāu to Govind Ballāl, the commander-in-chief's tone growing harsher and more reprimanding at the prolonged delay and default of that collector. The monthly expenses of this expeditionary force reached five to six lakhs of Rupees, and all the remittance that the Bhāu had received from the Deccan, less than two lakhs, had been eaten up in a fortnight. The monotonous burden of almost every letter received by Govind Ballāl from the Bhāu week after week, was, "Send me 25 lakhs quickly, or at least 12 lakhs in 10 or 12 days. Your failure to pay is very surprising."

As the Bhāu advanced beyond the Āhir country north-east of Sironj, the villagers rose in his rear and made the roads unsafe for traffic and couriers, but he could not turn back to chastise them. From Sironj he made a detour to the left by way of Araun (25 m. n. w. of Sironj, 14 May), Miānā (32 m. n. of Araun, 19 May), and Narwar, arriving at Gwālior on 30th May. During a two days' halt in this last city, he received information from Malhar which decided him to cross the Chambal a little east of Dholpur and not near Kerauli, as in the alternative plan. Leaving Gwālior on 2 June, he crossed the Kumāri (a feeder of the Chambal) on the 4th and the Chambal, some ten miles below Dholpur on the 8th, and issued strict orders to his soldiers not to molest the Jāt territory which they entered on that day [*SPD.* ii. 126], as it was the Peshwā's policy to keep the Jāt Rajah

on the Maratha side. The Bhāu's artillery and stores took a long time to be carried over the deep ravines intersecting both banks of the Chambal, and he halted more than a month (8th June—12 July) on the north bank of the Chambal, at some distance south of the Utangan river, which flows 20 miles south of Agra, roughly parallel to the Chambal.

§ 4. *The situation in the Doab and Maratha diplomacy.*

On 15th June Gangādhar Yashwant (Holkar's diwān) came and saw the Bhāu, and two or three days later Malhar himself joined them. Suraj Mal presented vast quantities of foodstuffs and other supplies to the Maratha army, and they enjoyed a month of plenty and repose after their constant marching for two months and a half. Consultations now began between the Bhāu and Malhar as to their future course of action. Suraj Mal himself visited the chief on the last day of June.

The Bhāu met with two severe disappointments at this stage. It was learnt that Shujā-ud-daulah had decided to cast his lot in with the invaders, and that all the Rajput princes, great and small, were confirmed in their policy of sitting on the fence and keeping both sides in play till some great battle should prove which of the two powers was decidedly the stronger.*

* Raj. i. 194, 203, 212 and 216 (halt s. of the Utangan), 217 (2 *Ziqad* is a mistake for 2 *Zihij*=16 July, the correct date of the

A long diplomatic tussle had been going on at the Court of Lucknow between the Maratha envoys and the agents of Abdāli for securing the adhesion of Shujā. While the Nawāb of Oudh was hesitating to which of these two powerful sides he should add his weight, the Bhāu hoped that the arrival of his army near Delhi would put heart into Shujā to reject Abdāli's invitation, or at least keep him neutral by the fear of a Maratha invasion of his realm if he openly declared against them. Following this policy, the Bhāu from Mālwa had ordered Govind Ballāl to collect boats near Etāwa for enabling the grand army to bridge the Jamunā, cross into the Doāb, drive out the Afghan outposts, and thus insert a wedge between the Abdāli camp and Shujā's dominions. But Govind failed to secure any boats, the rains began very early this year, and by the end of June the water-level of the Jamunā was too high to allow fording. To spoil the Maratha plan more thoroughly, while Govind with his unreinforced contingent could neither raid Shujā's province across the Ganges, nor make reprisals on Najib's jagirs in the upper Doab, the Maratha posts in the middle Doab were menaced by a southward march of Najib Khan and Jahān Khan, in the middle of May, when the Bhāu was still far away beyond the Chambal. The Afghans besieged the Maratha *thānahs* of Etāwa

Bhāu's arrival at Mathurā.) *SPD.* ii. 127 & 124, also Raj. i. 217*a* (Malhar meets the Bhau.)

and Shukohābād, and pushed on to Bithur (north of Cawnpur.)

The shock of this invasion emboldened the dispossessed local Rajput landlords to rise against the Maratha usurpers everywhere in the Doāb. The Bhāu, on receiving reports of it, wrote frantically to Govind Ballāl, "Urge all your *thānahdārs* to hold on to their posts patiently. In a few days I shall arrive and all will be well. It is better to die with honour in defence of your posts. The Ruhela besiegers have no artillery with them... It is surprising that your collector of a place like Etāwa has fled away!" Shukohābād was abandoned by its Maratha garrison, but that of Etāwa held out, and Najib, leaving it untaken, passed on to Oudh, where he achieved a momentous triumph by inducing Shuja to declare for the invaders. The news of this diplomatic reverse reached the Bhāu on 4th July, and he planned to send his troops across the Jamunā into the Doāb, whence they were to ford the Ganges and invade Shujā's territory. But the plan failed through his lack of boats and the early flooding of the rivers.

At the same time the blind obstinacy of the Marathas made a war to the death inevitable for them. When, on 16th May, the month of Muslim fasting ended, Hāfiz Rahmat came from Abdali to open peace talks with Malhar Holkar. At Mathurā he was met by Gangādhar Yashwant (Holkar's diwān) and Suraj Mal,

as the intermediaries from this side. They conducted him to Bharatpur, but nothing came of his efforts, as the Maratha demands were exorbitant* and they were only waiting for the vast reinforcements under the Bhāu to reach them, when they would be able to crush Abdāli and thus keep possession of everything they had ever gained in Northern India. So, they deliberately spun the negotiations and at last on the arrival of the Bhāu (middle of June) sent the baffled peace-maker back to his master.

§ 5. *The Bhau's plan of war, to seize Delhi first.*

The Bhāu had arrived on the north bank of the Chambal on 8th June, but halted there,† some twenty miles south of Agra, with the Utangan river (also called

* Raj. i. 186, 191, 194-196, 198-200, 204, 209, 212, 215-217. *SPD.* ii 124, 127. *DC.*

† I was at first tempted to regard *Pahāri*, 16 m. n. e. of Dholpur, 26 m. s. of Agra, and midway between the Utangan (now called Bān-gangā) and the Chambal, as the Bhau's halting place. It exactly agrees with his known movements. But in Raj. i. 188, *Pāhāri-war* means the hilly country north-west of Sironj and not a village named *Pāhāri*, as the Bhau's route north of the Chambal was still uncertain. "From the difficulty with which its flood-stream is crossed, the Utangan takes the title of *Ghorā-pachhār* or Overthrower of Horses....Its character is essentially that of a mountain torrent....Its bed, 800 feet wide, is of sand mixed with shingle,...it runs between lofty banks cut up by numerous ravines, some of which penetrate deeply into the adjoining lands." *N. W. P. Gazetteer*, vii. 423.

the *Gambhir*) interposing between him and that imperial city, till 13th July. This five weeks' inactivity can be explained partly by his uncertainty about his future line of action, but mainly by the early and excessive rainfall of that year, which prevented him from crossing the Jamunā into the Doāb and also made the raging torrent of the Utangan impassable for horses, artillery and transport carts for weeks together. Govind Ballāl's failure to build a bridge of boats near Etāwa led the Bhāu to abandon his first plan of attacking Abdāli in the upper Doāb and raiding Oudh.

Malhar Holkar first met the Bhāu about 18th June. He then allayed Suraj Mal's suspicion of treachery by taking personal oaths and giving solemn assurances, and conducted him to the Bhāu, who advanced two miles to welcome so valued an ally (on 30 June.) Arrived outside Agra (*c.* 14 July) with Malhar and Suraj Mal, the Bhāu inspected the Jamunā and was forced to abandon the plan to which he had clung so long for throwing a bridge of boats over the river and sending a strong detachment into the Doāb with orders to converge upon Aligarh. Early in that month some troops of Suraj Mal had crossed the river, probably by a boat or two, and attempted to restore the lost Jāt posts on the east bank facing Mathurā and Agra. But their number had only reached two thousand when the rising level of the rain-swollen Jamunā cut them off from their supports assembled at Mathurā. Not a single Maratha

trooper could follow these Jāts to the assistance of Govind Ballāl.

This stern decree of Nature forced a change of plan on the Bhāu. If he could not, for the next three months, cross over to the east bank to attack Abdāli or his allies, neither could Abdāli cross to the west bank in support of his agent at Delhi. The Bhāu's mind was quickly made up. Two days after reaching Agra he advanced to Mathurā (16 July), informed Govind Ballal of the suspension of the long-talked of march into the Doāb, and on the 21st sent a strong detachment ahead to seize Delhi, which, he knew for certain, was held by a very weak garrison.*

§ 6. *Affairs of Delhi city, 29 Nov. 1759-21st July 1760.*

We shall now turn to the doleful story of the lordless city of Delhi. Immediately after the murder of Alamgir II (29 Nov. 1759), the wazir's agent in this atrocious deed, Mahdi Quli Khan, silently enthroned in the fort Muhi-ul-millat (the grandson of Aurangzib's youngest child Kām Bakhsh) under the title of Shāh Jahān II. But the new 'king of kings' was even more of a shadow than his luckless predecessor. The harem apartments of the palace were ransacked by the regicide wazir and the story went that fifty lakhs in cash and

* Raj. i. 216, 217, 223.

jewels were taken away, even the marriage portions of the princesses not being spared. But retribution was close at hand. Abdali was coming, and at the news of it an exodus from Delhi began on 8th December, even the princes being removed from the palace (in bullock-carts) to Hasangarh fort (in the Doāb.) * On 28th December the wazir returned from the army of Sindhia to Delhi and began to entrench the river bank by way of precaution. [*DC.*]

Then events moved apace. The baggage of the Maratha army set out from Delhi on retreat to Rajputana about 6th January, 1760, and two days later the remnant of their rearguard plundered the shrine of Nizām-ud-din Auliyā and carried off some rich men of the city for ransom,—thus making a last grab at the capital before abandoning it to the foreign invader. On the 9th Dattāji Sindhia fell in a battle ten miles north of Delhi

* *Delhi.* 'After the fall of Dattaji. Abdali entered Delhi fort. The men of his camp plundered the property of the citizens by violence. For three days great disturbance raged there. On the fourth day the Shah ordered his soldiers to leave the city and dismount outside it.' [*Husain Shahi*, 51.] 'Abdali came back from Narnol and slew and plundered the people of Delhi to an extreme.' [*Mux.* 178.] Miskin (204-206) gives a graphic and detailed eye-witness's account of this plunder and slaughter of the city people. On 19th October 1760, the *Delhi Chronicle* records, "Bhāuji has captured Kunjpurā. Throughout this entire month, a state of death settled on the inhabitants of Delhi city from rumours of the coming of the Shah, who had decided on a battle near Kunjpurā."

and his army fled away in headlong rout to Rajputana, the wazir following their example. The victorious Durrāni king encamped at Khizirabad, south of the city, and on 21 January made a pilgrimage to Nizam-ud-din's shrine. Next day a foraging party from his camp went to the Old City and Pahārganj, and carried away the beams and planks of the houses for firewood. [*DC.*] Yaqub Ali Khan, a cousin of the Abdāli wazir, but long settled in India at the city of Shahjahanpur, was appointed subahdār of Delhi on behalf of the Shah (31 January.) This able and good governor applied himself to the pacification protection and relief of the ruined and distracted population of the city, enlisted a defence force of 600 men, mostly *sehbandi* or militia of little fighting value, from the Indian ex-soldiers and idlers, with only 25 or 30 Turks and Durrānis to stiffen them, and appointed his own *kotwāl* to re-establish police control over the capital and his superintendent of markets (*karora-i-ganj*) to ensure its food supply. [*DC.*]

Throughout February 1760 the Abdali king was absent campaigning against the Jāts and Malhar Holkar in the Bharatpur State and Mewāt. On the last day of that month (29th), he returned to the capital, but in a day or two crossed over to the Doāb in pursuit of Malhar Holkar, as we have seen in Chapter 19, §15. After expelling the Marathas, he encamped near Aligarh, while Delhi continued in charge of Yaqub

Ali Khan with the puppet Emperor Shah Jahan II sitting on the throne and receiving presents from the officials on ceremonial occasions like the *Nauroz* (20 March.) The political centre of gravity shifted from Delhi to the Doāb, and diplomacy and intrigue were conducted in and from Abdāli's camp there. At the end of May rumours arose that Shah Alam II, after being defeated by the English in Bihar, was coming at the invitation of Abdāli to ascend the throne in Delhi, but he held back and stopped in south Bihar. [*DC.*]

At the end of June, while the new Maratha army under the Bhāu arrived near Agra, the unusually early flood of the Jamunā cut Delhi off from the Doāb. Yaqub Ali Khan, therefore, turned to the defence of his city. The Delhi Gate of the palace-fort was kept closed; as for the city wall, the two leaves of the Lahor Gate having been burnt before, he replaced them with the large wooden front-entrance of the Sarāi of Mihrbān Aghā (9th July), in order to meet any Maratha attack. [*DC.*]

§ 7. *The Bhau captures Delhi.*

That attack came on 22nd July, when a strong force detached by the Bhāu from Mathurā under Malhar, Jankoji, and Balwant Ganesh Méhéndélé, accompanied by the titular wazir Imād-ul-mulk (whom Suraj Mal had introduced to the Bhāu at Mathurā), appeared in the

morning and assaulted the city-gate.* The defenders were so few that the resistance was prolonged only by the huge stone walls of the capital. But in the afternoon the invaders broke into the city by way of Jāvid Khan's mansion. The fort held out under Yaqub Ali Khan, who kept the assailants back by fire from the ramparts. One body of Marathas crowded before the Asad-burj and attacked the Khiziri gate, another body assaulted the Delhi Darwāza. For nearly two hours Malhar and Jankoji tried to break the Khiziri gate, but it was covered with brass plates and braced with iron bars, and defied all their efforts.

The garrison was very small, the Hindustani militiamen disappeared, and only a handful of Turks and Durrānis kept up the defence with their muskets. From their small number they had to leave large portions of the walls undefended, while the flood of Maratha light horse swarmed round the fort on all sides. Seizing this confusion, while the garrison's attention was fixed on the Khiziri gate, about a hundred men of Vital Shivdev, followed by groups from Holkar and Sindhia's contingents climbed the wall on the side of the Asad-burj and entered the palace unperceived. But they had no leader and no foresight. Instead of first opening the gates to their brethren outside, they recklessly dispersed for plunder through the royal

* The Bhau's capture of Delhi,—*DC.* Raj. i. 222-224. Nur-ud-din 33. *Siyar*, iii. 66. *Mur.* 180-182.

apartments, each man blindly seizing what he could and throwing the booty down from the ramparts to his comrades on the sandy bank below. The alarm soon spread to the garrison, and some fifteen Durrānis came up from the Salimgarh side and advanced against the dispersed Maratha looters, shooting down a dozen of them and then charging sword in hand. The rest fled away and leaping down from the walls in abject terror fell on the sand bank with broken limbs. Thus, a captured fort slipped out of the Maratha hands, through the selfish greed and thoughtless cowardice of their soldiery.

The Maratha generals then assembled in Sadullah Khan's house and laid a regular siege to the fort, digging trenches before the gates and mounting guns. The city nominally passed into Imād's control, while the Marathas encamped in the suburbs. Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi planted three guns on the river bank below the fort and bombarded the palace from the east side, which was lined with beautiful edifices like the curvilinear roofed mansions (*bangla*) of the Asad-burj, the Octagonal Tower, and the harem chambers. "Large breaches were made in the Diwān-i-khās, the Rangmahal, the Moti-mahal, and the Shāhburj, but the strength of the fort-walls was not impaired in any way." For some days this exchange of fire continued. On the 29th of July, the Bhāu himself arrived from Mathurā and encamped near Kālkādevi, *i.e.*, the Qutb Minār village ;

and Yaqub Ali, having exhausted his food supply and knowing relief by his master impossible, begged for terms of peace. The Bhāu jumped at the proposal and allowed Yaqub Ali to march out with his property and troops, and cross the Jamunā to join his master. Thus Delhi fort passed into Maratha possession on 2nd August, 1760.

§ 8. *Suraj Mal Jat abandons the Maratha side.*

Meantime, Shujā-ud-daulah from his camp on the eastern bank of the Jamunā had sent a letter and an agent, Rajah Devidat, proposing to bring about a peace between the Peshwā and Abdāli through the mediation of the Bhāu and Najib, on condition that the absent Shah Alam should be recognized as Emperor, his eldest son Jawān Bakht installed in the government of Delhi as his vicar (*wali ahad* or Heir), and Shujā appointed imperial wazir, and that the Shāh should return to his own country and the Marathas to the Deccan. The very entertainment of this proposal antagonized Imād and his patron Suraj Mal, and these two went away in anger from their camps at Tughlaqabad to Ballabhgarh, without taking leave of the Bhāu. Next morning (4th August) the Bhau's secretary Mahipat Rao, Malhar's diwān Gangādhar, and Sindhia's manager Rāmāji Anant went there to pacify and bring them back, but without success.*

* Defection of Suraj Mal.—Raj. i. 222. *SPD.* xxi. 190

the *Gambhir*) interposing between him and that imperial city, till 13th July. This five weeks' inactivity can be explained partly by his uncertainty about his future line of action, but mainly by the early and excessive rainfall of that year, which prevented him from crossing the Jamunā into the Doāb and also made the raging torrent of the Utangan impassable for horses, artillery and transport carts for weeks together. Govind Ballāl's failure to build a bridge of boats near Etāwa led the Bhāu to abandon his first plan of attacking Abdāli in the upper Doāb and raiding Oudh.

Malhar Holkar first met the Bhāu about 18th June. He then allayed Suraj Mal's suspicion of treachery by taking personal oaths and giving solemn assurances, and conducted him to the Bhāu, who advanced two miles to welcome so valued an ally (on 30 June.) Arrived outside Agra (*c.* 14 July) with Malhar and Suraj Mal, the Bhāu inspected the Jamunā and was forced to abandon the plan to which he had clung so long for throwing a bridge of boats over the river and sending a strong detachment into the Doāb with orders to converge upon Aligarh. Early in that month some troops of Suraj Mal had crossed the river, probably by a boat or two, and attempted to restore the lost Jāt posts on the east bank facing Mathurā and Agra. But their number had only reached two thousand when the rising level of the rain-swollen Jamunā cut them off from their supports assembled at Mathurā. Not a single Maratha

trooper could follow these Jāts to the assistance of Govind Ballāl.

This stern decree of Nature forced a change of plan on the Bhāu. If he could not, for the next three months, cross over to the east bank to attack Abdāli or his allies, neither could Abdāli cross to the west bank in support of his agent at Delhi. The Bhāu's mind was quickly made up. Two days after reaching Agra he advanced to Mathurā (16 July), informed Govind Ballal of the suspension of the long-talked of march into the Doāb, and on the 21st sent a strong detachment ahead to seize Delhi, which, he knew for certain, was held by a very weak garrison.*

§ 6. *Affairs of Delhi city, 29 Nov. 1759-21st July 1760.*

We shall now turn to the doleful story of the lordless city of Delhi. Immediately after the murder of Alamgir II (29 Nov. 1759), the wazir's agent in this atrocious deed, Mahdi Quli Khan, silently enthroned in the fort Muhi-ul-millat (the grandson of Aurangzib's youngest child Kām Bakhsh) under the title of Shāh Jahān II. But the new 'king of kings' was even more of a shadow than his luckless predecessor. The harem apartments of the palace were ransacked by the regicide wazir and the story went that fifty lakhs in cash and

* Raj. i. 216, 217, 223.

The defection of Suraj Mal was even more ruinous to the Maratha cause than Shujā's choice of hostility a month earlier. The Bhāu had no longer a single friend left north of the Narmadā. The Maratha relations with the Jāt kingdom had been marked from the first by grasping tyranny. Their unprovoked siege of Kumbher (1754) had been ended only by the promise of a tribute of 30 lakhs. Moreover, the expansion of the Jāt power from the Mathurā-Agra district over the Jamunā into the middle Doab crossed the line of Maratha ambition there. Suraj Mal had built and richly stored the fort of Rāmgarh (now called Aligarh), intending to make it a second Kumbher in the midst of his Doāb possessions, and Govind Ballāl, the Maratha governor of the tract immediately south of it, had planned (middle of May) to capture this fort and replace Jāt rule by his own in that region. [Raj. i. 187.] Though the design could not be put into execution, thanks to Afghan pressure, this unfriendly attitude could not be kept a secret from Suraj Mal. When the Bhāu entered Jāt territory on 8th June, he no doubt issued strict orders to his men not to molest or rob his ally's subjects. The Peshwā had also advised the Bhāu not to dun Suraj Mal for the unpaid balance of the tribute of 1754. [*SPD.* xxvii. 255.] But

(assurances given.) xxvii. 258. *Mux.* 184. *DC. Imad-us-sadat,* 180, (also 81) and Wendel, 81, say that the Bhau insulted Suraj Mal by calling him a mere landholder. (I doubt it, though the Bhāu certainly rejected the war plan of Suraj Mal and Malhar.)

even a less astute man than Suraj Mal would have guessed that as soon as the Abdali menace was removed, the locust swarms of the South would come down upon him for their old dues. Even then, as between Abdāli and the Marathas, he would have preferred the latter if only they had the sense to adopt a live and let live policy and honest enough to keep their plighted word. Such an assurance the Bhāu failed to give to Suraj Mal's complete satisfaction. On the contrary, he insulted and alarmed the Jāt king beyond hope of appeasement.

All evidence agrees in showing that the Bhāu antagonized Malhar Rao Holkar, and even if he did not openly insult his veteran lieutenant by calling him a dotard past his usefulness, he certainly disregarded Malhar's counsels and thus lowered him in the eyes of the army and the public. Malhar's angry remark that if these proud Brāhmans of Punā were not humbled by the enemy they would make him and other captains of the Maratha caste wash their soiled clothes, is historically true,* in view of his natural feelings, after this scarred veteran's advice had been brushed aside by a youth under thirty years who had never seen North-Indian warfare. Suraj Mal, who was the shrewdest Hindu potentate then alive, naturally saw eye to eye

* This does not mean that Malhar turned a traitor to his master's cause; he merely took care to save himself out of the wreck of the Maratha army on 14 January 1761.

with Malhar Rao for his strong sense of realism in politics and war, and distrusted the Bhāu, who trod the air of theory instead of planting his feet on the bedrock of the real facts of a situation. Suraj Mal had before this placed himself under the protective wings of Malhar, and sided with him in the Bhāu's council-chamber ever since their coming to Agra.

§ 9. *Sadashiv Bhau's character and policy examined.*

The Bhāu had started from the Deccan with a wholesome respect for the Durrāni military power and a persistent belief that his own resources must be greatly increased by the addition of fresh musketeers, firearms, munitions, and North-Indian allies, before he could confront such an enemy with any hope of victory. His almost daily correspondence during this campaign effectively disproves the popular tradition that his head was turned by insolence and pride; it could not have been so before his capture of Delhi (3 August), when Suraj Mal had already been estranged. His letters [*SPD.* xxvii. 255, 257] to the Peshwā show that even after the capture of Delhi he realized the gravity of his position and the difficulty of defeating Abdāli in pitched battle, so that he still preferred a waiting game and the policy of starving the enemy out as the best in the circumstances. A durable and honourable peace with Abdāli was possible by sharing Hindustan with him, *viz.*, by ceding the Panjāb to

Ahmad Shah and confirming Najib's possessions in the Doāb. But such a settlement he had rejected in June, long before his capture of Delhi, because the Peshwā's instructions were clearly against ceding the Panjāb to the Afghans. Therefore, a fight to the finish with the Durrānis was the only course left to the Bhāu, and for this choice of an extreme policy the responsibility rests not on the Bhāu but on his master in Punā.

Sadāshiv Rao's capture of Delhi forms a turning-point in his career. Its immediate effect was to restore the prestige of Maratha arms which had been ruined by the fall of Dattāji and the rout of Malhar early in this year. Abdāli's partisans were now dismayed and began to waver, and even to intrigue in secret with the Bhāu. The Shāh himself passed through a period of anxiety and avowed his readiness to return to his own country if only an honourable peace could be made with the Marathas and the Ruhelas could be assured of safety from Maratha aggression during his absence. This far-resounding success, secured with the loss of less than a score of men and after only a week of exertion, blinded the Bhāu to the realities of the situation. He regarded Shujā's proposal of peace as a proof of the hopeless weakness of Abdali's cause. As he wrote to Govind Ballāl on the day of his entry into Delhi (3rd August), "Ahmad Bangash and some Ruhelas are going away [from Abdāli's camp] to their homes. Shujā now realizes what to expect from his having joined Abdāli!

Internal dissension is increasing among the Durrāni sardārs. My capture of Delhi has broken his waist. I have put off the fight with him only in consequence of the high level of the Jamunā." Eighteen days later he was still puffed up with the same idea and wrote, "Yes, my conquest of the capital has struck awe into Abdāli and caused a split in his camp. Many Turānis wish to desert his service for ours. His troops are greatly frightened. Many of the Ruhelas have gone back [to their homes] beyond the Ganges, and the rest are about to do so. Najib alone is keeping up his spirits. Shujā, as the result of his joining Abdāli, finds himself bogged." The lame Ahmad Khan Bangash, who merely enjoyed the prestige of his office as imperial Paymaster-General and held the strategically important position of Farrukhabad, now began to make secret overtures begging the Bhāu's favour through Govind Ballāl, and peacefully evacuated Farrukhabad before the advancing Marathas (29th August.) [Raj. i. 224, 233, 236, 237.]

Shujā and Najib continued throughout August and September to hold peace parleys with the Bhāu, but without success, as the Peshwa's demands were impossible. The Bhāu continued to receive intelligence about the Abdāli camp of a kind most flattering to his vanity and tending to confirm him in the delusion that the Muslim league was broken up and that the invaders would be thankful for a retreat home with their bare lives. For example, on 29 August Govind Ballāl wrote, "At night a consultation

was held by the Shāh ; all his followers, high and low alike, advised him, 'You ought not to stay in this country. The strength of the Marathas is increasing daily. Therefore, do not listen to anybody else's [*i. e.*, Najib's] counsels, but make peace with the Marathas and go home.'" On 21st September was sent this report: "There is a tumult in Abdāli's army. High and low, all urge him to come to terms with the Marathas and return home. Besides, he has no spirit for fighting left in him. At Anupshahar, ten thousand of his horses, camels and mules have died, and more are dying daily. Thank God ! the Peshwā's star is dominant." [Raj. i. 236, 247-246.]

§ 10. *Difficulties and distress of the Bhau after the conquest of Delhi.*

But the Maratha acquisition of the Mughal capital was in truth a barren spectacular success. It actually aggravated the Bhāu's difficulties in two ways. His residence in the dry sterile north-western suburbs of Delhi (the Shālimār gardens) far away from the friendly and fertile old base in the Jāt country, caused the draught-oxen of his guns and munition-tumbrils to die of famine and sickness. The stoppage of food supply from the Doāb by reason of Abdāli's occupation of the tract immediately east of Delhi and the flood in the Jamunā, caused his soldiers and horses to starve. At the same time the occupation of the imperial city brought

him no gain in money, but actually increased his expenses by one lakh a month. As the official guardian of the imperial family, he had now become responsible for the maintenance of the princes and the salaries of the palace guards and menial servants and the Court officials. [*SPD.* xxvii. 257.]

On 16th September we have this astonishing report from the Bhāu's camp in Delhi, "In our army even big men are fasting, the horses have forgotten what it is to eat gram. Our soldiers are ruined ; nowhere is a loan obtainable. There is no life left in any man or horse; our men can procure rice with difficulty. The end of it all threatens to be very hard. None has seen such a year ever before." Each trooper and his horse now required Rs. 200 a month for food, and yet for three months the Bhāu had not been able to pay any subsistence money to his soldiers.

Even a fortnight before this the Bhāu had written to the Peshwā : "There is starvation in my camp ; but no loan can be had ; no revenue is being paid to me by any *kamāvisdār* (collector), in spite of my frequently writing to them. My troops are going through many a fast." Up to 5th September, the Bhāu had received from two Maratha collectors in North India only Rs. 2,80,000 and "not a *kauri* from any one else." The two lakhs that he had received at Sironj (6 May) from the Peshwā had been exhausted in a fortnight. And, as early as 26th June, when he had not yet

reached Agra, he makes this piteous appeal to the Peshwā for financial assistance : "I am getting no money from any side,—neither from our mahals [in the Doāb] which are disturbed, nor from tribute which is being evaded [by our vassal chiefs.] If we are to overcome Abdāli we require 30,000 horsemen. Many of my troopers had lost their chargers in the war with Nizām Ali, or from disease, and they have to be supplied with remounts. The parting gift for last year is still unpaid to my troops. As I cannot give them their full subsistence even, whence can I pay their overdue parting gift and bounty for equipment (*nālbandi*) ? The troubles around Delhi have dispersed the bankers of this region ; hence no loan can be raised here." [*SPD.* ii. 130, 131, xxi. 193, xxvii. 257, 255, 258.]

§ 11. *Sadashiv Bhau's financial resources during the Panipat campaign.*

The Peshwā had sent the Bhāu off with such small funds as he could immediately spare and had supplemented them with two lakhs after a month. He himself was overwhelmed with debt (a legacy from his father) and expected the Bhāu to support his troops with the revenue of the Maratha jāgirs in Hindustan and the tribute due from the Rajahs there, which would now be more promptly paid by reason of the Bhāu's presence there in overwhelming force. But both these calculations went wrong. The northern vassals sat on the fence,

paying nothing unless the Bhāu attacked them (which was not expedient during Abdāli's presence in India.) The Peshwā's orders were that his local revenue officers should pay half their actual collection to the Bhāu and remit the other half to the Punā treasury. In consequence of it, the Bhāu received nothing beyond Rs. 2,80,000 (as against 25 lakhs due on paper from Govind Ballāl alone.) He wrote to the Peshwā complaining that the rascally collectors had taken advantage of the Peshwā's order and "paid to neither, telling the Bhāu that they had transmitted their entire receipts to Punā, and reporting to the Peshwā that they had paid the whole amount to the Bhāu !" It is clear that the Bhāu entirely misjudged the situation from his ignorance of North India ; he refused to accept Govind Ballāl's very reasonable explanation that the Maratha districts in the Doāb had been too much ravaged by the late wars and were now too convulsed by Abdāli's presence in force in Aligarh to yield their normal revenue.

All that was remitted to the Bhāu by the Maratha collectors in Hindustan, besides the above Rs. 2,80,000, was 4.2 lakhs which reached Nāro Shankar at Delhi on 17th December, and out of which only Rs. 1,10,000 was safely conveyed to Panipat,—or a total of Rs. 3,90,000 actually received. Adding to this the 9 lakhs he made by coining the remnant of the silver ceiling of the Diwān-i-khās of Delhi and the 7 lakhs of booty secured at Kunjpurā, as also the Rs. 1,88,000 received at Sironj

and the lakh or less of starting gift at Patdur,—his total receipts during this entire campaign of just under ten months was about 22½ lakhs. But his mothly expenditure ran to 5½ lakhs for the first four months and a half, seven lakhs for the next two months and a half, and about ten lakhs during the last three months,—or a total of over 72 lakhs, *i. e.*, more than three times his income. And this at a time and in a country where he had not a single ally nor a single banker willing to give him credit. [*SPD.* xxvii. 254-258. Raj. i. 281.]

§ 12. *The Bhau's doings in Delhi.*

Delhi palace passed into Maratha hands on 3rd August 1760, but the coveted capital of India proved a Dead Sea apple to them. It had been emptied by the repeated spoliations of Nādir and Abdāli, and what little remained had been taken away by the wazir Imād-ul-mulk before his flight. Imād had even stripped off a portion of the silver ceiling of Shah Jahan's 'Paradise on earth'—the Diwān-i-khās within the palace-fort. The new masters of the imperial city were actually starving. On 5th August they write from Delhi, "There is no money for paying even one week's subsistence in a month; our men and horses are fasting. If we could discover the hiding-places in the fort, ten or twenty *krores* could be secured. But we cannot enter the female apartments of the palace. The Bhāu is trying

persuasion [for discovering the secret.]" [*SPD.* xxvii. 257, 258.]

On 6th August the Bhāu took out what remained of the ceiling of the Diwān-i-khās and coined the silver into nine lakhs of Rupees. This sum maintained his army for a month and enabled him to meet the cost of feeding the imperial family and palace servants, which was an additional burden of one lakh a month. On the 10th, which was the Maratha festival of the lunar conjunction of the month of Shrāvan, the Bhāu ceremoniously bathed at the Nigambodh *ghat*, (near the old Calcutta Gate),—at which holy spot the sages of ancient India had sat in religious comtemplation and attained to a true knowledge of the Vedas (*Nigama.*) He then distributed alms to the Brāhmans and also to the Muslim mendicants haunting the Jāmi Masjid. Jankoji Sindhia visited the fort, and sitting down in the Octagonal Tower called for the sons of the ex-Emperor Ahmad Shah and held a whispered conversation * with them, giving them robes of honour and jewelled crests. [*SPD.* xxvii. 257. *DC.*]

Then, leaving Nāro Shankar as subahdār and qiladār of Delhi with a force † for the defence of the city, the

* Did he try to pump out of them the secret of the treasure hoards within the palace, by promising to restore their branch to the imperial throne in return ?

† *DC.* merely says that the Bhāu ordered Naro Shankar to enlist infantry for the garrison. Raj. i. 237 states that he

Bhāu moved (12th August) to the Shālimār gardens near Bādli. This northward advance with artillery effectively blocked the Barāri-ghāt to the Ruhelas who were trying to cross the Jamunā there. The Bhāu lay encamped here for two months, from 12th August to 10th October. But by the end of September his position had become intolerable by reason of the failure of his food and fodder supply and the utter exhaustion of his funds and credit. He felt that he must remove elsewhere, or his entire army would perish through famine. The swollen Jamunā forbade any action in the Doab, where his enemies were concentrated, till the river should become fordable again at the end of October at the earliest. He had, therefore, as early as the first week of September, begun to think of advancing north and attacking Kunjpura.

§ 13. *The Bhau captures Kunjpura.*

This fortified town commanded the ferry over the Jamunā on the road from Karnāl and formed a most convenient half-way house for the passage of reinforcements and provisions from Sarhind (then in Afghan possession) to Abdali's camp in the upper Doab. Its master was Nejābat Khan Ruhela, a *protégé* of Najib. During the Durrani invasion of January 1757, he used to dress his Indian followers like the Qizilbāshes and

placed under N. S. 3,000 foot and 3,000 horse (evidently local recruits) and some *materiel*.

rob caravans on the grand trunk road between Lahor and Delhi, giving out that these were Abdāli's soldiers [Miskin, 133], whom none durst resist. His castle was a robbers' den where other Afghan freebooters and Abdali agents of that tract used to lodge their booty and find a secure asylum in need. Enormous quantities of grain were stored here for the Shah's army across the Jamunā.

The conquest of Kunjpurā was absolutely necessary if the Bhāu was to cut Abdāli's communications with his country and bring him to an action on the west bank of the Jamunā. The Maratha chief's plan was to capture Sarhind (as had been done in Raghunāth's campaign in March 1758), join Alā Singh Jāt and other Indian zamindars of the cis-Satlaj region and rouse them against Abdāli, as the first step towards driving the foreign invaders out of the Panjab. Such a policy required at its very outset the destruction of the enemy depot at Kunjpurā. But the strongest allurement of Kunjpurā for the starving and bankrupt army of the Bhāu was that this place was stored full with provisions and money belonging to Abdāli and his partisans, and yet the flooded river would defeat every attempt of Abdāli or Najib to come to its aid.

The Bhāu started on this enterprise. From his camp at Lāleri (3 miles south of Ganaur) he sent back Nānā Purandaré and Āppāji Jadav Rao to Delhi, and these two agents, on Friday the 10th of October, deposed

the titular Shah Jahan II, proclaimed Ali Gauhar as Emperor under the title of Shah Alam II, struck coins in his name, and installed his eldest son Mirzā Jawān Bakht in the Diwān-i-khās as his Heir and vicar. They also conferred the wazirship on Shujā-ud-daulah *in absentia,* in the hope of luring him away from Abdali's side. [Raj. i. 258, 259. *DC. Siyar,* iii. 67.]

Having strengthened his base at Delhi and in fancied security about his long-extended line of communication along the west bank of the Jamunā for a month to come, the Bhāu arrived before Kunjpurā in the evening of 16th October. Outside the city were encamped Abdus Samad Khan (the Durrāni governor of Sarhind) and Miān Qutb Shāh (the preceptor and ally of the Indian Ruhelas, whose brigandages have been described in Ch. 13, §15) with about 2,000 men. There were at least 8,000 more fighters within. The immense Maratha host halted for the night, encircling the city, and early next morning advanced to attack the Afghan camp outside. Ibrāhim Khān Gārdi with his artillery, supported by his eight regiments of foot-musketeers, led the van. Abdus Samad and Qutb issued from their tents and tried to charge the Marathas, but the withering fire of these disciplined troops broke their ranks up before they could come to close quarters. Abdus Samad was shot dead, and Qutb wounded. The remnant of their troops fled to the city gates and demanded entrance, which Nejābat Khan at first refused, as he

trembled at the deadly power of the Maratha army which he had witnessed from the walls. After a long wrangle they induced him to open the gates by threatening Abdali's wrath if he refused them help. But the Marathas had now arrived close behind the fugitives and entered the city pell-mell with them. Thus Kunjpurā fell into Maratha hands at one blow. Evidently there was much street fighting as the Afghans defended their homes, because the Marathas admit nearly a thousand casualties on their side (but no officer slain.) The booty secured was immense,—3,000 horses, besides all the camels and guns found in the fort. Two hundred thousand maunds of wheat and other goods of a total value of 10 lakhs, and six and a half lakhs of Rupees in cash came to the public treasury, while the soldiers and camp-followers on the day of the assault looted much property in the houses. So vast was the quantity of the captured provisions that the Maratha troops were paid their weekly subsistence in grain.

The Bhāu halted at Kunjpurā for seven days, celebrating the Dasahārā festival (19 Oct.) with great exultation and pomp, and digging up the floors of houses in search of buried treasure.* Besides Abdus Samad Khan who had fallen in the plain outside, Nejābat Khan died of his wounds in captivity. A sterner fate waited on

* Bhau's capture of Kunjpurā,—Raj i. 255 (wrongly dated),258-260, 265. vi. 405. *SPD.* xxi. 198, 192, 193. *Husain Shahi* 57. Nur-ud-din, 34-35. *Mar.* 185-186 *Imad*, 186, 78.

Miān Qutb Shah, who had fled wounded to the city and been seized. Nine months ago, when Dattāji Sindhia lay wounded and writhing on the field of Barāri-ghat, Qutb Shah had severed his head and carried it away in triumph to the Afghan camp. He had shown no mercy to a fallen foe, and in his day of defeat he could expect none. So, he opened his mouth in abuse of the Marathas when brought as a prisoner to their camp, and was sentenced to death,—with torture, according to one account. The severed heads of Samad and Qutb were placed on lances and paraded in triumph through the Maratha camp, and, as we can easily imagine, specially in the bazar of the Sindhia contingent. Two sons of Nejābat were captured in the fort and taken with the Maratha army to Panipat. Only one son, Dilir Khan, who was absent, escaped and lived to recover his father's seat.

§ 14. *Sadashiv Bhau comes to Panipat.*

After a week's halt at Kunjpurā for digging out buried treasure, looking after his numerous wounded, arranging for the proper care and transport of his vast booty in grain and animals, and setting up his own outpost in the captured fort, the Bhāu on 25th October started for Kurukshetra, 30 miles to the north. He had covered only half the way, when next day at Tarāuri, near the scene of Sābāji Sindhia's repulse ten months ago, he learnt that Abdāli had crossed the Jamunā at Bāghpat.

and arrived at Sonepat (two days earlier), thus cutting his communication with Delhi and the South. The Bhāu immediately turned back to meet the enemy, reached Pānipat on 29th October and halted to learn of the enemy's position and plans more clearly. On the 1st of November the Afghan army was sighted seven miles south of his position,* and the long looked for decisive contest at last began.

§ 15. *Abdali encamps in the Doab, his policy, March-October, 1760.*

We shall now turn to the invader's camp and see what Abdāli had been doing in the meantime. After crushing Malhar's rearguard near Sikandrābad in the morning of 4th March 1760, and sweeping the Marathas out of the upper Doab, he sacked and occupied the city of Koil (modern Aligarh) about the 26th and laid siege to its fort (then named Rāmgarh), which was held by Durjan Sal on behalf of Suraj Mal. The Jāt Rajah had strongly fortified it and stocked it with provisions artillery and munitions, wishing to make it a second Kumbher for the defence of his trans-Jamunā possessions. He naturally expected the place to hold out for many months; but in the meantime Abdāli's roving detachments drove out the Jāt posts along the eastern side of the Jamunā in the Bulandshahar district, so as to bring the entire upper Doab into the hands of his faithful Najib.

* *SPD.* xxi. 194, 197. Raj. i. 265. Kashirāj (wrong.)

The garrison of Aligarh, being thus cut off from all hope of succour from their brethren west of the river and remembering the massacre at Ballabhgarh after its capture by Abdāli in March 1757, capitulated within a fortnight, and this unexpected reverse greatly damped the spirit of Suraj Mal. The Rajah now sent an agent to Abdali to beg for terms; the victor demanded 45 lakhs. [26th April. *DC.* Wendel 79-80. *Husain Shahi*, 52-53. Nur-ud-din, 32. Miskin, 210. *Imad.* 76-77.]

If Ahmad Shāh had been left to himself, he would have immediately gone back to Qandahār, in order to avoid the Indian summer which had killed off hundreds of his soldiers daily in 1757. His task in India was done by the middle of April; he had annihilated the Maratha power in the North, slain Dattāji Sindhia, routed Malhar Holkar, captured Delhi, cleared the upper Doab of every enemy of the Ruhelas, and brought the Jāt Rajah to promise tribute. It only remained for him to confirm the work of his sword by inviting Shah Alam II to take the throne of Delhi with the loyal Shujā as his wazir. This expedition, unlike that of 1757, had brought in no rich tribute or booty, and the invader was hard pressed for money to feed his soldiers with. But Najib Khan begged him hard not to abandon the Indian Afghans to the mercy of the vast army that the Peshwā was sending to retrieve his prestige in the North; he even contributed ten lakhs of Rupees in cash to meet Abdāli's war charges and also undertook to

supply his army, if it remained in the Doāb, with provisions from his estates there and east of the Ganges. Thus it happened that as the rainy season approached, Abdāli made up his mind to go into cantonments near Aligarh. Here grass and bamboo huts were constructed for his army and tents were brought from the Delhi imperial stores by writing to his agent there, Yaqub Ali Khan. [*DC.* Nur-ud-din, 31-32*a*.] Each side now began to beat up for allies.

From this camp Abdali sent Hāfiz Rahmat Khan to Mathurā (16th May) to settle terms with Suraj Mal, and if possible with the Marathas also. We have seen how this embassy failed through the blind greed of the Marathas, and Hāfiz returned to the Shah (*c.* 20 June.)

§ 16. *How Shuja-ud-daulah was won over to Abdali's side.*

The Nawāb of Oudh possessed by far the strongest army and best artillery in Northern India. His Gosain troops were the most reckless fighters among the Hindus and formed a compact brotherly corps of ten thousand horse and foot, and he had besides a number of able and devoted Shia officers in his service. Each side held out to Shujā the bait of making him the wazir of Delhi after placing Shah Alam on the imperial throne.* On behalf of Abdāli, Mālika-i-Zamāni, the honoured widow

* **Raj.** i. 187, 179, 189, 191, 196, 215, 236. *SPD.* ii. 127. *Imad.* 75, 79-81. *Mun.* 179. *Husain Shahi*, 53. *Mujmil.* 127.

of the Emperor Muhammad Shah, visited Shujā, and later Jahān Khan (the Durrāni commander-in-chief) and Najib Khan (the invader's plenipotentiary in his Indian diplomacy.) The Bhāu tried hard, by means of special ambassadors (Shyāmji Ranganath) and personal letters to counteract this move. He assured Shujā that it was the duty of both of them to bring about the restoration of the Timurid dynasty at Delhi and that the Marathas' sole aim was to administer the empire in concert with him in the way best for all. But it was well known that Maratha support alone had enabled Imād-ul-mulk to murder two Emperors and all but succeed in killing a third ; hence, the Bhāu's present anxiety for the glory and welfare of the Delhi royalty was hardly convincing. He next appealed to Shujā's mother in the name of the old friendship that had existed between the Marathas and her husband. But she could not forget that they had, ever since his expulsion from the wazirship, backed Imād, the mortal enemy of the house of Oudh and of the Shia sect in general.

Shujā's clear-sighted advisers saw that the victory of the Abdāli king would in no way injure their master's interests, while a Maratha triumph would be ruinous to him. Ahmad Shah, as every one knew, was determined not to live in India nor create an Indian empire of his own ; he was sure to go away after his Indian expeditions, leaving Delhi and its government in the hands of his Indo-Muslim supporters. But the Marathas were

natives of the land, their northern ambition was boundless and had been fully unmasked since their Delhi expedition of August 1757. They had been openly demanding the surrender of Shujā's most lucrative cities, Allahabad and Benares, and he had barely managed to evade compliance with this demand up to now, but could not hope to practise his delaying tactics for ever. Their design to annex Bihār as soon as they would be free from their entanglement with Abdāli, had been publicly avowed in 1759, and once in possession Bihār, they were sure to seize Shujā's province of Allahabad, which would otherwise have interposed a troublesome alien wedge between their territories east and west of it. It was therefore Shujā's true interest to defeat the Maratha designs in the North.

When Najib Khan on his diplomatic mission from Abdāli reached Qānauj on the Ganges, Shujā came to the opposite bank at Mahdiganj. An envoy of such exalted rank was entitled to the highest respect and attention on personal grounds. Najib waited on Shujā and presented Abdāli's letter soliciting an alliance with him. In reply the Nawāb showed him the Bhāu's letter which pointed out the friendship of the Peshwā with Shujā's late father and urged the duty of the two to reinstate the Emperor of Delhi by expelling the foreign invader from India and giving the imperial Chancellorship to Shujā, as the ex-wazir's son. Najib, on the other hand, pressed the Nawāb of Oudh to side with Ahmad

Shah in this conflict between Islam and infidelity. Shujā was at first loth to commit himself, and proposed to remain neutral. He was a notorious profligate and drunkard, nursed in the lap of unimaginable luxury and extravagance from his childhood upwards, and he naturally preferred ease and enjoyment at Lucknow to the hardships of a campaign. His family feared lest Abdāli should still be harbouring vindictive feelings towards the House of Oudh for Safdar Jang's victory over him at Manupur in 1748, or that the Durrāni nobles should insult him when he was once in their power. He was India-born, and such men are regarded with contempt by the natives of Persia and Afghanistan *(vilāyet-xā.)* Above all, he was a Shia, while the Abdālī was a Sunni champion. Therefore, life in the Abdalī camp threatened to be intolerable for him.

These misgivings were answered by Najib, who pledged his honour and took the most solemn oaths to assure Shujā of the fullest safety and honour if he visited Abdāli. The ambassador warmed up and exclaimed, "What have you to do with the nobles in Abdāli's camp? God be my witness that if the Shāh himself frowns at your Highness, I shall immediately dig his two eyes out. If I do not do it, I am not my father's son. There are $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of Afghans in India; consider them as your servants. If any other envoy had come and you had rejected his message, I should not have complained. But as I have come, putting my faith in

your grace, listen to my words. Do one of two things now: either go to Abdāli's side, or here is my dagger and here my neck; cut it with your own hand. If you so desire, I shall give you a writing, sealed with my seal, absolving you from the consequences of my murder." His persistence and reputation for sincerity overcame Shujā's fears and hesitation, and the Nawāb of Oudh at last agreed to go if Najib could bring for him a signed safe-conduct and the robe of investiture as imperial wazir from Abdāli.

The successful ambassador turned back to Koil (beginning of June.) Abdāli sent the required letter and promise, and Shujā after some further wavering and an attempt to go towards Bihār and join Shah Alam (who had been defeated by the English) finally cast his lot in with Abdāli. His mother, the imperious daughter of Burhān-ul-mulk Sadat Khan, who watched over him like a guardian angel, had been most doubtful about his safety among the hated Afghans and the wisdom of alienating the Marathas. His old officers, true to the traditions of Safdar Jang's time, had spoken in support of a Maratha alliance. But all had failed before Najib.

Escorted by 7,000 picked horsemen and a devoted Gosain corps with a good park of artillery, Shujā made a start, early in July, for the Abdāli camp at Anupshahar. Some miles outside the place, he was welcomed in advance by Shāh Wali Khan the Durrāni wazir and then conducted to Ahmād Shāh's presence (18 July), where

he was received with the highest honours and given the title of that sovereign's son, *Farzand Khān*. *

This was the most splendid diplomatic success of Najib. The Marathas now had not a single Delhi grandee left on their side.

§ 17. *Abdali's difficulties during his encampment in the Doab; Najib's services.*

When the rainy season fully set in (during July), Abdāli removed from the neighbourhood of Aligarh to the high ground on the west bank of the Ganges at Anupshahar and cantoned there. The swollen river and rain-soaked plains made the movement of troops impossible before next October, and Abdāli, wishing to lessen the pressure on the food and fodder supply of his neighbourhood, allowed the Ruhelas to go back to their homes beyond the Ganges for two months (August and September.) Throughout these two months peace talks went on between Shujā and the Bhāu, but nothing resulted from them, as the Bhāu's head had been turned by his capture of Delhi and he refused to agree to any reasonable compromise. The intelligence he was

* Govind Ballal from Tirwa, 10 m. s. of Qanauj, gives (on 29 Aug.) the following intelligence : The day after Shuja's arrival at Anupshahar Abdali offered to give him investiture as wazir, but the former replied, 'Who is the Emperor? Whose wazir am I going to be? You sit on the imperial throne and I shall serve you as wazir. Why are you making me ridiculous by giving me the robes of an office without the functions?' [Raj. i. 236.]

receiving from the Afghan camp during the rainy season confirmed his belief that the invading army would be starved into surrender or dissolve through internal dissension. For, during these two months and a half Abdāli was really in a difficult and alarming position. His army was saved from disaster only by his iron will and influence over his troops, Najib's unfailing loyalty and resourcefulness, and the safe strategic position which the invaders had chosen in the upper Doab with no enemy left near them on the land side, their western flank protected by the raging Jamunā and eastern flank bordering on the fertile and friendly countries of the Ruhelas and Shujā. But he needed money for feeding his troops. Famine prices were then raging, and, as a Maratha officer wrote, it cost Rs. 200 to maintain a trooper and his horse for a month. The Doāb had been ravaged by almost unceasing war and rebellion ever since 1756, and large tracts of fertile country had lapsed into the jungle. The provisions for the Afghan army had to be bought in distant places like the Ambālā and Karnāl districts and Rohilkhand and Oudh, and transported at heavy cost to Anupshahar. The few lakhs paid by Najib were soon exhausted, and Ahmad Shah had to press the Indian Ruhelas for contribution, saying that he had come not to found an empire for himself, but to rescue them from the Marathas. They pleaded poverty.

He next turned to Shujā, who was reputed to be the

richest prince in Hindustan after the Jāt Rajah. Early in August he told the Nawāb, "You are a grandee, with two *krores'* worth of territory under you. I am hard pressed by the increasing arrears of my soldiers' pay. Make some arrangement for it." The request was a veiled threat of extortion, and Shujā in consequence had a rupture with Najib who had induced him to come within Abdāli's clutches, and the Nawāb in his inner council repented of having chosen the Afghan side. In addition to this want of money and foodstuffs, the monsoon months are unusually unhealthy in the Doāb. In the cantonments at Anupshahar ten thousand of his horses camels and mules had perished of disease by the midddle of September, and more were dying daily. [Raj. i. 247, 246.]

To aggravate these difficulties, backsliding appeared among his Indo-Muslim allies except the one constant Najib; Shujā sulked in his tents repenting of having joined Abdāli; the timid Ahmad Bangash and Sadullah Ruhela of Rāmpur, alarmed by the Maratha conquest of Delhi, began to intrigue secretly with the Bhāu and his agent in the middle Doab, Govind Ballāl; some Turki troops of Abdali (Miskin says the remnant of the *Sindagh* mercenaries) left his camp in disappointment and offered their services to the Marathas. [Raj. i. 236, 237, 244.] But the Bhāu could not take advantage of this distress of his enemy; he had no clever and energetic lieutenant nor any efficient troops in the

Doāb. The fat old revenue-collector Govind Ballāl with his rabble retainers could do nothing greater than taking petty mud-forts from the zamindars and their rustic militia. He could not even lead forays into the undefended trans-Ganges country, as the bitter experience of his attempted raid on Najibabad and disastrous flight in November 1759 (under Dattāji's orders from Shukartal) was still fresh in his memory.

§ 18. *Abdali crosses at Bāghpat and marches to Panipat.*

Abdāli, like a veteran general, grimly set his teeth and kept his army together, till his chance came towards the end of October. By reason of the flooded Jamunā he had not been able to raise a finger to save Delhi or Kunjpurā. And now the massacre of his partisans in the latter city roused him to the fury of impotent rage. "When the sack of Kunjpurā was reported to Ahmad Shah, his heart was inflamed to the extreme. Calling his Afghan generals together he told them that he could not bear it that while he was alive Afghan people should be so dishonoured." [Nur-ud-din, 35*b*.] He had moved to Shāhdara, facing Delhi, sometime at the beginning of October, only to look helplessly across the Jamunā till the river should become fordable again. The fall of Kunjpurā forced his hands. On the 20th of that month he marched northwards and arrived within four *kos* of Bāghpat. Here he halted for four days to find out if the river could be forded. Some of his Durrānis who

drove their horses into the river for discovering a fordable passage were swept away by the current and drowned. His Indo-Muslim allies, with all their local knowledge and influence, failed to provide a guide. So, the Shah fasted and prayed to God for two days, and on the third a ford was at last found. This miraculous reward of his piety roused the enthusiasm of the army to the highest pitch. The narrow passage across was lined with posts to mark it off from the deep water on the two sides, where men and horses would be drowned. The vanguard plunged into the river on 25th October, the day following the full moon, and reached the other bank in safety.

The Shah himself followed (26th) when half the army had crossed over. The river bank on the other side was boggy and had been churned into a sticky mud pool by the passage of thousands; but the numberless *jhau* bushes growing near were cut by the willing hands of the soldiers,—the grand wazir setting the example,—and thrown in to form a dry landing place. Some boats were seized on the western bank and these were employed in ferrying the camp baggage and heavy armament over. Three days were occupied in completing the crossing for the whole army. Owing to the hurry and the crowd, some thousands of men were drowned, but the Maratha grand army was at last caught in a trap.*

* Shah fords Jamunā at Bāghpat,—Kashirāj (best.) *DC.* Nur-ud-din, 36-37. *Mujmil*, 129. *Imad* 188. Raj. i. 260, 261.

On the 27th the Shāh began his advance from the west bank of the river. At an upper ferry east of Sonepat a Maratha patrol, less than a thousand strong, mostly second line troops or militiamen,—was posted to oppose any Afghan attempt at crossing. They were keeping watch in their usual slack and sleepy way, when 4,000 Durrāni horse under Shah Pasand Khan, guided by Najib's men, surprised them by hard riding and cut off the entire force. That night the Shah slept in Fakhru's garden, two miles north of Sonepat city. [Nur-ud-din, *DC.*] "On the 28th, at three quarters of the day, the Maratha vanguard [really advanced patrols] were sighted near Sarai Sambhālkā. From our side a force went to meet them and a battle was fought, with two to three thousand casualties in the two armies taken together,—but more on the Maratha side and less on the Durrāni. In the evening the Marathas retreated and the Shah's detachment fell back to their place of camping." [Kāshirāj]. The Shah then advanced to Ganaur (9 miles north of Sonepat and 8 miles south of Sambhālkā), where he halted for three days (28-30 Oct.), and on the 31st reached Sambhālkā, 12 miles south of Panipat. On 1st November he arrived five miles nearer to Panipat and established contact with the main enemy force holding that town.

APPENDIX

I. *The relative strength of the two armies at Panipat.*

According to Kashiraj Pandit, Ahmad Shah took a muster of his army one day before the Dasahara, *i.e.*, on 18th October, 1760, which showed 41,800 horse and 38,000 foot under his banners. He continues, after giving the strength of each contingent in detail, "These made altogether 40,000 horse and 40,000 foot. Out of this total, 30,000 cavalry and 10,000 infantry (composed of the heroic tiger-cubs of Kabul) and two thousand camel-swivels belonged to the Shah, and the rest to his Indian allies." This totalling must be considered as a rough one, as it does not quite agree with the detailed numbers he himself has given before; *e.g.*, in the details he has missed out the 10,000 Kabuli infantry whose name occurs also in the account of the battle, while the Indo-Muslim auxiliaries total 51,000 against the 40,000 which would be left to them if in an army of 80,000 the Durranis numbered 40,000. Four thousand infantry, each carrying a zamburak, were mounted on 2,000 camels; these and the gunners serving Abdali's 70 to 80 pieces of cannon are evidently included in the above total of 40,000, though in that age the musketeers were placed under the artillery department and not counted among the cavalry or infantry.

We may, therefore, take it as approximately correct that Abdali's fighting force was divided into two equal halves of about 40,000 men each,—the Durrani portion (including the camel corps and unspecified infantry) being composed of 30,000 horse and 10,000 foot, and the Indian portion of the

same number of men, but in the inverse proportion of horse to foot, namely 10,000 and 30,000 respectively. The Indian Ruhela army consisted preponderantly of foot musketeers.

The Bhāu held his muster a day later, which showed 55,000 horse and 15,000 foot (including 9,000 disciplined sepoys under Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi), or a total strength of 60,000.

As for the irregulars, on Ahmad Shah's side, "they were four times the number [of the regular Durrāni troops mentioned above], and their horses and arms were very little inferior to those of the regular Durrānis. In action it was their custom, immediately after the regulars had charged and broken the enemy, to fall upon them sword in hand, and complete the rout. All the Durrānis were men of great bodily strength, and their horses of the Turki breed; naturally very hardy and rendered still more so by continual exercise." [Kashiraj, 12-13.] On the Maratha side there were 15,000 Pindharis (*Chorghori* and *Hul sawar*.) These were employed in ransacking the battle-field and searching for the wounded of their side, after the fighting was over, and they could not therefore be used as reinforcements to turn the tide of an obstinately contested battle. In fact, their valour was reserved for unarmed peasants, defenceless women, and footsore solitary stragglers, and they were more of a danger to their own employers (by eating up the available grain and grass supply of the neighbourhood) than to their foes.

The above figures, though correct for 19th October 1760, were modified to a great extent in the battle of 14th January 1761. The wastage of war between these two dates did not exactly cancel each other, because (i) the Maratha casualties at Kunjpura, some 800 to 1,000, were not set off in the

Durrāni army, as the latter did not participate in that fight, (ii) in the intervening two and a half months' skirmishing the Bhāu's losses exceeded those of the Shah by one-half or even two-thirds, and (iii) Ahmad Shah received reinforcements from home a month before the final battle, and this body may be safely estimated at about 8,000 men (*vix.*, 2,000 regulars and 6,000 irregulars or more correctly raw recruits and apprentices.) These last were really soldiers in the making, born fighters, only lacking in the discipline and experience of their regular brethren.

Hence, the odds against the Marathas at Panipat were approximately 60,000 against 40,000 actually present in the field; but behind the Afghan fighting line there were about 80,000 second class troops as against 15,000 Pindharis. Above all, a famished army on lean half dead country mares met the finest cavalry in Asia, mounted on thorough-breds purchased straight from their breeding grounds in Khurasan and Trans-Oxiana, and the most efficient mobile artillery known in that age.

The scale of deduction from the full strength of the muster of 18th October necessary in order to get the numbers that actually took part in the battle of Panipat, can be correctly inferred from Kashirāj's own admission; *e. g.*, Najib brought to that field only 15,000 men, against the 26,000 he had passed at the muster; and Shujā fought at the head of 3,000 men (against 4,000 counted at the muster.) Hence, a reduction by one-fourth from the full muster-strength would be well within the truth.

Kāshirāj's detailed figures for the Bhāu's muster of 19th Oct. are all in thousands, never in hundreds; and his number for the total troops of the "several smaller bodies" whose captains were too humble to deserve mention by name, is 10,000. This last is such a large and round figure

that it must be discredited as based on conjecture or bazar rumour and not on actual counting; I reduce it to 4,000 actual. Kāshirāj assignss to Ibrāhim Khan (on 19 Oct.) nine thousand foot and two thousand horse; but in the battle he gives Ibrāhim only nine battalions of sepoys. A French battalion (forming one regiment) in those days had a normal strength of one thousand infantry only. [E. M. Lloyd's *Review of the History of Infantry*, 119.] Hence, his actual strength, allowing for the wastage of the Udgir campaign, was about 8,000, or 900 men per battalion which would correspond exactly to the Marathi report from Patdur (Kharé, i. p. 32) that he started with 8,000 sepoys. I cannot explain the 2000 horse assigned to the Gārdi; no other writer mentions such a force, nor do they figure at all in Kāshirāj's detailed story of the battle. I am sure that if they reached Pānipat, they must have been reduced to 'unmounted men' by the privations of the siege. No doubt, he had originally contracted for entering the Peshwa's service with 12 battalions, each normally containing a thousand men.

Kashirāj Pandit is the best authority on the campaign of Panipat, in which he was present throughout. No other author can be set against him in point of authenticity. *Siyar*, Nur-ud-din and other later writers give grossly exaggerated numbers—culminating in the 3½ lakhs of troops and 30,000 Gardis assigned to the Bhāu by Md. Jafar Shāmlu! Shamlu, who was present in the battle under Shah Pasand Khan, gives that general 12,000 men. But from the fact that this writer's figures are invariably inflated to at least three times the reality, I consider it safer to reduce Shah Pasand's force to 5,000,—which was the strength of his patrol, according to the more sober Kāshirāj.

Ahmad Shah's own troops, brought from Afghanistan and Persia and forming the backbone of his army, did not undergo any material change in their number during the three months intervening between the muster at Shāhdara and the battle at Pānipat, except for the addition of the newcomers under Hāji Atāi Khan (about 8,000.) The fluctuation was greatest among his Indo-Muslim allies, as it is definitely stated by Kāshiraj that Najib had 15,000 in the field (against 26,000 at the muster) and Shuja 3,000 (against 4,000.) Accepting this scale of shrinkage and allowing that no appreciable portion of the Durrāni regular troops was kept back to serve as baggage guard in the camp during the battle, we can make this fairly approximate calculation of the forces on the two sides *actually engaged* in the battle, counting each line of battle from its left :—

DURRANI.—[Left wing] Shah Pasand (5000, all horse), Najib (15,000, all foot and dismounted cavalry), Shuja (3,000, one-third being foot-musketeers). [Centre] Shah Wali Khan (19,000 men with 1,000 camel-swivels). [Right wing] Ahmad Bangash (1,000 foot), a small gap, Hafiz Rahmat and Dundi Khan (14,000, only one-fourth or less being cavalry), Amir Beg (Kabuli infantry) and Barkhurdār Khan (Persian cavalry), these last two together 3,000 men. *Total 60,000.*

MARATHA.—[Left wing] Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi (8,000 all foot-musketeers), Dāmāji Gaikwād (2,500 horse), Vittal Shivdev (1,500 horse). [Centre] some petty captains (2,000 horse in all), Bhāu and Vishwās Rao with the Household Troops (13,500). [Right wing] Antāji Mānakeshwar (1,000 horse), Satvoji Jadav (1,500 horse), minor captains (2,000 horse), Jaswant Rao Pawār (1,500), Shamsher Bahadur (1,500), Jankoji Sindhia (7,000), Malhar Holkar (3,000.) *Total 45,000.*

II. *The organization and discipline of the Durrāni and Maratha armies contrasted.*

Ahmad Shah Abdali had been trained under the eyes of the great Nādir Shah, first as his personal attendant and then as his favourite lieutenant. After his master's death he had inherited Nādir's veteran army and Nadir's system of military discipline. The Turks,—whether belonging to the tribes long settled in Persia and called *Qizilbashes* ('Red Caps') or mercenaries from their cradle-land in Central Asia, —were not only hardy soldiers and born horsemen, but also amenable to training and discipline in a degree unequalled by any other Asiatic race of former times and surpassed only by the modern Japanese. Under a great captain who shared their camp-life and hardships and led them personally in battle, and whose banners were ever victorious, these soldiers were prepared to perform every exertion, bear every hardship, and undergo every strictness of control and punishment almost to the extreme verge of human endurance. Nādir's strict control of his troops and their willing submission rivalled the condition of Frederick the Great's army. Two examples of it are recorded by Ashub (the foster-brother of the Emperor Muhammad Shah) during the Persian conqueror's occupation of Delhi, which contrast vividly with the slack chaotic condition of the Indo-Mughal army.

Ahmad Abdali was only a lesser Nādir ; less of an original genius, working in a narrower field and achieving less brilliant success than his master, no doubt, but still the only Asiatic of that age who could be at all compared to Nādir in capacity and spirit, and certainly no unworthy heir to his empire and tradition. The strict enforcement of order in camp and battle-field, the rigid punishment of

the least disobedience in any subordinate, the control of every officer's movements according to the plan of the supreme chief, the proper gradation of officers forming an unbroken chain between the generalissimo and the common soldier, the regular transmission of his orders by an efficient staff organization, and above all the fire control of the troops,—which distinguished Ahmad Shah's army were unapproached by any other Asiatic force of that age. Above all these was the transcendent genius for war and diplomacy and the towering personality of the master—who had risen like Nādir from nothing and attained to almost the same pre-eminence of fortune and invincibility in war.

The Maratha captains, on the other hand, were to a man individualistic in spirit and military tactics. Their common soldiers and lower officers alike were refractory and hated discipline with the hatred of "lesser breeds beyond the law" who extol lawless caprice as liberty and howl against the disciplined self-control and organized team-work of a true army or school as the marks of a 'slave mentality' and the destroyer of their *élan vital.*

This point will become quite clear when we contrast the rival races that met at Panipat in respect of their manner of camping, marching and discipline,—leaving out of consideration the relative genius of the two supreme chiefs.

Marching and Encamping.

"The Shah advanced alone amidst the ranks of his slaves, riding a horse ... There were four bodies of slaves,—each of 3,000 men,—one division in front, one behind, and one on each side. Each division of them wore a hat of a different style. It was prohibited for a slave belonging to one division to ride with another division; he must keep with his own set ... on pain of such severe beating

that he was left half-dead. They rode fast horses of Kābuli breed, and guided them, each in his own station, with a grave demeanour. They moved at the distance of a musket-shot from the Shah's person, all their faces turned towards him. The Shah rode alone in the middle, with an open space around him.

The treasure and the food supplies, the store of clothes, etc., were carried in the following manner. On the left flank, outside the ranks of the slaves, there were 100 camels loaded with bread, baked and then dried, 200 camels loaded with grain (*sursāt*.) This grain was given out daily in allotted portions ... On the right flank were 200 camels loaded with clothes and vessels. ... Such treasure as there was came in the rear of the guard of slaves, which followed the Shah; it was carried on mules and two-humped dromedaries.

Shāh Pasand Khan and Jangbāz Khan, with the *quwāchi-bāshi*, were told off to the rear-guard and held command over its movements. The three thousand slaves, who rode in front as advance guard, fully armed and ready, bore each a lance whose head was either gilt or silver-plated, having a decorated and fringed pennant ... It was wondrous as a garden in springtime, and a sight worth beholding.

The camp of the Shah was pitched in two portions. The first was the male and the other the female quarters. Between the two was left an open space of about the width of 2 or 3 arrows' flight. [The part of the male camp] where the Shah sat was styled *Khargāh*, and where the office scribes were placed was called *Darikhānah*. In the screens of the *Khargāh*, facing the *Darikhanah* there was one large entrance of wood. ... At each of the two wings of this entrance stood a large standard in a gold-embroidered scarlet broadcloth cover. From the top of each standard hung a

bow upside down ... (to which signals for a halt or a march on the next day were attached.)"

[From the diary of Samin in Abdali's camp near Ballabhgarh in March 1757. *Indian Antiquary*, 1907, pp. 55-58.]

Among the Marathas: "Orders for marching are signified by *chits* (notes) to the chieftains and promulgated by a cryer to the army the preceding night. And about four the ensuing morning the signal for moving is given by the great *naubat* or drum, on the second beating of which the Biniwāla (Quarter-master General) sets out with the Peshwa's flag, escorted by his own corps. ... With him proceed parties from all the different chieftains with their respective flags, followers, bazar, infantry, artillery, etc. (*bahir* and *bungāh.*) These all proceed promiscuously in vast multitudes and without the smallest order till they see the Peshwā's *Dal* flag, which is erected in a situation where the convenience of water is the principal consideration ... By this flag the erection of all the others of the army,—and every chief has one,—is regulated for the camp. Except in the line of the bazar which generally forms a fine street in front of the chief's tent, there is not the smallest internal regularity in the pitching of a Maratha camp ; yet with respect to Headquarters all the chiefs have their relative stations to the right and left, from which a deviation is by no means allowable. ... But, as no distances are marked out, and the numbers of no chief are definitely known, the whole exhibits an appearance of utter confusion.

The only part of the camp that carries the appearance of regularity is the Bazar, which generally forms a very long and broad street to the tent of the chief, whereas the rest of the camp is so straggled and destitute of all order that it is a most difficult thing to get through the crowds

of camels bullocks horses etc. to the interior of the camp, which subjects them to the utmost confusion in case of an alarm....

As soon as the camp is pitched the baggage *tattoos* (ponies), attached in great quantities to the *Pāgās*, gallop off with wonderful activity in quest of forage,···nor are the camels far behindhand with them.... These foraging parties are more destructive to a country than locusts. Nor are territories of friend or foe exempt from their depredations.... I suppose there was scarce a piece of wood or a blade of grass or hay left in the villages round the Peshwa's camp, after a short time's continuance, for the space of 12 miles.... Shopkeepers, handicrafts and every species of profession carry on their callings [in the amps of the Marathas] as much at their ease as in their cities... The safety of the Maratha camps is to be attributed to the vast numbers of their cavalry hovering round in every direction, rather than to any of the precautionary measures of trenches, posts, guards, etc. systematically used in our [*i.e.*, English] armies.

I am, from a general observation of the manners of the people and the extreme looseness of particular discipline or general arrangement amongst them, strongly of opinion that they would afford a very easy conquest to any army of a more vigorous composition that could bring a sufficient number of cavalry to prevent their making a sport of war and retreating in safety." [Sir C. W. Malet's *Memoranda on the Maratha Army*, written from the Maratha camp at Khardla, March, 1795. India Office MS. records.]

EQUIPMENT AND DISCIPLINE.

The organization of the Durrāni king's own troops was as regular as that of the European-trained sepoy regiments of India. Each *dasta* (cavalry regiment) of Abdali's army may therefore be taken as exactly 1,000 or 1,200 strong.

On the other hand, in every Maratha general's contingent the actual number of soldiers fell very far below the normal round number for which his cash salary (*naqd*) or land-assignment (*sarānjām*) was calculated. Sir .C. W. Malet noticed in the Peshwa's army in 1795:—

"The sums which the commanders receive for the payment of their troops, generally run to a certain rate per man and a fixed sum for the commander; and as in the management of these corps the payment by Government is generally very tardy, the commanders have recourse to every trick by which they can possibly elude the checks [of Government]; ...by which means it happens,—more particularly in the Peshwa's service,—that a corps of 100 men has seldom more than 50 effectives...Not only is half the grass and forage allowed to the horses of the *Pāgā* (cavalry mounted on Government horses) embezzled, but horses are changed, reported dead, and every species of the most flagitious peculation practised with impunity arising from the general interest and participation therein."

"The arms of the Maratha cavalry [in 1795] are swords, spears (*bhālā*), matchlocks and a few bows and arrows. The sword is universal and indispensable; the matchlock frequent and almost universal in the Pagas [this was not the case in 1761] and seems to be daily gaining ground of the long spear,—long a favourite weapon of the Marathas; but many of the *silahdars*, *yekandias*, and those who claim or affect superiority of birth or rank seldom encumber themselves with anything but a sword or two. It must, however, be understood that the arms, accoutrements and clothing of the horseman being his own property, there is not the smallest uniformity, every individual being equipped as his taste or circumstances suggest.

Every horseman throughout a Maratha army looks upon himself as company for his chieftain and always sits down with him."

"So long as the Shāhān-shāh was on his horse all these [his high officers] stood on foot around him···When he sat down in his tent, they too went in and used to make their speeches standing. Only Hafiz Rahmat Khan was often ordered to sit down at the time of dawn, which was not the time of holding Court, on the ground of his having memorized the *Qurān*." [Nur-ud-din, 40*b*.]

DISCIPLINE.

Bālāji Vishwanath took Malhar Holkar with him to Delhi as a Pindhara, with 20 to 25 retainers. The Peshwa agreed in return for ransom from a certain village there not to damage its green crops. But Malhar went with his retainers, cut the crop and gave it to his horses to eat. So Balaji's son Baji Rao himself went, stick in hand, to punish them. On seeing in Malhar's camp a *bārgir* feeding his horse with the green crop, he struck him with the stick. Then Malhar from the door of his small square tent abused Bāji Rāo and flung a clod of earth at him. . .Some time later during their return march, one day Bāji Rāo was sitting in the shade of a bush on the bank of a *nālā* in the plain of Sipri-Kolāras, with an escort of only 10 to 20 men, bathing and getting ready for his meal. Malhar Holkar arrived there with 500 troopers by devious paths, levelled his spear at the heart of Baji Rao and cried out, "That day I had hit you with a clod; if I now transfix you with my *bhālā*, who can save you?" But the Rao. . . rose up, and walking up to the feet of [Malhar's] horse, greatly flattered him! [*Holkarānchi Kaifiyat*, 2-4.]

Bālkrishna Dikshit writes on 15 Feb. 1751:—"On my

pilgrimage to Gaya I alighted at Daudnagar [a town in South Bihar.] There some 3 or 4 hundred horsemen of Nilopant Vaishampāyan came up and plundered the market of Daudnagar, taking away four lakhs worth of goods. They also laid hands on me, and I lost clothing utensils and a gold chain weighing 12 tolas. They had no sardar over them ; only a man named Mānāji Bhāgwat." [Raj. iii. 383.]

On 31 May 1754, when Malhar Holkar arrived opposite Delhi, as the ally of Imād-ul-mulk (imperial Paymaster-General), a body of his troops forded the Jamuna and plundered the *katra* of Nizam-ud-din Auliya's tomb and some other places and also burnt the Khurma mart. Imād, on hearing of it, went to Malhar and cried out, "What is this ? Why are your soldiers plundering the city ?" Malhar replied, "They are soldiers. They always do it." [*Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shāhi*, 133 .]

"As the common soldiers among the Durrānis are stubborn and disobedient, notwithstanding the Shah's proclamation, they committed some irregularities in Shuja-ud-daulah's camp (1760.) The Shah, on hearing of this, had 200 of them seized, and having had their noses bored through with arrows, and strings passed through the holes, they were led in this condition, like camels, to Shuja···to be put to death or pardoned, as he should think proper." [Kāshirāj, 8.]

"29 January, 1757. The Persian troops who had gone out for foraging, invaded many of the lanes [of Delhi], broke the doors of houses and plundered the property within. The shops of the bazars remained closed in consequence of this oppression.... This day the Shah slit the noses of two or three of the Persian soldiers, cut their stomachs open, thrust arrows into their nostrils, and in this manner paraded them in disgrace. This brought safety to Delhi." *DC.*

CHAPTER XXI

The Battle of Panipat, 1761

§ 1. *Bhau and Abdali entrench at Panipat; their first intentions and policy.*

The ten months of waiting and uncertainty were over. At last the two rivals for dominion over Hindustan had come to grips exactly in that arena where such contests had been fought out age after age. Arrived within reach of his enemy at Pānipat, Ahmad Shah Abdali, like a true master of war, held his troops strictly in hand, in a compact body under his eyes, never letting them extend beyond support. At first he followed a cautious watching policy in order to discover his enemy's strength and plan of war, before showing his own hand. For a week he silently suffered his stray cattle and horses* on the outskirts of his army to be carried off by the Maratha foragers and their Pindhari underlings, and strictly kept his troops back from sallying out for their recovery.

* The Pindharis brought away two elephants from the Afghan camp on 4th Nov. and two more soon afterwards. [Raj. i. 265. *SPD.* xxi. 197.] The capture of an elephant is considered by Indian soldiers as the highest glory like the capture of an enemy gun by European armies.

This inactivity was mistaken by the Marathas as a proof of his terror and timidity, and there was exultation in the Deccani headquarters, which was heightened by the scarcity of provisions in the Afghan camp. The Bhau wrote on 1st November, "Grain sells at 2 to 2½ seers in his camp. I have every confidence of being able to swallow him up soon." Four days later Krishna Joshi wrote from Pānipat, "The Yavan is greatly frightened, and dare not come on. Our troops are every day slaying 50 to 100 of his men and carrying off their camels and horses. His food supplies have been stopped, so that flour sells at three seers, gram at 4 seers, and *ghee* at ½ seer to the Rupee, while in our camp the rates are wheat 16, gram 12, and *ghee* 2½ seers. All our troops are confident that in four to eight days, Abdali Najib and Shuja would be destroyed. Abdali is called 'the King of kings,' . . . but having come within four miles of us, he has sat down for eight days and dare not make a demonstration of his valour. Hence, our army is in high spirit. Abdali's route to his home is blocked ; he cannot fight with hope of success, he cannot sit down idly as he has not the necessary food supply. He is bewildered." [Raj. i. 261, 264, 265.]

Everything, therefore, seemed to point out that the Afghan invader would be glad to beat a hurried retreat to his home without venturing to attack the Marathas, or, if he chose to halt there, the longer he delayed the

artillery with themselves. They easily entered by way of the Indo-Afghan trenches, but were defeated and expelled at the end of the fight, abandoning about 30 of their standards and some guns. [*DC., Husain Shahi,* 66.]

Three days later, while the ritual-loving Hindus were disorganized by the lunar eclipse due that night, the Durrāni wazir in the course of his daily patrol came to a large well (*bāoli*),* evidently south-west of Pānipat, immediately in front of the Maratha right wing. It was near sunset, and no engagement being expected that day he had kept only a small escort with him. While he was inspecting the well, the troops of Sindhia from their trenches opposite recognized him as a chief, and taking advantage of his unguarded condition,

---

* *Chāh-i-urchindāri* (Turki for *bāoli*), *Imād-us-sādat*, 190. It seems to refer to *Gaddiwāra* of the map, half a mile south-west of the shrine of Ghaus Ali Khan, south of Panipat. The correct date of this battle is given in two contemporary Marathi letters [Raj. vi. 406 and i. 272*n*.] Kashiraj gives 22 Rabi-us-sani [=1 Dec.] wrongly for the 12th (or 13th) of that Hijeri month.

Karnal Dist. Gaz. p. 32,—"The Maratha line of entrenchments can still be traced on the plain between Risalu and Panipat. The Durranis encamped close in front of them, on the plains north of Risalu and Ujaon." The latter statement cannot be true, because the contemporary records, both Marathi and Persian, say that the Shah encamped three miles south of the Maratha trenches. This would place his front south of the Siwah and Dhadaula villages, four miles south of the southern boundary of Panipat city,—or even further to the south, *i.e.*, along the Dimana—Pasina Khurd line.

made a sortie in full force and attacked him. A desperate battle joined amidst deafening shouts and a dense cloud of dust which hid friend from foe. The wazir held his ground against such tremendous odds, though he began to lose men very fast. After a time reinforcements came up from the rear and rescued him, his assailants chasing him up to a gunshot of the Afghan trenches and retreating with the setting of the sun. The wazir's casualties were about 600, and that of the Marathas about half the number. The Marathas captured over a hundred of his horses and boasted that but for nightfall they would have crushed him. *

There was a pause for the next fortnight. A Maratha letter, written on 27th November asserts, "Up to now our foragers and troops have captured 1000—1200 horses, 300—400 camels and four elephants from the enemy." The Afghan historian, on the other hand, claims superior advantages, "In every foray (*chapāwwal*) two to three thousands of the Marathas were slain, but few of the Abdalis." [*SPD.* xxi. 197. *Husain Shahi*, 63.] But whatever may have been the relative losses on the two sides, these skirmishes could produce no military decision.

* I have accepted Nana Fadnis's figures here. *SPD.* xxi. 197 gives about 950 and 160 for the two sides. Kāshirāj says, "Three to four thousand men were killed on the two sides taken together, in this action which lasted for 3 or 4 *gharis*" (exaggerated.) *Husain Shahi*, 61-62, does not refer to this battle, but to an earlier brush.

§ 3. *Ruhelas penetrate Maratha trenches; fall of Balawant Rao Mehendele, 7 December 1760.*

The first regular battle was precipitated on 7th December by a sudden outburst of Ruhela daring unauthorized by Ahmad Shah and without any concerted plan. That day, the Marathas, as was their wont, had dragged some of their guns to a position in the plain a rocket's flight in front of their trenches and fired them at the Afghans, who replied with some distant and equally fruitless shots. About an hour and a half before sunset, when the Marathas had just limbered up their guns and set out on return to camp, Najib's Ruhelas, harangued by his brother Sultān Khan, sallied out in a body of 1,000 horse and 5,000 foot and fell upon the retiring Marathas. The sharp and repeated fire of the Ruhela infantry—who were famous for their marksmanship, routed the cavalry guard of the guns, armed with sword and spear. The assailants reached the very edge of the Maratha trenches on the heels of the fugitives. But the alarm had spread to the entire army of the Bhau, and there was a rush from all sides to the defence of the threatened sector (the centre of the southern face.) The handful of Ruhela cavalry soon fled away before the thousands of Maratha light horse ; but their foot-soldiers, driving away the Maratha supports by their deadly musket-fire and profiting by the intense darkness of that night of lunar conjunction, penetrated inside the trenches. A party

of the victors climbed upon the deserted Maratha guns and beat their small drums in wild exultation. The thrust reached almost up to the market-square of the Maratha camp. But now the Gārdi musketeers were turned upon them under the personal lead of Ibrahim Khan and Balawant Rao Méhéndélé; over three thousand of the Ruhela infantry fell in the field, and the remnant retreated to their own lines, mostly wounded but still beating their drums and dancing wildly in scorn of the foe! The Maratha army was saved, but at a heavy price, for Méhéndélé, the sole lieutenant of the Bhāu, fell down from his horse with a bullet in his chest while trying to stem the flight of his men by galloping up to the exposed front line during the first Afghan onrush. The Ruhelas crowded upon the fallen general; one slashed at his face; another began to sever his head in order to carry it away in triumph. But half a dozen Maratha horsemen galloped up to the spot and rescued their chief's body from mutilation, though with the neck half cut through. The engagement ceased about three hours after nightfall. The Maratha casualties in slain and wounded were under one thousand, but the loss of Méhéndélé was irreparable. "We fought well, but owing to Balawant's fall the enemy became triumphant." [Nana Fadnis in Raj. i. 272 *n.*]

The battle of 7th December was the turning-point in the Pānipat campaign. The Bhāu lost his supreme

counsellor and right-hand man ; there was none left to whom he could entrust any responsible work as his dependable deputy where he could not be personally present. All the rest of his officers were small men, at best good clerks and account-keepers, but unworthy of command, incapable of taking the initiative, and unable to inspire confidence in a crisis. From that night of wild confusion terror and carnage,* everything went against the Bhāu, slowly but with increasing and resistless pressure.

§ 4. *Durrani cavalry patrols dominate the environs of Maratha camp and cut off communications and food supply.*

First, the enemy established undisputed supremacy in the open. Hitherto the light foray tactics of the

* Nana Fadnis says that it was only nightfall that saved the entire Maratha army from destruction. Indeed, if Abdali had driven home this individual thrust of the Ruhelas with his own troops, or even made a diversion on another wing of the Maratha army, the trenches would have been completely carried and the 14th of January anticipated by a month and a week. But the Ruhela attack was a spontaneous and unauthorized movement and begun with too little daylight left to call up distant supports. Thus the valour and heavy sacrifice of Najib's troops were thrown away through their lack of disciplined obedience to the supreme command. An army cannot win unless all parts of it work in concert like an organized team.

Ruhela night-attack.—Kashiraj 18, *Husain* 66, Nur-ud-din 42*b*—43*a*, *Mur.* 188, *DC., Siyar.* iii. 68, Nana F.'s *Auto*, Raj. i. 272*n*.

Marathas had remained unchecked and done great damage to the Afghans by cutting off their stragglers, grazing cattle and horses, and grain supplies. But now the Shah arranged for the strictest watch not only on his own camp, but also around that of the enemy. Every night a body of 5,000 Durrāni horse advanced as near as they could in safety towards the enemy's camp, and there they remained all the night, keeping watch against surprise. Two other bodies of his horse made half circles round the Maratha encampment, one to the right and the other to the left. These night-patrols, each at least 5,000 strong, mounted on powerful Turki horses and commanded by practised cavalry leaders like Shah Pasand Khan and Jahān Khan, cut off every provision convoy that attempted to steal into the Bhāu's camp and every party of camp-followers that issued from Pānipat under cover of the darkness to gather firewood and fodder in the neighbouring woods. The southward road to Delhi was the first to be closed by reason of the Afghan army sitting astride it. A detour through the jungles south-west of Pānipat and north-west of Delhi was rendered all but impossible by the hostile Jat villagers and still more vindictive Baluch landlords occupying that tract. In the rear of the Bhāu's position, Kunjpurā was recovered by Dilir Khan (a son of Ināyet Khan Ruhela) from its small isolated Maratha garrison, and the grain collected there for despatch to Pānipat was

seized by him. Only from the north-west did provisions reach the Bhāu once or twice from the dominions of Ālā Singh Jat of Patiālā; but these had to be paid for in hard cash by the Bhāu, as the Marathas had no vassal or revenue collector of their own in that region. This loss of communication with his base quickly impaired the Bhāu's military strength in addition to reducing his men and horses by starvation. The profuse firing, both in the actual fight and in the protective random cannonade, soon exhausted his munition stock, and as early as 15th November he was in urgent need of manufacturing 400 maunds of powder and 100 maunds of shot, and wrote to Govind Ballāl for every ounce of ready-made munition he could send immediately. These were to have come *via* Delhi, but that path was shortly afterwards closed. [Raj. i. 268. *SPD.* xxix. 27, camels for Marwar.]

§ 5. *Sad condition of Panipat city under Maratha occupation.*

Moreover, the stoppage of treasure supply from his distant agents soon turned him bankrupt at a time when every seer of grain, every bundle of grass, and every service whether of bringing in intelligence or carrying a despatch outside had to be paid tenfold its normal price and paid in cash, if it was to be at all secured in that beleaguered city. And that city was utterly unfriendly to him. Panipat being the seat of

many famous Muslim saints' tombs, the population was predominantly Muhammadan,* and most of these residents claiming descent from the holy men or their servitors and in consequence living on rent-free land grants from the Mughal Government, resented the Maratha intrusion more bitterly than the ordinary peasants and labourers of their faith elsewhere. The Bhāu's military necessities had justly deepened their antipathy. As a noble of the city, Shākir Khan (the son of Nawāb Lutfullah Khan Sādiq Ānsāri), who was present there during the siege, writes about the sufferings of the local population :

"The Marathas felled all the timber and fruit trees of the gardens round Pānipat. Our seven gardens, each two to three hundred *bighas* in area, full of fruit trees and flower plants, were thus destroyed. They employed the timber in supporting the walls of the ditch and the raised gun platforms. For want of fuel, they consumed the planks beams and doors of the houses, ruining the roofs and walls. Marble slabs from the tombs of holy men were burnt in kilns and turned into lime for their *pān*. Our city houses were demolished by cannon balls and we were forced to exile ourselves from home. Heaps of stone and brick

* In 1881 there were 17,000 Muslims out of a population of 25,000, and all its substantial families (except one) were of that creed. Denzil Ibbetson gives the Panipat Muslim gentry no very flattering character. *Karnal Dist. Gaz.* 257-259.

were formed at different places. After the arrival of the accursed dogs, the higher people took refuge in the fort, the seat of the [Mughal] governor, which was no larger than a *sarāi*, with only one lower and one upper rooms. Our hardship in eating, sleeping and evacuating in such a narrow space can be imagined." (P. 102.)

§ 6. *Govind Ballal Bundele's raid into the upper Doab and death, 17 December.*

After the 7th of December the sole star of hope visible to the confined Maratha army was Govind Ballāl, who had been commanded by the Bhāu to ravage Najib's estates in the Mirat and Bulandshahar districts and send convoys of grain and treasure to Pānipat *via* Kunjpurā. And within ten days of that date even this star set. Leaving his headquarters at Etāwā, with less than 10,000 men, mostly rustic levies and second-rate Maratha light horse, Govind moved northwards to the upper Doāb, to carry out his task, which if successfully accomplished would have counteracted the closing of the Delhi route by Abdāli. Govind was an old man of over sixty; his life had been spent in revenue collection varied by petty fights with refractory landlords and attacks on their small mud-forts. He was now too stout to ride on horseback with ease or speed, and in such broken health as to be unable to bear the strain and rough life of light forays. He fondly imagined that the entire Doāb was secure from

his enemies, as all the Durrāni and Ruhela soldiers were entangled at Pānipat, 200 miles away; and so he repeated Malhar Holkar's mistake of 4th March 1760 by neglecting to keep a sharp look out. His advance to Shāhdara, opposite Delhi, was unopposed; all the agents of Najib were driven away from the way, and half a dozen villages in the Sikandrabad region were sacked by the raiders. The Maratha force lay dispersed in fancied security from Shāhdara by way of Ghaziabad to Jalalabad (10 miles north-east of the latter city.) Here doom overtook them like a bolt of thunder from a cloudless sky, in the form of a body of 5,000 newly arrived Durrāni horse, led by Atāi Khan and Karimdād Khan and guided by Najib's captain Karim Khan and some spies of that Ruhela chieftain, in the morning of 17th December.*

The news of Govind Ballal's advance up the Doab had spread consternation among the Indo-Afghan allies of Ahmad Shah for the safety of their defenceless homes. At their entreaty the Shah had detached the above force, to make a rapid march with their fresh horses and cut Govind Ballāl's division off. The two generals crossed the Jamunā at Bāghpat and after covering 160 miles in one night and day, reached

* Fall of Govind Ballāl.—Kashiraj 15-16, Nur-ud-din 45*b*-46*b*, *DC* (date). *Husain Shahi* 63-65, *Siyar* iii. 68, *Muz.* 189. Raj. i. 264 (Bhāu's order to G. B.), 272 (Bhau's report of disaster), 272*n*, iii. 511 (details from Benares.)

Shāhdara about 4 o'clock in the evening of 16th December, and at once annihilated the Maratha outpost there (under Nāro Shankar's deputy.) Early next morning they destroyed the second Maratha corps at Ghāziābād, and followed this victory up by immediately pushing on ten miles northwards to Jalalabad and surprising Govind Ballāl, "who was totally off his guard." That general had alighted at this village, which had been sacked by his troops a day or two earlier and now lay utterly deserted by its inhabitants. He was engaged in his ceremonial bath and preparations for personal cooking, when the Afghan cavalry burst upon him in overwhelming force. After a short feeble resistance the Marathas, hopelessly outnumbered and outridden, took to flight. Their half-naked general fell down from his horse, with a bullet wound (according to Bālkrishna Dikshit's letter from Benares), and was beheaded before his rank could be known. When it was learnt, the head was taken to Abdali by the returning victors, exposed in the market-place of the Durrāni camp, and finally sent to the Bhāu, as a triumphant proof of the downfall of his plan. On the sandy plain outside Jalalabad, Govind Ballāl Bundélé at last found that peace which had been denied to him in life. No more for him the jealous accusations of Antāji Mānakeshwar, the backbiting of Bāpuji M. Hingané, the confiscation of his estates by the Peshwā, the persecution of his caste-brethren by the Punā

Brāhmans, and the last eight months' constant nagging censure and prodding into activity by Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu. Even the blackening of his memory by the Chitpāvan partisan V. K. Rājwadé was to come a century and a half later. His son Bālāji escaped from the carnage with a handful of men of the family contingent. Everything in the two Maratha camps including the vast stores of provisions which this force was convoying for the Bhāu, was carried off by the Afghans. "After this action, the Durrāni army was constantly supplied with provisions."

§ 7. *Maratha raid into Oudh fails disastrously, January, 1761.*

The news of this disaster reached the Bhāu about 21st December and filled him with consternation. At the same time, a second plan of raid and diversion that he had ordered further south, in the lower Doab, also miscarried. Simultaneously with Govind Ballāl's march from Etāwā into the upper Doab, Gopāl Ganesh Barvé (of Fathpur-Haswa) and Krishnānand (of Karra) had set out with their small contingents to raid Oudh territory. Crossing the Ganges at Dalmau and Manikpur respectively, early in December, they sacked two villages, Phulpurā and Nawābganj. But the Oudh troops soon came up and attacked the raiders. As the battle began, Balbhadra (the Rajah of Tiloi) and other rebel zamindars—who were the sole hope of Barvé,

took to flight. The small Maratha force, unable to contend alone, broke and scattered each as he found a path open. Barvé himself escaped with only half a dozen followers by way of Vindhya-bāsini to Karra Jahanabad.*

§ 8. *Treasure sent to the Bhau cut off near Panipat 6 January ; despair and terror in Maratha camp.*

Before advancing to the fatal field of Jalalabad, Govind Ballāl had at last performed one of the tasks so persistently laid on him by the Bhāu. He had safely transmitted to Nāro Shankar at Delhi Rs. 4,20,000 of collected revenue, (in addition to the two lakhs paid to the Bhāu in August.) The Bhāu had sent a party of horse under Krishna Rao Ballāl of Manaji Paygudé's contingent, to fetch this treasure to his camp. But like a wise man, Nāro Shankar did not risk it all in one consignment. On 21st December he remitted Rs. 1,10,000 with Krishna Rao, and this amount seems to have reached the Bhāu's camp in safety. But when, on 1st January 1761, a second instalment of one and a half lakhs was despatched in charge of 300 troopers under Parāshar Dādāji, each man carrying Rs. 500 tied round his waist, the situation had already become most

* *Oudh Gazetteer*, ii. 479-480. Raj. iii. 511. *SPD.* ii. 134. The *Gazetter* says that this rout took place after the news of the disaster at Pānipat had reached the invaders At all events, this raid *cum* fomented rebellion in Oudh did not affect the issue at Panipat.

dangerous for the Marathas in consequence of the annihilation of Govind Ballāl's force in the Doab and the strict investment of the Bhāu within his trenches at Pānipat. Six of these troopers came back at the end of the first day, their horses or their hearts having failed, and returned the money. The rest pushed on, travelling by night for safety through the wilderness west of the imperial highway, but at the very end of their journey, in the dim misty small hours of the morning of 6th January, they missed their way, entered the left wing of the Abdali camp, mistaking it for their own, and asked in Marathi what general's quarter it was. Their speech at once betrayed them, and the whole body of 293 men with their captain was cut off by the Durrānis, only one man escaping to carry the tale of disaster to Delhi. [Raj. i. 281, *Husain Shahi* 65, Nur-ud-din 41*b*, Kashi. 16.]

The horizon now totally darkened round the Bhāu and his pent up army. Their food supply was exhausted, their horses and gun-cattle were lean with fasting and dying by the hundred, and no relief was visible as far as the human eye could gaze into the future. At first a few grain convoys had come from the Patiala district in the north-west through the favour of Ala Singh; but a punitive expedition by a Durrāni detachment effectually cowed that Rajah into neutrality. Even after that, the offer of large rewards had induced some Banjaras to smuggle grain into Pānipat by obscure

jungly tracks at night. But the vigilance of the Durrani night-patrols and the wide sweep of their powerful chargers closed that path. Even the untenanted jungle stretching for miles and miles west and south-west of Pānipat city became inaccessible to the beleaguered army. "One day, near the end of the night, when 20,000 or rather more of their camp-followers had gone out of the trenches to gather grass and wood in a jungle of Dhāk trees, they were overtaken by a body of 5,000 horse under Shah Pasand Khan, . . . who surrounded them and put the whole to the sword. On account of its being night, no one came to their assistance from the Maratha camp. On the scene of slaughter the dead bodies were piled up into a perfect mountain. . . . The grief and terror which this event struck into the Marathas is indescribable ; even the Bhāu himself began to yield to fear and despair." [Kāshirāj.]

§ 9. *Ahmad Shah rejects Bhau's request for peace.*

One last effort the Bhāu made to save his army by appealing to Shujā to arrange a peace at any price between him and the Shāh, and sent him a *carte blanche*, in the form of the impression of his palm dipped in saffron on a piece of blank paper, to be his credentials as a plenipotentiary, together with the most solemn oaths for a Hindu to abide by any settlement that he might make. The Durrāni wazir, Shāh Wali Khan, a

kind-hearted man as well as a cool and far-sighted statesman, was willing to accept a large ransom from the Bhāu instead of antagonizing the Marathas for ever. But in the Shah's council-chamber his pacific advice was borne down by the vindictive fury of Najib Khan and the fanaticism of the Afghan soldiery, who refused to lose this opportunity of waging a holy war and slaying infidels on a gigantic scale, which would give them measureless spiritual merit.* As their mouthpiece, Qāzi Idris, urged his master, "Fix your eyes on your Faith, and let not any greed of money influence you in this matter, because the merit of *jihad* would be lost thereby. . . . This world is for a few days only. . . . Fear not the enemy, fear not the lack of money for your army expenses. Fear God rather." On hearing this speech, the Durrāni captains cried out with one voice, "The Qāzi has spoken the truth. In this holy war, we shall follow your wishes in every eventuality. Whether we are hungry or with full stomachs, we shall not lessen our exertions." Then Ahmad Shah said, "Recite the prayer for battle ; the idea of making peace is given up." The baffled Maratha envoys were dismissed.

§ 10. *Starving Maratha army decide on fighting one desperate battle, 13 January.*

As day followed day after the destruction of the treasure convoy under Parāshar Dādāji (6th January),

* Abortive peace parleys.—Nur-ud-din 43*b*-45*b*, Kashiraj 19-21.

life within the entrenchments at Pānipat became harder and harder to sustain. There was no food and no firewood for man and no grass for the horses. The stench of the carcases of men and beasts lying uncremated and unburied, and the effluvia of the evacuations of four lakhs of living creatures, made the confines of the entrenchment a living hell for human beings. At last the soldiers, in the agony of hunger, got out of hand and broke out in a general plunder of the houses in the city of Pānipat. But their outrage yielded very little, because very little had now been left in that small poor and battered city.

Finally on the 13th of January 1761, life became utterly intolerable to the beleaguered Maratha army. The soldiers and officers went off in a tumultuous body, surrounded the Bhāu's tent, and cried out, "It is now two days that no man among us has got a grain to eat. A seer of grain cannot be had even for two Rupees. Whence can we procure, no matter at what high price, an article that has totally disappeared from this place? Do not let us perish in this misery. Let us make a valiant struggle against the enemy; and then what Fate has ordained will happen." The discussion went on till midnight, when it was resolved that the whole army should march out about an hour before daybreak and attack the enemy in a pitched battle. The decision made, the generals were sent back to their posts each with a betel-leaf from their chief's hand, in token of

their readiness to make their utmost exertion in the desperate enterprise about to follow.*

§ 11. *Bhau's army marches out to battle, 14 January, 1761.*

That night, none, at least of the leaders, slept. The Brahman officers, including the Bhāu, rose from the bed very early, performed their ablutions and religious worship in preparation for facing eternity on the morrow, took their last mouthful, and then donned their arms.

An hour before the morning of 14th January, 1761, the Maratha army set out from its camp to the field of doom. Each division marched "step by step behind its banner with the regularity and order of the parade ground" and took up its appointed position. After three hours of movement, "in the processional manner which was then the only one known," the line of battle was fully formed. Then both sides halted for about an hour, as if by mutual consent, to let the dust settle down and make the opposing army visible. The Afghan line of battle extended seven miles in length and two in depth. It overlapped the Maratha line on the right and the left alike by about half a mile each way, as the invader had a numerical superiority of 15,000 men (*i. e.*, 60,000 against 45,000), and his extreme right and left wings were bent inwards like the

* Kashiraj 21, Nur-ud-din 46*b*.

horns of a crescent, so as to outflank and threaten the two ends of the Maratha line.

The Bhāu's decision to fight that day had been taken so suddenly that Abdali had received no intelligence of it before his enemies were actually on the march towards him. After surrendering to his army's clamour at midnight, Sadāshiv Rāo had made a last despairing attempt to avert the fatal conflict. He had sent off his favourite valet Bālakrām, who used to serve him his betel-leaf, with a short note to Kāshirāj, a Maratha clerk of Shujā, urging him to appeal to his master to arrange a peaceful settlement, now or never. "The flood," so ran his expressive language, "has risen above my head. If anything can be done, do it or else inform me plainly at once, for hereafter there will be no time for writing or speaking." Shujā, learning from Bālakrām that the Maratha army had started, rode immediately to Abdali's tent, waked him by pleading the urgency of the situation, and told him what he had heard from the Bhāu's valet and his own spies. The Shah promptly took horse and rode out a mile to the front to observe, ordering his guards to get ready and his long Persian pipe to be lighted and brought to him, as a sedative in that intensely cold night air. That day Shah Pasand Khan was in command of the night-patrol, and his men discovered the march of the Maratha artillery by the clatter

of the iron chains of the guns and their wheels. The Maratha guns on taking up their allotted position fired a salvo and this confirmed the news brought by Shujā beyond any doubt.

§ 12. *Ahmad Shah's battle arrangements.*

The veteran lieutenant of the Asiatic Napoleon calmly finished his pipe, replaced his cap on his head, and calling up his wazir and Shah Pasand Khan gave them orders to marshal his ranks. With the instinct of a born general, he placed over half (18,000) of his own national troops in the centre in charge of his wazir, while two other corps—about 5,000 each, mostly cavalry mounted on superb Persian horses,—were sent to his extreme right and left. Thus, his Indo-Muslim allies were wedged in between strong bodies of Durrani troops on both sides and any attempt at treachery or flight on their part could be promptly crushed. These divisions on the extreme wings also rendered the favourite Maratha tactics of a flank attack impossible and thus heartened his Indian associates by guarding them against such a danger.

There was no love lost between Najib (with his friend Shujā) and the trans-Ganges Afghans under Hāfiz Rahmat, Dundi Khan and other generals of Ali Muhammad Ruhela's colony. Hāfiz despised Najib as a vulgar upstart, who had first entered his master's service as a poor infantryman but now

risen to be the dictator of Delhi and the prime minister of Abdali for Indian affairs,—while Hāfiz claimed the blood of the honoured spiritual head of the Ruhelas long settled in India. Abdali, therefore, placed Najib (with Shujā) on the left and the Pār Ruhelas on the right of his centre. Ahmad Khan Bangash with his paltry contingent of about 1,000 men stood in the right wing, but at some interval to the left of the Pār Ruhelas and next to the centre.

§ 13. *Causes of the military superiority of the Durrāni over the Maratha army.*

During the two and a half months' leaguer of Pānipat, the Shāh had received some reinforcements from home. The new arrivals, both men and horses, untouched by the Indian summer and strangers to the scarcity and sickness which had afflicted their brethren during the past twelve months' campaign and cantoning, were in the pink of condition. The Afghan army totalled 60,000 men, nearly half of this number being the Shah's own subjects (23,000 horse and 7,000 foot) and the other half his Indian allies (7,000 horse and 23,000 foot.) The Durrani divisions, thanks to the iron discipline and constant exercise enforced by their chief, moved like one man at the will of the Shah, while the preponderance of cavalry among them (three to one) and their superior horses, made them a match for more than double their number of Indian troops.

This advantage could have been neutralized if the Indians had a superiority in fire-arms. But here, too, Abdali's artillery was incomparably more efficient and mobile. The field-guns of the Marathas were of larger calibre than those of the Afghans, but once placed in position, they could not be dragged forward with the advancing troops and became useless. On the other hand, the Shah had, in addition to his cannon (40 light pieces), two thousand camels each carrying two soldiers armed with swivel-guns, called *zamburaks*, which formed the finest mobile artillery of that age in Asia. Their effect on the Maratha horsemen was as decisive as that of the galloper guns in Lord Lake's campaign against Sindhia 42 years later. The fire-strength on the Bhāu's side was composed of (*a*) the big guns which became stationary and silent after the battle had joined, (*b*) the rockets,—that constant favourite of this race, which merely served to frighten horses and wound a man here and there except when fired into a dense mass, and (*c*) the foot-musketeers under Ibrahim Khan Gardi, actually 8,000 strong, who were most probably armed with French fusils of the early 18th century pattern, having short barrels and firing small bullets which inflicted light wounds only.* Opposed to these last were the long Afghan

* *C.* 1708, the French muskets were of smaller calibre than those of other countries, and their lighter bullet,—20 to the lb. —had no doubt something to do with the less effectiveness of

flint-locks or *jizails*, firing heavier bullets and carrying very much further than the fusils.

The Durrāni officers were clad in armour, the weight of which was easily borne by their superb Khurasani horses. Even the leather jackets and thick quilted coats which their common soldiers as natives of a very cold climate wore, could turn away many a sword cut or spear thrust. But among the Marathas armour was hardly worn even by the officers; their garments were very light as more suited to the warm South where they lived and the small mares they rode, while their common soldiers often wore nothing beyond the *dhoti* wrapped round the waist; whence Ahmad Shah's habitual scornful reference to them as 'the bare backed' (*kun berahna.*)

Above all, on that fateful morning, over the flat plain of Panipat a starving army mounted on sorry famished nags, met the finest cavalry in Asia in the best of conditions.

§ 14. *Sādashiv Rao Bhau's plan of battle.*

Bitter was the jealousy felt by the Maratha generals towards the Bhāu's favourite Gārdi sepoys, who were paid their salaries more regularly and at

their fire.... The bullets of Gustavus Adolphus were 12 to the lb.... The ordinary rate in the armies of the 18th century was 2 or 3 rounds fired per minute. The British infantry at Fontenoy carried 24 rounds per man. [Lloyd, 136, 112, 155.]

higher rates than the starving Deccani soldiery and whose mode of warfare that supreme commander had preferred to the traditional guerilla tactics which alone the Maratha army knew. Indeed, some days before the battle, Ibrahim and Malhar had almost come to blows over this difference in military policy. The Bhāu, therefore, isolated Ibrahim Khan's division on his extreme left, furthest from Malhar; and so it happened that his disciplined foot-musketeers were assembled in a very deep column (according to the French practice) in one place, instead of being distributed along his entire front, judiciously mixed up with his cavalry.*

Of the Bhāu's plan of battle we have no record; it can be only guessed from the known facts. He had, it appears, formed no plan except a general engagement along the entire front. From his situation, a mere break-through would have been fruitless. He could not march away with his fighting troops, as he was tied down to the city of Panipat by the presence of his women, lakhs of camp-followers and civil servants, heavy artillery, and all kinds of property acquired during seven months of successful progress through Hindustan. He had formed no base at Delhi or even at Bharatpur. Hence, his liberation could come only from a decisive defeat and flight of

* Friedrich the Great said (1755) that one should always have cavalry on the spot to help the infantry. [Lloyd, 162.]

Abdali. His divisional generals acted throughout each on his own initiative, without receiving any reinforcement or even fresh direction from their supreme head during the changing course of the battle. Like a desperate gambler, the Bhāu staked everything on one throw of the dice, and did not arrange for a compact orderly retreat in the event of a defeat, because such a retreat was well-nigh impossible in his situation.

The Bhāu expected the regular sepoys of Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi to be the spear-head of the thrust from his left, while his central division under his own eyes would assail the Afghan centre at the same time. After the spear-head had penetrated into the opposite ranks, its work was to be completed by the advance of Dāmāji Gaikwād in support from behind it.

§ 15. *Why the Maratha right wing was paralysed.*

The Bhāu's absolute lack of worthy and dependable lieutenants was his greatest handicap compared with his opponent. The Maratha army of the North had no officer comparable to the brilliant galaxy of martial stars on the Durrāni side,—Jahān Khan, Shāh Pasand Khan, Atāi Khan, Karim Dād Khan, Najib and the wazir, each a match for the Bhāu himself. The Maratha right wing was composed of the contingents of Malhar Holkar and Jankoji Sindhia, a total of about 10,000 men. These troops had been beaten in every

encounter with the Durrānis and terrorized by the Afghan atrocities committed on their wounded and prisoners. They could not be brought to look the enemy closely in the face. Nor had they a single dashing leader capable of infusing a new spirit among the rank and file. Jankoji was an inexperienced youth just out of his teens. Antāji Mānakeshwar and other captains told off to support this wing, were too small men to take charge of an entire division or to call forth the devotion and obedience of the soldiery. Malhar Holkar was now a very old man and too weak to sit on horseback or to go through a fight. [Raj. iii. 516.] Even if he had retained the fulness of bodily vigour, would he, on this field, have gone back on his life's experience and conviction in favour of guerilla tactics and against standing the shock of a pitched battle? Thus, it happened that the entire right wing of the Maratha army remained inert during the critical stage of the battle while the issue was still trembling in the balance. As these Maratha troops did not make any charge, Najib and Shāh Pasand Khan on their part merely remained on the alert, without attacking, till they could see which way the tide of battle finally turned in the rest of the field.

As soon as Ahmad Shah had satisfied himself that it was not the ordinary daily skirmish of the past two months but a regular battle in full force for which the Marathas had sallied forth that morning, he ordered

his own troops to form their line of battle facing the enemy. By the time this was done, the late winter sun had already risen, and the Shah galloped in front of his army inspecting every one of the divisions, and then fell back to his customary post in a red tent pitched two miles in front of his camp, and just behind the fighting troops.

The battle began, as usual in that age, with a cannonade. The Maratha guns were larger and, owing to reckless aiming and faulty elevation, their shots fell harmlessly behind the Shah's troops. The Durrāni, like a wise general, reserved his fire at this stage, letting his enemies waste their powder in making an unprofitable noise. His own strength lay, not in big cannon, but in camel-swivels; and these he was resolved to use only at the right moment.

§ 16. *Ibrahim Khan Gardi charges the Durrani right wing.*

After this preliminary cannonade, the clash of arms began. Early that morning Ibrahim Khan Gardi, after posting his brigade in the line, had ridden up to the Bhāu and assured him, "*Rām! Rām!* You were highly displeased with me because every month I used to take from you, with bold insistence, order for the cash payment of our salary, running to lakhs of Rupees. This month your treasure has been looted and we [illegible] no order of payment. Never mind

that; today I shall discharge my duty." He had previously rejected a call from the Afghan king to join the Faithful in this war with the Infidels, and had replied that he held fidelity to one's master to be the highest of virtues. And now he lived up to his ideal of duty. Immediately after this speech he galloped back to the head of his troops, seized a flag in one hand and a musket in the other, and personally led the attack. Throwing two of his sepoy battalions obliquely forward on his left hand to hold the Abdali division under Barkhurdār Khan outflanking him, he with the other seven battalions (actually 6,300 men) fell straight upon the forces of Hāfiz Rahmat Khan, Dundi Khan, and Ahmad Bangash (about 15,000 strong.) The distant roar of cannon and rattle of musketry ceased, and soon afterwards the antagonists grappled together in a confused mass. A most obstinate combat raged for hours. The Ruhelas fought with their wonted valour, but at first European training and discipline seemed to triumph. "Of the Ruhelas eight to nine thousand were wounded or slain and they were pressed back. Only a few hundred men were left with their three chiefs; but these generals held their ground firmly and arrested an utter rout or break through. The fighting was so close that one leader could not inquire about another. Hāfiz Rahmat, owing to his illness, was carried into the field in a *pālki*. Dundi Khan alighted from his horse and

EXPLANATION OF PLANS OF BATTLE

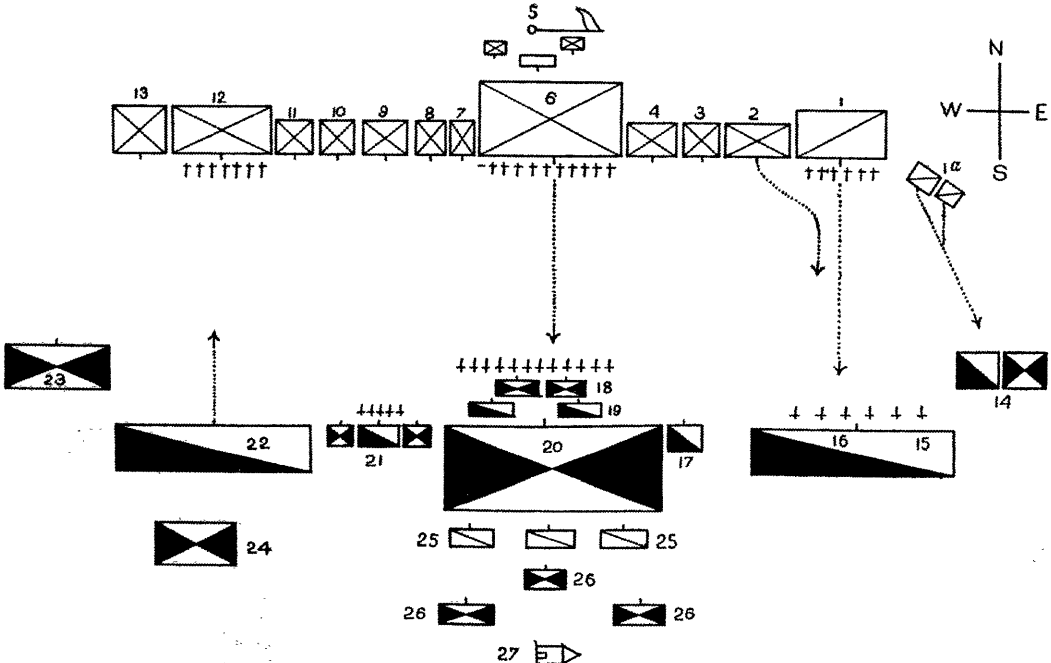
Square with one diagonal line—Infantry.
Square with 2 diagonal lines crossed—Cavalry.
White square—Maratha troops.
Half-black square—Durrani troops.
Squares with dotted outlines—Former positions.
Dotted lines—Lines of advance or retreat, as shown by arrows.
Zigzag dotted lines—Najib's field trenches.
Small circles—Broken fugitives.
†—artillery

MARATHA ARMY

1. Ibrahim Gardi (8,000)
2. Damaji Gaikwad (2,500)
3. Vittal Shivdev (1,500)
4. Minor captains (2,000)
5. Bhau's banner & position
6. Centre (13,5000)
7. Antaji Manakeshwar (1,000)
8. Pilaji Jadav's sons (1,500)
9. Minor captains (2,000)
10. Jaswant Puar (1,500)
11. Shamsher Bahadur (1,500)
12. Jankoji Sindhia (7,000)
13. Malhar Holkar (3,000)

DURRANI ARMY

14. Barkhurdar & Amir Beg (3,000)
15, 16. Dundi & Hafiz Rahmat (14,000)
17. Ahmad Bangash (1,000)
18. Camel-swivels (1,000 × 2)
19. Kabuli infantry (1,000)
20. Centre, Shah Wali (15,000)
21. Shuja (3,000)
22. Najib (15,000)
23. Shah Pasand (5,000)
24. Reserve (Nasrullah)
25. Civil officers &c.
26. Slave squadrons of body-guards (3,000)
27. Abdali's tent.



BATTLE OF PANIPAT—10 A. M.

cried out in agony, 'Comrades! our life and honour are perishing. How is Hāfiz Rahmat Khan?' "

The grim Gardi-Ruhela duel went on for over three hours, at the end of which the twofold odds and Ruhela tenacity began to tell against the sepoys. They lost the superior advantage of their training in the confused breast to breast fighting,* and when at last at half past one in the afternoon three thousand fresh troops from Abdali's reserve joined the Ruhelas, the scales were hopelessly weighted against the sepoys, and the short black Telingas were overwhelmed by the tall brawny Indo-Afghans; Ibrahim Khan's battalions were almost annihilated, and only one battalion and a half remained standing out of seven. There was on his side no efficient cavalry ready to take advantage of the first successful thrust of the sepoys and complete their work by a shock charge overwhelming the disorganized Ruhela infantry. Dāmāji Gaikwād who had been ordered to support Ibrahim fought well, receiving three wounds; but his contingent was less than 3,000 strong and not first-rate fighting material, having never before this faced north-Indian foes. O for one hour of Dattāji Sindhia, at the head of his family contingent fully

* Marshal Saxe wrote, 'Troops that have fired are undone, if those opposed to them have reserved their fire.' So far as fire effect is concerned, troops advancing must be at a disadvantage compared with troops standing still. The compensation lies in the moral effect of attack, the threat of hand-to-hand combat. [Lloyd, 155.]

10,000 strong, in this crisis ! The two Gardi battalions told off against the outflanking force of Barkhurdar, boldly charged them and threw the enemy ranks into confusion. But in the end the left attack of the Maratha army entirely died out, and fifteen hundred unwounded men, the remnant of eight thousand French-trained infantry dispersed in flight from a hopelessly lost field. Bussy's pupils had not disgraced their master ; they had killed or wounded more than their own number and borne 80 per cent casualties before they were broken.

§ 17. *Sadashiv Bhau attacks the Durrani centre under Shah Wali Khan.*

All this time the centre had been the scene of a still more deadly and obstinate conflict. Here each side had concentrated its best resources, and the opposing forces were more evenly matched in number,—about 18,000 on each side,—than in the fight between the Gardis and the trans-Ganges Ruhelas (6,300 against 15,000.) Simultaneously with Ibrāhim Khan's advance against the Shāh's right wing, the Bhāu had launched his own division in an attack on the Durrāni centre where the wazir Shāh Wali Khan commanded in person. This struggle was prefaced by the discharge of the Bhāu's artillery, which was mostly drawn up in front of his centre. To this the Afghan wazir replied with the fire of his own lighter pieces planted on the

ground and a thousand swivel-guns mounted on camels which were placed before him in a line with their knees tied together. Suddenly the firing on the Maratha side ceased, and from around the great yellow banner (*Bhagwā Jhāndā*) towering above their centre, a thunderous roar of *Hara ! Hara ! Mahādev !* was heard and a waving forest of long swords and spears flashed in the morning sun, as a vast cavalcade of 13,500 men heaved tumultuously like one gigantic billow of the ocean and the next instant dashed in resistless sweep upon the Durrāni centre. The momentum of their charge broke through the screen of Afghan front skirmishers and the hail of zamburak balls. Regardless of the bloody trail they left behind them, the Maratha horse grappled with their foes in a deadly hand to hand combat, under a cloud of dust "which hid the earth and sky and from which blood dropped in rain-showers," while the mingled dissonance of *Hara ! Hara ! Mahādev !* and *Yā Ali ! Yā Ali !* drowned every other sound.

The desperate fury of the Maratha charge at first seemed to carry everything before it. Hāji Atāi Khan, the slayer of Govind Ballāl, fell with nearly 3,000 other Durrānis, their surviving comrades were pushed backwards and many of these took the road to the camp. So intense was the pressure that "the grand wazir stood with only a hundred or two hundred troopers and fifty zamburak-camels (having their knees tied together)

placed in front of him. He himself, in full armour, dismounted from his horse and sat down on the ground, beating his forehead and throwing dust into his mouth and cursing and haranguing his fleeing followers, 'Brethren ! our country is far off. Whither are you going ?' " An appeal to Shujā (on his left) to come at once to his rescue passed unheeded, as Shujā, in view of the unbroken enemy masses facing him, wisely refused to weaken his section of the line and thus invite a break-through there.

But even at the centre the Afghan line held. The Bhāu had no squadron of cavalry in heavy armour and mounted on powerful horses ready to charge in close order and cut its way like a solid wedge through the shaken Durrāni ranks and complete his initial success. The hand to hand combat swayed to and fro with each individual group's charge and counter-charge, indecisively for over three hours, and though the wazir's casualties were much less than his opponents', yet from the unabated courage and wild onslaught of the Marathas it seemed likely that they would triumph in the end.

§ 18. *Ahmad Shah reinforces his centre and right.*

Shortly after midday the Shāh received intelligence of the perilous condition of his right wing and centre, and the dispersion of most of their troops to the rear. He could not thin his battle front elsewhere without the risk of the Marathas penetrating there and crumbling

up the whole line. At this critical stage, the side which would be first able to push up adequate reinforcements to the centre was sure to turn the wavering struggle into a victory. Here the Shah's matchless generalship, the ready obedience of his troops, and the ability of his subordinate commanders told. He sent one provost-marshal with 500 troopers to gallop to his camp and by merciless beating drive out of it all the soldiers who were found hiding there and all the armed followers to the battle front. Another officer with 1,500 mounted military police was posted immediately behind the firing line under orders to attack every runaway from the fight and turn him back to the field. Thus, some six or seven thousand retreating troops were rallied. To them were added the small body of soldiers (under one thousand) found in the camp and a detachment from the Shah's bodyguards, forming a total of over 13,000 men. Out of these some 3,000 were sent to reinforce the hard-pressed Ruhelas of the right wing, and 10,000 to support the wazir. At the same time his two flanks were ordered to charge the Maratha centre from their respective sides every time that the grand wazir made an advance against it from the front.

It is an age-old habit of the Hindu soldiers to work at high pressure up to noon and then retire for taking food and rest. An unconquerable lassitude comes over them after one o'clock in the afternoon. (Hence, General Harris launched his storming columns on

Seringapatam at that psychological hour.) The Marathas had spent a sleepless night and had fasted or been half-fed for a month before. Moreover, troops who carry roast meat and dry bread in their saddle bags and water in leather bottles can easily refresh and reinvigorate themselves in the field. Not so a caste over-ridden by the dread of defiling touch at meal time and regarding leather with abomination as a carcase. The long-drawn battle had worn the Marathas out far more than the Muslims when the fresh Durrāni troops appeared on the scene.

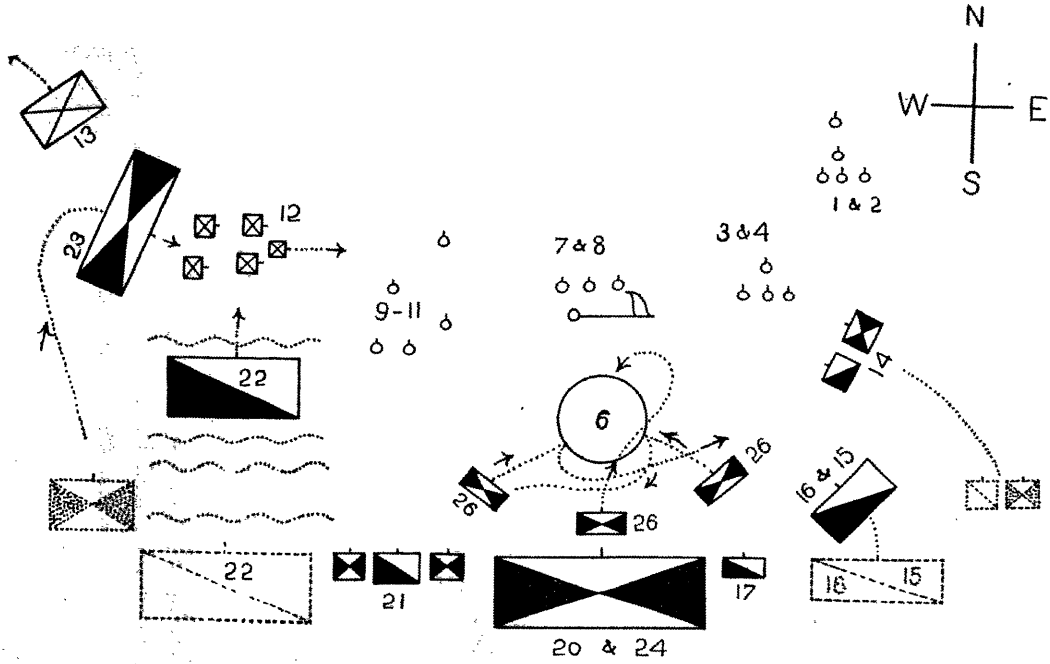
§ 19. *Desperate fighting by the outnumbered Bhau at the centre ; Durrani tactics.*

Shortly after half-past one, the reinforcements reached the wazir, and they at once delivered a charge at the full gallop. Ten thousand fresh troops thrown into the contest at a time when the Marathas were exhausted by four hours of strenuous fighting and reduced to less than 10,000 men, turned the scale decisively against them. But the Bhāu refused to acknowledge defeat. He fought on for over an hour more, regardless of the tremendous odds now arrayed against him, and delivered three counter-charges with his rapidly thinning band of personal followers and himself headed the attack. In that awful hour, when all hope of victory had vanished and life had assumed the bitter taste of death in the mouth of the Marathas, there was

no holding back among their leaders or their Household Cavalry. Nor did Vishwās Rao, the young heir to the Peshwā's throne, belie his noble ancestry. He pressed into the thick of the fight along with the boldest of his comrades.

But as the blood of the Maratha centre was being more and more drained and a smaller and still smaller wave came up on each successive counter-attack under the Bhāu, the eagle eye of Ahmad Abdali seized the situation at a glance; now was the time to launch his most deadly weapon, so long kept in reserve for such a moment. He sent three squadrons* of his favourite slave corps to fire upon the Bhāu's division and envelop it from three sides. "One squadron of slaves ... came up from the right and after firing off their muskets went away to the left. Another squadron which came up from the left, after emptying their fire-arms galloped away to the right. The third squadron, advancing from the front, discharged their pieces at the Bhāu's vanguard and then wheeled to the rear. Before the enemy could recover from the shock, these men had loaded their muskets again and arrived,

* Nur-ud-din says three squadrons of 2,000 men each, but Kashiraj [p. 12] gives 'six *dastas* (squadrons) of slaves each consisting of 1,200 horsemen. *Husain Shahi*, 71, has three *dastas* of a thousand men each. Law, 195. Shamlu, as usual, inflates the number to 8 or 9 thousand under the *Qular āqāsi* (p. 74.)



BATTLE OF PANIPAT—2.30 P. M.

the left squadron on the right wing and the right squadron on the left wing, while the squadron that had been originally in front fell on the rear. During this circular manoeuvre, they quickly discharged their muskets from one side and went off to the other. It looked as if on all four sides troops were attacking the Marathas simultaneously..... Their firm stand was swept away..... Their vanguard retreated and mingled with the division under the Bhāu himself, and great confusion arose..... The Maratha soldiers who had been spread over the field now drew together into a knot at their centre." [Nur-ud-din, 48*b*-49*a*.] Every Afghan bullet found its billet in that dense enemy mass around which the attacking horsemen revolved in circles.

But even then, thrice did the Maratha horse form again under their lofty banner and advance like a roaring wave upon the wazir's front, which stood like a rock and every time flung them back with woefully thinned ranks, pursued and raked by the fire of the Afghan mounted musketeers and camel-borne light artillery. The white spray of uplifted dust, stabbed by the fire flash and sharp rattle of musketry, concealed for a time the red heaps of writhing horses and men that strewed the plain as the surf retired shivered into many small eddying fragments.

§ 20. *Death of Vishwas Rao, last efforts of the Bhau, Maratha rout.*

At a quarter past two Vishwās Rāo was shot dead with a bullet, after receiving a sword cut in the neck and an arrow wound on his left eye-brow. The fatal news was brought to the Bhāu. He ordered his nephew's body to be laid on the back of his own riding elephant in the rear seat of which Bapuji M. Hingané was posted, and then came to view it. There, with his legs dangling by the elephant's head, lay the darling of a nation, a youth of seventeen only, whose placid beauty in death was to extort the admiring cry even of the fierce Durrāni soldiery when his body was taken to their camp after the battle. "Though he was an Indian, yet no man of such light complexion and beautiful shape had ever come in their sight. His colour was that of the *champa* flower, his limbs well-formed, his arms reaching down to the knees. His eyes were half open; he seemed to be gently asleep"—as if death could achieve no victory over him.

After a last look at his nephew, the Bhāu turned to the fight once more. He could not show his face at Puna after having lost the precious charge entrusted to his hands at Patdur by a weeping mother. Death had lost all its bitterness, because life had no longer any meaning for him. Victory was beyond his power, but not a soldier's death. Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāu forgot his duty as a general and remembered only his honour

as a knight. He harangued his men, gathered together a small band of his personal followers and friends, mostly high officers and specially-paid cavalry, and led a last desperate charge. But now, in addition to the three squadrons of slave musketeers circling round, 1500 camel-swivels were turned directly upon him, doing fearful havoc at such short range. After less than half an hour's renewed fighting, even this last attack was smothered in blood, about a quarter to three in the afternoon, and then "in a twinkle of the eye, the Maratha army vanished from the field like camphor." A few small broken groups here and there moved aimlessly and without concert to the rear.

§ 21. *How Sadashiv Rao Bhau met with his death.*

Half a mile from the front a fair-coloured sharp-nosed deep-eyed youth, with a tall robust frame, every muscle of which was developed by regular daily exercise,—was seen limping with the help of a short spear. He wore very costly pearls in his ears and round his neck, together with a highly ornamented vest. Throughout that afternoon he had been seeking death, but death seemed to avoid him. Three horses had fallen under him during the battle; the first two were powerful chargers, but the third time only a sorry country mare was left for him which could not carry him far. He had received a spear wound and a musket-shot in his thigh, the latter of which had

thrown him down. As he was walking over the field like a man in a dream, utterly worn out by the last two months' anxiety and the wreck of all his hopes, a knot of five Durrāni horsemen, lured by his splendid dress and rich jewels, surrounded him and cried out to him to surrender and save his life. But it was not his life that he was seeking to save, and he gave them no reply. The Afghan plunderers then attacked him. The wounded lion turned at bay and struck three or four of his assailants with his spear before he was killed and his head cut off and carried away by his slayers. Thus perished Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāu on the grave of his reputation and of the imperialistic dreams of his race. The historian's memory goes forward to the day 38 years later, when under a dark gateway of Seringapatam another heroic Indian prince, after the wreck of his army and cause, came to his end in resisting an alien spoiler's hand on his person.

§ 22. *The contest on the Maratha right wing : Malhar and Jankoji against Najib and Shah Pasand.*

We have said nothing about one main division of the Maratha army because there is nothing to be said about it. Their right wing did not influence the issue of the battle in any way. Here Shah Pasand Khan and Malhar Holkar had merely immobilized each other without any exchange of fire or blows till after the

contest in the centre had been decided. During the five hours of the general battle Najib Khan had advanced one *kos* and a half and arrived very close in front of Jankoji Sindhia's contingent. Dismounting his six thousand cavalry and merging them with his nine thousand infantry, and himself moving with them on foot, he had steadily gained ground bit by bit. While his infantry watched with loaded firelocks, his pioneers advanced a musket-shot in front of them and quickly threw up a breastwork of sand eighteen inches high, to which the infantry next rushed up and where they crouched down, while the pioneers went the same distance forward and prepared a similar trench for them. Arrived at last within firing range of Sindhia's troops, Najib attacked them, discharging two thousand rockets at a time, and "although the forces opposite to him wanted to attack him, they were convulsed and overpowered by the shock of this fire." On the left hand of Najib was Shah Pasand Khan, forming the extreme flank of Abdali's line. The bold front he presented "prevented the Maratha corps facing him from drawing breath." This corps was Malhar Holkar's, and numbered only 3,000 against the 5,000 men led by Shah Pasand.

On the right of Najib and left of the grand wazir stood Shujā-ud-daulah, with 2000 horse and 1000 State-equipped infantry and twenty guns, besides *jizails*, ready to meet any attack. But none attacked him. Facing

him were a number of small individual contingents, namely those of Shamsher Bahadur, Jaswant Rao Puar, and others, but these did not make any move throughout the day. "Twice or thrice their swords and spears flashed in the sunlight in the distance, as if they were going to issue on a charge, but it did not materialize, and the thing passed off safely for us," as Shujā's clerk writes. It means that every time the Bhāu made a charge from the centre, a thrill of excitement passed through his right wing and some men there shouted to be led on to an advance from that wing; but they had no general with heart or leadership, the momentary enthusiasm evaporated and nothing was done. Only at the end of the day, when all was almost over at the Maratha centre and left wing, and the entire Afghan line advanced, Shah Pasand and Najib made an onset upon their opponents. Malhar first fled away, uncovering Jankoji's right flank, which Shah Pasand at once turned; Sindhia's never-beaten contingent shamelessly followed Holkar's example, leaving their chieftain to his fate. [*SPD.* xxvii. 271.] Jankoji was wounded and driven upon the centre, Jaswant Puār and a son of Pilāji Jādav fell, Shamsher Bahadur was mortally wounded, and the Maratha right wing ceased to exist.

§ 23. *Pursuit and slaughter of the Marathas.*

The last trace of resistance ceased at a quarter to three in the afternoon. Most of the officers of the

defeated army had fallen, and the field was covered with scattered knots of bewildered leaderless men making their way between piles of the dead and wounded, "every one fleeing as he found a path, without trying to unite with others." Then the whole Durrāni line advanced in one exultant rush. The Maratha camp, stocked with immense riches, lay only two miles before them, and from it streams of fugitives encumbered with heavily loaded transport animals were seen to be issuing. Two hours of daylight still remained, and as the moon did not set before a quarter past nine that night, the pursuit was kept up for twenty miles in a fan-shaped semi-circle by the Durrāni horsemen, who slew every one they could overtake. But the Maratha entrenchments were not sacked that evening, because Ahmad Shah, like a wise general, kept his troops together till he could be sure that the enemy forces were destroyed beyond any chance of rally or counter-attack.*

Next morning the sun revealed a horrid spectacle on the vast plain south of Pānipat. On the actual field of the combat thirty-two distinct heaps of the slain were counted, the number of bodies in each ranging from 500 upwards to 1,000, and in four up to 1,500,—a rough total of 28,000. In addition to these, the ditch round the Maratha camp was full of dead bodies, partly

* Kāshirāj, 28. Nur. 50*b*-51*a*. *Husain Shahi*, 72-73. *Manaxil*, 79-84. Nana Fadnis, *Autobiography*.

the victims of disease and famine during the long siege and partly wounded men who had crawled out of the fighting line to die there. West and south of Pānipat city, the jungle and road in the line of Maratha retreat were littered with the remains of those who had fallen unresisting in the relentless Durrāni pursuit or from hunger and exhaustion. Their number,—probably three-fourths non-combatants and one-fourth soldiers, could not have been far short of the vast total of those slain in the battlefield. "The hundreds who lay wounded perished from the severity of the cold."

After the havoc of combat followed cold-blooded massacre. Several hundreds of Marathas had hidden themselves in the hostile city of Pānipat, through folly or helplessness; and these were hunted out next day and put to the sword. According to one plausible account, the sons of Abdus Samad and Mian Qutb received the Durrāni king's permission to avenge their fathers' death by an indiscriminate massacre of the Marathas for one day, and thus nearly nine thousand men perished [*Bhau S. Bakh.* 123]; these were evidently non-combatants. The eye-witness, Kāshirāj Pandit, thus describes the scene: "Every Durrāni soldier brought away a hundred or two of prisoners and slew them in the outskirts of their camp, crying out, 'When I started from our country, my mother father sister and wife told me to slay so many *kāfirs* for their sake after we had gained the victory in this holy war,

so that the religious merit of this act [of infidel-slaying] might accrue to them.' In this way, thousands of soldiers and other persons were massacred. In the Shah's camp, except the quarters of himself and his nobles, every tent had a heap of severed heads before it. One may say that it was verily Doomsday for the Maratha people."

§ 24. *The spoils of the victors.*

"The booty captured within the entrenchment was beyond calculation, and the regiments of Khans (*i. e.*, 8000 troopers of Abdāli clansmen) did not, as far as possible, allow other troops like the Irānis and Turānis to share in the plunder; they took possession of everything themselves, but sold to the Indian soldiers handsome Brāhman women for one *tuman* and good horses for two *tumans* each." [Nur-ud-din, 50*b*.] The Deccani prisoners, male and female, reduced to slavery by the victorious army numbered 22,000, many of them being the sons and other relatives of the sardars or middle class men. Among them 'rose-limbed slave girls' are mentioned, which shows that the Maratha officers during their victorious occupation of Delhi had imitated the Peshwa's example and replenished their harems with the fair-coloured beauties of the northern hill range, for whom there were regular markets in Delhi Lahor and other great cities. Besides these 22,000 unhappy captives, some four hundred officers and 6,000 men fled for refuge

to Shujā's camp, and were sent back to the Deccan with money help by that Nawāb, at the request of his Hindu officers. The total loss of the Marathas after the battle is put at 50,000 horses, captured either by the Afghan army or the villagers along the route of flight, two hundred thousand draught cattle, some thousands of camels, five hundred elephants, besides cash and jewellery. "Every trooper of the Shah brought away ten, and sometimes twenty camels laden with money. The captured horses were beyond count, but none of them was of value; they came like droves of sheep in their thousands." *

§ 25. *The casualties in the Maratha army.*

Among those who fell in the battle was the Peshwā's eldest son Vishwās Rao, whose body was detained for three days by the Durrāni soldiers clamouring that they would stuff it and carry it away to their country as a memorial of their victory over 'the Emperor of the Hindus'; but it was at last surrendered at Shujā-ud-daulah's entreaty to his Brāhmans for cremation. The headless trunk of the Bhāu was dragged out of a huge heap of the slain two days after the battle, and the head on the third day, and burnt at different times with proper rites. Jaswant Rao Puār, one son of Pilāji Jādav, Tukoji Sindhiā, Sāntāji Wāgh (covered with 40 wounds)

* Spoils.—Kashiraj, 28; *Siyar*, iii. 69 (=*Mux.* 191); Nur-ud-din, 50*b*; Raj. vi. 408 and 409; *Manazil*, 79-81.

and several other captains were known to have perished here. Jankoji Sindhiā, helpless from severe wounds and with a broken arm hung by a sling from his neck, was found and concealed in a tent by Barkhurdār Khan, who agreed to ransom him for seven lakhs ; but when Najib Khan, the mortal enemy of the house of Sindhia, got scent of the matter and told Abdāli, Barkhurdār had Jankoji murdered and buried in secret in order to avert his master's wrath. [Kashiraj.] Ibrāhim Khan Gārdi, also badly wounded, took refuge in Shujā's camp, but the Durrāni soldiers demanded the execution of this Muslim ally of the infidels, and the Shah yielded to their clamour. Shamsher Bahadur, who had escaped to Kumbher, died of his wounds, in spite of all the attention and care of Suraj Mal. Another notable general, Antāji Mānakeshwar, on his way home was killed by the Baluch lords of Farrukhnagar, as also was Bāji Hari.

Among these, the historian has a special reason for lamenting the death of Antāji, which has robbed posterity of a most brilliant account of the battle of Pānipat from the Maratha side. He has left behind him the most graphic and detailed despatches on his other campaigns and reports of Delhi Court affairs. He was, in fact, a journalist before his time, and possessed the modern pressman's facile pen, eye for the picturesque, descriptive power, and—we must mournfully add,—disregard of truth for producing effect or glorifying himself.

Māhādji Sindhia received during his flight wounds from a Durrāni pursuer which lamed him for life. It was, in short, a nation-wide disaster like Flodden Field ; there was not a home in Maharashtra that had not to mourn the loss of a member, and several houses their very heads. An entire generation of leaders was cut off at one stroke. *

As for Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāu, the survivors of that fatal day made him the scapegoat of the Maratha debacle. They ascribed the loss of their northern empire and army solely to his overweening conceit, contempt for the advice of wiser men, and that intellectual blindness with which the gods first afflict those whom they wish to destroy. Later generations of Maratha writers have echoed this cry, but with what little justice the authentic documents cited in the foregoing narrative of his campaign will have shown. But his conduct on the last day no student of the military science can justify. When a soldier makes the supreme sacrifice, there may be sorrow for it, but not regret. The fruit of his action is immaterial to him. The young hero—only two years older than the Bhāu,—who fell into the arms of victory on the Heights of Abraham, was fond of singing,

* Antaji,—Kashiraj 28. Mahadji lamed,—*Manaril* 85-88, *Husain Shahi* 73. Ibrahim Gardi,—Kashiraj, 31-32 (poisoned by order), *Husain Shahi* 74 (corpse disgraced and exposed), *Mux.* 190 (confined in a cage and then beheaded.) *Gulistan-i-Rahmat*, 67.

Why, soldiers ! why
Should we be melancholy boys ?
Why, soldiers ! why,
We whose business 'tis to die ?

It would have made no difference in his outlook upon life if he had changed places with his gallant French rival and closed his eyes amidst the darkness of defeat.

But a generalissimo who has led into ruin half a lakh of fighters and eight times that number of non-combatants entrusted to his care, and made no provision for their compact orderly retreat under proper leaders in the event of an almost certain defeat, stands on a different footing and must receive a different verdict at the bar of history.

§ 26. *Troubles of the Maratha fugitives.*

For the fugitives from Panipat the open road to the Deccan lay through the tract west and south-west of Delhi, *i.e.*, the Hariana country or the modern districts of Hisar and Rohtak. Here the Marathas reaped as they had sown in the past. Almost every year since 1754 they had crossed and recrossed this tract, pillaging or blackmailing the peasants and landlords alike with insane greed. Payment of the fixed revenue or tribute to one Maratha officer had not saved the village headmen from exaction by another. The tenants of the local chiefs who had joined the Maratha banners had been robbed by the Deccani troops, and appeals for

redress even to their highest generals had only produced the comfortless reply, "They are soldiers ; they always do it." [Malhar's speech to Imād-ul-mulk, 31 May 1754. *T. Ahmad Shahi.*]

The numerous small scattered fragments of the vanquished army came here, worn out with hunger, ceaseless marching, and constant alarms, and went to the villages to beg for food and shelter. Then the justly incensed peasantry turned on them, robbing the stragglers of their arms, apparel and horses, and killing all who hesitated or attempted defence. When larger bands, moving under their generals, like Satvoji Jādav, appeared, they offered fight from within their walls. These generals, with half-dead horses, fainting troops and no guns, were not in a position to attack any village, and had much ado to continue their retreat without being beaten and robbed. Even the women plundered solitary Deccanis without resistance. Many thousands of horses were here sacrificed and the broken remnant of that proud army at last reached shelter on foot, most of the men having been robbed of their *shāls* and coats and wearing nothing but a rag wrapped round their loins. [Raj. vi. 409.] The Baluch zamindars of Bahādurgarh and Farrukhnagar were particularly ruthless towards their infidel oppressors and eager to emulate their triumphant Durrāni brethren. They recognized Antāji Mānakeshwar by his horse and dress as a chieftain and slew him for the rich spoils. Many

lesser captains met with the same ignominious end.

It was only when the fugitives, now at their last gasp from 200 miles of flight without food or rest through a hostile population, reached the Jāt kingdom that they found a haven of refuge. Suraj Mal received them with every mark of kindness and hospitality, giving free rations to every Deccani soldier or camp-follower and medical attendance to their wounded, and, when they were rested and recovered, conveyance to their own city of Gwālior. Thus fifty thousand men and women, the sole survivors of the Bhāu's camp at Pānipat, were saved. The Jāt queen was particularly liberal in her charity to the Brāhmans and respectful attention to the ladies of the Marātha race. Not a single man among them could have returned to the Deccan if Suraj Mal had so wished, as Father Xavier Wendel justly claims.*

§ 27. *Consequences of the battle of Panipat.*

Since the days of Vishwanāth K. Rājwādé, it has been the fashion with Maratha writers to belittle the result of the battle of Pānipat as no disaster to the Marathas except for the death of so many chiefs and so many thousands of soldiers. Its political

* Fugitives molested,—Nur-ud-din 51. Kashiraj 28. Raj vi. 406 and 409 (Suraj Mal's help.) Wendel, 81. Horse impaled on Sonepat sarai,—*Manaxil* 88-89, *Husain Shahi* 73.

consequence is spoken of as nothing, and Abdali's victory as a great illusion. This view is supported by the fact that Ahmad Shah reaped no lasting gain from his victory and sought soon afterwards for a friendly settlement with the Peshwā by sending an envoy and presents to him. Māhādji Sindhiā's occupation of Delhi in 1789 is pointed out as a proof that the Maratha defeat of 28 years earlier had been completely nullified. But a dispassionate survey of Indian history will show how unfounded this chauvinistic claim is. A Maratha army did, no doubt, restore the exiled Mughal Emperor to the capital of his fathers in 1772, but they came then, not as kingmakers, not as the dominators of the Mughal's empire and the real masters of his nominal ministers and generals. That proud position was secured by Māhādji Sindhiā only in 1789 and by the British in 1803.

But what a change from the Indian world of 1760 ! The contrast can be most easily realized if we imagine that the Marathas had triumphed on that 14th of January. Then the broken Durrāni army would have been expelled from India, robbed and hunted down by the Sikhs through the Panjab, the Indus would have been closed to invasion from the north-west, the mortal enemy Najib Khan would have been crushed outright instead of reigning for the next ten years as the dictator of Delhi, and the middle and upper Doab would have been purged of every single element hostile to the

Marathas. The Bhāu's army, flushed with victory and seeing all their enemies in North India cowering in terror, would have taken up Dattāji's interrupted plan of annexing the provinces of Allahabad and Bihār and fleecing Bengal. In 1761 the English would certainly have saved Bengal from Maratha incursion by regularly paying *chauth*, but they could hardly have fought to preserve Bihār, as their Home forces were now involved in the weary exhausting latter stage of the long-drawn Seven Years' War. Therefore, Bihār would have remained a jumping-off ground for further Maratha adventures in the north-east, as Orissa had become by Alivardi's cession of 1751. Shujā-ud-daulah would have sunk into obedience as a tribute-paying vassal.

But in 1772, and still more markedly in 1789, things were not as they had been in 1761. In these eleven years, the El Dorado of Bihar and Bengal had become closed to the Marathas beyond the possibility of conquest; even the *chauth* for these provinces, though formally granted to them by the Mughal Emperor in 1746, had lapsed, and they durst not claim it (as Mahadji Sindhia found to his cost when he sent a feeler to Sir J. Macpherson on this old legal claim); Oudh was now girt round by British bayonets, and the long coveted city of Allahabad was entrusted to the same strong arms; even the Pār Ruhelas,—those last possible allies of the Marathas (either through

military weakness or territorial ambition) in any invasion of Oudh,—were to be crushed only two years after Shah Alam's return to Delhi under Maratha protection.

In the north-west, the Panjab was for ever lost to the Marathas. A race that could not stand fast and true as the watch on the Indus, had no moral right to rule that frontier province. At the end of the eleven years that followed Pānipat, while a Durrāni viceroy held Court at Peshāwar, central and eastern Panjab had been practically abandoned to the Sikhs, and Sarhind formally to Alā Singh's successor, and these new masters would have been no more submissive to the Maratha intruders than to the Afghan. Nay more, the Sikhs rushed into the upper and north-middle Doab to fill the void caused by the eclipse of the Maratha power there during these eleven years, and by their annual raids left the land sucked dry for any Maratha army or tribute collector that might come after them.

What then remained to the returned Maratha dictators of Delhi in 1772? Only the Jāt country, Mewāt and Ḥariānā in the west, which became the cockpit of the empire during the next two decades. The ambition and arms of the revived Maratha power in the north were henceforth cooped up within the barren sands of Rajputana and the broken infinitely chequered wilderness of Bundelkhand,—all Hindu

territory,—and their activities there for the forty years from 1765 to 1805 have left a legacy of hatred for the Maratha name in Rajput hearts, which has not yet died out.

The moral effect of the disaster of Pānipat was even greater. The Maratha failure to oppose the foreign invader in 1757 and even more, with the Bhāu's vast resources in 1760-61, convinced the Indian world that Maratha friendship was a very weak reed to lean upon in any real danger. No North-Indian potentate would risk sure annihilation by siding with the Marathas in their day of difficulty, or even while the issue of their contest with the foreigner was trembling in the balance. Maratha protection was not worth purchasing by the least sacrifice, because the Marathas had clearly demonstrated in the last four years that they could not protect their dependents, any more than they had been able to protect their own selves in 1761.

Above all, to the reflective historian, the Pānipat disaster by killing the Peshwā Bālāji Rāo and removing nearly all of his great captains and able civil officers, as well as his grown up son Vishwās Rao and his expert and devoted prime minister Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāu, left the path absolutely open and easy to the guilty ambition of Raghunāth Dadā, the most infamous character in Maratha history. Other losses time could have made good, but this was the greatest mischief done by the debacle at Pānipat.

§ 28. *Death of the Peshwā Bālāji Rāo.*

The Peshwā's health began to show an alarming decline towards the close of the year of his greatest triumphs in the North and the South,—his victory over the Nizam and his capture of the imperial capital. Unsuspected by doctors, the hand of death was already upon him. A wasting disease was sapping his strength, and this, coupled with the increasing worries of public business, quarrels within his family circle, and above all the bankruptcy of his Government, made him extremely irritable. Some attempt was made to divert him with dance and song, for which handsome slave-girls were imported from Delhi, and even by marrying him to a new young wife on 27th December at Paithān. He now planned to march to Northern India, taking Nizām Ali with him, in order to make a combined effort of all the loyal country Powers for expelling the alien usurper of the Padishah's realm. On 9th January 1761, Raghunāth Dādā and Sakhārām Bāpu were deputed to induce Nizām Ali to come. The embassy failed, and the Peshwā had to continue his northward march alone.

By this time all was over with the Bhāu, and on 24th January the Peshwā at Bhilsā intercepted a banker's letter written from Delhi giving the fatal news of Pānipat. All his plans were now upset. He halted at Bhilsā till 7th February, and then marched by way of Sihor and Sironj to Pachhar, 32 miles north of Sironj,

in the delusive hope that the rumours about the Bhāu and some other chiefs having escaped from the field might prove true. Here the survivors from Pānipat met him, and pressed him to return home. The awful catastrophe had unhinged his mind and hastened the work of consumption. He began to moan to himself alone, call for his lost son and cousin, and talk incoherently. By this time he had been reduced to a skeleton, having lost 64 lbs. Leaving Pachhar on 22 March, the Court returned to Punā in June, and here he expired on 23 June 1761. It was a dismal sunset to the glorious noon of his father's and his own reign. A new scene now opened in the tragic drama of Maratha history, with its "Theban horrors" of murder suicide and the untimely death of the young. * But the historian of Delhi is not concerned with it, as the Delhi Government practically enjoyed a respite from Maratha intrusion almost to the end of the reign of the new Peshwā Mādhav Rāo Ballāl (1761-1772.) Panipat had done its work even in the South.

* Peshwa's last days,—Nur-ud-din 52. Nana Fadnis *Auto. SPD.* ii. 133=xxvii. 260. xxi. 204. xxvii. 260-272. xl. 137. Raj. iii. 210. vi. 415, 416. Kharé, i. 26, 28.

APPENDIX

I. *The Peshwa's responsibility for the defeat at Panipat.*

Did Bālāji Rao cause the disaster at Pānipat by breaking his promise to go to the relief of the Bhāu with an army from the Deccan ? No, because there is not a scrap of evidence that he made any such promise, or even that the Bhāu had appealed to him for reinforcements. The modern effort to make the Peshwā or Govind Ballāl the scapegoat for the Pānipat disaster is at once disproved by the contents and *dates* of the original letters of the Bhāu and the Peshwā, and the fact that it took at least four weeks in the most peaceful times for a letter to travel from Panipat to the Godāvari, while the least local disturbance on the long route would delay the letter by weeks more. The popular theory that the Bhāu put off his attack on Abdāli immediately after the rival armies had reached Pānipat because he expected that the Peshwā would come up in the rear of Abdāli and thus the enemy would be easily destroyed between two fires, is pure moonshine, because the Bhāu decided to entrench on 4th November [Raj. i. 264], when there was not the least whisper of the Peshwā having started for the north or even that he had decided on a personal campaign in Hindustan.

On 5th September the Bhāu did indeed appeal to the Peshwā, but it was for money ; he gives not the faintest idea of any military insufficiency on his side. Then followed the success at Kunjpurā (October), which elevated the spirit of the Maratha army of the North. Even on 1st November the Bhāu wrote to Govind Ballāl that he "had

every hope of being able to swallow Abdāli up in a few days." [Raj. i. 261.] Another letter from his camp written four days later (by Krishna Joshi) shows his army in the same over-confident spirit. For a month after this, *i. e.*, up to the 7th of December, the Maratha troops retained their optimism ; they were daily roving round the Afghan camp and making spoils from its outskirts and distressing the enemy by cutting his supplies off, while Nāro Shankar from Delhi was successfully harrying the middle Doāb and parts of trans-Ganges by means of his detachments [*SPD.* ii. 197, Raj. i. 243.] Therefore, such a dominant force could have had no occasion or valid reason for demanding more man-power from the South. Money alone was needed by it, and that money could come only from the Maratha collectors in the North.

The fall of Méhéndélé (7 Dec.) completely changed the scene, but not at once. It took the Shāh about a fortnight from this date to cut the Bhāu's line of communication with Delhi, to terrorize the Maratha army into remaining passive within their trenches day and night, and to stop their provision supply altogether. Govind himself fell on 17 December. That was the date on which despair took the place of boastful confidence in the beleaguered army. But a letter sent out of Pānipat on 22nd December (the day when the Bhāu received the mangled head of Govind Ballāl), even if it could have escaped the Durrāni patrols and the hostile Baluch zamīndars on the way, could not have brought a single trooper back from the Deccan, could not even have reached the Peshwā before the fatal morning of 14th January 1761.

The Bhāu nowhere says that he was looking for armed relief from the South. He perished, not so much from insufficiency of man-power, as because his army at Kunjpurā

and after "lived in the air"; it had no secure base at all. He had rejected Suraj Mal's wise advice to leave all his non-combatants and impedimenta behind in the Jāt forts, so as to render his force extremely mobile. After this it was a criminal folly on his part to make Delhi his base and yet leave there Nāro Shankar with a contemptible force of 3,000 light horse and 3,000 foot, all second line troops or raw recruits [Raj. i. 237], whom any Durrāni lieutenant could have crushed. Even a Dattāji Sindhia with fully 10,000 seasoned horse of his own, if posted at Delhi, would not have been more than what the importance of that base during the Bhāu's northward advance to the Satlaj demanded from a far-sighted general.

The Bhāu had taken 78 days in marching from Sindhkhed to a place 20 miles short of Agra, and the Peshwā would have required at least a hundred days in covering a route 275 miles longer, from Paithān to Pānipat. The knowledge of this fact alone would have deterred the Bhāu from asking for the Peshwā's armed aid.

Therefore, it is proved beyond a doubt that the only help which the Bhāu solicited from the Peshwa was money. Such an appeal exasperated Bālāji Rāo beyond endurance, and with every reason. He had, in order to furnish the Bhāu for the Hindustan expedition, added to his already heavy burden of debt, and cut down the force retained for the defence of the Deccan to the bones (only 10,000 men of his own.) The devoted Dattāji Sindhiā had assured him that he was thinking day and night how to relieve the Peshwā's load of debt, but Dattāji in the midst of his arduous campaigns in the North had never asked for remittance from Punā. The Bhāu had been supplied with a much larger army and orders for half the Maratha dues in the North. His task was to collect, by the demonstration

of his force, the tributes and revenue outstanding there and thus help to satisfy the creditors of the Punā Government, for whom nothing could be spared from the scanty revenues of the Deccan. And yet the Bhāu was demanding more money for his own expenses ! We can now easily understand why Bālāji's courtiers found it dangerous even to speak to him about the army under the Bhāu. As a courtier reports, "He has lost all recollection of the men in Hindustan (*viz.*, the Bhāu and his army.) Even talk about sending help to them is displeasing to his mind." [Letter of 26 Nov. *SPD.* ii. 133=xxvii. 260.] To such hints the Peshwā's reply, expressed by silence or a grunt rather than words, signified that he had given the Bhāu a rope sufficiently long to hang himself with and would leave him there. What lashed his resentment to fury was the unforgettable fact that the same rope which Sadāshiv had placed round his own neck would strangle Vishwās Rāo also !

In such circumstances, a born master of affairs would have asserted his will, cut his losses by abandoning all his northern ambitions (or severely curtailing them within the limits of possibility), and commanded the Bhāu *at once* to fall back on Agra, or even Gwālior, and thus saved his son and army, at the expense of the coveted but unattainable lordship of Delhi and the Panjāb and the unhampered possession of the Doāb. We can blame Bālāji for this failure of a supreme master's duty ; his marriage at Paithān had nothing to do with the issue in the North.

The military disaster to the Marathas at Pānipat was inevitable, considering the polar difference in armament, tactics, discipline, internal cohesion (by means of a dependable chain of officers) and numbers between the rival armies. There could have been no victory for the Bhāu there ; the utmost was a successful retreat with what he could save

out of his army, abandoning all his accumulated plunder of six months and most of his non-combatants. His failure in that clash of arms does not excite our indignation so much as the utter blindness to the facts of the situation, the lack of a consistent far-sighted policy and of the practical give and take spirit, and above all the total diplomatic failure,—in one word, the want of statesmanship,—on the part of the master at Punā who dictated, and the doomed agent near Delhi who carried out, his North-Indian policy.

II. *How far did Malhar Holkar contribute to the defeat at Panipat?*

In a defence of his own conduct supposed to have been dictated by Malhar Holkar, which is current in Maharashtra, he says that he was ordered by the Bhāu to escort the wives of the Bhāu and other chiefs out of the Pānipat camp to the Deccan as soon as he saw signs of defeat in the field on that day (or received a hint to that effect from the Bhāu), and that he had left the field accordingly. This apologia bears every mark of being apocryphal, and indeed Rājwādé suspected its authenticity long ago. The only division of the Maratha army that returned from Pānipat in a tolerably large and compact form was Holkar's (about 1,500 men.) If he was the officer selected by the Bhāu to lead the retreat, he would certainly have kept touch, throughout the fight, with the ladies whom he had been ordered to save and he should have gone up to them immediately after leaving the field. But in fact he met Pārvati Bāi on the way, some 20 hours after the end of the battle, which shows that their junction was purely accidental.

Again, though according to the current Maratha tradition (*Bhāu Sāh. Bakhar*, p. 79 and *Holkar Kaifiyat*, p. 23),

young Jankoji Sindhia clung to Malhar as a child does to its mother, and in the battle of Pānipat Jankoji was posted at the very elbow of Malhar, the latter did not take Janko with him in his flight, which he could have most easily done in a pre-arranged and well-conducted retreat. The weight of evidence is irresistible that Malhar thought only of saving himself, and by a secret collusion with Najib (and, through Najib, with Shah Pasand Khan, his opposite number,) that neither party would molest the other, he remained inert during the critical stage of the battle. * But as soon as the Bhāu's defeat appeared certain, though still an hour before the end of the struggle, Malhar fled away westwards, thus utterly uncovering Jankoji's right flank. Shah Pasand thrust himself into the gap and attacked Janko from that wing and the rear, while Najib, who had now worked his way to within musket shot of Janko (his opposite number), assailed him in front with a discharge of 2,000 rockets at a time into his densely crowded and confused ranks. Jankoji, himself severely wounded and enveloped in front right and

* The sober Kashiraj says, "Shah Pasand Khan was very brave and experienced in war. He advanced with such vigour that the [confronting] Maratha corps had not the power to draw breath,"—which I take to mean that the two sides only made a demonstration from a short distance. But Shah Pasand's servant Shamlu, writing 35 years afterwards, says with his usual exaggeration,—"As Janko and Malhar with one lakh of troops, keeping their feet firmly before Shah Pasand Khan, were fighting, the Khan on becoming strengthened at heart when he heard the news of the flight of the infidels [at the centre], charged the sardars in front of him and fought for two *gharis*. At last they too preferred flight to fight." (Br. Mus. Or. 1895, p. 78.) Malhar's concert with Najib is mentioned by Nur. (51*a*) and *Husain Shahi*, 72.

rear, was driven with the broken remnant of his division towards his left (the only path now lying open to him) and reached the rear of the Bhāu's division (the centre.) There he fell into the jaws of Barkhurdār Khan, who, after the annihilation of the Gārdi troops and consequent disappearance of the entire Maratha left wing, had turned the Maratha centre and got behind the Bhāu.

It is only on this supposition that we can explain how Jankoji, who was posted on the extreme *right* of the Maratha line of battle, happened to become the captive of Barkhurdār Khan, who commanded at a diagonally opposite position, namely that facing the extreme *left* of the Maratha line.

III. *Historical sources on Pānipat.*

The primary source for the history of the Bhāu's campaign in Hindustan (March 1760—January 1761) from the Maratha side is the long series of letters from the Bhau to Govind Ballāl and others and several of Govind Ballāl's letters which V. K. Rājwādé recovered and printed in his *Sādhanen*, vol. i, as well as a few stray letters of that period in his vols. iii. and vi, and a small sheaf of the historical letters still extant in the Peshwās' record office and included in G. S. Sardesai's *Selections from the Peshwas' Daftar*, vols. ii, xxi, and xxvii, and two or three letters printed by V. V. Kharé in his *Lekh Sangraha*, vol. i. Only two of these touch the last battle, and that too very briefly. The *Bhāu Sāhibānchi Bakhar*, the *Pānipat Bakhar* and *Holkarānchi Kaifiyat*, in the same language, have to be rejected as later gossipy fabrications, no better than opium-eaters' tales. But what puzzles the critical historian in the *Bhāu Sāhibānchi Bakhar* is that, hopelessly mixed up with its mass of demonstrably false statements, there are some

true traditions (as proved by authentic records) and some statements which have every appearance of being true though unsupported elsewhere. Therefore, the simple remedy of rejecting this work in its entirety would impoverish our scanty store of information on the battle, and yet it is not safe to accept any of its statements so long as it cannot be corroborated by other and more reliable sources.

I have rejected much of Nānā Fadnis's autobiography, written probably 30 years after the battle and with much of his early memory effaced by the lapse of time and engrossing State affairs, because when this narrative is confronted with his letters written from the Bhāu's camp (which I have accepted as most trustworthy), it is proved incorrect in some particulars.

In the Persian language no despatch, newsletter or other State-paper has survived. The earliest and best record is the *Delhi Chronicle*, which gives the most accurate dates and several original facts, though in its usual brief language. The Persian narrative of the battle and the events which led to it, written in 1780 by Kāshirāj Shiv Rāo Pandit, a Deccani Brāhman long in the service of Shujā-ud-daulah, is the fullest and most trustworthy source on the battle itself, about which naturally no Marathi despatch is available. The fact of this author being a Maratha by race and creed and his presence in Abdāli's camp in the train of Shujā throughout the campaign made him naturally see both sides more intimately and get information about both the camps more fully and accurately than was possible for any other person. His employment as a mediator between the two sides gives a peculiar importance to his narrative. He stood by Shujā's side throughout the battle and once carried a message to the hard-pressed Durrāni wazir at the centre.

Kāshirāj frankly admits that he "wrote 19 years after the event and from memory," but a critical and comparative study of his narrative proves his veracity. A few inaccuracies due to lapse of memory or hurried writing can be easily corrected, often from his own words elsewhere. These are: (i) Malhar Holkar's position was in the extreme right of the Maratha line of battle, and not penultimate as his loose language suggests. (ii) Najib did not leave his position facing Jankoji Sindhia, in order to deliver a flank attack on the Bhāu's centre,—at least not till all was over except the shouting. (iii) Similarly, throughout the contested stage of the battle Shah Pasand Khan merely neutralized the Maratha division (Malhar's) opposite to him, instead of engaging in any close combat with it or with the Bhau's centre, before Malhar's flight. (iv) The Durrānis plundered the Maratha camp not in the night following the battle but next morning. (v) The rival armies stood facing north and south (and not eastwards and westwards, as in Browne's translation.) *Sharq-rua* in the text means 'counting from the eastern end of the line of battle.' Shākir Khan says that the Ruhela contingent in the Durrāni army barred the road to Delhi, which we know ran southwards and not eastwards from Pānipat city. (See also *SPD.* xxvii. 259.)

Sayyid Ghulām Ali, the author of *Imād-us-sādat*, extensively borrows from Kāshirāj (often verbatim).

Another eye-witness of the battle was Md. J'afar Shāmlu, then the chief manager of Shah Pasand Khan. But he wrote 35 years after the battle, without any notes, and solely trusting to his memory. Though he boasts, "It is most probable that none knows more about this battle than the author (*i.e.*, Shāmlu)··· Whatever any other man narrates contrary to my statements···is falsehood pure and simple, and deserves no credence,"—yet his narrative is often wrong

and his numbers grossly inflated, a *reduction to one-tenth* being necessary in most cases before we can reach the truth! He gives no details of the battle at all comparable to Kashiraj's. [Br. Mus. Persian Or. 1895.]

Sayyid Nur-ud-din Hasan's Life of Najib-ud-daulah [Br. Mus. MS. 24,410] written about 1773, most probably for Sir Charles W. Malet, is extremely valuable in some parts, but has to be used with caution where he depended on others for information. He was not present in the battle, as being a servant of Imād-ul-mulk he had to remain in hiding at Bharatpur with his master throughout this campaign. But he was the most learned and thoughtful of the Muslim writers on this subject and took care to ascertain the facts from the actors in the affair and to reproduce them faithfully in his book. [Fully trans. by me in *Islamic Culture*, Haidarabad, 1933.]

The author of *Siyar-ul-mutākhkharin* lived at Patna, at a vast distance from Delhi at this time, and his account of the battle (copied by *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* with only two small additions) is based on hearsay. Shākir Khan was living in Pānipat in unemployment and poverty during the siege, but his *Tazkira* [Br. Mus. Add. 6585, I have used a Patna MS.] is too brief to be of any use.

Gross misrepresentation of the facts of the battle was afterwards made by Shujā-ud-daulah's flatterers to glorify their patron, in Gulistāni's *Mujmil-ut-tawārikh* (ed. by Oskar Mann, Leiden, 1896), Mustajab Khan's *Gulistan-i-Rahmat* and Imam-ud-din Husaini's *Tārikh-i-Husain Shāhi* (wr. 1798.) The last-named work, amidst much confusion of dates and events and incorrect statement, supplies many useful correct details, and sometimes agrees remarkably with Nur-ud-din in points not given by any other author.

Miskin, unfortunately for us, was not present at the

battle or anywhere near. Nor was Suraj Mal. Hence, Miskin's *Memoirs* [Br. Mus. Pers. 8807] and Father Xavier Wendel's French history of the Jat kingdom (India Office, Orme MSS., O. V. 216) touch the battle too briefly.

Purandaré Daftar, i., is a valuable primary source for the events *after* the battle of Panipat, esp. the Peshwa's last days (Nos. 393-426), but gives nothing important about the *battle*: 386 (Ahir risings in Bhau's rear), 389 (why Bhau rejected Shuja's peace proposal), 391 (early Maratha brag at Panipat=Raj. i. 265), 392 (Barve's Oudh raid), 397 and 425 (casualties and fugitives), 417 (Nana Fadnis's letter on the battle with list of names,—very useful.)

IV. *Military notes on Panipat.*

The cause of the Durrani victory is thus convincingly given by the French captain Jean Law, who visited Delhi in 1758:—"Nothing like it [*viz.*, the disorderly condition of Indian troops] is to be seen in the army of Abdali; everything there is real, the men as much as the horses and the arms. His army is divided into squadrons of a thousand horsemen. Each squadron is distinguished by a cap of a different colour and under the command of a chief, who invariably makes his report to Abdali himself twice a day. The chief has subaltern officers for whose conduct he is held responsible. The review of the troops is made rigorously all the months, and—what merits attention,—they are punished at least as often as they are rewarded. Although the troops of Abdali are generally good, there are among them some corps that surpass the others. They are the men whose bravery has been more frequently put to the proof. Every time this prince enters on a campaign he keeps apart 12 or 15 of these squadrons. It is his reserve corps, destined for

the decisive strokes, and of which the Marathas have felt the weight so often." (*Mémoire*, 194-195.)

I believe that over half the Sindhia contingent (the rear portion) fled away *westwards* very early along with Holkar and only a fraction (the van and Jankoji's personal friends and staff) offered resistance and, when overpowered by Shah Pasand and Najib, retreated with their chief *eastwards* to the Bhau's corps. [*SPD.* xxvii. 271.] To this extent my second plan of the battle requires alteration. Also, though in the plans the Maratha divisions (except the Gardi brigade) are shown as cavalry, there were in fact many unmounted men among them, as one general (Satvoji Jadav) admits that "Many of our soldiers lost their horses and the rest were famished" during the two months' investment in Panipat.

Elephants versus Turki horses.—Ahmad Shah said that elephants were admirable means of baggage transport ; but a mount, the control of which is not in the hands of the rider and which can carry him whither it wills, should not be resorted to ; while a litter (*pālki*) is only suitable for a sick man. [Samin, tr. in *Ind. Antiq.*, 1907, p. 60.]

Sardar Jahan Khan came to the camp of Najib with 8,000 horsemen by fast marches [1767] and ... Najib immediately sent Zabita Khan to accompany him against the Sikhs. The sardar said to Zabita Khan, "Your head and body appear to be very soft ; you have been constantly used to sitting in palkis and carpets. How will you be able to keep up with us ? ... Why do you take an elephant with you ?" [Nur-ud-din, 111*b*.]

The Maratha generals are said to have brought three hundred elephants into the field in the battle of Panipat.

CHAPTER XXII

Najib-ud-daula, Dictator of Delhi, 1761-1770.

§ 1. *Ahmad Shah Abdali's doings in India after Panipat.*

From 10th October 1760, when Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu deposed the wazir's puppet Shah Jahan II and proclaimed Shah Alam II Emperor in Delhi, to the 6th of January 1772, when Shah Alam rode into the capital of his fathers for the first time as sovereign, the imperial city was widowed of her lord. True, throughout this long interval of over eleven years, there always lived in Delhi a recognized vicar of the Emperor in the person of his eldest son Mirzā Jawān Bakht, with the title of *Wali Ahad* or Heir; but the Emperor himself was sighing out his days in exile at Allahabad or elsewhere in the territory of the Nawab of Oudh, unable to control the administration of the realm from its centre. This eclipse of royalty coincides almost exactly with the noontide splendour of Najib Khan's career as the virtual dictator of Delhi and the supreme regulator of the affairs of what still remained of the Mughal empire. Only fourteen months separate the death of Najib (31 Oct. 1770) from the return of Shah Alam to Delhi. Therefore, the history of the centre of the Mughal empire can be best studied as a part of the life-story of Najib-ud-

daulah, even though he very seldom resided in the city of Delhi during these ten years.

The day after his greatest victory, Ahmad Shah Abdali visited the city of Pānipat, dressed in a splendid robe on which glittered the costly jewels (including the Kohinur) taken away by Nadir Shah from the Delhi palace and seized by Ahmad Shah during the plunder of his murdered master's camp. He made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the saint Bu Ali Qalandar and there knelt down in thanksgiving to the God of Hosts for His crowning mercy. He soon set out for Delhi, which he entered a fortnight after the battle (on 29th January, 1761.) *

Throughout the last three months, "a feeling as of death had settled upon that unhappy city from rumours of the Shah's coming," and on his arrival "grain became extremely dear." Its Maratha governor Nāro Shankar, had found his position untenable as soon as the news of the disaster to the Bhāu's army reached Delhi. The Muslim mob assembled and engaged in plunder without fear or check ; every fugitive from Pānipat was stripped of his all. But, thanks to the grateful support of the ex-Empress Zinat Mahal, Nāro Shankar issued from the city with his property and family without molestation, except for being forced to pay up the dues of the Abyssinian qiladar Habsh Khan and his garrison. He

* **Abdali after Panipat.**—Kashiraj, *DC.* Ghulam Ali, ii. 186-188. Wendel 83. *SPD.* ii. 142. xxi. 202.

presented 3½ lakhs of Rupees in cash, besides costly articles of the Deccan to the Queen-mother; much dispersed property which he could not collect and carry away in his hurry, came into the imperial treasury.

Then the Durrani army entered the city and engaged in seizing property "beyond imagination." Habsh Khan was squeezed out of 10,000 gold coins. The Queen-mother welcomed the victor by advancing with the Heir to Narela, 12 kos north of Delhi, and presenting one lakh of Rupees to him and half a lakh to his wazir.

During February and the first half of March, Ahmad Shah occupied the Delhi palace, living with his wives in the rooms set apart for Mumtaz Mahal in the reign of Shah Jahan, and holding Court in the famous Diwān-i-khās. After the hardships of the last fifteen months of campaigning and privation, he gave himself and his army up to pleasure and repose for some time in the imperial city.

But his peace was disturbed by the mutiny of his Durrani troops who clamoured for their pay,—now two years in arrear,—and also insisted on being immediately led back to their mountain home, as they would not spend another summer on the Indian plains. Najib was called upon to pay the cost of his deliverance from the Maratha menace by Durrani arms. He tried hard to shift the burden from his own shoulders by presenting Nāgar Mal the envoy of the Jat Rajah (21st Feb.) and

opening negotiations for the payment of a tribute by that prince in return for Abdali's forgiveness. But the Queen-mother Zinat Mahal hated Suraj Mal as the protector and ally of her husband's murderer and she knew from the past that Suraj Mal was only playing to gain time and would pay nothing unless compelled by force. So, she induced the Durrani wazir to dismiss the Jat envoy with a direct refusal. On 8th March, Shah Wali Khan, with Prince Jawān Bakht and Zinat Mahal, set out for Agra in order to put pressure on Suraj Mal; but the Durrani soldiers refused to march to the Mathura region where they had daily lost hundreds of their brethren from cholera in this very month of March only four years ago. The increasing disorder among his troops compelled Ahmad Shah to decide on a prompt return to Afghanistan and he recalled his wazir. In the meantime, a riot had broken out between Shuja's Shia followers and the Shah's Sunni troops, and the Nawab of Oudh, in high anger at this return for his valued assistance during the late war with the Marathas, left for his province on 7th March. On the 13th of that month the Shah began preparations for his retreat. Leaving Delhi city on 20th March he halted for two days in the Shalimar garden north-west of the city, and began his return march on the 22nd, reaching Ambala on the 27th. A Maratha letter reports that there was a three days' plunder of Delhi by his retreating troops.

§ 2. *How Najib became regent of Delhi.*

The Durrani king's parting instructions were that Shah Alam should be recognized as Emperor, Imad reappointed wazir and Najib Mir Bakhshi, and that these two ministers should bury their old hostility and work in friendly co-operation and singleness of devotion to their master's interests. But a river of blood lay between Shah Alam and Imad, and the opportunist Najib used this fact to secure his own elevation as regent of the empire for the next ten years. He wrote to the Queen-mother that if Imad returned to Delhi and resumed charge of the government, he would set Shah Alam and his branch of the royal family aside and set up a crowned puppet of his own like the late Shah Jahan II. So, the Heir issued a rescript calling upon Najib to come and take charge of the capital. Thus, while Imad, after receiving the wazir's robe from Abdali's agent was delaying at Mathura to assemble his Jat escort and "building castles in the air," Najib stole a march over him, came to Luni, and was brought over to Delhi by the Crown Prince (7th April), the two seated on the same elephant.* This move checkmated Imad; his sole supporter Suraj Mal, when faced with the accomplished

* Nur. 54*b*—55*b*. *DC. SPD.* ii. 144. There are two lives of Najib in Persian, one (extremely well-written) by Sayyid Nur-ud-din Hasan Khan (afterwards Sir C. W. Malet's *munshi*) composed probably in 1773 (Br. Mus. Pers. MS. 24,410), and the other by Bihari Lal, the *munshi* of Najib, written in 1787.

fact, refused to instal Imad in the wazirship as it now meant an attack upon Delhi.

Najib became the official head of the army of the empire (*Mir Bakhshi*), governor (*faujdār*) of the metropolitan district, and regent (*mukhtār*) of the imperial administration. "In the whole city his men were installed in the offices of tax collection, control of the grain market, &c. His agent was posted at the gate of the palace-fort as its commandant. Shah Alam ratified the arrangement." Najib put a garrison of some six thousand men in Delhi, and held the capital by means of a trusty lieutenant such as his brother (Afzal or Sultan Khan) or his son Zābita Khan, who governed it. This work Zabita discharged very ably and pleased every one, especially the traders, by his strict justice, suppression of robbery, and sympathy with the people in their distress. [Nur 98*b*].

§ 3. *Abdali's attempt to conclude peace with the Peshwa and Suraj Mal fails.*

Ahmad Shah Abdali, like a wise statesman, wished to leave behind him an agreed peace among all the Powers of India: he himself would keep the Panjab from the Satlaj westwards and content himself with an annual tribute of 40 lakhs of Rupees for the rest of the Mughal empire, payable by the minister who would wield the regency of Delhi. As for the Marathas,* during several

*Abdali and the Peshwa after Panipat,—Raj. vi. 382, 384, 423,

years after Panipat Abdali persisted in the attempt to placate the Peshwa; he wrote repeatedly to his Delhi agent, Yaqub Ali, to go to the Peshwa and beg him to excuse the Durrani king for the slaughter of his son and cousin at Panipat, as Ahmad Shah had no intention of fighting them, but the Bhau had begun the offensive and forced the Shah to take up arms in self-defence. The envoy was instructed to assure the Puna Court that the Maratha-Durrani boundary as now settled by negotiation would be scrupulously respected, and that all the Indian Powers would have Abdali's blessing in supporting Shah Alam on the Delhi throne and letting the regular government of the empire start again.

In short, Abdali's sole interest in India was to get his tribute punctually year after year, without having to send an Afghan army for its collection. It was, therefore, necessary for him that the *status quo* should be maintained in Hindustan, the Ruhelas secured from molestation, and the Marathas induced to come to terms with the Durrani and Shah Alam and not to disturb the Delhi administration and cut off its revenue resources as they had done by their invasions in the past. Such a live and let live policy was the most sensible and business-like plan at the time, if only the Peshwa could be induced to let bygones be bygone and to curb his ambition within the bounds of what was realizable. The

425. *DC. SPD.* xxi. 202 (completed by ii. 103.) xxvii. 272. ii. 145, 146. xl. 141, 142. xxix. 10.

Maratha failure to do this shows that they had not a single statesman among them and that by trying to grasp all they were destined to lose all in the end.

Yaqub Ali Khan, by Abdali's order, left Delhi on 9th April with the robe and jewelled pen-case appertaining to the office of imperial wazir, for delivering them to Imad at Mathura. On the 19th the envoy was presented to Suraj Mal. Long consultations were held by these three, as well as Tatya Gangadhar (Holkar's diwān) and Bāpu M. Hingané (the Peshwā's resident wakil at Delhi), for settling a peace between the Shah and the Peshwā and restoring the normal administration of the country. Envoys of the trans-Ganges Ruhelas and of Ahmad Bangash and Shujā-ud-daulah too arrived to join in this peace congress. But nothing came of it, partly because with a dying Peshwa on the throne the Maratha State was headless, but mainly because Suraj Mal and Imad were bent upon setting Najib aside and asserting their own authority over the imperial dominions without a partner. A lasting peace with Abdali and Najib was the last thing that they desired. Imad and Tatya Gangadhar prevented Yaqub Ali from going to the Peshwa and settling the peace terms and the boundary question by direct negotiation with him, and asked the envoy to conclude the discussion at Mathura. The envoy protested that the Shah's order was for him to go to Puna, placate the Peshwa by offering condolences for the slaughter at Pānipat, ascertain his demands

and make terms then and there. But in view of Balaji Rao's mental derangement and imminent death, he was detained at Mathura and the congress broke up after two months of futile talk.

Yaqub Ali was a mere courier of the Shah's message; he could undertake nothing on his own responsibility. So, he plainly told Imad that his task was over with the handing of the wazir's insignia to the latter and that Imad must make himself the *de facto* head of the Delhi government by his own strength. Suraj Mal was now by far the most powerful prince in India, with absolutely unimpaired forces and an ovrflowing treasury. The recent two years' Afghan-Maratha contest had left him quite untouched. In the visible decay of all other Powers in North India, he wished, with Imad as his tool and the cloak of legality which Imad's office of wazir could throw over all his undertakings, to seize the actual government of the empire and wrest the neighbouring provinces from the Ruhelas the Bangash and Shuja in the name of the Emperor but keep them himself "under a veil."

The Oudh and Afghan envoys assembled at Mathura were indignant and replied, "If you want us to give up our lands only in order to lease them to the Jat, we shall not surrender them." The natural result was that the negotiations broke down, the par-Ruhelas, though jealous and afraid of Najib, were antagonized towards Imad, and the titular wazir's hope of ousting

Najib from Delhi entirely disappeared. Suraj Mal bluntly refused to fight Najib single-handed for the sake of Imad. He had a most precious fruit close at hand, ripe for the plucking. On 12th June he captured Agra fort by bribery, after less than a month's blockade. Najib had come back from Sonepat to Delhi for the *Id* prayer of 6th May, which he attended seated side by side with the Crown Prince on the same elephant. Now, on hearing of Suraj Mal's design against Agra, he at first talked of marching out with the prince to the relief of that fort. But after taking a muster of the troops available at Delhi (9th May), he wisely shrank from a war with the Jat myriads, and left Delhi on 14th June with a view to establishing his revenue control over the Sonepat district, now that the country south of Delhi was hopelessly lost to the empire from Suraj Mal's occupation of Agra fort.

§ 4. *Survey of Najib Khan's career from 1761.*

This is a convenient point for taking a bird's-eye view of the rest of Najib's career. The Panipat campaign had left him without a rival in the Delhi Government and supreme in authority and influence in the north, though grievously weakened by the heavy slaughter of his trained soldiery during the long warfare and the draining of his resources through the payment of money subsidies to Abdali and the supply of provisions to his army from his Doab estates for

over a year. On the other hand, the Jat Rajah was now the strongest and richest potentate in India. Najib wisely shrank from a trial of strength with Suraj Mal. His ambition was therefore strictly limited to the country north and west of Delhi and his old jagirs in the upper Doab and Rohilkhand, besides such former Maratha acquisitions in the middle Doab as he could easily seize. Further down the Doab, *i.e.*, roughly south of a line drawn west to east through Delhi, the Jat Power now expanding without fear or check impinged upon Najib's possessions and precipitated a deadly conflict which was to dominate Delhi's external politics till February 1765. After Najib's potent diplomacy and still more potent gold had enabled him in that month to finally checkmate the new Jat Rajah and turn his hostile designs to other quarters, the Ruhela chief's ceaseless preoccupation to the very end of his days was with the Sikhs. In spite of some signal victories gained by him in the field, this eternal trouble wore his strength and resources out, desolated and beggared his Doab jagirs, and converted the northernmost Doab and the sub-Himalayan tract facing it on the west bank of the Jamuna,—*i. e.*, the Ambala district,—practically into Sikh dominion.

In this perennial contest, it was only by hard marching, hard fighting, and the relentless sacrifice of everything else to the supreme military need, that Najib could prevent his principality from dissolving and the

Sikhs annexing its fragments. But the end was, all the same, the devastation of his lands and the insecurity of the roads every year. At the same time a life of strenuous exertion was telling upon his health, and illness began to sap his vitality from 1763 onwards. After 1764, his patron and potent supporter, Ahmad Shah Abdali, became too much entangled in civil wars at home, the mutiny of his troops, the irrepressible upspring of the Sikh nation and latterly his own illness, to come to Najib's rescue. Najib was thenceforth thrown entirely upon his own resources. But the folly and failure of Jawahir Singh made Najib safe at home, except for the Sikhs, from March 1765 onwards, as the debacle of Pānipat had removed the Maratha menace from him for a decade after 1761.

No doubt, this peace was mainly a pure gift of Fortune, but it was rightly deserved by his marvellous diplomatic tact, political insight, masterly handling of his resources, and power of seizing every opportunity with unfailing skill and prevision. He utilized this respite from war to aggrandize his own power and create a strong and spacious domain of his own, without a thought for the interests of his nominal master, which Najib as an intensely practical man must have perceived to be hopeless.

Secure from the dread of any enemy attack northwards up to the Sarhind border, and, after Jawahir's decisive repul › early in 1765, equally safe southwards

to Ballabhgarh, Najib turned to imposing his authority upon the ever-refractory landlords of the North Delhi region, and then expanded his possession and rule over the Hansi-Hisar districts immediately west of the above tract. Southwest of Delhi lay the Baluch settlements in the modern Rohtak district,—such as Jhajhar, Bahadurgarh, Farrukhnagar and Tauru,—the petty barons of which, as his brother-Muslims and fellow trans-Border men, clung to Najib for protection against the growing menace of the Jat expansion through Mewat towards them. "The parganahs of Hariana,—such as Gohana, Rohtak, Dadri, &c.—came into Najib's possession. The Baluch zamindars of that district became obedient to him,"—Musavi Khan of Farrukhnagar joining him with a force of over 2,000 men. "Day by day Najib's power increased. From the faujdari of Saharanpur he realized 75 lakhs of Rupees [a year.] In the Doab places like Mirat, Sikandrabad, Dasna, Baghpat &c., and seven mahals belonging to the Marathas, came into his possession." [Nur. 55*b*-56*a*. *SPD.* ii. 144.)

Najib's Baluch *protegees* formed a line of defence along the south-western frontier of his domain; but this very fact made a war to the death between him and the Jat Rajah inevitable, as we shall see in Chapter 23. The middle Doab also formed a debatable land between him and the Jats who had crossed the Jamunā, recovered their possessions lost to Abdali in March 1759, and rushed in to fill the void caused by the late

Maratha withdrawal from that region. Like a wise man of business, Najib seized the substance of power in the Delhi Government, leaving it to Imad and Shuja to fight over the title of wazir—now reduced to a mere shadow, without the least significance in Indian politics. He extended his own sway over the three regions described above and confirmed it beyond challenge by the ruthless sack and massacre of two prominent villages,—Buāna and Bhiwāni,—which struck as much terror and were as effective in cowing all opposition throughout the country, as Cromwell's massacres at Drogheda and Waterford. With his immense income from the land, he set himself to build a new capital of his own at Najibabad—adorned with splendid mansions, mosques, etc.—and a strong fort at Pathargarh.

§ 5. *Najib visits Abdali (1762) and Shah Alam (1763.)*

We shall now turn to the narration of Najib's movements and other acts. On 10th September 1761 he returned to Delhi from his estate. As he was about to enter the Diwan-i-khas for interviewing the Crown Prince, the porters, in accordance with the rules, refused to admit more than eleven attendants with him. At this he took offence and at once left for his own camp. After two days he was pacified by princely apologies and paid his visit on the 12th. Then he left for Gohana while [illegible] was sent to Kumbher to arrange for

a personal meeting between him and the Jat Rajah. This interview took place about 23rd October, but as we shall see in Chapter 23, it produced no real understanding between the two nor any concerted plan for bringing Shah Alam back to Delhi. [*SPD.* xxi. 89. Nur. 56*a*.]

In the November and December of this year we find Najib engaged in subduing his refractory tenants in the Hansi-Hisar country, aided by Musavi Khan. From this region he was called at the beginning of February 1762 to meet Ahmad Shah who was then busy repressing the Sikhs in the Sarhind-Patiala country. He bore the Shah company till the first week of April and received high praise from his patron, who publicly remarked, "This is the only man among the Indian Afghans. I have shown many favours to that race, but not one of them, not even Shuja-ud-daulah, has come to my side." [Nur. 57*a*. *CPC.* ii. *DC.*]

After his return to Delhi on 15th April, Najib paid a fortnight's visit to his city of Najibabad, then in course of construction, and afterwards came back to Delhi (17th May), occupying his official residence, Safdar Jang's mansion. Early in October next he went to Lahor, again to settle the affairs of the empire in consultation with the Abdali king. Yaqub Ali Khan, as well as Shah Alam's agents Munir-ud-daulah and Aghā Razā, and the Maratha wakil Bāpu Hingané also went there for the discussions. It was agreed that Shah Alam should be recognized as Emperor and Shujā as

his wazir, and that forty lakhs a year should be paid to the Afghan king as the tribute of India,—for which Najib was held answerable. Abdali's letters to this effect were issued to the chief Indian Powers, and robes of honour for Emperor and wazir were despatched from his Court with Razā Quli Khan. Ahmad Shah left Lahor for his home on 12th December 1762, and Najib returned to Delhi on 18th January, the other Indian envoys with him. [*DC.* Nur. 57*b*.]

Shortly after this Najib received pressing invitations to join the Emperor Shah Alam who was then encamped with Shuja at Sikandrabad, and on whom Hafiz Rahmat and other Ruhela chiefs (but not Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad) were in attendance. But Shuja, who was really the keeper of the puppet Emperor, attempted to wrest Ahmad's territories from him, as a preliminary to the Emperor's march on Delhi. This antagonized all the Ruhelas, and destroyed the chance of any united action by all the vassal chiefs for installing Shah Alam on his ancestral throne. Najib quickly arrived in the imperial camp, was cordially welcomed by Shuja and presented to the Emperor, who bestowed many costly gifts on him. Under pressure from Najib, the Nawab of Oudh abandoned his hostile designs against the Bangash chief.* In this camp Najib fell ill of a high fever,

* 's very cogent reasoning, Nur. 59*a*-60*a*. Shuja *vs.* Bangash 38-41.

which caused fits of unconsciousness for hours together ; the Emperor graciously visited his sick-bed and showed him every kindness. Soon there broke out a sectarian dispute between Shuja's Shia troops and Najib's Sunni Afghans, and in the rioting that followed a *pir-zāda* of the Afghans, when on a visit to the Oudh camp, was killed by the ruffianly Qizzilbashes and Mughalias there. The soldiers on both sides came out for a battle and could not be controlled by their chiefs. So, Najib hurriedly took leave of the Emperor (on 16th May) and marched back to his home, where he made a long stay on account of his illness. [*Ghulam Ali,* ii. 157-167, *DC.* Muna Lal 60.]

§ 6. *Najib fights Suraj Mal and Jawahir, 1763-1765.*

He had barely recovered health and strength, when in December he was suddenly recalled to Delhi by Suraj Mal's attack on the Baluch zamindars and threatened invasion of Delhi. Najib tried hard to pacify the Jat king, but without success. The campaign ended in Suraj Mal's being shot dead (25 December 1763) during a night attack and all his troops dispersing, as we shall learn in detail in Chapter 23. The disappearance of the greatest of the Jat kings, the immature character of his youthful successor, and the internal dissensions that ravaged the Bharatpur State, all combined to give Najib a respite from that

enemy till November next, when Jawahir Singh, after assembling a vast force of his own tribesmen and hired Sikh Maratha and Gosain troops, attacked Najib to avenge his father's death. This life and death struggle kept Najib busy in Delhi till the middle of February 1765, when he succeeded in defeating the attack, and stood triumphant as the undisputed lord of Delhi. This repulse of the Jat king, even though supported by Imad, Malhar Holkar and the myriads of Sikhs, marks the climax of Najib's greatness. The holy month of Ramzān began on the next Friday, 22 February 1765, and Imad begged leave to enter Delhi and offer his Friday prayers in the Jāmi Masjid of the capital. For six years he had ruled over the city as an wazir mightier than the sovereign and Najib had then ranked among his humble retainers. And today as Imad rode through the Broad Street of Delhi to the Grand Mosque, the citizens saw with wonder that Najib was seated side by side with him on the same elephant. Such was his present exaltation. [Nur. 91.]

Meantime, his patron, Ahmad Shah, had been defeated by the Sikhs and recalled quickly to Afghanistan by disorder in his own army and kingdom (end of March 1764.) In the following September, Najib, anticipating the storm visibly brewing from the new Jat Rajah's quarter, sent his own envoy Meghraj to Abdali in Qandahar, via Jammu. In response to this appeal, Shah reached Mustafabad-Buria

(25 m. s.e. of Ambala) by rapid marches in February 1765 ; but by that time Najib had already made peace with his enemy, and Abdali hurried back to his own country without giving Najib time to meet him.

§ 7. *Najib sternly represses refractory villagers in Hariana, 1765.*

Freed from the Jat menace, Najib marched to the Sonepat district (in the north of Delhi) for subduing the turbulent tenantry, who would not pay rent unless forced to do so. "Here many villages were in rebellion ; their leaders were a body of Jats residing in Buānā (16 miles north-west of Delhi), who were notorious for their highway robbery and usurpation of other people's lands and cattle." Najib first went to the district headquarters and peacefully demanded the revenue. On being refused, he rode out at midnight with his troops, came upon the village at dawn, slew the Hindu abbot and his monks who had their hermitage near the place, and tried to seize the cattle that were being led out of the village to their pasture. The villagers opened fire with their matchlocks. A thousand of them were armed with muskets and 2,000 with side arms ; besides, three hundred matchlockmen of the Bhangi (sweeper) caste had been hired by them. The Ruhela troopers encircled the village, standing beyond range. The villagers began to parley, but had no real intention of paying, they only mocked Najib.

By this time it was noon and the Ruhela troopers and their horses, standing in the open, were suffering dreadfully from the Sun (April 1765); they had brought no artillery with them. The village had a mud wall twice the height of a man, all around it, with a dry ditch below. But Najib's spirit was up. He could not bear the thought that the Amir-ul-umara of the Empire should lay a regular siege to a peasants' mud fort or retire leaving it untaken. His plan was quickly formed: dismounting all his troopers and even officers, he made a simultaneous assault from all sides, at a given signal, immediately after firing a salvo from his camel-swivels, which had been advanced to the front. A sudden distraction and alarm seized the villagers, and only one camel-gunner and one infantryman on Najib's side were killed, while the Ruhelas ran forward, jumped into the ditch, and clung to the wall; climbing on one another's back they entered the village in spite of the shower of bullets. The villagers, losing heart, took to flight. A body of them, who were mounted along with their women, broke through the Ruhela cordon and escaped by the back gate. The leading men of the village took refuge in a house and continued to hold out with their musket fire. The Ruhela soldiers dispersed for plunder and slaughter, and it was an hour before they could be rallied and made to carry this house by assault. Two-thousand [illegible] and about the same number of

women and children were made prisoners, and finally the sacked village was set on fire. "From the massacre at Buānā a great terror spread throughout Hariānā, and all the landlords made submission and paid their revenue." [Nur. 93*a*–97*b*.]

Having thus restored Government authority in the north Delhi region, Najib returned to the capital, whence he was soon recalled to Najibabad by the news of the illness of his wife, a daughter of Dundi Khan. She died, leaving two sons and one daughter behind. After spending the rainy season there, Najib in October returned to Delhi, and turned to subduing the peasantry of the region west of the capital, in the modern Rohtak and Hisar districts.* Some 30 miles west of Rohtak city there was a village which had paid no revenue for three years. Parleys went on for ten days, and then the villagers agreed to terms. A collector was posted there, but he was attacked at night. The news reached Najib's camp; at once he rode out, came up to the village while it was still dark and delivered an assault on it. The village was set on fire; many of its inhabitants fled away, the rest were slain or taken prisoner. This terrified the headmen of Bhiwāni, a most important village in the neighbourhood (35 miles s. e. of Hisar), notorious for its bold and successful defiance of the local governors and even of the Emperor in person. After a futile preparation for armed

* Nur. 98*b*-100*a*. *SPD.* xxix. 99. *CPC.* ii. *Ch. Gulz.* 485*a*.

opposition, the villagers realized Najib's overwhelming superiority and fled away at night, evacuating all their houses. "Next morning the Ruhela soldiers entered the village and brought away heaps of grain to their camp. All the men, and even their animals, fed on this grain for four or five days. When they marched away, they set fire to a great store of grain. Even after that, so much was left that it could not be computed...Najib after devastating Bhiwāni, went towards Rohtak, where he heard of a Sikh raid into his Saharnapur estates and marched thither."

§ 8. *Najib's repeated contest with Sikh raiders in Hariana and Doab.*

Najib's conflicts with the Sikhs in his own dominions, as distinct from his engagements with them as an auxiliary in Abdali's army, had begun in January 1764, [Ch. 24 § 4], when the Sikh forces, flushed with their slaughter of Zain Khan and capture of Sarhind, overflowed across the Jamuna into the upper Doab. "This was the first time that the Sikhs came to the eastern side of the Jamuna and spread through the villages of Bārha, the homes of respectable men whose ancestors had been *umara* in former times. They took booty beyond calculation in coins, gold bullion and jewels, burnt the country, and draggged away captives. Najib, distracted by the news, came up near them by rapid marchi[illegible]t they went back to their own country."

[Nur 72.] Tahmasp Khan Miskin, who shared these campaigns in Najib's army, writes, "The Sikhs after having completed their occupation and settlement of the Sarhind district in one year, made a further advance. Four thousand of their horsemen crossed the Jamuna and disturbed and looted the Saharanpur and Mirat districts. Najib for a month or two moved in every direction where the Sikhs were reported to be roving, fought and usually defeated them. As they did not make a firm stand anywhere and offer battle, he had to run about after them, but they did not give up their jackal-tricks. Three years passed in this way." [266.]

During this first Sikh invasion of the Doab, Najib, who had just before slain Suraj Mal and routed the Jat army by accident and was expecting a vendetta with his son Jawahir and the entire Jat nation any moment, found it politic to buy off these new enemies at the opposite corner of his territory by paying them eleven lakhs of Rupees. [*SPD.* xxix. 55.] But, with Sarhind as a secure base, the Sikhs could henceforth most easily cross over at Buriā ghat or Rāmrā ghat to the upper Doab, or marching southwards raid Hariana and the country round Delhi, or even penetrate to Rajputana through the friendly Jat kingdom.

In November 1765, a formidable Sikh invasion* descended upon Najib's territories, but he met it with

* Sikh raids 1765-1766.—*SPD.* xxix. 99, 102, 128, 121, 133. Nur. 100*b*-109*b*. *Ch. Gulz.* 485. Williams.

a skill, firmness and tenacity which mark him out as the foremost Muslim general after Ahmad Shah Abdali among his contemporaries. The struggle this time continued for six months ; there was no truce and there could be no relaxation of vigilance and effort on his part. At the end of October 1765, while one band of Sikhs went to raid the Saharanpur district, another vast force, reported to be 25,000 horse, led by Jassa Singh, Tara Singh, Sham Singh and other sardars, attacked Najib's villages in the region north of Delhi, levied contribution from them, and advanced to Kharkhauda (23 m. n.w. of Delhi). But finding the people on the alert and ready for defence there, they made a lightning raid upon Rewari (in the jagir of diwan Nagar Mal), plundered and burnt that town, dug up the floors of the houses and took away prisoners. "The ryots of Rewari were plundered to an extreme, . . . the place was ruined." Then they penetrated to Jaipur territory in alliance with Jawahir Singh Jat, but had to retire on the coming of the Marathas and the promise of a subsidy, (late December.) Bands of them continued with the Jat Rajah for some months after.

Early in 1766 the Sikh bands attacked Najib in the Sonepat-Panipat district. He had a force of less than 10,000 men ; the odds against him would have overwhelmed a lesser man. At the rumour of the Sikh invasion, Najib's Delhi agent Afzal Khan warned the citizens not to issue for visiting Kalka-devi (near the

Qutb Minar.) He also strengthened the city defences and sent out scouts for news of the enemy's movements. Next day (17 April) it was learnt that the Sikhs, marching from Okhlaghat, had looted the Patparganj mart and encamped at Masuri. A small band plundering the southern suburbs of the capital was driven away. The Sikhs marched up the east bank of the Jamuna, raiding Kutana, Jhanjhāna and Budhāna, when Najib overtook them,* slew and wounded many and wrested much of their booty (20 April.) A graphic account of one of his campaigns is given by Nur-ud-din, which illustrates the nature of the war and the standard of Najib's leadership in the field.

§ 9. *Najib's manner of fighting the Sikhs illustrated.*

"Every day there were skirmishes between the two sides. The Sikhs roved round, firing and plundering

* *DC.* It is probably this fight of which Nur-ud-din, 108*b*-109*b*, gives the following description :—Najib crossed at Kutana ghat by night and learnt that the Sikhs had halted 5 *kos* off. Leaving his camp and baggage there, he set out after them, and sighted the Sikhs after advancing 2 *kos*. The Sikhs, ignorant of Najib's approach, had left their camp and were out plundering villages. On hearing the tramp of the Ruhela cavalry and the roll of kettle-drums, they retreated in bewilderment to their camp. But the Ruhelas by hard riding overtook them and captured vast quantities of booty and animals from them. He drove them beaten for 10 miles to near Kandhala, slaying and wounding many of them. In the end they recrossed the Jamuna and went back to their own country. (This was the *Budha Dal.*)

the villages on all hands. Along the bank of the Jamuna they came to the Shāmli parganah, where a severe engagement took place. Evening came on and the Sikh horsemen stood their ground around Najib for three hours after nightfall. There were many sugarcane plantations at the place, under cover of which the Sikhs plied their muskets, and made a few attacks, band after band emptying their muskets and then riding away. Najib and his troops stood firmly. Then the Sikhs fell back to their camp . . . Next morning Najib marched upon the halting-place of the Sikhs, in a compact formation, with his van right and left under different officers, his baggage in the centre, and his rearguard in charge of his brother Afzal Khan and Sadat Khan Afridi . . . Najib strongly urged his men not to break their formation or leave their places in any circumstance, so that the movements and fighting of every section of the force could be kept carefully under his control . . . The Sikhs appeared on all four sides and kept up a running fight with the marching Ruhelas throughout the day. They charged home the Ruhela left wing (under Zabita Khan) when thrown out of order in crossing a dry *nālā*. Many men fell on both sides, and unable to bear their heavy loss, a captain of Zabita issued from the column and made a counter-charge upon the Sikh assailants, in spite of Najib's order to advance steadily without halting to fight. This small section was at once enveloped by the Sikhs and could be rescued only after

being heavily reinforced ; many men fell on both sides in this contest."

Najib's unbroken column thus steadily approached the east bank of the Jamuna in order to cut the Sikhs off from it and prevent their escape. The enemy tried to gain time by keeping the Ruhelas engaged till sunset, after which they would be able to cross the river with all their baggage. So, about 3 P. M. they made a combined attack upon Najib's rearguard, (under Afzal Ruhela and Sadat Khan Afridi) pressing it very hard and causing much loss. But though urged again and again by his sorely stricken troops, Najib would not allow them to arrest the advance of the entire column, sally forth and drive the attacking enemy horse away by a counter-charge. He would not lose sight of his objective, the Sikh camp ahead. Men dropped fast among his rearguard. Sadat Khan said to Afzal Khan, 'My men are being destroyed by the enemy's bullets. I have no strength left.' But such was Najib's iron discipline and the obedience of his troops, that Afzal Khan forbade a charge for driving the Sikhs away. At last a band of 50 Afridi horsemen under Sadat's brother, unable to control themselves, galloped upon the Sikh mounted musketeers and a desperate hand to hand fight raged for some time amidst great disorder and noise. Sadat Khan himself was compelled to leave the column for his rash brother's defence. Najib on hearing of it cried out, 'He has spoilt my work,' and himself turned

aside to the scene of the fighting in order to save the rearguard, while ordering all other divisions to remain firmly in their appointed places. The Sikhs were now driven back, though after more obstinate fighting. But by this time night had fallen. Najib's grand plan failed and the Sikhs beat a hurried retreat by fording the Jamuna with all their camp and baggage under cover of the darkness. "Next morning not one of their horsemen was left." [Nur. 100*b*-106*a*.]

A newsletter written on 13 January 1768 shows that this battle or one very much like it took place a day or two before that date near Jalalabad (10 m. n. e. of Ghaziabad): "Intelligence was brought that the Sikhs were hovering in detached bodies round Najib's camp, beyond cannon shot . . . to intercept the convoys of grain . . . Immediate orders were issued by Najib to get the artillery in readiness and prepare for battle . . . The advanced guards engaged. A heavy fire of artillery and small arms began and was maintained with great vigour. Najib, mounted on an elephant, was present in the rear of the artillery. The first line which bore the brunt of the battle behaved with singular intrepidity. In the midst of this, the Sikhs found means by a feint to throw the line of artillery into some confusion and were advancing with great impetuosity, when some timely assistance was given by Sayyid Md. Kh. and a chosen body of Afghans, and the Sikhs were repulsed with loss. Towards the close of the day Najib ordered

his troops to desist from the engagement but to stand armed and prepared . . . Several sardars of distinction were killed and wounded in the battle." [*CPC.* ii. 776.]

§ 10. *Najib's movements, 1765-1767.*

The Sikh bands, on return from the Doab (April 1766) attacked the Patiala State. Abdali's shrewd diplomacy, by making Ala Singh (the founder of the Patiala royal family) a friendly tributary and also giving him the office of governor of the Sarhind district (now a Durrani territory), had set up this Phulkian Sikh against the trans-Satlaj or Manjha Sikhs. It was the Patiala Rajah's interest to cling to Najib against the common enemy, and he had sent his son to Najib's camp in the Rohtak district in October 1765, for concerted action against those Sikhs who were then out levying blackmail all over the country. In May 1766, when the Sikhs invaded the territory of Ala Singh's successor, Amar Singh, and tried to capture his capital, Najib marched up to Mustafabad on the way to Patiala for helping the Rajah. Amar Singh, however, succeeded in averting the hostility of the Sikh bands (*Dal*) through the mediation of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (the founder of Kapurthala), evidently by paying a subsidy. [*SPD.* xxix. 99. xxvii. 133. Patiala records.] Soon afterwards the rainy season began and suspended military operations till October next.

At the beginning of 1767, Ahmad Shah Abdali again entered the Panjab—for the last time,—and encamped on the Bias. The Sikhs were torn by internal dissensions and could not oppose him or molest Najib's territories for some time. Abdali summoned Najib to join him* with the 7 years' arrear tribute of Hindustan. Najib interviewed him on 9th March, and was treated with the greatest honour and kindness, as will be fully narrated in Chapter 24 §6-7. The Sikh raid into Mirat, which was crushed by a combined Durrani force (8,000 cavalry under Jahan Khan) and Ruhela contingent (5,000 horse under Zabita Khan), about 15 May 1767, will be also described there. After sending his patron back to Afghanistan by promising 25 lakhs, Najib left the Durrani camp and reached Delhi on 30 July.

In the following cold weather, Najib went from Delhi to Aonla, where he celebrated the marriage of his son Kalu Khan with the daughter of Sadullah Khan (the successor of Ali Md. Ruhela) with the most lavish pomp and extravagance. At the end of the festivity, he returned to Delhi. The Sikhs spread through the

* *SPD.* xxix. 119. After taking leave of the Shah, Najib came to the Sarhind district and halted long at Mustafabad (25 m. e. of Ambala), attacked many parganahs of the Sikhs... Then he came to Delhi. (Nur. 113*a*.) Minute details of this campaign of Abdali in *CPC.* ii. 12-415. Shah honours Najib, *ibid.*, 310 and 415, refuses him Sarhind, 323.

Karnal district [Nur. 113], and even menaced Delhi.* Najib's health had now completely broken down. Ever since 1763 he had suffered off and on from an intermittent fever. In youth he had been attacked by an inflamed ulcer (*chaude pisse*), and now that malady took an aggravated form. Throughout this year he was constantly unwell. On the other hand, the Sikhs were year by year increasing in number and spirit; the final retreat of Ahmad Shah, practically beaten, in May 1767, had given them boundless courage. Even at that time, while the Shah was still on this side of the Satlaj, "the Sikhs to the number of 120,000 men, both horse and foot, all devoted to each other and equipped for war, were assembled at Amritsar." [*CPC.* ii. 345.] And now the dying Najib confessed himself beaten. It was only against an entire nation in arms, fired with all the energy of a newly risen and hungry people and all the unity of the early Islamites before their dissolution into sects, and multiplying "like ants and locusts," that he had at last to admit defeat. He had served his sovereign loyally and defended his capital and family as long as he could. But he now begged leave to resign a burden beyond his physical powers. He wrote to the Emperor Shah Alam: "Until this hour I have manifested the firmest

* Acc. to *SPD.* xxix. 143, this invasion was led by Jai Singh, who recalled all the Sikh bands then in Bharatpur territory to join him against Najib.

devotion and loyalty to the young princes and ex-Empress [in Delhi fort.] But I am no longer able to continue that support to them which is necessary for their protection. Let your Majesty advance to your capital and yourself defend your own honour. Your vassal frankly represents that he is not equal to the charge in his present situation."

To the Dowager-Empress Zinat Mahal, he wrote in the same terms, resigning the task of defending Delhi and offering to escort the whole royal family in that fort to the Emperor at Allahabad if she desired it. He added that the Sikhs had prevailed and he was unable to provide for his own security. He talked of seeking his political *nirvān* by making a pilgrimage to Mecca, or retiring to some obscure retreat. [*CPC.* 1101, 847. *SPD.* xxix. 143 of which the correct date is 26 Mar. 1768.] He withdrew his deputy Sultan Khan, troops and property from Delhi.

§ 11. *Najib resigns his government to Zabita Khan and retires to Najibabad, March 1768.*

Realizing, that his end could not be far off, he took counsel with his household and with his usual foresight provided carefully for the future. While on his usual cold weather march in the Hisar district with his army, he one day assembled all his sardars and in their presence declared Zabita Khan his successor and deputy, tied his own turban to his son's head as a

symbol of his chieftainship, and transferred all authority over his army and territory to him during his lifetime. He advised his heir to confirm his own authority immediately by crushing those of his generals (*i.e.*, the partisans of Zabita's step-brother Kalu Khan) who were reported to be ill-disposed towards their new master and were sure to cause trouble after Najib's death. Najib now retired to Najibabad to lead a life of relief from public cares. Zabita, to whom unfettered discretion in foreign policy had been given, came to terms with the Sikhs, evidently by a money payment, near Jalalabad-Nahari, north of Delhi. Two of his father's high officers,—Ali Muhammad Kur and Sayyid Mian Asrar-ud-din (popularly called Lambi Miān),—who defied Zabita's orders, were suppressed by force. "By these means the entire army was brought under discipline and made to recognize Zabita Khan as their supreme master." [Nur. 114*a*-115*a*. Miskin, 270.]

On 15th October 1769, Najib returned towards Delhi, and leaving his camp at Shahdara paid a visit to the Crown Prince in the palace in the afternoon and was highly honoured in return. Three days later, his deputy Zabita Khan was presented to the prince and the Dowager-Empress. He was given a dinner and entertained with dance and song in the palace, and sent back with a present of the Crown Prince's own head-dress. [*DC.*]

§ 12. *Renewed Maratha invasion of Hindustan, 1770; Najib's subtle policy.*

Early in 1770, a vast Maratha army, led by Ramchandra Ganesh (the Peshwa's deputy), Visaji Krishna Biniwala, Tukoji Holkar, and Mahadji Sindhia, advanced to the north of the Chambal for restoring the Maratha authority in Hindustan which had been eclipsed for nearly a decade as the result of the defeat at Panipat, and recovering their lost estates in the Doab. Their coming was preceded by letters calling upon all the chiefs of Northern India to present themselves and pay tribute or release the Maratha jagirs they had usurped in the interval. Tukoji Holkar, the successor of Malhar, wrote a private letter to Najib to confirm the friendship between the two houses which had subsisted in Malhar's time and by which Najib had benefited so often and so signally. Najib replied, "I have for a long time past renounced the world on account of age and made Zabita Khan my heir and supreme agent. He will not deviate from your counsel."

But the return of the Deccani myriads ten years after Panipat alarmed Najib with good reason. His protector Ahmad Shah Abdali was dying; the Peshwa had by now healed his domestic discord and made peace with the Nizam and Haidar Ali, and was free to devote all the resources of his Government to his northern interests. The Marathas could not have forgotten that Najib had been the cause of their ruin in 1761. The

house of Sindhia bore sleepless vindictiveness towards Najib and was sure to annihilate him if it could. As Najib wrote to his son, after unfolding the political situation, "Not one of the potentates of Hindustan has the courage to gird up his loins for opposing them. I cannot bear on my shoulders the heavy burden of this task without the aid of troops from the Durrani kingdom." He had lost his old health and strength, and could no longer ride forth on campaigns as in the past. No succour was to be expected from the house of Durrani, now involved in domestic brawls.

He felt that Zabita was too young and inexperienced to handle such a situation, while a single injudicious step towards such irresistible enemies would ruin his newly founded kingdom and dynasty. So, Najib decided to go himself to the Marathas, "incline them by face to face meeting and parley to maintain peace with him, and, by offering his co-operation in their present undertakings, keep them firmly on his side."*

§ 13. *Maratha policy towards Najib and Jat Rajah.*

There was a sharp difference of opinion in the Maratha camp as to their policy and plan of war.

* As he wrote to the Emperor, "In order to gain time, I have inclined this race (Marathas), more numerous than ants and locusts, by my friendliness and suppleness to remain loyal to your Majesty and have thus preserved the capital Delhi safe and intact." [Ghulam Ali, ii. 258.] At this time Najib was very ill and had

Ramchandra Ganesh welcomed Najib's offer of co-operation as a godsend, remarking, "We have come to this country after ten years, and if we do not first make friends with Najib, then all the par-Ruhelas and Shuja would join him against us (in self-defence), and he is also very powerful in himself. With such a combination of enemies against us, we shall have to fight a hard fight, the result of which none can foresee. Therefore, we ought to reassure this man, make him our ally, first attack the Jat Rajah, and easily exact a large contribution from him. Whatever was done by Najib against us (in 1759-61) is now a thing of the past." Tukoji Holkar was the hereditary friend of Najib and used to supply him with secret intelligence about the happenings in the Maratha camp and timely reports of Mahadji's intended treachery towards him, or merely Tukoji's own suspicion of such designs. They expected to win over the par-Ruhelas through Najib and thus secure tribute and restitution of territory from them without a blow, so that the undivided forces of the Marathas might be employed to squeeze the friendless Jat Rajah.

Mahadji Sindhia objected, saying, "We have come here after a long interval in order to take vengeance on this man. If you now make an alliance with him and give him your solemn oath of friendship, how then can we be avenged on him ever after?

to be carried about lying down in a litter. [Muna Lal, 107.] Najib and the Marathas in 1770,—Nur. 115*a*-123.

All the lands belonging to the Peshwa (in the Doab) have been enjoyed by the Afghans for over ten years. Our prestige has been ruined by that race. The foremost of our enemies is Najib-ud-daulah; especially *the blood of three and a half persons* of my family (*viz.*, Dattaji, Jankoji, and Sabaji slain, and Mahadji himself left half dead and lamed for life) is on his head. And Tukoji is proposing to embrace him! Never mind, I shall write to the Peshwa and take his orders." The Peshwa preferred the demands of political expediency to those of blood feud.

So, the Marathas sent a written pledge of alliance and friendly assurances to Najib, through Tukoji Holkar, and asked him to capture the Jat possessions in the middle Doab, at the same time that they invaded the Jat kingdom west of the Jamuna. Nawal Singh, the Jat Rajah, issued from Dig and was defeated after a bloody battle with Ramchandra Ganesh near Mathura (4-6 April, 1770.) Najib encamped at Chandausi (5 April), and in two days his men took the fort of Nohjhil, driving out its Jat garrison across the river. He very quickly wrested from the local officers the Jat parganahs of Jewar, Dankaur, Tappal, Dabahi &c., and encamped on the Jamuna east bank opposite Mathura.*

* *SPD.* xxix. 254-262, 246. xxix. 260 dated 16 June, says '20 Jat mahals have been seized by Najib for himself. Many have been looted by the Pindharis.' Nur. 119. *DC.* (imp.)

§ 14. *Marathas enter Doab, meet Najib ; Mahadji Sindhia unfriendly to him.*

The Maratha generals, after their victory in the field, shrank from attacking the impregnable Jat forts, and therefore could not drive the vanquished Nawal Singh to submission. They decided, instead, to cross into the Doab and there exact tribute from the par-Ruhelas and divide with Najib the parganahs of the middle Doab that he had recently wrested from Nawal Singh's men. Their whole army, reported to be 70,000 strong, assembled at Mathura. Holkar was the first to cross over to the east bank for meeting Najib. Abdul Ahad Khan acted as mediator and conducted the parley from the Ruhela side (13 April.) The 17th of April was selected as an auspicious day for the meeting, after assurances and oaths of good faith had been exchanged. Najib advanced beyond his artillery lines and welcomed Tukoji Holkar, and took him to his tent with every mark of honour. More consultations were held next day, and on the 19th Najib returned the visit. He rode to Tukoji's tent, who introduced him to Ramchandra Ganesh and then to Mahadji Sindhia. Najib tried to soothe Mahadji Sindhia by offering him commonplace condolences like, "Whatever God wills happens. I did not from my side move against Dattaji Patil, but rather sought his friendship, and he too did not intend fighting.

But owing to the Divine will it happend in that way. Don't now entertain any idea of revenge in your hearts. Now that I have joined you, I shall repress your enemies." Mahadji remained in sullen silence for some time and then dryly replied, "The will of God has been accomplished. Let us see what He wills *in future*" ! They parted after exchanging the customary presents, "but soreness of heart remained between the two sides, and affectionate speeches were not made."

After some days of discussion the allies formed their plan of operation. On 25th April, the entire Maratha army crossed over to the east bank of the Jamuna and encamped close to Najib. Najib's men took possession of Shukohabad, Sadabad and other parganahs from Nawal Singh and posted his own collectors and military guards there (*c.* 3 May.) The ex-wazir Imad-ul-mulk, from his refuge at Mainpuri, joined the Maratha camp at Agra unasked. But there could be no real or hearty co-operation between such an ill-matched pair of confederates. On 10th May, Najib after receiving a secret warning from Tukoji that the other Maratha sardars were planning treachery against him, broke up his camp and marched towards Aligarh. The Marathas fell on his baggage, but could capture nothing. [*DC.*] Soon afterwards the rainy season put an end to military movements and the Marathas went into cantonments in the Aligarh district. [*SPD.* xxvii. 214, *DC.* Nur. 120-121.]

§ 15. *Maratha enterprise in Doab fails.*

Mahadji Sindhia had at the very outset urged that unless tribute was realized from the Jat Rajah, nobody else would pay the Marathas anything, and therefore their army should not enter the Doab before making a settlement with Nawal Singh. This advice was set aside in favour of Tukoji Holkar's alternative plan of working through Najib and against the Jats. As a Maratha agent complains, "We all gave the counsel to treat the Jat Rajah kindly, take from him whatever cash he readily paid down, and thus relieve the distress of our impoverished army. But instead of doing it, our chiefs have, by Holkar's advice, sided with Najib Khan and under his guidance attacked the Jat possessions. All our plans, great and small, have been ruined by our alliance with Najib."

Throughout the three monsoon months negotiations for tribute went on with the Jat Rajah and the Bangash and Ruhelas, but nothing came of them, as no pressure could be put on these parties and Ramchandra Ganesh made an impossible demand on Nawal Singh. The end of this expedition showed once again that Najib's shrewd and sure diplomacy was superior to Maratha short-sightedness and vacillation. Their hope of peacefully securing tribute and territory from the Bangash and the trans-Ganges Ruhelas through the backing of Najib, proved illusory. These Afghan chiefs dismissed the Maratha envoys with a scornful refusal,

"Najib has usurped Mirat and other mahals, and you have not recovered them. Why then are you asking us to restore our annexations? We shall not give you *chauth* or land unless Najib does the same." (August 1770.) The result was the utter failure of the Marathas to get a pice and a consequent addition to their army debt. The evil was aggravated by Najib's double-dealing. Throughout the rainy season he kept writing to the par-Ruhelas in order to stiffen their backs and induce them to form with him and the Jat Rajah a vast anti-Maratha coalition. One of his letters to them was intercepted and revealed his treachery.

A rupture between two such insincere friends was difficult to prevent. At one conference the exasperated Maratha chiefs held a high tone and taxed Najib with failure to keep his promise and treacherous collusion with his brother Afghans, which had prevented the collection of the Maratha tribute even after six months' effort. Najib answered haughtily, bidding the Deccanis remember that the lion was not yet dead and that if they desired war with him he was ready for them then and there. He continued, "I cannot bear to live in your camp in dishonour. Don't you think that you have now a vast army with you and I have only a small force. Even when I am dead and buried in the ground, I can eat you all up with only 10,000 men. I know that Mahadji Patil harbours ill-will towards me in his heart. Go and tell him from me, 'If you are a man, why don't

you come into the field, but are merely repeating that the blood of three of your family is on my head? Either exact retaliation for it, or become a fourth in addition to the other three. Your behaviour is unworthy of a brave man.' You have seen what I can do, and I have seen your work. Very well. I shall march away this moment." * He was pacified with great difficulty and after profuse apologizing by Anand Rao Narsi.

§ 16. *Najib's death and character.*

About 27th September, Najib held a private discussion with the Jat envoys and reached a friendly settlement. On 8th October he called the two sides before him, fixed by his arbitration the tribute to be paid by the Jat Rajah, and thus concluded a peace between him and the Marathas. Then knowing his own death to be near, he placed Zabita Khan's hand in Tukoji Holkar's, praying to the latter to be as kind to the son as Malhar had been to the father, and then sent the Maratha sardars away, escorted by Zabita, and

* Nur. 122*b*. Muna Lal, 108, confirms it but more briefly: Najib giving harsh replies, cried out in a loud voice to the Maratha sardars, "If you are thinking of seizing my mahals knowing me to be ill, know that so long as the breath of life remains within me, I shall not leave even one among you alive. If you desire battle at this very moment, I say *Bismillah* [*i. e.*, I am ready to begin.]" So saying, he leapt up from the stretcher in which he was being carried. The Maratha sardars thereafter spoke to him most softly.

himself set out for his home to die. By way of Chandausi (12 Oct.), Najib entered Sikandrabad (16 Oct.) He had only reached the district of Hapur, when death overtook him on 31 October. His last act, characteristic of his life, was to issue an order to his troops not to molest or rob the pilgrims who had assembled for the Ganges fair at Garh Mukteshwar close by his camp. [*DC.* Miskin, 272. Nur. 123*a* incorrect.]

Thus ended the career of the most powerful personality in India during these ten years. A poor illiterate Afghan of the Umr-khel clan, sprung from the humblest home and without a friend or patron in India when he migrated to this country as a grown-up man with a son, and sought his bread by entering Ali Muhammad Ruhela's service in the capacity of a despised foot soldier, Najib Khan rose by sheer ability and strength of character to the highest position in the realm and guided the fortunes of the empire of Delhi as its supreme regent for a full decade. In the combination of first-rate military and administrative capacity, diplomatic skill, and tact in dealing with others, and above all in his instinctive perception of the realities of the politics of his day and concentration on the essentials, he had no equal in that age except Ahmad Shah Abdali. His defence of Delhi against the Jat-Maratha-Sikh army of Jawahir Singh, his running fight in grim pursuit of the Sikh invaders, and his storming of the mud-fort of Buana with mere

dismounted cavalry and no guns, illustrate his consummate generalship in three different types of battle. The historian does not know what to admire most, his capacity as a leader of men in action, his unerring perception of the realities of every situation, or his inborn opportunism in instinctively seizing amidst darkness and confusion the course that would prove most advantageous to him.

The last eight years of his life were one long struggle with painful illness and new foes,—such as the Jats and Sikhs,—and during these years he was not once aided by Durrani arms, but held his own to the last. The peace and mild government which he gave to his territories, enabled him to accumulate a vast treasure, not by plunder but from the surplus revenue of a prosperous estate, and to leave his successor Zabita Khan the richest prince in Northern India after the Jat king.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE JATS, DOWN TO 1768.

§ 1. *The local distribution of the Jat race.*

The most important racial element in the vast tract of land that stretches from the bank of the Indus, through the Panjab, the northern States of Rajputana and the upper Jamuna valley, down to Gwalior beyond the Chambal, call themselves Jats. We are not here concerned with the question of their Scytho-Aryan origin, the analysis of the tribes that have been fused into the common stock, the probable line of migration to the present home of each of their branches, or their early history on the Indian soil which goes back beyond recorded antiquity. But a survey of their distribution in the early 18th century is necessary for our present purpose.

"The Jat is, in every respect, the most important of the Panjab peoples. In point of numbers he surpasses the Rajput, who comes next to him, in the proportion of nearly three to one. In Bikaner Jaisalmer and Marwar, they possibly equal in number all the Rajput races put together." [Ibbetson, in ii. 366-69.] Broadly speaking, the Jat is a Musalman in the Western District (*i. e.*, Panjab west of the Ravi), a Sikh in the Centre,

and a Hindu in the South-east." Such is the distribution of the Jats in the Panjab, but the historian of Delhi is interested in the tribal population of the Panjab only so far as they merge their Jat race in the Sikh sect. [Rose's *Glossary of Panjab Tribes.*]

In a second regional area, namely the northern and western districts of the United Provinces, or along the upper Jamuna valley, the Jats constitute as important an element of the population as in the Panjab, and the tribesmen living in this tract have played a most conspicuous part in the history of the fall of the Mughal Empire. They are even today the most important and industrious of all the cultivators not only in the Mirat district but in the entire Mirat division (consisting of the districts of Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Mirat, Bulandshahar and Aligarh.) In Aligarh "they are decidedly the most powerful amongst the other castes and occupy nearly the whole of the western portion of the district. In the Bulandshahar district they owned, in the late 19th century, twice as many villages as the Gujars. So, too, in the Muzaffarnagar district, the Gujars and Jats occupy the upland ridge above the Ganges *khadir* (low lands beside the river.) But these Jats were scattered over the country as peasants or landholders, without aspiring to political independence.

Proceeding south of Delhi along the Jamuna, we find the Jats more numerous in Mathura than in any

other district of that province except Mirat. Further south, in the Agra district, they form 7 per cent of the population, but till 14 per cent of the cultivated area and in two of the sub-divisions (Agra and Kiraoli tahsils) they are the most extensive cultivators.

West of Agra is the Bharatpur territory, the rulers of which gave cohesion to the Jats by uniting them into an independent State and leading them on to a career of conquest northwards and eastwards. It is the Jats of this third region that played a striking part in the politics of the declining Delhi empire and the present history will deal with them in detail.

There is a fourth area of Jat preponderance, south of Agra up to the Chambal and even beyond that river to Gwalior, where a Jat power district from the Bharatpur family raised its head but was crushed by the Maratha advance from Malwa and is now confined within the narrow limits of the State of Dholpur,—the sole remnant of that large principality of Gohad which has left its mark on North Indian history from 1750 to 1780.

§ 2. *The Jat character ; comparison with Sikhs and Marathas.*

"The Jat is the husbandman, the peasant, the revenue-payer *par excellence*", observes Ibbetson when writing of the Panjab province ; and the same high praise is given to the race in the Agra province by the local

administrators. Whiteway calls them "the backbone of the agricultural population" in Mathura. The Jat "is more honest, more industrious, more sturdy, and no less manly than the races of our frontier mountains. Sturdy independence and patient vigorous labour are his strongest characteristics. . . . But he is of all the Panjab races the most impatient of tribal or communal control and the one which asserts the freedom of the individual most strongly. . . . He is usually content to cultivate his fields and pay his revenue in peace and quietness if people will let him do so ; though when he does go wrong he takes to anything from gambling to murder, with perhaps a preference for stealing other people's wives and cattle." Herein the Jat presents a contrast to the Gujar who, though precisely of the same physical type and almost of the same social status as the former, is "lazy to a degree and a wretched cultivator," . . . turbulent and habitually fond of cattle-lifting. In short, we can broadly distinguish between the three castes of the village population by calling the Rajputs landlords, the Jats yeomen, and the Gujars primarily cattle-keepers. [Atkinson, *N.W.P. Gaz.*]

The Jats, except in the Rajputana desert, are a healthy prolific race. Their devotion to agriculture and freedom from most of the restrictions on marriage observed by high caste Hindus give to their homes a stronger freer womanhood and numerous children. They follow the ancient Vedic Aryan practice—so

much abhorred by the latter-day Hindus,—of a man marrying his deceased brother's widow as a matter of right. They have no scruple in taking wives from other castes and the offspring of such unions become fully merged in Jat society without any taint of inferiority. Among them man woman and child share in the agricultural work or in cattle-tending. Their close contact with the soil and healthy outdoor life make them the most stalwart of the Hindu races. As is well known, the Jats form the racial backbone of the Sikh sect, so famous for their martial achievements.

Oppression by revenue officers and robbery by their neighbours, especially the Gujars, during the dissolution of government, drove the Jat peasants to a predatory life by way of self-defence or reprisal. They had the making of the best infantry in them. With their sturdy physique, manly habits, and the experience and tradition of forays and even of vulgar burglaries, they supplied the Rajahs of Bharatpur,—as in another region they did the Rajahs of the Panjab,—with the finest material for an army, if only they could be properly armed trained and led. But the Jat soldiery of Bharatpur, in spite of their martial instincts, lacked that intelligence and power of co-ordination which modern warfare requires.* They also used cannon only in forts and

* The reader will remember, as a parallel case, how the officers were theia weakest element in the Sikh army, so that, in their struggle with the English the Khalsa proved an army of lions led by asses. Here too the soldiers were Jats by race.

had to depend for their field artillery on foreign allies or mercenaries. Further, this peasant race was without letters, without knowledge, unlike the Marathas,—among whom an admirable union was effected between the brainy priest and writer castes and the warrior Maratha caste, in fighting as much as in diplomacy and the civil administration,—so that all the various works of a State could be done in Maharashtra by men of the same race speech and province. The Jat Rajahs, on the contrary, had to depend on other people than Jats for their revenue administration and diplomatic settlements.

Again, the Jats who embraced the religion of Guru Govind were fused into a perfect brotherhood, differing only where personal interests and jealousies separated them. This compact homogeneity was lacking among the Hindu Jats, where innumerable minute differences of sept or of family-groups within one and the same caste, caused almost the same mutual cleavage as between Brahmans and Shudras. Thus the Jats in the Mirat division are separated into two branches, the Heles and the Dhes, who do not intermarry, the former despising the latter as of less pure blood! Hence, Suraj Mal of Bharatpur failed where Ranjit Singh of Lahor succeeded.

§ 3. *Relations of the Bharatpur State with its neighbours.*

The Jats under the house of Bharatpur, in their natural expansion eastwards and northwards along the

upper Jamuna valley and beyond that river, came into collision not only with the authority of the Delhi Government but also with the Rajput Gujar and other landowners already in possession of the soil. Even before the rise of this royal family, the Jats had been making a peaceful penetration of the Agra and Mathura districts; they first entered that region as immigrant servants and hired labourers; but their skill in husbandry, rapid growth in numbers and dynamic force as a race enabled them to supplant the decadent lazy old owners and make themselves lords of much of the soil. The same process continued throughout the 18th century and received a great impetus from Suraj Mal's victorious advance and his legal position as a lessee of these districts recognized by the sovereign of Delhi. But this Jat occupation of the country could be effected only at the cost of the existing superior landowners, and thus every Rajput and Gujar zamindar's arms were turned against the Jat power. The success of Suraj Mal only accentuated the age-long feud between Rajput and Jat, and the former readily joined the enemies of the latter every time the Jat power showed the least sign of decline.*

It was the dream of the Jat kings of Bharatpur to justify their title of *Braja-rāj* by actually ruling over the

* Even during the eclipse of British authority in the Mutiny of 1857, this feud broke out afresh in the rural parts of Agra, without any connection with the revolted sepoys.

sacred city and district of Mathura. But that was possible only if they could be allowed either to cut the highway between the imperial cities of Delhi and Agra, or to hold Agra, the second capital of the Empire, in addition to Mathura. The sovereign of Delhi could not be expected to agree to this mutilation of his empire, and hence Mathura was held by the Jat Rajahs only on an eternally precarious tenure, and solely by the force of indisputably superior arms. And yet the Jats of Bharatpur could expand only by holding Agra and Mathura, and then from these secured bridge-heads crossing the Jamuna and overflowing into the Aligarh and Bulandshahar districts east of that river. The Bharatpur State is hemmed in on the west by the Rajput kingdoms,—Mewat (Narnol, Alwar etc.) being the bone of contention between the two races,—on the north by Delhi and its surrounding districts, and on the south-east by the Marathas, now firmly planted in Malwa. This geography inexorably dictated the course of Bharatpur history.

§ 4. *Origin of the Jat kingdom ; the initial difficulties of Badan Singh.*

The creation of the kingdom of Bharatpur out of nothing is the achievement of two of the greatest Indian statesmen of the 18th century, as its ruin was the work of a single personality of the opposite character who succeeded them on the throne. The story of that rise

can be unfolded in full detail from contemporary records in Persian French and Marathi.*

In the declining days of Aurangzib, while the Emperor was absent in the Deccan for a quarter century and all his best officers and troops were concentrated there, individual Jat village headmen, like Rājārām, Bhajjā and Churāman, led predatory bands of their clansmen to rob the royal highway from Delhi to the South and even the suburbs of the capital city of Agra. But these risings, however successful at first in causing loss and mischief, had been ultimately suppressed by the imperial Government through the house of Jaipur. Up to the middle of the 18th century there was as yet no Jat State, no politically united Jat nation, no Jat king standing clearly above the other village headmen or even recognized as first among equals; but only a robber leader whose success had drawn to his banners many of his peers in social status as partners in his adventures and plunder. But even this small beginning of a tribal organization and foundation of a State was totally destroyed when in 1721 Sawai Jai Singh captured Churāman's stronghold of Thun, Churaman committed

* My internal history of the house of Bharatpur to 1767 unless otherwise stated is based upon Father Francis Xavier Wendel's French account in India Office Libr. Orme MSS., O. V. 216 No. 2 and India XV. No. 11. For the earlier Jat chiefs, see my *History of Aurangzib*, vols. iii and v, and W. Irvine's *Later Mughals*, vol. i., Almost all the sources except *SPD* have been used in K. R. Qanungo's *History of the Jats*.

suicide, and his sons Zulkaran and Muhakam Singh were turned out to till the soil or to wander over the face of the earth. The Jat levies raised and held together by Churaman, after escaping the slaughter of the battle-field, had been dispersed to their homes and forced to turn their swords into ploughshares. The city of Thun itself was ploughed by asses under orders of the victor, to make it an accursed soil, unfit to serve again as a seat of royalty. The work of Rajaram and Churaman left no trace behind it, and their successor had to begin everything from the very foundations.

This great work of construction was done by Badan Singh, the son of Churaman's brother Bhāo Singh, in the face of almost insuperable obstacles, both from within and without. The Jat people had no tribal cohesion; every village head or leader of a small group of related families stood in proud isolation, recognizing no superior within the clan. Their government, if it could be so called, was a republic of aristocrats, too numerous to be called an oligarchy. The hope of plunder might lure them to join one among themselves (such as Churaman), not as his followers, but as his equal partners in a joint-stock enterprise; they would not take their orders from him in peace times, nor link their estates with his to form a tribal kingdom. Shortly after the death of Churaman, his son and successor Muhakam Singh was turned out by the leading men of the clan, who repudiated his authority, and the nascent political society of the Jats

seemed about to dissolve when Badan Singh stepped in and took the thorny seat vacated by his cousin.

At the outset the prospect was almost hopeless for Badan Singh. The position of a recognized political chieftain had yet to be created among a scattered race of peasants, who knew no other leader than the head of each family, and every such family head considered himself as perfectly equal to any other head and refused obedience to him. Even within his own family group, namely the Sinsania branch of the Jats, Badan Singh was not the undisputed head, as Zulkaran and Muhakam, the dispossessed heirs of its eldest line, were alive and ever on the look out for overthrowing him and recovering their patrimony with outside aid. The heads of all the other families clung to their independence as long as possible. We see this social condition vividly illustrated in the Jat Court-poet's description of the tribal contingents that followed Suraj Mal in his battles. The list reads exactly like the separate quotas of ships and men sent by the various independent cities of Greece in support of Agamemnon, in Book II of *Iliad.* [*Sujān Charitra,* pp. 75, 184.] War and plunder was their only bond of union.

§ 5. *Badan Singh's reign and policy.*

For uniting these scattered atoms, Badan Singh had, at first, no superior armed force, no recognized higher status, no hoarded wealth. But with matchless cunning,

tireless patience, and wise versatility in the choice of means, he attained to complete triumph at the end of a long life. First of all, he followed the path of suppleness in getting into the good graces of Sawai Jai Singh, the conqueror of Thun, and securing him as a protector. His manners were so humble and submissive and his conduct so obliging, in contrast with the usual rude character of the Jats, that Jai Singh was quite won over and began to take a special delight in favouring this man whom he had raised from the dust and whose greatness he felt would shed reflected lustre on his patron. Jai Singh bestowed on Badan the *tika*, the *nishān*, the kettle-drum, the five-coloured flag, and the title of *Braja-rāj* (or lord of the holy land of Mathura)* so as to give him authority among the Jats at home and to entitle him to greater respect abroad. But in spite of his getting these insignia of feudatory princes, Badan very astutely abstained from assuming the title of Rajah and throughtout life styled himself only *Thakur* or baron and represented himself publicly as a mere vassal of the Rajah of Jaipur.

Thanks to Sawai Jai Singh, Badan was installed in a higher position than any of his predecessors, and he soon translated that position into the reality of

* The entire country of Braja (Mathura) was never subject to him, but only a small fraction on the west. It was Suraj Mal who afterwards made himself little by little master of the whole of it. [Wendel.]

sovereign power. At first he set himself very cunningly to join together the richer among his people under his newly acquired authority. He tolerated neither the very rich nor the very great, but made himself master of the lands and goods of those who had hitherto been the chief men of his clan, reducing them to the level of the common Jats. Thus, in a short time he became the sole lord of all the domains and wealth which had so long lain dispersed among the Jat village headmen. From a zamindar, Badan Singh became shortly a petty Rajah, strong enough to be obeyed at home and feared abroad. During the administrative disorder caused by the Sayyid brothers' usurpation of power at Delhi, the Jats continued their robbery and rebellion in a more intense form than before, because Badan Singh was more powerful, his bands more numerous more hardy more sustained and doing more widespread and irremediable harm than the Jats under Churaman or Rajaram. Besides a large force of infantry, whom he had engaged little by little, he formed a considerable corps of cavalry of whom one portion was employed in robbing the plains, the royal road to Delhi and the environs of Agra, and the remainder in extending his territory in the neighbourhood. In proportion as he gained territory, he increased his army.

Badan Singh's immense expenditure on forts, cities, palaces and parks, indicated the great value of his booty. It was most probable that he had discovered either by

chance or from some key handed down from father to son a big hoard of the buried treasure of his ancestors, for burying one's wealth underground was the universal practice among the Jats.

Taking advantage of the internal dissensions in the Delhi Government, the Jats began to fortify their villages in large numbers and furnish them with munitions and provisions for long defence. In the place of Thun, Sansani, Soghor and other old forts which had been demolished by the imperialists before his time, Badan Singh founded four new forts, Dig Kumbher, Bharatpur and Ver. By bribing the wazir Qamr-ud-din, he silenced all complaints made against these military preparations at the Court of the Emperor. When next Sawai Jai Singh obtained the governorship of the Agra province, the Jats had more leisure and more liberty to do as they had always done. Jai Singh officially entrusted to the Jat chief the patrolling of the king's highways to Agra, Delhi, Jaipur &c. and the collection of the transit duties on them, in the hope of turning him back from rapine. Jai Singh's deputy and actual administrator of the Agra province was a villain and a close ally of Badan Singh ; he was the man most suitable for the enterprises of the Jats, who roamed freely over the province, demolishing houses, gardens and mosques, disfiguring them for the sake of a knob of copper, a piece of marble or a bit of iron. Every gate, stone slab, and beam was carried off from these old

edifices to the places which the Jats were then building. At the same time these tribesmen, in bands of two to three hundred each armed with sword and musket, carrying hatchets and torches in their hands and blowing their trumpets, broke into the houses of the rich, which they had previously divided among themselves and carefully noted where the owner was not in a position to offer resistance. The invasion of Nādir Shah led to a sudden and vast expansion of the Jat power and dominions ; * Badan Singh became master of the environs of the two capitals, completed his forts and began new ones in the lands he had recently annexed. All these forts were put in a strong posture of defence, being armed with an infinite number of small pieces of artillery acquired by plunder or purchase and larger pieces cast by himself, as well as provisions. One contemporary writer hardly exaggerates when he says that the walls of Kumbher were lined with guns with no interval between them. These forts were known to be impregnable in the India of that age.

But, in spite of his wealth and military strength, Badan Singh always declined the Emperor's invitation to visit his Court, saying that he was no noble but a

* As in the parallel case of the Sikhs, but with a very important difference. The Jat expansion was made easier and more rapid by the fact of their being (unlike the Sikhs) always on the side of the Emperor and his ministers and sharing in his campaigns along with the old nobility, so that the Jat territorial gains were legalized by the Delhi Government.

mere peasant! He did homage solely to the Rajah of Jaipur, acknowledging himself as that Rajah's vassal and attending his Dasahara darbar every year till old age curtailed his movements. Outside Jaipur he built a mansion, garden and other houses for himself, at a village assigned to him by Sawai Jai Singh and named *Badan-pura* after him.

Badan Singh followed one most ancient and legitimate method of enhancing his political strength, by marriage alliances with the heads of other groups of families who were once the equals of his forefathers. In addition, he kept a prodigious number of women of all castes and tribes,—a mark of his wealth. His ancient predecessor on the royal seat of Mathura, the divine cow-herd of Hindu mythology, was girt round by a hundred blooming young women. * Badan Singh improved upon it and kept a harem of 150, some secured by consent, some by force. Of his sons, thirty were known to have become heads of villages in his territory, and there were at least as many more of whose future career nothing was known. "The swarm was so large that he had difficulty in recognizing his own offspring; each of them had to announce his mother's name and his own age and place of residence, when he came to do his father reverence!" [Wendel.]

---

* *Vrindāvana-stham yuvati-shata-vritam Brahma-gopāl-vesham* [*Bhāgavat Purān.*]

§ 6. *Suraj Mal, his birth and early career.*

Badan Singh died at Dig on 7th June 1756; but for many years before it he was a quiescent figure, stationary at his capital, and merely presiding over State councils. His inactivity was further increased by his growing blindness. The policy of his State in war and diplomacy was shaped and its campaigns were led by his adopted son Suraj Mal, the ablest statesman and warrior that the Jat race has ever produced. Suraj Mal was no son of Badan Singh, nor did he share his blood in any way. He was the lawful son of a married woman who during a visit to her sister (a member of Badan Singh's harem) with the infant Suraj Mal in her arms, caught Badan Singh's fancy and was enrolled among his concubines and soon became his first favourite. But apart from his mother's influence, Suraj Mal's outstanding genius made it clear to all that he was the fittest man to lead the rising Jat nation. So, Badan Singh adopted Suraj Mal as his son and successor, with the full approval of the elders of the clan, setting aside the offspring of his body. Therefore, the history of the Bharatpur kingdom during the latter half of Badan Singh's reign was really the history of Suraj Mal.

The earliest expansion of the Bharatpur State was at the expense of its immediate neighbours on the north and west, in that ever-anarchical mosaic of fiefs

and universal brigands' den called Mewat.* The fame of Suraj Mal's capacity for leadership and the tough fighting qualities of his troops spread rapidly, and there came repeated solicitations for his sword from the highest in the land. A Jat contingent accompanied the Emperor Muhammad Shah in his expedition against Ali Muhammad Ruhela (May 1745) and fought creditably in that inglorious campaign. In November next his support was hired by Fath Ali Khan (son of Sābit Khan, a famous governor of Aligarh), who had been robbed of some of his father's estates by Asad Khan Khānahzād. In the battle near Chandausi that followed, Asad Khan was shot dead and the Jats gained a complete victory. Suraj Mal's next achievement was to lead his father's contingent of 10,000 horsemen in support of his feudal superior, Rajah Ishwari Singh of Jaipur, who had appealed for Jat aid when threatened by a Maratha invasion. In the battle of Bagru (August 1748) Suraj Mal led the Jaipur vanguard and fought most gallantly, defeating the Marathas opposed to him, though the campaign ultimately went against Ishwari Singh. Still greater fame was won by the prince of Bharatpur when, on 1 January 1750, he defeated and reduced to utter impotence the commander-

* This conquest must have spread over a number of years and been effected little by little. The poet Sudan's assertion that Suraj Mal captured the fort of Mandu is unsupported by history.

in-chief of the Empire, Salabat Khan Mir Bakhshi, near Sarai Sobhāchānd. [Ch. 7 § 9.]

Advancing higher still, Suraj Mal was enlisted by Safdar Jang, the imperial wazir, to assist him in his war on the rebellious Bangash clan of Farrukhābād and their Ruhela allies from beyond the Ganges. The brunt of the fighting at Ram Chatauni (September 1750) was borne by the Jats with conspicuous success, and if Safdar Jang failed it was due simply to his folly and lack of generalship. The same service was repeated in Safdar's victorious invasion of Rohilkhand in 1751-52. On 20 October 1752, the grateful wazir induced the Emperor to create Badan Singh a Rajah with the title of Mahendra, and Suraj Mal a Kumar Bahadur with the title of Rājendra * and a few days later to confer the office of faujdar of Mathura on Suraj Mal. This gave him the governorship of most of the territory on the two sides of the Jamuna, in the province of Agra and the environs of that city, for an annual tribute. "This was the first step in the ascendency of the Jats, because though they had before this acquired enough of goods and riches, they had not obtained rank among the potentates of Hindustan for want of title and [officially conferred] authority; but now their head was created a Rajah by the Great Mughal himself, as Jai Singh was." [Wendel.] Safdar Jang now expedited the issue of

* *TAh.* 43*b*, 45*a*. Wendel is wrong in saying that at this time Suraj Mal was created a Rajah with the title of Jaswant Singh.

patents from the imperial Chancellory for the fiefs that had been ordered to be granted to Suraj Mal before.

§ 7. *Expansion of Suraj Mal's power from 1753 to 1756.*

Backed by the wazir, Suraj Mal ousted Bahadur Singh (Bar-Gujar) the faujdar of Chakla Koil (Aligarh), and even took from him his paternal stronghold of Ghasira (40 miles south of Delhi) after a three months' siege. The fighting here was most obstinate: 1,500 Jats were slain by gunfire from the fort-walls; and at last Bahadur Singh in despair slew all his women, threw the gates open, and rushed upon the enemy with twenty-five desperadoes like himself, who perished to a man (23 April 1753.) * During Safdar Jang's rebellion against the Emperor, Suraj Mal joined his former patron and took a leading part in the fighting round the imperial capital. The rising failed, and Suraj Mal was glad to make peace with the Emperor through the new wazir Intizam-ud-daulah (25 Oct.) The imperial Bakhshi Imad-ul-mulk, who had not been a party to this treaty, next launched a campaign and freed the country south of Delhi from Jat encroachments; Ballabhgarh and Ghasira were wrested from the Jats and even the Aligarh and Jalesar

* Bahadur's son Fath Singh was then in Delhi and thus escaped the massacre of his family. He naturally joined Suraj Mal's enemy Imad-ul-mulk and recovered Ghasira with Mughal help in January 1754. [*TAh.* 47*a*, 52*b*, 106*b*.]

districts east of the Jamuna. [Ch. 12 § 2.] Carrying the war into the enemy's own territory, Imad co-operated with the Marathas in the siege of the Jat stronghold of Kumbher. After four months (Jan.-May, 1754) the fort remained untaken, * and the besiegers were glad to go away on receiving promise of an indemnity of 30 lakhs of Rupees. [Ch. 12 §5.] Holkar's raid on the Emperor's camp at Sikandrabad (25 May), which followed within a week of the raising of the siege of Kumbher, and the change of Emperors by Imad-ul-mulk (2 June) introduced chaos into the Delhi administration and the Jats joined in the plunder of the country round the imperial capital, "with this advantage on their side that after Malhar Holkar and Imad-ul-mulk had left, the Jats were sufficiently in time to profit by the general consternation into which the one or the other had put the capital and its environs." [Wendel, 71. *SPD.* xxvii. 90.]

In the second half of the year 1754, large Maratha forces occupied the country round Delhi and north of it, under Raghunath Rao, who found it expedient to come to an understanding with Suraj Mal, by which the Jat chief agreed not to oppose the Maratha enterprises nor to obstruct the frequent marches of Maratha forces through Northern India which had now become necessary,

* Suraj Mal's fame spread all over India from his successful defence of Kumbher against 80,000 men led by Malhar Holkar, Imad and a Jaipur general. [Wendel.] But the Marathas suspected the Jaipur agent Haragovind Natani of collusion with the Jats. *SPD.* xxvii 94.

while Raghunath allowed Suraj Mal to occupy much of the territory of the province of Agra, then at Maratha disposal. [Wendel.]

In the course of this renewed Jat expansion in the country south of Delhi and west of Agra, we can note the chief events,—the seizure of Palwal (36 miles south of Delhi) on 27 Sep. 1754,* the recovery of Ballabhgarh, the reconquest of Ghasira from Fath Singh Bar-Gujar in November 1755, and the acquisition of the imperial fort of Alwar (*c.* 23 March 1756) by composition with its custodian. These successes were chequered by some reverses. On 29 June 1755, Najib Khan set out on a campaign, under orders of the kingmaker Imad, for recovering the lands in the Ganges-Jamunā doab seized by Suraj Mal. But Nāgar Mal, the diwan of Crownlands, mediated, and after some haggling arranged a peace between them, near Dasnā, on the following terms (26 July) :—

---

* A force sent by Suraj Mal on 27 September captured the city of Palwal, which was in the wazir's jagir. The Jats seized and slew Santokh Rai, the *qanungo* of Palwal, who had instigated Aqibat Mahmud to kill Balu Jat. They also carried off the *qazi* of the place. The wazir, on hearing of it, assembled his forces and went to Malhar asking him to join in an attack on Suraj Mal. On 29 Sept. Malhar took him to Raghunath, who frankly told him, "We have come to terms with Suraj Mal and shall not deviate from our promise to him. Do you remain here in composure of mind. I shall send word to Suraj Mal to abstain from seizing any place in your jagir." *TALS.* 22*a*.

(i) Suraj Mal was to retain the lands in the Aligarh district that he had occupied before.

(ii) Rupees 26 lakhs was settled as the perpetual quit-rent (*istimrār*) of these lands, out of which 18 lakhs was deducted as cash compensation for the jagirs which Jāvid Khan and Safdar Jang had formally assigned to Suraj Mal in the last reign, but which had not been actually transferred to him.

(iii) Suraj Mal would vacate the fort and district of Sikandrabad, which had been handed over to him by the Marathas in the preceding month.

(iv) Out of the balance of 8 lakhs due to the imperial exchequer, Suraj Mal paid two lakhs down and gave an undertaking to clear the balance in one year at the rate of half a lakh per month. [*TALS.* 57-58.]

§ 8. *Rebellion of Jawahir Singh against his father.*

But a worse thing was to come on the Jat chief. Badan Singh died on 7th June 1756, and though the disappearance of the blind old figurehead of the State made no difference in its actual administration, this event precipitated a civil war through the impatient ambition of Suraj Mal's son Jawahir Singh. This youth had been born with a boundless courage, a fierce delight in fighting, and some power of leadership; but these high gifts were neutralized by his reckless impetuosity, blind obstinacy and utter lack of self-control and foresight. While Suraj Mal, with all his power and wealth, lived to the end of

his days in a very simple style, being inclined to be miserly rather than liberal in all kinds of expenditure, Jawahir was of exactly the opposite character, a prodigal fond of luxury and profusion, "playing the Mughal umara in his equipage company and diversions." Selfish favourites gathered round him and instigated him against his strict and stingy father as an obstacle to his happiness and independence, and led him on to live far beyond his modest allowance. Suraj Mal's remonstrances only increased his son's anger and aversion towards the Rajah's old counsellors. When he next tried to remove Jawahir's evil advisers, "the young Absalom" (as he is aptly called by a Jesuit priest of Agra) flew into rebellion and prepared for war in the fort of Dig which was then his residence. Suraj Mal had no help but to lay siege to it. Jawahir, as was his wont, made a reckless sortie upon his father's troops, personally rushed into the thickest of the fight, and was captured with three severe wounds from sword lance and bullet. For some time after, his life was despaired of; but he recovered, though these wounds left his right arm weak and one leg lame. Suraj Mal seems to have now made some more liberal provision for Jawahir, because he could not afford to lose his most spirited and war-experienced son.* This civil war ended in November 1756, and next month Abdali's invasion burst upon the Delhi empire.

* Wendel reports the current story that Badan Singh with a grandfather's doting affection handed to his favourite Jawahir

Suraj Mal set himself to improving the defences of Dig and to building more forts, his chief care being to fortify Bharatpur so strongly as to make it absolutely impregnable and a worthy capital of his kingdom. At the same time he began a grand palace at Dig, which was planned on such a gorgeous and costly style that it was not completed even in Jawahir Singh's reign.

§ 9. *Suraj Mal's doings and policy from 1757 to 1760.*

From Ahmad Shah Abdali's fourth invasion in January 1757 to his retreat after his fifth invasion in March 1761, Suraj Mal passed through a most anxious and critical time, as his home was nearest the danger zone and he had the fatal reputation of being excessively rich. But he emerged at the end of this period with his territory unimpaired, his treasury untouched, and his forces undiminished. This success was due to his marvellous sagacity patience and diplomatic shrewdness, but he was in no less a degree indebted for it also to the exceptional ability and devotion of his minister Rupram Kothari, which rose equal to every danger and every surprise. Throughout these four years there were, at

a paper containing the key to his buried hoards, and that Suraj Mal kept pressing Jawahir, when his wounds were supposed to be incurable, to surrender this paper to him. But the fact is that Suraj Mal and Jawahir were temperamentally opposite; Suraj Mal could never forget that he was a cultivator's son and Jawahir that he was a Rajah's son! Wendel, 73. *SPD.* xxvii. 226.

times, threats of Abdali's attack unless the Jat Rajah paid down a large ransom; at others, there was the opposite danger of Maratha pressure to join with all his forces in their attempts to dismember the Delhi empire, which (Suraj Mal knew) would antagonize all the Muslim and Rajput Powers of North India and inevitably bring the Afghan invader back. But through each crisis as it developed the suppleness of Suraj Mal's diplomacy enabled him to pass unscathed.

We have seen how during the Durrani invasion of 1757 he withdrew his clansmen from their fields into his forts and thus saved them while he gained time by parleying and bribing Abdali's tribute-collectors, till the Afghan king was driven out by an epidemic in his army. The stand made in vain by his garrison of Ballabhgarh and the gallant but equally unavailing effort of his son Jawahir to defend Mathura from the invaders, have been described in Ch. 16 § 3-5. During the Maratha return to the North under Raghunath Dada and Dattaji Sindhia in 1757-1759, Suraj Mal wisely remained quiescent, only supplying a few thousand auxiliary troops to the Maratha general when he could not help it. His dealings with the Bhau in 1760 have been unfolded in Chapter 20 §5 and 8. The result of all this was that the retreat of Ahmad Shah in March 1761 left the Jat Rajah as the strongest potentate in India with absolutely unimpaired forces and an overflowing treasury, while every other chief had been more or less ruined.

§ 10. *Suraj Mal captures Agra fort, June 1761.*

He turned this opportunity to making the greatest expansion that the Jat kingdom ever attained. After his design of making himself regent of Delhi under cover of his tool Imad-ul-mulk had been nipped in the bud (in May 1761, see Ch. 22 § 2), he made more solid gains nearer home. Agra was now the richest city in the empire. Delhi had been devastated and its population thinned by repeated foreign occupation and sack, but Agra fort had never opened its gates to any Durrani agent. The rich fugitives from the capital had taken refuge in Agra and it was the best centre of trade in upper India in those troubled times. The accumulated hoards of the Mughal Emperors from Akbar's reign had been lodged in Agra fort, and though much of this treasure had been dissipated by Aurangzib's long wars and the insolvency of his successors, yet much still remained, especially costly robes, furniture, utensils, and jewellery worthy of kings. The fort was held by a *qiladar* directly under the Emperor. He and the garrison under him had received no pay for two years past and had kept off starvation only by selling the vessels of precious metal from the imperial stores.

Suraj Mal sent a strong force to capture Agra. Their first assault was easily repulsed by fire from the impregnable walls and they then laid a regular blockade to the fort, after plundering the houses immediately under the fort-walls and arresting the

wives and children of the garrison who used to lodge there. Within a month (Wendel says, 20 days) the qiladar opened the gates on 12th June 1761, on being promised* one lakh of Rupees in cash and five villages. "It is calculated that Suraj Mal carried away 50 lakhs in this pillage. Enormous stores of artillery, munitions, and articles of the royal wardrobe had accumulated in Agra for a long time past. Most of the artillery and all the effects were removed to Bharatpur and Dig. In 1765 Jawahir Singh razed most of the houses in the environs of the fort for the unobstructed fire of the guns on the walls. A garrison of some thousand Jat musketeers was put in."

§ 11. *Expansion of Suraj Mal's power, 1761-62, relations with Najib.*

Three months after Panipat, Suraj Mal found himself delivered from the Marathas and the Durranis at the same time, and set himself to extending his

* The promises made to the *qiladar* and his troops were broken and those men were languishing in poverty, when Wendel wrote in 1768, the reason being that the Jat Rajah called upon the *qiladar* to render full accounts of the enormous imperial property hitherto kept in his custody and accused him of defalcation. [Wendel, p. 86.] *Chahar Gulzar*, 454*b*, says that the *qiladar* Fāzil Kh. remained faithful to his charge, but Musa Beg, the keeper of the gates, opened them for 3 lakhs to the Jats, who punished his treachery by imprisonment, (? confounded with the surrender of Farrukhnagar by Musavi Khan *Baluch* in Dec. 1763.)

possessions. He seized many Maratha jagirs in the Doab, recovered his own earlier annexations in the Aligarh and Bulandshahar districts which Abdali had seized in March 1760, and made fresh conquests at the expense of the Rajput and other zamindars within his reach. He crushed the Bhadauria Rajputs of Agra district and the Porach Rajput taluqdar of Mendu (in Aligarh), and did not spare even independent Jats like the zamindar of Mursan. "On this side of the Jamuna, from the gates of Delhi to the Chambal, there was no other government but his; and towards the Ganges it was almost the same ... The reduction of Agra fort assured to Suraj Mal the tranquil possession of most part of that subah, because in fear of the imperial force posted in it he had so long confined himself to the region south of that city. But now he spread his dominion northwards up to Sarai Khwajah Basant, 20 miles from Delhi. West of the capital he engaged in creating a small separate State for his son Jawahir Singh," covering Mewat and the Baluch lordships near Rewari. Here Jhajhar and other small places fell to him, but Farrukhnagar held out till December 1763.

Najib tried to come to terms with Suraj Mal. On 7th October 1761, Rajah Diler Singh from Delhi, accompained by the Jat agents Rupram Kothari and Mohan Singh, went to Suraj Mal at Dankaur, and after five days' discussion it was agreed that Suraj Mal would be formally confirmed in his recent gains (Jhajhar and other

places), subject to the payment of a tribute to the Emperor, for which Nāgar Mal stood security. Then two envoys from Najib visited the Jat Rajah, with a Quran on which Najib had sworn solemnly to safe-guard Suraj Mal, and arranged for an interview between the two chiefs near Delhi. On 19th October Abdali's courier brought his letters from Kabul to Delhi calling upon the Indian chiefs to pay the promised tribute, and to report who was loyal to the Emperor and who not. A Durrani army was announced to be about to visit India soon, and the Shah himself behind it. On the 24th, Nagar Mal went to Suraj Mal to arrange for paying Abdali and also to persuade him to visit Najib near Delhi in order to settle terms, after which Najib, accompanied by Suraj Mal's son, was to go to Shah Alam and conduct him to the imperial capital, with the support of all the Indian princes.

A few weeks later this interview took place. "The armies of these two chiefs alighted on the opposite banks of the Jamuna at Dankaur-ghat. Najib went towards Suraj Mal, seated in a small boat, with only a few servants, leaving all his troops on the other side of the river . . . Suraj Mal behaved towards him with great purity of heart." [Nur. 56. *DC.*] But no lasting settlement was made. Ahmad Shah passed the whole of 1762 in the Panjab, and Suraj Mal seems to have held his hand back during that year. *

* Najib and Suraj Mal in 1761-62,—*DC, SPD.* xxi. 89, 90.

§ 12. *Suraj Mal captures Farrukhnagar ; rupture with Najib, 1763.*

Next year, the Jat attempt to enforce law and order in that immemorial robbers' den known as Mewat and guard the roads leading out of their kingdom, brought about an open war between Suraj Mal and Najib, the patron of the harbourers of these robbers. Musavi Khan, the son and successor of Kamgar Khan, was the strongest of the numerous petty Baluch chiefs in the Gurgaon-Rohtak district west of Delhi. He led a contingent of over 2,000 of his clansmen, with whom he had joined Najib soon after the latter's entry into Delhi as regent. During the Panipat campaign he had aided the Afghan cause by closing the roads west of Delhi to the Marathas and cutting off their stragglers convoys and couriers. His seat was Farrukhnagar, (30 miles south-west of Delhi), a very well-fortified place.

The Mewati race used in all ages to live by robbing the country round. For some years past the Jat Rajah had been engaged in conquering that district and establishing his own administration there. He had taken the imperial fort of Alwar, which dominated the district (March 1756), and had built another fort at Kishangarh, 20 miles northwards. This country was intended to be the appanage of Jawahir Singh, while the main Jat kingdom was to descend to his younger

xxix. 23. Wendel, 83-88. Nur. 56. *N.W.P. Gaz.* vii. 618-664. ii. 429-489.

brother Nāhar Singh.* In the course of his gradual occupation of Mewat, whenever Jawahir heard of any Mewatis practising highway robbery, he used to track them by their footmarks and sternly put them to death. But a most notorious culprit of the place defied him. A Meo named Sānulbā, with his gang of ten mounted brigands, used to make long night marches from his lair, and loot caravans near the fort of Dig or between Hodal and Barsana. "The people were helpless against his oppression. He fixed his residence in the fort of Tauru, the seat of Asadullah Khan Baluch, with whom he used to share his booty, (as the price of his protection.)" Jawahir found that Sānulbā would not be expelled from his refuge unless his protectors were attacked. Suraj Mal at first called upon the Baluch chiefs to drive Sānulbā out. They refused to lose such a profitable agent in crime, and Jawahir led an expedition against them. All the Baluches under Musavi Khan of Farrukhnagar, the head of their clan, opposed him, and the expedition had to return unsuccessful. This repulse only served to rouse Jawahir's spirits. A second and stronger expedition was sent. Najib Khan wrote to Suraj Mal asking him not to touch the Baluches who were his *protegees*. Suraj Mal replied by pointing out that those who harboured highway robbers deserved punishment.

* Jat capture of Farrukhnagar, Nur. 60*a*-66*a*. Wendel, 88-89. Ghulam Ali, ii. 194.

Jawahir Singh advanced upon Farrukhnagar, wasting the villages on the way. Suraj Mal came up with reinforcements and a train of big guns, and in less than two months the fort was taken, (*c.* 12 December 1763.) Musavi Khan issued with his family on a promise of safety, but was arrested and confined in the fort of Bharatpur. Meantime, on receiving an urgent appeal for relief from the Baluches, Najib had written again to the Jat Rajah to withdraw from the Baluch estates, which were dependent on him and on the border of his own dominions. He himself was lying very ill at Najibabad, but set out for the scene of war, and reached Delhi on 14th December. But Farrukhnagar had fallen two days before, and all that Najib could do now was to write to Suraj Mal protesting against his unfriendly act in attacking the Ruhela chieftain's dependent, and adding, "Let what is past be past. You may keep the fort that you have captured. But it is not proper to hold Musavi Khan and his family in captivity. You ought to release them out of regard for my friendship with you."

Suraj Mal wrote back, "These men are my enemies. Between you and me there is agreement and friendship. How was it consistent with that friendship for you to march from Najibabad to Delhi (during my siege of Farrukhnagar)? It became publicly known that you were leading your army against me. If I had not in the meantime taken the fort, you would have joined

Musavi Khan against me. The idea was in your mind. You have thus already broken the alliance between you and me by acting with breach of faith." Even after this Najib tried to avert a war with Suraj Mal, whose immense resources in men and money he dreaded; "his own treasury was empty and his estates required time to recover from his recent war against the Marathas, and he was suffering from a dangerous malady." But Suraj Mal had been thoroughly exasperated; he decided on crushing this thorn in his path once for all. Najib's peace-messenger Yaqub Ali Khan, sent from Delhi on 19th December, returned baffled on the 23rd, with the Jat Rajah's reply, "Najib has acted contrary to my expectations. Clearing of our hearts is impossible now. He has come from Najibabad solely in pride of his troop of clansmen. It is necessary for me to look at his army once."

§ 13. *Last campaign and death of Suraj Mal.*

Having thus thrown down the gauntlet, Suraj Mal left a strong garrison in Farrukhnagar and Jawahir Singh in its neighbourhood, and marched with the rest of his army rapidly to the Doab.* Encamping on the west

* Last battle and death of Suraj Mal,—Nur. 66*a*—70*b* (best and fullest.) Wendel, 89-90 and *DC.* (support, briefly.) *Bayan* 305. Ghulam Ali, ii. 194-205 (detailed but vague.) Muna Lal 78-85, *Siyar*, iii. 82, *Chahar Gulzar* 453 (meagre.) This battle seems to have taken place, east of *Sarai Sadar* and north of *Bhagel*, about 10 miles south-east of Delhi, where a straight line

bank of the Hindan, he sent detachments across it, who plundered all the villages around Ghaziabad and set fire to them, only the fort remaining safe. After this the Jat army returned to the south of Delhi. Najib issued from the city with his troops and stood near the garden of Khizirabad for some time, but returned without giving battle. Suraj Mal, after sending a haughty challenge to Najib, again crossed the Jamuna in light kit and halted some miles south of Ghaziabad. Najib with all his troops (below 10,000 men) forded the Jamuna two hours before dawn and took post on the west bank of the Hindan. It was the 25th of December. The Jat army came up opposite and an exchange of artillery fire began which lasted till about 3 P. M. Then Suraj Mal, keeping the bulk of his troops and all his guns and elephants stationed facing the Ruhela army, marched away with 5,000 horse under his own command, crossed the Hindan four miles upstream, and tried to penetrate into Najib's rear. A furious battle raged for some time, with charges and counter-charges, and nearly a thousand men fell down on the two sides taken together. Suraj himself with his small personal staff, then rode forward to rally his shrinking men. But in crossing a *nala* left behind by the river, he fell into an Afghan ambuscade and was shot down with most of his companions by the

drawn from Delhi to Sikandrabad crosses the Hindan. From the field Najib marched to Surajpur, which is 15 m. w. of Sikandrabad. (*DC.*)

Ruhela musketeers lying concealed among the *jhau* bushes. The rest of that squadron broke and fled into the jungle, abandoning their horses to plunder. The triumphant Ruhelas rushed forward from their ambush. One of them, Sayyid Muhammad Khan, popularly called Sayyidu, recognized Suraj Mal, and "thirsting for vengeance, dismounted, and plunged his dagger twice or thrice into the Rajah's stomach. Two or three of his light horsemen also struck at the body with their swords. He then ordered the head to be cut off. Five or six men plied their swords at the head and it was hacked to pieces, and one sword too was broken. Then Sayyidu came away from the place."

"The Jat force facing Najib kept up their fire, the flag on their elephant still stood erect, and their kettle-drums continued to be beaten. When Sayyidu came up and boasted that he had slain Suraj Mal, none would credit it, as the entire Jat army was holding its ground as firmly as before. Three hours after sunset both armies fell back to their encampment. Next day, at dawn spies brought the report that no trace of the Jat army could be found for 30 miles. Najib asked for proof of Suraj Mal's death. Sayyidu cut off an arm from the corpse of Suraj Mal and showed it to Najib. The Ruhela chief's envoys, Sāgar Mal Khatri and Shaikh Karamullah, who had visited Suraj Mal only a day before the battle, at once identified the body by the design of the chintz cloth of his tunic and the mark of

the amulet that the Jat Rajah was known to have worn for years. Thus, all became convinced that Suraj Mal had been slain."

§ 14. *Character and achievement of Suraj Mal Jat ; state of his kingdom.**

Thus perished Suraj Mal at the height of his greatness at the age of fifty-five. He was of middle stature and of a robust frame, very black in complexion and very fat. He had two extremely sparkling eyes, and all his physiognomy showed more of fire than was noticeable in his conduct, which was very sweet and supple. For more than twenty years he had enjoyed the sole government of the Jat kingdom, first as regent under the *faineant* Badan Singh and latterly as king himself. He left behind him five sons,—Nāhar Singh, his intended heir (born of a Jat wife), Jawahir and Ratan Singh (the offspring of a woman of the Gori caste), Nawal Singh and Ranjit Singh. His chief queen Hānsiā was childless but adopted Jawahir as her son.

So great was his moderation, that in spite of his immense wealth and military force, he used to go to Jaipur every year at Dasahara and offer his homage and customary tribute as a humble vassal to Madho Singh. It was only a few years before his death that he gave up this practice in fear of treachery from his overlord. Though risen from the peasant stock, Suraj possessed the royal

* Wendel, 82-96.

gift of knowing men of real merit and esteeming them. The ex-wazir Imad-ul-mulk, long a fugitive at the Jat Court, met with the greatest respect and protection from Suraj Mal, in consideration of his high lineage, though he had in 1753-4 been the most cruel enemy of the rising Jat State.

Even on the most troublesome occasions, Suraj Mal displayed an instinctive sagacity of political management in which he surpassed all the great men of the time except Najib. "He made himself great amidst the general decay of the empire ; none else in Hindustan had such good fortune." He attended so admirably to the business of a landlord, in increasing the value of the country he had subjugated, that he greatly augmented his revenue, and at the same time he controlled his expenditure so well that after some years he used to save at least half the annual yield of his dominions, in spite of the large sums spent on his forts and palaces. "In one word, being prudent, politic, valiant and noble above his birth, he was able to make himself admired and at the same time feared by the outside Powers. He had found the Jats rich already but mere zamindars and unknown except for their plundering ; but he left them powerful and highly reputed throughout Hindustan." The only defect noticed in his character by this Jesuit observer was a low greed, which made him keep in his employ, even after he had been raised to the highest fortune, bands of robbers for conveying their booty to

him, and induced a miserliness in his expenditure which left his family and troops frequently to languish in poverty by withholding their dues for years together.

All his expenditure taken together ranged between 60 and 65 lakhs of Rupees a year, while his annual revenue was 175 lakhs, so that in the seven years of his reign he added about six *krores* to the reserve hoard left behind by his predecessors. The revenue of the *entire* subah of Agra was then less than two *krores*, and the Jat kings did not hold more than three-fourths of its territory. Although Suraj Mal tried his best to make the country yield double the revenue which the Mughal Emperors used to draw from it, yet taking all circumtances into consideration, Suraj Mal's total reserve wealth, both inherited and acquired, could not have exceeded ten *krores*, much of it being buried underground.

Suraj Mal left to his successor 15,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry (apart from his fort garrisons), 300 pieces of cannon of all kinds, 5,000 spare horses, 60 elephants, and munition in proportion. Above all, he left a country, well cultivated, tranquil, free from the danger of being easily surprised, which during his last years used to yield Rs. 175 lakhs in cash. Suraj Mal took pride in being a zamindar; he knew how to improve the yield of his conquests, to give them peace, to conserve and defend them. He entertained no foreign soldier in his service: he had conquered all that country by means of his Jat brethren only. "They tilled the soil, they

defended it too. He had made them warriors, but after their martial service they returned to their plough, not less industrious as peasants than they had been brave as soldiers when defending the territory on which they were established.

"Suraj Mal was loved by his own people and held in respect by all his neighbours. The reputation of the Jat race reached its highest point under him and after him it was sure to decline."

§ 15. *Jawahir Singh's accession; opposition from his chiefs; preparations for war against Najib Khan.*

Suraj Mal had been slain so suddenly and his army had dispersed so unexpectedly, when they had twofold odds in their favour, that at first the Ruhelas could not believe in their good fortune. The Jat State was still the richest and strongest in Hindustan and the Ruhelas naturally expected a bloody reprisal upon their homes by the infuriated Jat nation. Hence, immediately after the fall of Suraj Mal, Najib returned to Najibabad instead of following up his victory by an invasion of the Jat kingdom. Even later when he became aware of the internal divisions in the Jat State and Jawahir's inability to embark on a vendetta immediately, he was distracted by a Sikh incursion into the upper Doab. "The tide of victory [over Zain Khan, faujdar of Sarhind] bore forty thousand warriors across the Jamuna, and at first

there was no one to resist them. They took Saharanpur on 20 Feb. 1764." Najib had to hurry to the scene and buy the raiders off with eleven lakhs of Rupees. A Marathi letter rightly remarks, "The Sikhs have done great good to the Jat Rajah; they have saved his kingdom." At the same time, Najib was dunned by Abdali for the unpaid tribute of Hindustan. These events gave a respite to Jawahir Singh.

The new Jat Rajah * was in sore need of such a respite. He had gained a throne, but was not yet master in his own house. From the bank of the Hindan Suraj Mal's expeditionary army had hurried back to Dig in about 30 hours, bringing the fatal news with them. The tribal elders met together to decide the succession. Nāhar Singh, the chosen heir of the late king, demanded to be recognized at once. The courtiers disliked Jawahir Singh for his fiery temper, rashness, and want of self-control. Just then came a courier from Jawahir reproaching the chiefs for their cowardly desertion of their master and for their unseasonable deliberation to give him a successor without first thinking of avenging his death. Jawahir would, he said, go alone and attack his father's slayer, and think of the succession afterwards. This reproach at one blow disconcerted the conspirators. Nāhar Singh, too young and constitutionally timid, knew

* Jawahir's accession and war preparations,—Wendel, 96-97. Nur. 71*a*-74*a*. *SPD.* xxix. 55, 58, 85. *Ch. Gulz.* 454. *Siyar*, iii. 84 (cruelty.) *DC.* (dates only.) *CPC.* i. 2459 (eve of war.)

his chance gone and fled away by night to Kumbher, where he gathered his family partisans and wealth together and retired to Jaipur for refuge. Suraj Mal's brother-in-law and chief minister, Balarām, now proclaimed Jawahir, who arrived at Dig at once, on a fast camel, from Farrukhnagar. Many of the chief officers of State who had so long enjoyed Suraj Mal's confidence and high offices, refused to render accounts and yield their balances to the young king. Jawahir's authority was too recent for him to coerce such recusants. When he proposed a war of revenge against Najib, none of them approved it. But Jawahir got his war expenses from his father's widow Hānsiā, openly taunted his pacific counsellors with cowardice, and threatened to hire foreign soldiers for fighting his battles if his old captains held back. They, therefore, had to join him.

For this war preparations were made long and on a vast scale, which speaks well of the youthful king's wisdom. First of all, he satisfied his army by at once discharging their arrear salary, which Suraj Mal had kept unpaid for two years. Next, by sending his veteran envoy Rupram Kothari to Malhar Holkar, he contracted for the hire of a Maratha army of 20,000 horse for 22 lakhs of Rupees. In the midst of the campaign he also engaged 15,000 Sikh mercenaries.

These negotiations took months to mature and could not be kept a secret from Najib. The Ruhela tried to pacify the Jat king by arguing, "What was predestined

has happend to your father. If by fighting me you can bring him back to life, then fight me. I have not seized any part of your territory. Why then are you vainly worrying yourself against me ? God alone is the Giver of victory or defeat." But it was a point of honour with the entire Jat nation to punish the slayer of their great king. If they peacefully digested that injury and made no attempt at retaliation, their prestige in the Indian world would be totally lost.

Jawahir's jealous overlord Mādho Singh intrigued for an alliance with Najib. That Ruhela chief also tried to dissuade Malhar from joining the Jats by appealing to their old friendship and his help at Panipat. The Peshwa ordered Malhar to side with Jawahir against Najib ; but Malhar's sole interest in the war was to make money at the expense of the fabulously rich Jat king.

In the first flush of his victory over Suraj Mal, Najib had seized the Jat posts in the middle Doab, from which the collectors had fallen back without resistance. Jawahir now (April 1764) recovered them and strongly reinforced with more artillery and munitions the fort of Ballabhgarh, which was to serve as his base in the operations against Delhi. Here he posted his chief of artillery Bishwa-sukh.

§ 16. *Jawahir attacks Delhi from the west bank.*

The campaign opened early in November 1764.*

* Jawahir Singh's attack on Delhi,—Nur. 74*b*-92*b* (eye-witness.)

Leaving Faridabad on their right, the Jat army struck the Jamuna some 14 miles south of Delhi and entrenched. Jawahir's own troops were between thirty and thirty-five thousand horse and foot with a hundred pieces of artillery of all calibres, and Najib's the same number of men with all the guns of the capital. But 20,000 Maratha horse were expected to join the Jats in a few days. Najib had sent his wakil Meghraj to Abdali in Qandahar *viā* Jammu (as the Lahor road was closed by the Sikhs), appealing for protection from the coming storm; he had also called for reinforcements from his brother Afghans of trans-Ganges.

Arrived before Delhi, Jawahir at first held his troops back, determined to assume the offensive on being joined by Malhar. After the arrival of this ally, he advanced his camp to the bank of the Jamuna east of the old Fort (Purana Qila.) Najib took post in the Buland Bagh, at the foot of the imperial fort, and threw a bridge of boats over the Jamuna to allow provisions to come in from the Doab. He himself lodged in the mansion of the former wazir Qamr-ud-din Khan, while his troops took up their residence by the river side. They dug a ditch with an earthen rampart behind it, lined with artillery, and connected the

(*DC.* invaluable for dates.) Wendel 97-98 and foot-note (too general.) Ghulam Ali, ii. 220-231. Muna Lal, 93-98. *SPD.* xxix. 72, 73, 193.

south-eastern bastion of the city with the river by these defences.

The first battle took place on 15th November, and the total casualties on the two sides mounted up to a thousand [*DC.*] Jawahir advanced to the fort of Firuz Shah in front of the Ruhela trenches, calling upon Malhar to support him in assaulting them. Malhar rode out with his troops, but halted far behind Jawahir's army, near the fort of Sher Shah, and turned a deaf ear to all the appeals of his Jat ally to advance and join in a general attack, saying that it was unsafe to go further ahead before the Ruhelas were cleared out of the Old Fort. There was that day only an exchange of fire between the two sides, with some petty skirmishes, but no close engagement.

Jawahir, finding that Najib's ditch south of Delhi prevented a closer approach to the city, and losing faith in the sincerity of his Maratha allies, changed his plan of operations. Early in the morning of the 16th he sent Balaram with Ram Krishna Mohant (his own *gurū*), Sawāi-rām a Brahman of Jodhpur (who led a contingent of 150 Rathors) and 8,000 Jat horse, to ford the Jamuna at the Amlighat, with orders to drive out the small patrol of Ruhela horse posted on the left bank, overpower the hundred Ruhela musketeers holding the eastern head of Najib's bridge of boats, and then charge over the bridge and penetrate into Najib's trenches from the rear. At the same time

Jawahir attacked these trenches from the front to keep Najib's main army in play. The scheme could have succeeded if only there had been a complete surprise; but the Jat horse lost time by stopping to plunder Patparganj, a very rich grain mart, their march was detected by the cloud of dust they raised, Najib's 500 Turki horsemen from Shahdara and a reinforcement of 600 Afghan cavalry under Nasir Khan Darrati, boldly advanced and fought desperately to stem the Jat advance but were swept away by numbers. Meantime, Najib from his seat on a high bastion had seized the situation on the eastern bank with the help of a field glass. He strengthened the defence of the bridgehead, kept his trench-officers on the alert, and sent a thousand picked Ruhela soldiers by boat to the eastern bank to block the path of the Jat advance to the bridge, for if the enemy's thousands reached the bridgehead the momentum of their advance would sweep away all obstruction and Najib's defence would be hopelessly broken.

The newly arrived Ruhela infantry, crouching in a hollow by the riverside, surprised the recklessly advancing Jat force and shot down most of their leaders. Both sides dismounted and a desperate hand to hand combat ensued. Sawāi-rām and his Rathors were cut off and the rest of the Jat force took to flight, pursued by the Ruhelas and Turks.

Jawahir saw the disaster to his detachment and

pushed up reinforcements of 700 Nagas under Umrao-gir Gosain in person, by a luckily discovered ford. They were just in time to save the Jat force on the eastern bank from annihilation. The battle raged till sunset, after which Najib's men fell back to their camps and Jawahir's troops crossed over to the western bank by a ford lit up by two lines of torch-bearers. It must be admitted that Balarām's troops had disgraced themselves, and had been saved only by the desperate and bloody sacrifice of the Nagas.

§ 17. *Jawahir bombards Delhi from the east bank of the Jamuna.*

On the 18th the entire invading army crossed over to the eastern bank of the Jamuna, planted guns along the river and began to bombard Delhi across the water, because there was no wall along the eastern face of the city to stop the balls. This was done after plundering Shahdara, where grain beyond calculation was stored for sale in Delhi; "the floors were dug up, the houses were burnt, and the place utterly devastated." The Jat cannon-balls from the east bank fell on the houses along the eastern side of the capital; some even fell inside the imperial palace, and a few persons were killed and a crystal stool in the Diwan-i-khas was broken. Najib's troops withdrew from their trenches on the river sands (*reti*) and took refuge in houses within the city, while he himself dug an underground room in the Buland Bagh,

with a roof of planks covered with earth. The bridge was protected by guns mounted on the ramparts overlooking it, and held by a strong Ruhela guard under shelter of an earthen wall one yard in height. In the city men were killed by the enemy shots.

For a fortnight this bombardment of Delhi continued. Every morning Jawahir used to drag his guns up to the edge of the river, fire them all day, and take them back to his lines at sunset. Meantime he had concluded his long negotiations with the Sikhs, as he had lost faith in his Maratha allies, and a Sikh force 12,000 strong, appeared near Delhi early in January 1765. A month before, another fierce horde of Sikhs, known as the *Budha Dal,* had swept over the upper Doab from its extreme north away to the Barha Sayyid settlements along the Ganges; Miranpur was again sacked; the fierce Ranghars and Gujars rose and joined in the looting Najib could do nothing for the defence of his estates. "All the country up to the bank of the Ganges was brought into the possession of the Jats and Marathas; at some places their outposts were established, or else all was plundered. The parganahs of Dasna, Ghaziabad etc., as a family heritage, were taken over by Imad-ul-mulk," who was in Jawahir's camp and had been his chief instigator in this enterprise.

§ 18. *Jawahir's Sikh allies arrive; their attacks on Delhi.*

When the Sikhs arrived near Barari ghat, Jawahir

crossed over from the east bank to the west and interviewed their chiefs. He had to submit to every kind of insult in order to enlist these allies. He was not allowed to approach the place of conference on an elephant. In the assembly of their sardars, he was introduced by their Guru Ardas crying out, 'Jawahir Singh, the son of Suraj Mal, has sought the shelter of the Khālsajiu and become a Sikh of Nānak. He is demanding [through you] redress for his father's blood." They also drove out the Jat Rajah's *huqqa*-bearer with insult and abuse, because, among the Sikh sect, tobacco is an abomination, but the strongest wine, opium and *bhāng* are allowable. He bore all this in silence. According to the new plan of campaign, the Jat army took post on the east bank opposite Delhi, the Maratha army on the same bank, but to the north of the Jats, and the Sikhs on the west bank, north and west of the capital. The Sikh horsemen were to scour the country on the north and west and cut off provisions from that side. The besieged had only the two gates towards the south open, but these faced the Jat country, and the Jat fort of Ballabhgarh barred the path in that direction.

Every day the Sikhs used to ride out, enter the old houses which lay desolate in the environs of the city and try to approach the walls. Najib's men used to fire at them from the cover of the ruined houses, and the day passed in exchange of musket fire at close range, with loss on both sides. But the Sikhs had no artillery and

therefore could not assault the fort. Najib with his rockets used to break up every group of Sikhs that was formed within range of the walls. On 25th January 1765, a great battle was fought between Najib's men and the Sikhs aided by Jats, on the hill close to the Horse market (*Nakhās*) and Sabzi-mandi. Though many men were slain and wounded, the result was indecisive as usual.

Shortly afterwards, ten thousand Naga sannyasis arrived from Oudh or Allahabad and were taken into Jawahir's pay through Umrao-gir Gosain. One day they crossed over to the southern suburbs of Delhi with a Jat force and fought a desperate battle with the Ruhelas, but were defeated by Najib's superior generalship and repulsed with heavy loss at the end of the day.

§ 19. *Peace negotiations between Najib and the Jats; Malhar Holkar's double-dealing.*

This sort of fighting continued daily till the first week of February. But though Delhi defied assault as on the first day, it was not impervious to famine. The scarcity of grain in the beleaguered city reached an extreme point, while the Jat and Maratha armies outside revelled in plenty, and even the Deccani mares in the Maratha camp grew fat on an unlimited supply of gram. Men left the city by the bridge and begged food in the Jat camp or migrated elsewhere. The Ruhela soldiers pressed Najib hard to let them make one sortie and die

sword in hand rather than perish through famine. But he held grimly on, as he knew that Jawahir had more enemies inside his own camp than within the walls of Delhi. Malhar had secretly pledged himself not to let any real harm befall Najib, his 'adopted son'. He again received considerable sums from the Ruhela. Imad-ul-mulk, once a double-dyed traitor to his imperial masters, was now equally faithless to Jawahir, who had sheltered and protected him and was now risking his all to restore him to the wazirship of the Delhi empire. The two were constantly corresponding with Najib in secret, as one of their agents, Sayyid Nur-ud-din Hasan, has described in detail in his excellent Memoirs of Najib-ud-daulah. Even Suraj Mal's old captains were in collusion with these traitors and wanted the campaign to end in failure. At last Jawahir realized that he had nothing to hope for from the faith of Malhar, the prestige of Imad, or the arms of the Sikhs and Nagas. His spirit was finally broken by the signs of lukewarmness and covert opposition from his own servants. Negotiations for peace were set on foot on 4th February and brought to a speedy conclusion. On the 9th Najib paid a visit to Malhar and Jawahir, and "ponies laden with grain came to the city in large numbers" as the first fruit of the peace. Finally, Najib was reconciled to Imad, whom he visited on the 11th, and conducted into Delhi on the 22nd (which was the first day of the

sacred month of Ramzan) for saying his Friday prayer in the Jāmi Masjid. Malhar was presented by Najib to the Heir in the palace and highly honoured; 120 of his officers received *khilats*. At last Jawahir, on 16th February marched away from the city, before the walls of which he had spent 160 lakhs of Rupees and incurred a further liability of 12 lakhs (due to the Marathas) without achieving anything at all. The peace was hastened and Malhar's desire to escape from the neighbourhood of Delhi was accentuated by the news that Ahmad Shah Abdali was about to cross the Indus and enter the Panjab for rescuing Najib. Malhar and Imad at once sent their families away to the middle Doab for safety, and themselves departed for that side on 25th February. "The Sikhs, on the day that they heard that Abdali had arrived near Lahor, went off all at once without asking leave of Jawahir."

§ 20. *Jawahir Singh crushes his refractory chiefs.*

The baffled Jat Rajah retired to his capital, disgusted with Malhar, disgusted with Imad, and furious towards his own chiefs. He refused to pay Malhar the balance of twelve lakhs still due out of the promised 22 lakhs. He drove Imad out of his shelter in Dig to the Court of the Nawab of Farrukhabad (May, 1766.)* And he

* "Imad-ul-mulk...has been obliged to quit the Jat country and retire to Farrukhabad, [arrival on 27 May 1766, *SPD.* xxvii. 133], under the protection of Ahmad Khan Bangash. One of his

set himself to crush the traitors within his own realm. To make himself independent of the Jat tribal army which adored the old stiff-necked officers of Suraj Mal's time, he took into his service foreign soldiers, especially the contingents of Samru (June 1765) and René Madec (June 1767.) Thus furnished with mercenary tools, without any conscience or sense of nationality, he arrested with the help of these foreign troops Balarām and all other leading Jats of his father's days, as well as their families and dependants. This Balarām, once the chief minister of the State, had defied his authority by not admitting him to Bharatpur (which was in Balaram's charge) nor delivering to his new master the treasure deposited there. Balarām and another Jat grandee cut their own throats in prison, in order to escape public disgrace. Some other chiefs saved themselves by giving up their all, and others again died under beating rather than yield their wealth. Mohanrām, the ex-Chief of Artillery, had been so powerful in the last reign that all the principal places were in the hands of his relatives

women, whom he loved most [Ganna Begam] had, during Suraj Mal's lifetime, given her love to Jawahir and manifested much passion for him. All had been concerted for carrying her off secretly, but Suraj Mal, being informed in time, prevented its execution...Imad [when migrating to Farrukhabad] narrowly missed leaving her a prey to the Jats again on the way; the latter, by a secret order of Jawahir and the consent of the belle, went to surprise her conductors and get her into their hands. This they undertook not far from Agra, but they failed in the attempt, as they did not apply all their force." [Wendel, 99.]

or dependants, and he was credited with having amassed 80 lakhs of Rupees in cash besides articles of value. He, too, died in prison with his son, under torture to make him divulge the hiding places of his hoards.

Jawahir next attacked the fort of Ver which was held as an appanage by Bahadur Singh, the son of Pratap Singh, a younger son of Badan Singh. After a three months' siege, the place was captured, partly by false peace parleys and partly through the treason of some of the officers of the garrison, and Bahadur was thrown into prison. This new war cost Jawahir 30 lakhs in his own expenses, besides the treasure deposited in that fort which came to be spent during the siege, (*c.* Sep. 1765.) "These acts of Jawahir Singh* spread consternation among his relatives and utterly dismayed the Jat people in general, and at the same time embittered their feelings and alienated their attachment to his person." His attempt to recoup himself for his huge loss of money in the war with Najib by seizing and squeezing all the rich Jats with whom he was dissatisfied, only made him odious to all, without bringing in more than 15 or 20 lakhs as the result of his extortion.

§ 21. *Nāhar Singh, claimant of the Jat throne; Jawahir's rupture with the Marathas, 1766.*

He now became involved with the Marathas in a quarrel which survived long after him and helped to

* Wendel, 99-104. *SPD.* xxix. 165.

ruin his State. Nāhar Singh, Suraj Mal's favourite son and Jawahir's disappointed rival for the throne, held Dholpur as his appanage. He had a most beautiful wife whom the licentious Jawahir coveted. In self-defence, Nāhar Singh strengthened the fortifications of Dholpur, threw himself under the protection of Malhar Holkar (then campaigning against the Rana of Gohad), and inspired by the Maratha general claimed the throne of Bharatpur against Jawahir, whom he denounced as a bastard born of a lowcaste mother and not of a pure Jat queen. The Marathas jumped at this prospect of a war of succession in the Jat kingdom, as in their own words, "there was no other place for money like this in India."* They had played the same mercenary part in the contest between two brothers for the throne of Jaipur.

From the Maratha camp, Nāhar Singh kept up a secret correspondence with the leading malcontents in Jawahir's State, claiming the headship of the clan as Suraj Mal's fully legitimate heir. Malhar, after having recovered Jhansi (Dec. 1765), was now (January 1766) engaged in fighting the Rana of Gohad, a Jat prince independent of Bharatpur, whose resistance was stiffened by Jawahir's promise of support. Seizing the opportu-

* *SPD.* xxix. 177. The mouth of Holkar's diwan waters at the prospect; in the course of one short letter he twice writes, "There is no place for getting money equal to this." *Chandra Dāf.* i. 164 repeats this sentiment.

Nāhar Singh—Wendel, 105-196; *Vam. Bhaskar*, 3718.

nity of interfering in the internal affairs of Bharatpur with a show of legality, Malhar sent a detachment of 15,000 horse under Sultānji Lambhāté, Makāji Lambhāté, and Sāntāji Bāblé, across the Chambal. These men looted the Jat villages from Dholpur up to the walls of Dig and Agra. Jawahir came up with his own troops and 7,000 Sikhs in his pay, and opposed Holkar's men seven kos from Dholpur (13 and 14 March, 1766.) At first the Sikh skirmishers fell back, the exultant Marathas gave chase "thinking the enemy fled," and came upon Jawahir's front line bristling with guns. The Jats now advanced firing, the Sikhs side by side with them. Towards sunset the baffled Marathas turned to retire, when the Jats charged. Many of the Marathas were killed and many hundreds of their horses taken in the ravines of the Chambal. Following up his victory Jawahir easily captured Dholpur and seized Sultanji (wounded) and all the other Maratha generals who had retired there after their defeat. It was only about 15th December next that Naro Shankar secured their release by treaty—and Malhar's successor fired a salute of artillery in honour of the event!

The Jat prince of Gohad now joined Jawahir, and the two concerted a plan of campaign against Malhar, and began to raid the Maratha possessions in north Malwa. On hearing of this disaster, Malhar sent Mahadji Sindhia and Gangadhar diwan ahead, as he himself was a dying man. Jawahir would have attacked

and probably defeated Malhar beyond the Chambal if his Sikh horsemen had not absolutely refused to follow him on account of the intolerable heat which they suffered in a grassless and totally waterless plain. In this way Nahar Singh lost his own estate, and was afterwards cast off by the Marathas as a tool no longer needed. He took refuge in Jaipur and finally at Shāhpurā, where in despair he swallowed poison, *c.* 6 December 1766. This was the sad end of Suraj Mal's Benjamin, as the Jesuit father aptly calls him.

Raghunāth Rāo Dādā came to north Malwa, and was joined by Malhar Holkar and Mahadji Sindhia near Bhānder (*c.* 24 April.) But Malhar died a month later and Mahadji was thoroughly antagonized by Dādā, so Raghunāth's efforts against Gohad failed like all his other campaigns. "After having long and uselessly attacked Gohad, Raghunath threatened Jawahir, who, proud of his success against Malhar, decided to turn the storm away by going in person to the aid of Gohad and encountering the Marathas beyond the Chambal. Recovering from a dangerous malady, he marched to Dholpur a second time for opposing Raghunath, . . . but the discovery of a treasonable collusion of his valued Gosain generals with the Marathas, obliged him to make peace."

In December 1766, Raghunath finally gave up the hopeless Gohad business and approached the Chambal for opposing Jawahir, who began to sue for terms through

Ramkrishna Mohant and Umrao-gir Gosain. The parley dragged on and no tribute was paid, though the captive captains of Malhar were set free, as a friendly turn (c. 15 Dec.) A personal interview arranged between Jawahir and Dada fell through, because of Jawahir's fear of treachery. Suspecting that his Gosain generals had secretly gone over to the Maratha interests,—they had in fact been entreating Dada to take them into his pay,—Jawahir in the night between 23rd and 24th December made a sudden attack upon the Gosain camp; some six hundred of their men were slain, but Umaro-gir, Anup-gir and Mirza-gir the three chiefs managed to escape with only 300 troopers across the Chambal and took refuge in the Maratha camp. Jawahir refused to visit Dada's camp lest his fugitive Nāgās should attack him by surprise. So, next day, the Jat Rajah turned his face from Dholpur to his own capital, while Dādā marched away towards Kerauli. By escheating the Gosains' property in Bharatpur Jawahir gained 30 lakhs.*

§ 22. *Jawahir conquers the Kalpi region, 1767.*

The Maratha attack on him, with all their forces led by the Peshwa's uncle himself, had been warded off. His domestic rival was in the grave. His disloyal Gosain troops had been crushed. These successes turned the

* *CPC.* ii. 12B *et seq.* Wendel, 105-106. *SPD.* xxix. 117, 126+127, 204, 158. *Chahar Gulz.* 473*b*-474*a* (important.)

head of Jawahir Singh. The territory of the Rajah of Ater and Bhind (20 miles west and s. w. of Etawa) had formerly been tributary to the Marathas. After the departure of Dādā and his army from the north, (Sironj reached on 16 May, 1767), Jawahir Singh invaded that region at the height of the rainy season (July) and quickly effected a conquest of all the domains of the Marathas and the petty zamindars, up to Kalpi. Throwing Balaji Govind Kher, the officer in charge of Kalpi, off his guard by friendly messages, Jawahir sent a detachment to surprise him, and Balaji had just time to escape with his family across the Betwa to a friendly Rajah. As the Maratha local agents reported, "Bhadaur, Kachhvadhar, Tomardhar, Sikarbar, Dandrauli, Khitauli, all are gone from us. Only a small tract remains, but that too has been rendered *lamp-less*. We retain Gwalior and Jhansi only; all else is under Jat rule." Jawahir established his rule in the Kalpi district, levied tribute from Datia and Seondha, and advanced up to the bridge of Narwar. From this point he turned back, declining the invitation of the Khichi chief to go further south and expel the Maratha posts from his State. Returning towards Gwalior he took the Maratha thanah of Jigni. The Rajahs of Pichhor and Gohad joined him, and he promised to clear their dominions of Maratha posts in October in case no relieving force came up from the Deccan.*

* *SPD.* xxix. 185, 149, 152, 215. *Chandra Daf.* i. 156. Wendel 106. Recovery, *SPD.* xxix. 75.

§ 23. *Jawahir visits Pushkar, fights Madho Singh of Jaipur at Maonda, 14 Dec. 1767.*

Soon afterwards Jawahir sought his doom by arrogantly provoking a war with the Rajah of Jaipur, once the overlord of his house. Mādho Singh, alienated by Suraj Mal's discourtesy and suspicions during his last years and genuinely alarmed by Jawahir Singh's manifest design to wrest the Narnol district from him, was further outraged by the incursions of the new Jat Rajah and his Sikh allies into Jaipur territory in 1765. He had intrigued, with his usual futility, with every enemy of Jawahir, and harboured Nāhar Singh, a claimant to the Jat throne, though under the strong recommendation of Malhar Holkar. And now Jawahir, intoxicated with his recent sweeping victory over the Marathas in Bundelkhand, planned to organize a grand coalition with the Rajputs for excluding the Marathas totally from the north of the Narmada. The plan broke down from his pride, recklessness and utter want of diplomacy. He demanded from Mādho Singh the surrender of Nāhar Singh's widow and children (with their hoarded treasures.) The lady refused, justly fearing Jawahir's notorious character, and the Jaipur Rajah could not forcibly expel a suppliant for asylum. Jawahir taxed him with the design of adding this beautiful widow to his harem,—the very step he himself had been contemplating. Mādho Singh gave an angry reply. Then the Jat Rajah marched with his army and a full supply of artillery

(including Sombre's and René Madec's battalions) to Pushkar, through Jaipur territory, inviting Bijay Singh of Marwar to meet him there and form the coalition. Madho Singh had warned the Jat Rajah though in vain to come slenderly attended as befitted a pilgrim and a friendly visitor. On 6th November (Kartik full moon day), Bijay Singh welcomed Jawahir on the bank of the sacred lake. The two Rajahs exchanged turbans and sat down side by side on the same carpet like full brothers, and sent an invitation to Madho Singh to come and join them. The proud Kachhwa Rajah, long the foremost Rajput vassal of the Delhi empire, was provoked beyond control by this insult. He sharply reprimanded Bijay Singh for having degraded his Rathor ancestry by admitting a peasant's son and a mere servant of Jaipur as his brother and political equal. This roused Jawahir to fury. In his march through Jaipur territory, his soldiery had looted the villages on the way and molested the people. The Kachhwa tribe could no longer restrain themselves. The long halt of Jawahir at Pushkar gave them time to assemble their tribal levy of 16,000 horse besides infantry.

The Jat Rajah with his immense force and ponderous artillery and baggage set out on return from Pushkar, and had all but reached his own country, when at Maonda, only 23 miles south-west of Narnol, the last Jaipur station near the Jat frontier, the Kachhwa army

which had been following him delivered their attack (14 December, 1767.) * Here a narrow defile lay before the Jats ; they sent their baggage ahead, covering it with the troops in the rear. The first attack of the Rajput horse in the open was repulsed by the Jats making a counter-march towards them, as the Kachhwa artillery and infantry were lagging behind. The Jats took advantage of it to enter the defile, hoping thus to escape. But the Jaipur cavalry overtook them in the middle of the pass ; the Jats made a half-turn and offered battle. The Jaipur horse after firmly standing a devastating fire from the Jat guns for some time, at last threw themselves sword in hand on the Jat army, which fled away at the first shock, crying out that all was lost and abandoning their artillery, baggage and Jawahir himself. The Rajputs immediately dispersed for plunder and an indescribable confusion raged over the scene, during which the trained battalions of Sombre and Madec kept their heads and with equal bravery and coolness maintained the battle, fighting with their backs to the rocky walls till nightfall, and thus saved Jawahir and enabled him to make an unmolested retreat, though the rest of his army had dispersed in flight. But all

* Battle of Maonda,—*Rene Madec* 49-50. Wendel 108. *Vam. Bhaskar* 3720-'27. *Chahar Gulzar*, 495*a*. *SPD.* xxix. 192. *DC. Maonda* is a railway station on the Reengus-Rewari-Delhi line, sixty miles due north of Jaipur. Wendel puts the Rajput loss at 2 to 3 thousand killed and wounded, Madec that of the two sides together at 10,000 (exaggerated.) *CPC.* ii. 789-'91.

his artillery train (70 pieces of different calibres), tents and baggage including his royal umbrella, had to be abandoned on the field. The total loss on the two sides together was about 5,000 men, the Rajputs losing two to three thousand soldiers, "mostly by artillery fire, before which they stood with astonishing firmness" ; but most of their principal chiefs fell on the field ; there was hardly a noble family in Jaipur that did not sacrifice a son or two on that day. "Dalil Singh, the commander-in-chief of the Jaipur army, fell in the fight with three generations of his descendants, and none but boys of ten remained to represent the baronial houses of Jaipur". [Qanungo, 211.]

Jawahir had saved himself and the men of his army and claimed the victory ; but it was a most Pyrrhic victory. "The fortune of the Jats has been shaken and the result has been fatal to them. They have returned home pillaged, stupefied and overthrown ; and Jawahir ... has since then only gone backwards. The country beyond the Chambal rose at the first report of that rout and is gone as quickly as it was taken. His own country is the prey of the enemy, who have followed him close."*

§ 24. *Last days of Jawahir Singh.*

Soon afterwards Madho Singh followed up his success by invading the Jat country at the head of

* Wendel, 108. He is slightly inaccurate here, as *SPD.* xxix.

16,000 men, (Madec's estimate of 60,000 is grossly exaggerated.) Jawahir had hired 10,000 Sikhs and tried hard to increase Madec's sepoy corps by adding Rs. 5,000 to his monthly pay. On 29th February 1768, a battle was fought outside Kāmā (the halting place of the Jaipur army); the Jats were defeated with the loss of 400 men killed and Dān Sāhi wounded, and they fled away with their Sikh allies. On a fresh Sikh force of 20,000 men, engaged for seven lakhs (a month), arriving, the Rajputs retreated to their own country. [Wendel, 108. *René Madec*, 50. *SPD.* xxix. 84. *CPC.* ii.] A scheme framed by the Marathas and Shuja-ud-daulah for conducting Shah Alam with a combined escort of English, Maratha, Jaipur, Ruhela and Oudh troops, to Agra, wresting that fort from Jawahir's hands, installing the Emperor at Delhi and stripping the upstart Jat kingdom of all its annexations under Suraj Mal and Jawahir, fell still-born from the wise refusal of the English to venture so far from their base. And Jawahir gained breathing space. Soon afterwards, he captured a petty Rajput baron's fort through Madec. Then, his stormy career came to an appropriately tragic end, when in July 1768 he was suddenly cut down by a favourite soldier whom he had once raised inordinately high and then disgraced. *

75 shows that his Bundelkhand conquests of July 1767 were recovered by the Marathas six weeks *before* this battle.

* *SPD.* xxix. 192. *CPC.* ii. 789, 835. *Chahār Gulzār*, 495*a* & *b* Qanungo, 213-218.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Panjab and Rajputana, 1761-1771.

§ 1. *The state of the Panjab during 1760 and 1761.*

Throughout the year 1760, when Ahmad Shah was busy campaigning in the Doab or the Delhi region, he had left the Panjab in charge of his agents, Buland Khan* the subahdar of Lahor, Abdus Samad Khan the faujdar of Sarhind, Rustam Khan the faujdar of "the Four Mahals" (Sialkot), and others. But during the campaign of Panipat (Oct. 1760—Jan. 1761) all the Durrani forces were naturally concentrated round the Shah's person, and the Sikhs finding the province so weakly garrisoned, everywhere rose with impunity. While Abdus Samad Khan was slain by the Marathas at Kunjpura (17 Oct.), the trans-Satlaj Sikhs defeated and captured Rustam Khan and Tahmasp Miskin (our invaluable memoir-writer), and these two could secure their release only by paying ransom. The victors, in a body reported by Miskin as 40,000 strong, then invested Sialkot, but the place was strongly fortified and its defence was gallantly kept up by

* Miskin 214. The traditional history of Lahor says that the governor was Karim-dād Khan; but we know that Karim-dād was present with Abdali at least from *c.* 10 Dec. 1760 to 20 January 1761.

Rustam's diwan for three days, till a relieving army under Qāsim Khan was sighted, when the Sikhs withdrew. [Miskin, 218-224.] Emboldened by the news of the Bhau's capture of Delhi and Kunjpura, the Manjha Sikhs attacked Lahor itself. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (the founder of the Kapurthala State), Jai Singh Kanhaiya, Gujar Singh Bhangi, Lehna Singh and other group-leaders assembled at the sacred tank of Amritsar on the Diwali day (6 Nov. 1760), and after concerting their plans advanced with 10,000 horsemen to loot Lahor. The Durrani governor shut the city-gates and himself retired to the citadel for safety. The Sikhs roved round the city, plundering the suburbs, stripping the houses of their timber and then setting fire to them. Many people were killed and the rest fled away. The raiders were dissuaded from breaking into the city by the governor paying a ranson of Rs. 30,000, disguised under the name of "a donation for consecrated food offering to Khālsaji." [Kanhaiya Lal, 32.]

But at the beginning of next year Ahmad Shah became free by crushing the Marathas at Panipat (14th Jan. 1761.) Then, after settling the affairs of Delhi, he left the imperial city on 20th March and reached Ambala on the 27th. Posting Zain Khan Mohmand as his new faujdar at Sarhind and granting Ala Singh Jat a rescript* confirming him in the

* Issued on 22 Shaban 1174 (29 March, 1761) under the

possession of the Patiala principality in return for a tribute of 5 lakhs, the Durrani king moved on to Lahor, arriving there on 26 April. He was indignant at the weakness of Buland Khan, which had left the suburbs of the provincial capital to be turned into a howling wilderness, and punished him with dismissal. Then, appointing Khwajah Abid Khan as subahdar of the Panjab, Abdali passed quickly on to his own country via Sialkot, to avoid a second summer in the Indian plains.

§ 2. *Abdali's campaign in the Panjab, 1762.*

As soon as the dreaded Abdali was out of the country, the Sikhs came out of their hiding places and again overran the province. Mirza Khan with a thousand men was attacked and cut off by a large Sikh force. Khwājah Abid Khan himself came out of Lahor and invested Gujranwala (43 miles northwards), where Charat Singh Sukarchakia (the grandfather of the great Ranjit Singh) had built a fort. But there was a small body of Sikh horse in the governor's employ; Charat Singh's garrison conspired with these men, fell upon

seal of Shah Wali wazir, recognising the integrity of the territory held by Ala Singh and promising to defend him if he was attacked by anybody else. Mirza Taqi was left at Patiala to collect the tribute. [Patiala State records.] I believe Ala Singh at once submitted to the victor of Panipat, without provoking a siege by him, in March-April 1761. My dates are from *DC.* and *SPD.* xxi 202.

Abid Khan's force in concert and drove him in headlong rout to Lahor, capturing all his baggage, (early January 1762.) They next routed Sadat Khan and Sādiq Khan Afridi, the Durrani faujdars of the Jalandar Doab. Their raids again made the highways unsafe, and people could travel from Sarhind to Peshawar only by making a long detour through Sialkot and the northern hills. [Miskin, 237-238.]

The news reached Ahmad Shah in Afghanistan and he hastened to the rescue of his officers in the Panjab, with a lightly-equipped cavalry force, accustomed to rapid marching. The Sikhs were then engaged in the siege of Jandiala, a city twelve miles east of Amritsar. It was the stronghold of the Niranjani sect,* who may be equally well described as dissentient Sikhs or Hindu deists,—their religion being a mixture of the tenets and rites of both these great religions. "In the conflict between the Sikhs and Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Niranjanis aided the latter . . with information. In revenge for this the Sikhs invested Jandiala. Akāldās, the Jandiala *guru*, sent off a *sawār* post haste to Ahmad Shah, who was . . . at Rohtas. He returned to their aid with a force of cavalry." [*Amritsar Gaz.* 165.]

* *Husain Shahi*, 77, says,—The residents of Jandiala "were friendly to Islam and Nanakshahi faqirs, listening to the *baug* and *sahoat*. Hard pressed by the Sikhs, they hung out shanks of beef from their fort walls."

At the report of his approach the Sikh besieging force at once vanished from the scene. Abdali halted near Jandiala for two or three days when he learnt that the Sikhs had fled to the Sarhind district, and there joining their cis-Satlaj brethren had begun to plunder the country. Zain Khan the faujdar, with Bhikhan (Hingun, according to Cunningham) Khan of Maler Kotla, Murtaza Khan Parācha, Qāsim Khan Maral and other officers, issued to oppose them, and halted at Maler Kotla, while the Sikh army lay ten *kos* to the north. In the night of 4-5 February, 1762, swift Durrani couriers came to Zain Khan and told him that the Shah had crossed the Bias and the Satlaj by unbroken rapid marches and would fall upon the flank of the Sikhs the next day, and that the Shah had ordered Zain Khan to issue next morning with all his troops and assail the Sikhs in front. But the Sikhs too had received intelligence of Abdali's approach and tried to escape from him by decamping south-eastwards. Early in the forenoon of 5th February, Zain Khan's vanguard under Qāsim Khan fell in with the Sikhs near the village of Kup (6 miles north of Maler Kotla) and was driven back in a panic flight upon its base. But another officer named Murtaza Khan Parācha (with Miskin) stood his ground on a small eminence and was joined after some time by a detachment of Ahmad Shah's horsemen. The Durrani force, in two divisions,—one under the Shah and the other

led by his wazir (with Zain Khan), moved round the two flanks of the Sikhs, slaying all they met with. The pursuit was kept up till the evening, when the tired victors reached Bharthala (10 m. n. e. of Maler Kotla) and encamped there. In the course of this running fight, some ten thousand Sikhs were slain and the day is still remembered by them as that of the *Ghallu-ghara** or great scrimmage.

After a short halt, the victor proceeded to Sarhind and encamped in the imperial Shalimar garden outside the city. From this centre he raided Ala Singh's country. The Patiala chief's tribute had evidently fallen into arrears,—or he might have assisted his Manjha brethren in their late attack on Zain Khan,—but he now deemed it politic to seek refuge in his fort of Bhawanigarh (21 miles west of Patiala.) Rajah Lachhmi Narayan, the diwan of Sarhind, assured Abdali that if Ala Singh were captured, a ransom of 50 lakhs could be easily secured from him. Guided by the diwan's local knowledge, Abdali made a forced march of 80 *kos* in the course of 36 hours and suddenly appeared

* *Husain Shahi*, 78-83; Miskin (present) 241-243; Nur-ud-din 57*a*; *Siyar*, iii. 74; Forster, i. 278; Raj. vi. 465. *Ludhiana Gaz.* 23. Cunningham, 100. A Marathi despatch written from Shāmli 20 days after the battle says that five to seven thousand Sikhs were slain, *Siyar* 'nearly 20,000', Miskin 25,000, *Husain Shahi* 30,000, Forster 25,000, Cunninghan 12,000 to 25,000. Cunningham's Barnala is *Bharthala*. "On the site of the battle there now exists a village named *Jitwal*, near Malod". [K. S. Barhat.] The Atlas gives a *Jhatiwal*, 6 m. n. w. of Maler Kotla.

before Bhawanigarh. Ala Singh gave him the slip by evacuating the fort just in time, but he felt further struggle to be useless, and submitted to the Shah through the mediation of Najib-ud-daulah, who had come to the Shah's camp on the Satlaj at his call. He secured peace by promising a large tribute and making a part payment immediately. Leaving Sarhind on 15th Feb., Abdali arrived at Lahor on 3rd March, carrying Ala Singh in his train. On the way, he razed to the ground the Sikh temple called Har Mandir built by Guru Arjun at Amritsar, and desecrated the "pool of immortality" by killing cows on its bank and throwing their bones and the *debris* of the temples around it into the water.*

§ 3. *Abdali stays in Lahor 1762, makes political settlement of Delhi empire, conquers Kashmir.*

At Lahor Abdali halted for the rest of the year, wishing to put the affairs of the Panjab in order, settle the question of the government of Delhi, and conquer Kashmir. He was sincerely anxious to ensure a general peace in Northern India by making a permanent

* Abdali against Ala S. and sack of Amritsar,—Raj. vi. 465, 382. Nur. 57*a*. Miskin 244. *Siyar*. iii. 74. Forster i. 278 *Amrit. Gax*. 150. *Husain Shahi*, p. 41, wrongly ascribes the sacrilege to Buland Khan Sadduzai and in 1757, adding that after Prince Timur's flight early in 1758 the Sikhs compelled the Muslims to cleanse the tank (p. 45.)

friendly settlement with the Peshwa. From Sarhind he had sent letters calling to his side Najib and Yaqub Ali on behalf of the empire and they promptly joined him. The Maratha envoys at Delhi, Bāpu and Purushottam Hingané, were invited by three or four letters in succession to come to Lahor. Bāpu went there soon (*c.* middle of March) and Purushottam some two months later after writing to the Peshwa and securing his approval. Diplomatic parleys opened. The Maratha envoys naturally wanted to resume the negotiations from the point of agreement reached between the Bhau and Shah Wali Khan in the days before Panipat, but no officer of Abdali knew anything of the terms proposed by the two sides at that time. Shah Wali Khan, the wise and pacific Durrani wazir, pleaded for the claims of the new Peshwa, and induced his master to recognise Madhav Rao Ballal by presenting to him, by the hands of these envoys, the *tikā* of Rajaship, the impression of his palm dipped in saffron (*keshar-pānja*), robes, jewels, horses and an elephant, and deputed his own envoy to accompany them to the Court of Puna (June. 1762.)*

While these negotiations were in train, Abdali set himself to recover Kashmir from Sukhjivan Ram Khatri, the former diwan of that province, who had thrown off the Durrani authority, and seized the governorship in the name of the Emperor of Delhi. He was an exceptionally able and upright administrator, liberal in religion,

* Raj. vi. 382, 384, 423, 425 (primary.)

charitable to the poor, a patron of poets and the financial supporter of a new history of the province. But Ranjitdev, the Rajah of Jammu, was his rival, and was induced by the Durrani wazir to come to Lahor and to undertake to guide the Durrani army of invasion by showing some undefended pass for penetrating into Kashmir. The first expedition composed of about 3000 Durrani soldiers and some Jammu auxiliaries, started in June, but returned baffled, as all the passes were found to be held too strongly for assault or surprise. A later expedition achieved complete success, Sukhjivan was defeated and taken prisoner, and Kashmir annexed to the Durrani empire. [*Siyar*, iii. 74, Raj. vi. 384.] During the autumn of 1762, Ahmad Shah called up to Lahor Najib and Yaqub Ali from Delhi and Agha Raza, Abdul Ahad, and Munir-ud-daulah from Shah Alam's Court to put the affairs of the Delhi Empire inorder and end the chaos that had followed the murder of the last Emperor. It was agreed that the Durrani king would call upon all the Indian princes, with the prestige of his authority but without lending his armed aid, to recognise Shah Alam II as Emperor and instal him in his ancestors' capital, while Najib and Munir-ud-daulah undertook on behalf of the Indian Government to pay Abdali a tribute of 40 lakhs a year. This settlement concluded, Ahmad Shah left Lahor on 12 Dec. 1762, while Najib and other Indian envoys took leave of him and reached Delhi in January 1763. [*DC.*]

Even during the second half of 1762, the Panjab was not free from internal trouble. His massacre during the Ghallu-ghara was no more successful in crushing the Sikhs than stamping on a few thousand ants can exterminate an ant-hill. On the contrary, his wanton outrage on their holiest shrine more than anything else defeated his purpose of cowing the Sikhs for ever. Hitherto that sect had greatly multiplied its converts and drawn them closely together by the need of mutual protection against the oppression and exaction of the local governors of the decadent Mughal empire. And now Afghan sacrilege roused the Sikhs to their highest exertion and united them in the closest bond by the unquenchable thirst of a vengeance that was a sacred duty. The noblest and the basest passions of the human breast were united in a national resistance to the alien from beyond the Indus and his local associates. Durrani rule in the Panjab became impossible in future.

As early as May 1762, the Sikhs reappeared in the Sarhind district. In June, Zain Khan made peace by paying them Rs.50,000, and the raiders set out on their return. But when they had marched away about 10 *kos*, Zain Khan's troops treacherously looted their rearguard. The main Sikh army then turned back, attacked him, plundered him as well as his diwan Lachhmi Narayan, and drove them to fight a pitched battle at Harnul-garh, 15 *kos* from Sarhind. [Raj. vi. 384.] During the earlier part of this year, "the roads again became open

on all sides, the danger of robbery and fear of highwaymen disappeared, because Ahmad Shah was staying in Lahor." But the province was in a miserable condition; the Jalandar Doab had been repeatedly plundered and devastated by the Shah's troops and the country on all sides of Lahor was a "lampless" solitude. [Miskin, 244-247.]

§ 4. *Sikh power revives, Zain Khan slain, 1763.*

Ahmad Shah left Lahor for his home on 12 Dec. 1762, and immediately afterwards Sikh aggression revived * and was aggravated by the misrule of his lieutenants, who, like all Afghans, had no administrative capacity or honesty, and the administration broke down on the rock of finance. The eye-witness Miskin writes, "Zain Khan departed from his former character and rules of conduct. He stopped paying his soldiers their salaries and began to live by looting the villages of his district, and giving a portion of the booty to his troops in payment of their arrears, though not amounting to one-fourth

* I follow Forster (*Journey*, i. 279), and Cunningham (102*n*) in rejecting the Sikh tradition, unsupported by any contemporary record and naturally incompatible with other known facts, that in November 1762 the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar (in a body of 60,000) for a sacred bath, and when Ahmad Shah arrived to attack them, they drove him back in headlong flight to Lahor, and in retaliation took that city after a short siege. This success was achieved not on Ahmad Shah but on his local agent, and its date was 1763.

of their dues. He planned in alliance with the hill-Rajahs to amass a fortune," probably with a view to carving a larger and more independent principality of his own out of the disintegrating Mughal empire. The starving of his soldiery, however, had the inevitable result of weakening his defensive strength and ultimately bringing about his ruin. Throughout the whole of 1763 Ahmad Shah was kept busy in his own country by a rebellion in Khurasan and could not attend to India. This was the Sikhs' opportunity. In the autumn of this year we have the final and decisive upheaval of their power. They assembled at Amritsar on Dipavali day (4 November) and vowed to restore their sacred shrine and assert their independence. They first turned against the enemy within the gates, crushed the Muslim colony (Gurdezi Afghans) of Kasur and Bhikhan Khan of Maler Kotla,—who had joined every Durrani invasion,—and then attacked Sarhind in a body 40,000 strong (December 1763.) Just before this fateful contest, Zain Khan had been abandoned by his starving lieutenants, Qasim Khan and Murtaza Khan, who had marched away in search of bread to Najib's estates in the Gangetic Doab. The faujdar of Sarhind, at the head of a small impoverished army, came out of the city and was defeated and slain, with the loss of his baggage and armament. The Sikhs, flushed with victory, entered Sarhind, and "looted and totally devastated it, turning the city upside down", and converting into an untenanted

wilderness the "accursed place which had witnessed the death of the mother and children of Guru Govind" at the hands of Aurangzib's officers. Swept on by the impulse of victory, the Sikhs crossed the Jamuna at Buriāghat and poured into the Upper Doab, plundering the Saharanpur (20 Feb. 1764), Shāmli and Kandela parganahs. Their owner, Najib Khan, fresh from the slaughter of Suraj Mal,—which paralysed his Jat enemies for the time,—hastened to the defence of his estates, and induced the raiders, by a bribe of 11 lakhs to recross the Jamuna. (February 1764.)* But it was the beginning of the annual Sikh raids into the Doab.

§ 5. *Sikhs begin to dominate entire Panjab, occupy Lahor : 1763-1765.*

In the meantime, Sikh activities in Lahor and further west had called up Jahan Khan from his master's side to the Panjab. But only a small force could be spared for him, and after he had crossed the Indus at Attock he was easily defeated (on the eastern bank of the Chinab) and driven back to Afghanistan (middle of November 1763.) Then the Sikhs attacked Lahor.†

* Miskin, 250-263. *SPD.* xxix. 55. Cunningham 102. Nur. 72*a*. Williams in *Calcutta Review*, 1875, vol. 50, p. 26.

† Kanhaiya Lal, 33-34. *DC. CPC.* i. 2174. *SPD.* xxix. 58,55 (says that the Sikhs est. their post in Lahor, Apr. 1764), 73 (Sikh sardars have gone to Amritsar, Oct. 1764 ; for *Chelaguru* read *Chakguru*=Amritsar.) xxxviii. 128.

Its Durrani governor Khwājah Abid was slain in battle, his deputy Kābuli Mal conducted the defence of the capital. The besieging Sikh army howled for the surrender of all the cow-killing butchers of Lahor to put them to death. The governor hesitated, the Sikhs broke the Delhi Gate and entered the city plundering, and then Kabuli Mal secured peace by cutting off the noses and ears of some of the butchers and turning them out of the city and also paying a large contribution to the Sikhs. This happened in February 1764, for we find Ahmad Shah back in Lahor in March next. But he could stop there for a fortnight only, and had to return to his own country in consequence of a civil war there, mutiny among his own troops, and dearth of grain. Kābuli Mal marched out for some distance to see his master off. Immediately after he had started, the three Sikh leaders Lehna Singh, Gujar Singh and Sobha Singh attacked Lahor. The masterless city capitulated on the promise of life and property being spared; the gates were thrown open. Some amount of plunder, however, took place on the first day, but the three chiefs divided the city between them and each ruled over and administered his portion as its master. Thus, peace at last returned to Lahor, but not prosperity. The city continued in desolation and misery till its revival under Ranjit Singh.

"The whole country, from the Jhilam to the Satlaj, was partitioned among the Sikh chiefs and their

followers, as the plains of Sarhind had been in the year previous." Ahmad Shah's atrocity on their holy city was now avenged in his own manner: "numerous mosques were demolished, and Afghans in chains were made to wash the foundations with the blood of hogs.* The chiefs then assembled at Amritsar, and proclaimed their own sway and the prevalence of their faith, by striking a coin with an inscription to the effect that Guru Govind had received, from Nanak, grace, power, and rapid victory—

Deg wa tegh wa fath wa nusrat-i-bedirang
Yāft āz Nānak Guru Govind Sing,

The Sikhs were not interfered with for [the next] two years." [Cunningham, 103.]

In January 1765, while Jawahir Singh, with Malhar Holkar, Imad-ul-mullk and a vast force of Sikh mercenaries, was attacking Najib Khan in Delhi, that Ruhela chief sent urgent appeals for help to Ahmad Shah. The Shah, by a rapid march,—along the southern skirt of the hills,—arrived at Mustafabad (end of February.) Here he learnt that Najib had made peace already without waiting for him, and so he in high anger at once hurried back to Afghanistan, on hearing of which

* Taken from Forster (i. 279), who adds, "The Afghans in chains were also compelled to excavate the reservoir at Amritsar, which in the preceding year they had filled up...Though the Afghan massacre and persecution must have been deeply imprinted on their minds, the Sikhs did not, it is said, destroy one prisoner in cold blood." *Husain Shahi*, 45. gives wrong year.

Najib, then on his way to Abdali's camp, returned from Ismailabad. [Nur, 92*b*. Ghulam Ali, ii. 230.]

§ 6. *Ahmad Shah's last invasion, 1767 ; Sarhind faujdari given to Patiala Rajah.*

Ahmad Shah's last expedition took place in 1767. * He reached the Bias, after overcoming the Sikh opposition on the way ; Mayā Singh submitted and paid him a visit, Charsā Singh (?) fled away to the hills, while Jassa Singh was wounded and routed (*c.* 20 January, 1767.) Internal dissension among the Sikh chiefs made Abdali's path of advance very smooth. He now sent a message to Najib Khan, ordering him to present himself with the tribute of India, now in arrears for seven years, and amounting to two *krores* and 80 *lakhs* ! Najib did not know where to find even a tenth of this vast sum. So, he sent some of his troops across the Jamuna at Ramraghat (near Karnal) and himself halted there trying to collect some revenue, and reporting to Ahmad Shah that he was soon coming (*c.* 1 Feb.)

When the Shah arrived at Ismailabad, 20 miles south of Ambala, Najib Khan waited on him, on 9th March. So, also, did the envoys of Jawahir Singh and the trans-Ganges Ruhelas ; but not one of these chiefs had the courtesy to come in person, though they owed their

* *CPC.* ii. 12Å—415 (minute and useful details.) Nur. 110*a*-112*b*. *SPD.* xxix. 165, 119. *Chahar Gulz.* 474*a*. *Husain Shahi*, 84-85.

deliverance from the Marathas to Abdali's unselfish exertions. Ahmad Bangash did not even care to send an envoy. The Shah, therefore, treated Najib with every mark of honour and personal favour. "At the Court held for receiving the Indian chiefs' agents, Ahmad Shah repeatedly inquired about Najib's health. The latter replied that in his war with Jawahir Singh, when his enemies numbered more than a hundred thousand, he had undergone much hardship and gained the victory only through this Emperor's grace, but illness and fatigue had left him very weak. Ahmad Shah asked, 'How are you now?' Najib replied, 'The sight of the Shahan-shah has made all my illness melt away'. . .Najib and Yaqub Ali used to be frequently admitted to the private audience of Ahmad Shah."

The Durrani king was at first asked to make Zabita his faujdar of Sarhind, but he was induced by his grand wazir, who had been heavily bribed by Fattu, the widow of Ala Singh, to entrust that district to Amar Singh, the grandson of Ala, with the superlative title of *Rājā-i-Rājgān,* as the only man capable of keeping the trans-Satlaj Sikhs out, on his agreeing to an annual tribute.

§ 7. *Durranis repress the Sikhs in Mani Majra; defeat Sikh raid into Mirat, 1767.*

Leaving Ismailabad on 17th March, 1767, Abdali marched back through Sarhind and Machhiwara to the northern foot hills of the Jalandar Doab, carrying Najib

in his train. "He set himself earnestly to root out and destroy the Sikhs. His vanguard used to march two or three days' journey ahead. The Sikhs in terror of his troops fled far away like crows. Whenever he got a chance, he used to seize the Sikhs who had taken refuge in places hard of access ... His own soldiers, accompanied by a contingent of Najib's Ruhelas under Afzal Khan, penetrated into the Mani Majra hills, and brought away large numbers of captive men and women from the region, but the Sikh leader escaped. Much plundered property was sold cheap in the Durrani camp, and captives also." [Nur. 110*b*.] On 11th May, Abdali from the bank of the Satlaj gave Najib leave to return to Delhi. Some days before news had reached his army that the Sikh raiders had slipped past the Durrani camp, and after fording the Jamuna at Buria-ghat had poured into Najib's jagirs in the upper Doab, and sacked Nanouta and Mirat. On account of Najib's attendance in the Abdali camp, with his brothers, sons and troops, this region had been left entirely defenceless, and Najib in bewilderment appealed to the Shah to save him, and the latter promised a considered reply at night. * "The

* It was an invariable practice with Ahmad Shah to keep the spies and idle babblers in his camp entirely in the dark about the departure and destination of his detachments, by issuing marching orders to their captains only during a hunting excursion or in the secret audience at night. This Sikh raid is best described in *CPC.* ii. and Williams, *Calcutta Review*, 1875, vol. 50, p. 27-28. *Chahar Gulz.* 475*a*. *CPC.* ii. 269, 310 (tribute paid.)

Shah, overcome by the jackal-tricks of the Sikhs, himself stopped there. When three hours of the night had passed, suddenly the noise of horses' hoofs and the tramp of soldiery was heard in the Ruhela camp. It was ascertained that sardar Jahān Khan had arrived, with 8,000 troopers by hard riding. Entering the tent of Najib, he said, 'The Shah has ordered me to take one of your sons or brothers with me and make a lightning raid into your estates. Tell me where the Sikhs are.' Najib immediately deputed Zabita Khan to accompany him. The sardar said to Zabita, 'Your head and body seem to be very soft. You have been habitually used to sitting in *palkis* and on carpets ; how will you be able to keep pace with us ?' Zabita replied, 'I too am an Afghan's son' . . . Jahān Khan asked him, 'Why are you taking an elephant with you ?' He answered, 'Wherever there is a river on the way, the sardar will cross it on this elephant's back. At midnight Jahān Khan started from that place with 5,000 horse of Zabita Khan, and in three days reached the Mirat pargana, 120 *kos* away. The Sikhs got news of it four *gharis* beforehand and decamped across the Jamuna. Those that remained behind were all slaughtered [9,000 men, according to Miskin, who was present], and much plunder was also taken. The chief of the Sikhs was slain and Baghel Singh wounded. The party returned to Abdali's halting place (on the west bank of the Satlaj) in the course of seven days." [Nur. 111-112 ; Miskin, 268.]

§ 8. *Ahmad Shah's ultimate failure; his political arrangements in Panjab.*

This long contest with a nation in arms, while no dependable ally or lieutenant could be found by him in India, at last wore Abdali out: his illness too now proved to be hopelessly intractable; his soldiers became rowdy through his frequent failure to pay them, and a large contingent of them mutinied and left for Afghanistan in open mutiny. This was destined to be the last of Ahmad Shah's Indian campaigns. He realized the limits of his power, and like a true statesman confined his ambition to the attainable. He left a contented and grateful Phulkian Sikh chieftain, with largely extended territory, in hereditary charge of the Ambala district (Sarhind-Patiala), as an agent most likely to keep order and pay the annual tribute. He himself retained hold of Peshawar * and the country west of Attock, while he abandoned the Manjha districts and central Panjab including Lahor to the Sikhs; but the Sindh-Sagar and Jech Doabs in western Panjab remained a debatable land which finally came into Sikh possession in the days of his unworthy successors.

It was recognized throughout India that after his

* In the geography of the Mughal empire, Peshawar was a part of the subah of Kabul (and not of the Panjab as now), Sarhind was attached to the Delhi subah, and the Panjab was bounded by the Indus on the west and the Satlaj on the east. See my *India of Aurangzib: Statistics Topography and Roads.*

experience in 1767, Abdali would be in no haste to visit India again. The wildest exultation filled the Marathas at the news of his internal troubles and hurried retreat. One of their agents now planned to revive their old dream of controlling the Delhi Government as the Emperor's keeper after escorting Shah Alam II to his capital, this time in coalition with the invincible English troops stationed at Allahabad and the Jat Rajah. [*SPD.* xxix. 192.] But the moral canker that was eating into the vitals of the Puna Court put off the pursuit of this policy in the North.

The historian of Delhi is no further concerned with the internal history of the Panjab province after this date, as it now ceased to be a jumping-off ground for Afghan invasions of Northern India, though the fear of such invasions continued to haunt the Indian rulers for a generation after, even down to Lord Wellesley's time. No doubt, trans-Satlaj Panjab continued to send Sikh raiders almost every year into the Doab and the Delhi-Hariana country, but they should be treated as private bands of forayers and not the organised forces of a State engaged in regular warfare with the empire of Delhi.

§ 9. *The repercussion of Panipat upon the Rajput States, 1761.*

In December 1759, Malhar Rao Holkar had wrested the fort of Barwādā from the usurper Ratan Singh

Kachhwa (the son of Fath Mal Kusalath) and restored it to its original owner Jagat Singh Rathor, and then left Rajputana to encounter Abdali near Delhi, [Ch. 18 § 10.] On the way his men looted Chatsu and some other places in the Jaipur kingdom [*Vam. Bh.* 3667.] Thereafter a full year had passed without any Maratha general being free to visit Rajputana. Panipat saw the annihilation of the Maratha armies of the North in January 1761, and the repercussion of it* was a revolt against Deccani domination everywhere in Hindustan,—in the Gangetic Doab, Bundelkhand, Rajputana and Malwa alike. Everywhere the dispossessed or humbled original chieftains, and even petty landlords, raised their heads and talked

* Ahmad Shah after his victory entered Delhi and sent off letters to the Rajput Rajahs calling upon them to join him with tribute and troops for driving the Marathas out of the empire. [Original *farman* preserved in Jodhpur.] Madho S. of Jaipur was ordered to present himself with one *Kror* of Rupees. On receiving this summons, he in alarm appealed to the Peshwa, then in Malwa to come to Bundi, where Madho promised to unite with him after assembling all the other Rajputs. The Peshwa's reply was a stern rebuke for Madho S's coquetting with the anti-Maratha Muslim powers in the past: "You first come to Ajmir taking Bijay S. with you. The Bhau assured you of the possession of, Ranthambhor; he pardoned all your offences at Malhar's intercession. Let bygones be bygone. You are a leading Hindu. In the past you were kindly favoured by us. [But] you relied on him [Najib or Abdali.] Well, ultimately you Rajput Hindus ought to take heed. If the foreigners defeat us, we retire beyond the Narmada; I do not now fear Abdali, [but Rajputana has no escape from him.]" *Pur. Daf.* i. 402 (23 Feb. 1761.)

of shutting the southern invaders out of their country in future. But it all ended in talk; union was impossible among the countless separate caste and tribal chiefs of these regions, and no great leader arose to unite the ancient Hindu baronage of the North and win their freedom.

For three or four months after Panipat the situation was most critical for the Marathas north of the Vindhyas; everywhere they were pushed to the wall, without a single friend or dependant. Though by April next some 40,000 soldiers had been assembled in the Gwalior region and further south, out of the wreck of their northern army and local garrisons, these were beaten leaderless troops and their prospect was darkened by the approaching dissolution of Balaji Rao Peshwa, the insolvent Puna Government's attempt to escheat the property of the generals who had fallen at Panipat (in order to recover the collections made by them in their late North Indian campaigns on behalf of Government and the advances from the State Treasury they had taken for equipment), and the family quarrels, delay and vacillation which took place in appointing a successor to Jankoji as the head of the Sindhias. These serious difficulties of the Marathas ought to have been the Rajputs' opportunity, but Rajah Madho Singh's lack of character, quarrels with his feudal barons, and above all his chronic antagonism to Bijay Singh of Marwar, the only other Rajput prince that counted for anything,—prevented him from taking

advantage of this situation, and within less then twelve months of Panipat the tables were completely turned against the Rajputs. This was the achievement of Malhar Rao Holkar, the sole "elder general" of Baji Rao's time now left.

§ 10. *Anti-Maratha movements in Rajputana, 1761.*

As a Maratha agent in Rajputana reported to the Peshwa in May 1761, "All the Rajahs and Rajwādās have turned against us ... The Rajputs are showing too much cheek." [*SPD.* xxix. 81.] But Malhar on return from Panipat, recouped himself at Gwalior for a short while, rallied other bands of fugitives from that fatal field, and then came to his capital Indor. He found it necessary to set out immediately for restoring his authority in the border tract between Malwa and Rajputana. A Chandrawat baron had seized Rāmpurā, which was in Malhar's jagir; but early in May, before Malhar's arrival, Krishnaji Tandev (an officer of Shantaji Wagh and revenue collector of Mahantpur) had defeated the Chandrawat and retaken Rāmpurā, slaying six or seven hundred Rajputs and capturing there the Rajput's diwan as well as Mir Baqā (a son of Qamr-ud-din Khan of Delhi, whom the Chandrawat had been holding to ransom in that fort.) Three days after this success, Malhar reached Ghukhedi in the Hada country, and

then advanced to Ganguri (120 miles north of Indor) where Abhay Singh Rathor, an officer of the Rao of Kota, had seized the fortalice, driven out the Maratha collectors and was causing disturbances. Malhar at once invested the place ; but twenty days passed away without any result, and then he received the artillery he had sent for from Indor, bombarded the place, and took it promptly (early in June.) These rapid successes had the immediate effect of overawing the whole province of Malwa, and Malhar moved on to Kakdā in Mewar territory in order to put pressure on the Maharana and secure payment of the old tribute of $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs a year that he had repudiated.*

All this time Madho Singh of Jaipur had been intriguing how to overthrow Maratha predominance in Rajputana. He sent envoys to Najib Khan, Yaqub Ali, and Shah Alam II to negotiate for an anti-Maratha coalition. Then, under the advice of his favourite minister Shāmrām Trivedi, he sent two forces of 4000 and 5,000 men under Raj Singh Chauhan and Nandlal diwan respectively to raid the villages of his refractory vassal Sardar Singh of Uniara (a Nārokā.) Madho himself issued from his capital, and after marrying at Ratlam (on 14 May), went towards Uniara to terrorize

* Marathas in Rajputana, first half of 1761,—*SPD.* xxvii. 114, 267, 269, 271. xxix. 81. Oct-Nov,—*SPD.* xxvii. 276. xxix. 16-22. Raj. VI. 563. *Ganguri* or *Gagroni*, 9 m. w. of Khilchipur.

his vassal into paying tribute. Many other Rajput chiefs joined him, or promised to do so, such as the lords of Sopar (Indra Singh), Bundi, Kota, Kerauli and Khichi. He took up an attitude of open defiance to the Marathas: "The Rajah is determined to oppose us strongly. All the Shekhawats are coming ... All the Rajahs and Rajwadas have planned to assemble at one place and form a grand political coalition." The approach of the rainy season compelled Malhar to put off his punishment till the next autumn, when the contest was fought to a quick decision. [*SPD.* xxix. 81. xxi. 91.]

§ 11. *Malhar Holkar defeats Jaipur army at Mangrol, 29 November, 1761.*

Late in October 1761, Madho Singh assumed the offensive by sending a force, 10,000 strong, to besiege Nenvé (held by a Maratha garrison under Sadashiv Gopal), while another detachment led by Keshav Rao crossed the Chambal and penetrated to Patan (Keshorai Patan, 12 miles north-east of Kota city), raiding the neighbouring district (early November.) Malhar, hearing of it, marched from Indor to the Mukandara pass (13 Nov.) with 6,000 men (partly his own contingent and partly the Sindhia family force led by Khanaji Jadav and Chinto Krishna). At Bāriyā, in the Kota territory, he was joined by 3,000 Rajput allies under Akheram Pancholi the diwan of Kota, the youthful Zalim

Singh, and the Rao Rajah's foster-brother. The Kachhwa army besieging Nenvé fell upon their main body at Patan, raising it to a strong force of 10,000 men with an abundant supply of artillery, rockets and camel-swivels ; their leaders were Raj Singh Ghorchara, the two diwans Kaniram and Nandlal, and Surat Singh Shiva-Brahma-potā. Before this imposing array, the Maratha outposts in the Hada country were evacuated in terror aud their tenants were helplessly abandoned to plunder.

Malhar promptly marched up and offered them battle between Mangrol and Bhātwara. The two armies came into touch in the afternoon of 28th November and immediately began an exchange of fire which lasted till three hours after sunset. All that night the Maratha soldiers lay with their arms at their sides and their horses saddled ready, surrounding the Jaipur army. Next day the battle raged from the morning and ended near sunset in the total destruction of the Jaipur army. Most of their high officers, including the supreme commander, fled away wounded, Saligram Shah fell, and all their guns with two elephants, many horses and camels, and their entire camp and baggage were abandoned to plunder. Large numbers of prisoners were taken, and out of that army of 10,000 men only 400 fled away, if we can take the Maratha figures. The Sindhia family contingent fought well and boasted of their feat here as if it could wipe out the disgrace of

their flight from Panipat. Malhar's skin was grazed by a bullet.*

The victory was decisive; it at once destroyed all chance of forming an anti-Maratha coalition, and restored Maratha prestige, which had been eclipsed as the result of Panipat, throughout Hindustan. Madho Singh, who had gone to Ranthambhor after sending his army to the fight, now fled to Jaipur. His favourite Shāmrām Trivedi, who had evaded the campaign by frankly confessing, "My business is not war; the diwan is going," now set himself earnestly to the defence of the capital. The garrison of Amber fort was strengthened; Guru Shah (*bakhshi*) himself took post below that ancient capital to hold the way leading up to it.

* *SPD.* ii. 5,6. xxi. 92-94. xxix. 27. Tod repeats the Rajput tradition that this battle (named by him after (*Batwara*) was won solely by Zalim Singh and the Kota contingent, while Malhar merely looted the Kachhwa camp! The detailed and absolutely contemporary Marathi despatches disprove this story. The Kota contingent of 2,500 men could not have routed the Kachhwa army of over 10,000 horse, equipped with artillery shutarnals, jizails and rockets borne on camels, and flushed with their recent success in the trans-Chambal region. The severe contest waged for nine hours by Malhar and the Sindhia family contingent than under his banners, shows that the Marathas bore the brunt of the fight and that Zalim Singh played a very minor part. That there was no swift panic flight of the Jaipur army is proved by their exceptionally large proportion of casualties.

Mangrol, 35 miles n. e. e. of Kota, on the east bank of the Banganga, while *Bhatwara* (*Tod's Butwarro*) stands four miles south of Mangrol, but on the west bank.

Block-houses were set up in Amber and Jaipur alike, with strong bands of musketeers; outlying detachments were hurriedly recalled to the capital. The royal family was removed to Amber for safety, while Madho Singh continued at Jaipur with light equipment, in the deepest anxiety. This sudden failure of all his plans almost unhinged his mind, and his temper "went out of control." The wise old diwan Kanirām immediately reopened negotiations with the Maratha general to settle the dispute about the outstanding tribute. After a few days' halt at Mangrol, Malhar pursued the fugitives to Khopra (? Kāpran) and then halted at Manoharpur (40 miles north of Jaipur), to enforce his demand for tribute. Agents of Jodhpur Kota and Bundi also reached his camp.

While these negotiations were dragging their customary slow length along and the Maratha horse was subsisting by raids on the Jaipur villages, an unexpected diversion came to the relief of Madho Singh in the form of the invasion of Bundelkhand by the Emperor Shah Alam II and his new wazir Shuja-ud-daulah, their prompt capture of Kalpi (January 1762) and Jhansi (1 Feb.), the uprising of all the Bundela chieftains against Maratha rule, and the treason of three Maratha local agents who went over to the Muslim invaders. Holkar was compelled to turn away from Rajputana to the eastern side from which frantic calls for help were reaching him. He left Jaipur territory, by way of

Nandgaon, Sākore and Pataudi (17 Feb.) for Jhansi. But that fort had already been lost to the Marathas. So, he turned back *via* Sanganer (27 Feb.) to Indor, as his wound had festered, making him very weak and reduced in health, with the result that he was given no bath for three months. His retreat disheartened all the Maratha officers and partisans in that country. *

§ 12. *Maratha interests in Rajputana neglected, 1762-1764.*

Throughout the whole of 1762 and 1763 the Maratha power in the North was paralysed by the events at home,—Nizam Ali's invasion of Maharashtra and sack of Puna, Raghunath Dada's desertion to the enemies of his house and the civil war between him and the new Peshwa. It was only after the decisive defeat of the Nizam at Rakisban (10 Aug. 1763) that the Puna Government was free to attend to their interests in Hindustan. It also took a long time before the young Peshwa's advisers could recognise the fact that Mahadji Sindhia was the coming man and that their delay in filling up the vacancy caused by the death of Jankoji and their fatuous policy of appointing two heads to the

in Rajputana or Bundelkhand impossible, and thus things lingered on till his death (26 May 1766), when new and younger actors entered the northern scene as leaders of the Holkar and Sindhia families and Maratha pressure on Rajputana was resumed with effect. But two years before that time, the contest was complicated by the entrance of another factor, the Jat Rajah Jawahir Singh, who openly challenged the power of Jaipur and flung himself amidst the inter-State disputes of Rajputana. Throughout Jawahir Singh's blood-feud with Najib Khan (1764-1765), Madho Singh wisely courted Najib's friendship as a check on the insolent Jat Rajah on his western flank.

Early in October 1764 we find Malhar Holkar revisiting Rajputana, at Jobner (13 miles east of Sambhar), in order to put pressure on Madho Singh for payment. Soon afterwards, in response to the Peshwa's instructions and a large daily subsidy paid by Jawahir, he left to join that Jat king in his attack upon Najib in Delhi and the Gangetic Doab. Nothing came of this alliance through Malhar's treacherous collusion with Najib, his 'foster son', and Jawahir had to make an unsatisfactory peace with the Ruhela (Feb. 1765), after having wasted his treasures on the mercenary chief of Indor. Malhar was next lured by Shuja-ud-daulah to oppose the English, and met his doom at Kora on 3rd May, at the hands of Sir Robert Fletcher. His only activity before his death on 26 May 1766 was in the

Gohad district early in that year. He had clearly outlived his usefulness.

Madho Singh, realizing that he could not succeed by arms against the Marathas and faced with the new danger of Jawahir Singh's hostility backed by all the European-drilled troops and Sikh mercenaries that the Jat king's enormous wealth supplied, very wisely set himself to conciliate the Marathas as his only protectors. He made friends with Holkar, most probably by bribing Holkar's diwan, and agreed to make a reasonable settlement of his long-standing arrears of tribute through Malhar's friendly mediation. As the Peshwa's agent wrote in September 1765, "At Malhar's instance we are treating the Jaipur Rajah with every tenderness and consideration, but Mahadji Sindhia has been dunning him for the arrears . . . This Court moves very slowly and protracts business." However, before the end of that year he paid the current instalment of five lakhs, and proposed to issue orders on bankers for the balance. [*SPD.* xxix. 99, 107, 108, 102.]

§ 13. *Jawahir Singh's attack on Jaipur, 1765-1767.*

A vast Sikh army (25,000 strong) led by Jassa Singh Tara Singh and two other sardars, in the pay of Jawahir Singh, penetrated into the Jaipur kingdom by way of Rewari, and joined by the Jat Rajah began to plunder the realm unopposed (late Dec. 1765.) Dulerai (the bakhshi) and Jaychand (the Khan-i-saman) had been then

sent from Jaipur to invest the fort of Kanaud which was being held by Ratan Singh Khangarot, a rebel against the Jaipur Government. The Sikh invaders arrived on the scene and encamped seven *kos* from the Kachhwa siege lines. Their strength was overwhelming, and Madho Singh in utter helplessness appealed to Malhar and Mahadji to come to his aid. A Sindhia contingent, some 5,000 horse, under Achyut Rao Ganesh, which was plundering near Kishangarh, on being promised Rs. 5000 daily, hastened to Jaipur. This prompt intervention of the Marathas upset Jawahir's plans and he patched up a truce with the Jaipur Rajah through Nawal Singh. The Sikhs were promised a subsidy and sent back to their homes, while Jawahir returned to Kumbher. Achyut, arriving near Fāgi, found that there was no work for him; the Jaipur general Raj Singh Ghorcharā gave him and his officers presents and put them on the way of return to Mahadji. During their march these Maratha allies "were beyond their officers' control, plundered the country and devastated the crops."

The detachment under Dulerai bakhshi was now recalled from Kanaud to Jaipur, March 1766. [*SPD.* xxix, 72, 99, 102, 105, 107. xxvii. 109.]

The insolent challenge of the young Jat Rajah continued as the dominant factor of Jaipur history till the death of the two principals,—Madho Singh on 6 March 1768 and Jawahir Singh four months later. In 1765 Sombre (Walter Reinhard) with his well-drilled

contingent of a thousand men left the service of Madho Singh for that of the Jat Rajah. Next year (*c.* June) Jawahir received a more valuable accession to his strength in the person of the able and honest French mercenary René Madec. But Jawahir's career was foredoomed to failure from his wilful character. He quarrelled with everybody else. After provoking Madho Singh by invasion and insult, he in November 1767 dreamt of building up a coalition with all the Rajput States and expelling the Marathas from Rajputana and even Malwa! And yet he gave fresh offence to Madho Singh which resulted in his disastrous defeat near Pushkar (14 Dec. 1767) and another reverse near Kāmā (29 Feb. 1768.) These affairs we have treated in the chapter on Jat history. [Barbe, p. 43. *SPD.* xxix. 128, 162, 162*a*, 84.]

After the death of Madho Singh, the Peshwa demanded a succession fee (*tikā nazar*) from his heir Pirthi Singh, as if the Brahman minister of the Rajah of Satara had become the lord paramount of all India. [*SPD.* xxix. 248.]

§ 14. *Mewar and the Marathas, 1761—1766; the tribute promised.*

We now turn to the doleful history of Mewar during these ten years. The reign of Raj Singh II (1754-1761) was a long minority during which his weak and helpless State received repeated visitations from Maratha generals

and had to buy them off every time. On 3rd April 1761 Ari Singh II succeeded to this impoverished heritage, and though he was of ripe age and reigned for twelve years, his violent fits of anger, ungovernable temper, and insolent demeanour led to a general rebellion of his vassals and the breakdown of law and order throughout the State, which continued for half a century and was ended only by the establishment of British paramountcy and British peace.

The annual subsidy promised in writing by the Maharana to Baji Rao in 1736 [Ch. 6 § 11] had long ago fallen into arrears and then been repudiated by the Udaipur Government. In April 1761 the Peshwa wrote to Malhar Holkar urging him to march his army to Udaipur to add weight to the Maratha envoy's demand for this subsidy, and also to squeeze ten or even twenty lakhs of Rupees out of the new Maharana as his succession-fine. [*SPD.* xxix. 269.] But Malhar was detained in the Hada country till the rains by his entanglement at Gagroni, and thereafter, in November, by his war with Jaipur. During 1762 and 1763 no Maratha general could turn to Mewar for the reasons already given. During 1764 and the first part of 1765, Jaipur engrossed their attention.

In July 1765, Mahadji Sindhia advanced from Ujjain to Kota, settled the Rao Rajah's tribute at 15 lakhs, out of which $5\frac{3}{4}$ lakhs were to be paid in cash and a quarter lakh in elephants and horses immediately. Only after

this instalment had been paid was the Rao allowed to visit Mahadji and embrace him "like a brother." Sindhia then (August) marched to Bundelkhand at the call of Malhar, who was besieging the fort of Mot. His diwan Achyut Rao Ganesh stayed behind with 10,000 men and collected the Udaipur tribute (5 lakhs) and smaller sums from Shahpurā and Rupnagar (November) actually in the form of bankers' bills, and then passed into Kishangarh territory in order to put pressure on Pahar Singh, who had turned refractory, and whose territories were now plundered (December.) [*SPD.* xxix. 96, 99, 108, 102, 105.]

The financial settlement between Mewar and the Peshwa in 1766 is clearly set forth in the official records of the Puna Government :—

The Maharana agreed, through his minister Chimanlal Munshi and the Maratha agent Govind Krishna, that his liability up to the end of the year 1765-66 was	Rs. 11,80,221
Malhar Holkar in 1764-65 fixed the Mewar tribute at 25 lakhs, out of which Holkar was to get 5 lakhs, Sindhia 3 lakhs, and the Peshwa	17,00,000
The annual subsidy promised in 1736, this year's amount	1,50,000
	30,30,221

From this total, the Peshwa at the entreaty of Chimanlal Munshi and on the promise of punctual payment in future, abated	4,00,000
Net total due ...	26,30,221

This sum was to be realised in quarterly instalments in four years, namely 11 lakhs in 1767, and about 5 lakhs each in the next three years. Every succeeding year the $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of the old stipulated subsidy were to be collected in addition to the above instalments. Holkar and Sindhia were ordered to collect their shares (5 and 3 lakhs respectively) in four years by instal ments, and not to take one pice in excess. [Vad, ix. pp. 266-269.]

The Rajput tradition given by Tod, that in 1764 "Malhar invaded Mewar, advanced as far as Ontala, where Arjun Singh and the Rana's foster-brothers met him and negotiated for the payment of 51 lakhs of Rupees" is unsupported by history. The Maharana had not 51 lakhs to spare, and if Malhar had actually collected such a vast sum the Peshwa would have taken the lion's share of it and there would have been an entry about it in the account-books of the Peshwas which are still preserved. The correct transaction is set forth above. The Maharana's actual payment was five lakhs (not 51 lakhs), made in November 1765 (not in 1764), and to Sindhia's diwan (not to Malhar Holkar.)

Tod's tradition really refers to Tukoji Holkar, who went to the siege camp of Mahadji Sindhia between Bhaurasa and Ontala in May 1769; but what he obtained we shall see later.

§ 15. *War of succession between Ari Singh and Ratan Singh, Maratha intervention in Mewar, 1769.*

The next Maratha visitation to Mewar took place in 1769 and was brought about by dissensions between the Maharana and his vassals, the curse of every Rajput State when there was no outlet of foreign war. Ari Singh II's wild temper and foul tongue had estranged the highest nobles of the land, and they set up a rival for the throne in the person of Ratan Singh, falsely reputed to be a posthumous son of the late Maharana Raj Singh II, who had died in 1761 at the age of 18. The Rajput tradition runs that Ari Singh, by the advice of Zalim Singh of Kota (then a refugee at his Court), bought for 20 lakhs the support of two Maratha generals Raghuji Pagawala and Daula Mian,—while the pretender hired the arms of Mahadji Sindhia by promising $1\frac{1}{4}$ *krores*, and that Ari Singh's partisans attacked Sindhia and the pretender on the bank of the Sipra and pushed them back to the gates of Ujjain, where, however, the assailants were routed with heavy loss and Zalim Singh was taken prisoner (13-15 January, 1769.) This story finds no support in recorded history, and from the

distance between Ujjain and Udaipur seems to me to be incredible.

Early in May 1769, Mahadji Sindhia marched from Ujjain to Udaipur in order to back the cause of Ratan Singh; he encamped at Bhaurasa, 16 miles east of the Sisodia capital. Tukoji Holkar went to Kota, but at Mahadji's request joined the latter with 2,000 men, leaving the rest of his army at Sopārā (*c.* 10 May.) The two rival lords of Malwa immediately fell to quarrelling about the policy and conduct of the war, as their predecessors had done before them. Mahadji, though hired by Ratan Singh, was induced by Yashwant Rao Bāblé to discard that pauper and come to terms with Ari Singh as the party more likely to yield money. At first it was agreed between the two that Ari Singh would undertake to pay 35 lakhs (25 lakhs to the Peshwa and 10 lakhs to the two sardars) and that the Marathas in return would withdraw from the State and abandon the pretender's cause. But Mahadji soon afterwards changed his mind and left everything in confusion. He merely sat down before Udaipur without investing the city. As Tukoji Holkar complained in his letter of 2 June, "I told Mahadji, 'You have not yet run trenches. The rainy season is at hand. The Jat expedition is before us. Let us leave 2,000 of your men and the same number of mine here and march away. If we can cut off the grain and fodder supply of Udaipur, the work would be easily accomplished and the country would come

under our control.' But Sindhia did not agree . . . His mind changes every hour." So, Tukoji in disgust left the camp at Bhaurasa on 2 June and marched back to his own station in Kota.

Twelve days later we have a similar report from Sindhia's camp: "The siege of Udaipur is being slackly conducted. Mahadji can take the city any day that he pleases to deliver an assault. The city contains 5,000 infantry, grain is selling there at two seers per Rupee, but the inmates can get out of it without difficulty. Our guns are not being fired; our trenches are not being carried up to the walls; no effort is being made to capture Udaipur and seat Ratan Singh on the *gadi*. Yashwant Rao Bāblé had taken from the Rajputs a bond for 10 lakhs payable to the Peshwa in $1\frac{1}{2}$ months, written in favour of the Peshwa. But Mahadji is not trying to make him give us orders for the payment of this money. The time is about to expire, but no prospect of realising it is in sight. An envoy from the Sikhs has come to Bāblé, offering to join with 40,000 of their men and punish both the Jat Rajah and Najib Khan. . .Mirza Rahim Beg enjoys the full confidence of Pātil Bābā, and prevents overy undertaking from maturing."

Towards the end of July the negotiations promised to come to a conclusion, and it was reported from Mahadji's camp that the contribution from Udaipur had been settled at 64 lakhs,* in addition to which Ari Singh had

* Out of this indemnity, 33 lakhs were provided immediately,—

promised to alienate $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs worth of land in favour of Ratan Singh and five lakhs for Mahadji Sindhia. The attempt to take 64 lakhs of Rupees in cash from the kingdom of Mewar in its then condition was as hopeful of success as a plan to draw blood out of stone. It only left a sore perpetually open between the Maharana and the house of Sindhia. At the end of September, Mahadji at last marched away from the neighbourhood of Udaipur, for aiding Tukoji Holkar, who was then engaged in the siege of Raghogarh in Khechiwara. [*SPD.* xxix. 87, 233-245.]

§ 16. *Foreign relations of Marwar, 1761–1767.*

Marwar enjoyed a long peace so far as freedom from foreign incursion could give it peace. Bijay Singh's unwarlike character and failure to bind his nobles to his side by bold leadership and politic treatment prevented him from entering into any ambitious scheme of conquest or defensive coalition. His one absorbing anxiety was to

8 lakhs in cash, and 25 lakhs in gold, silver, jewels and orders on tributary chiefs. For the balance ($30\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs) the districts of Jawad Jiran Nimach and Morwan were set aside, to be administered jointly by the officers of the Maharana and the Peshwa. This arrangement continued till 1774. (Tod, i. ch. 16.) The Rajput version puts the indemnity at 60 lakhs for the Peshwa and $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs for Sindhia's secretaries; and adds that Zalim Singh was ransomed for Rs. 60,000, and Ratan S. got jagirs yielding Rs. 75,000 a year in Mandesor. Full terms in Ojha, 962—967. I follow the *contemporary* Marathi records.

guard himself from Madho Singh of Jaipur who had given refuge to Ram Singh, the dethroned king of Marwar, and was openly threatening to restore him by force. But the Jaipur Rajah's entanglement with the Marathas and the Jat king and thereafter with his nobles, made it impossible for him to undertake any expedition against Bijay Singh, and the latter breathed freely. Quarrels with his headstrong and disloyal nobles weakened Bijay Singh no less than his enemy of Jaipur, and left both an easy prey to Maratha aggression. Every time a Maratha army entered their territory, the Rajput Courts without a single exception, held parleys with it, gained as much time as possible, and finally agreed to a subsidy the actual payment of which was beyond their capacity and against their real wishes. Something was paid after long higgling and threats by the Maratha residents and the invaders were bought off for the time.* "Procrastination is the sole policy of these States," as one of these tribute-collectors wrote

* In Nov. 1765, Achyut Ganesh (Sindhia's diwan) installed, by order of the Peshwa, Govind Krishna as qiladar of Ajmir fort *(vice* Bāpuji Tākpir, dismissed for defalcation) and was about to set out for Marwar, when Yashwant Bāblé intervened for a peaceful settlement; Chāran Alā Karn agreed to pay 10 lakhs, which Bijay Singh ratified, and gave bonds for the tribute due, and thus averted the invasion. Before Achyut could collect any portion of this money, he had to hasten to Jaipur to help Madho S. against a combined Sikh-Jat army, and thereafter he was hurriedly summoned to Sindhia's side in the Gwalior district. [*SPD.* xxvii. 109, xxix. 99, 102.]

with bitter truth. Ajmir had been ceded to the Marathas in 1755 and continued to be held by them. This inglorious and monotonous course of Marwar history was varied in 1767 by the visit of Jawahir Singh to Pushkar, where Bijay Singh met him by invitation (6 Nov. 1767.) On the bank of the lake sacred to the Divine Creator, Jawahir and Bijay Singh exchanged turbans in sign of full brotherhood and vowed to wage a joint war of Rajputs and Jats for crushing the Marathas and Najib Khan in Hindustan. Bijay Singh invited Madho Singh to come to Pushkar for cementing this coalition. But the proud Kachhwa chief replied, sternly rebuking the head of the Rathor clan for having degraded himself by sitting on the same bench with "a silly Jat, a tenant of the house of Jaipur, who had always come to our feet on the receipt of our summons. Only the Maharana, the Rao Rajah and yourself are my peers." This letter threw Jawahir into a paroxysm of rage and he plunged headlong into a war with Jaipur which nearly ruined him. [*Vam. Bh.* 3720, *SPD.* xxix. 162.]

§ 17. *Reflections on Rajput decadence.*

The impact of European civilization and of the European military system on India in the middle of the 18th century hit the Rajput warrior class hardest of all. [Ch. 6 § 1.] Their arms and method of fighting proved manifestly out of date. Their strict isolation within the narrow and obscure nooks of their homeland prevented

them from acquiring the new knowledge or moving with the times. In their ignorance some of their princes vainly sought to strengthen themselves by hiring mercenaries with a thin tincture of European military knowledge and led by officers with second-hand European training. Every Portuguese half-breed, or even a pure Native Christian of Goa when dressed in a cast off European military costume, was believed to be a master of the new war, and was commissioned to raise a sepoy battalion for the local Hindu prince and thereby deepen the insolvency of his State, without really adding to its strength in any way.

For the Rajput chief or *thākur*, cooped up within his ancestral fort, nothing now remained, but to nurse his 'pride, poverty, and pedigree a yard long.' But to the famished Scottish laird salvation came in the course of the expansion of the British empire in this very second half of the 18th century. Many a Scottish estate was freed from encumbrances, more than one barony endowed in that rugged land out of the spoils of Seringapatam and Bharatpur, Lucknow and Delhi, or from the princely remuneration of high office filled in the East under less stormy circumstances. Such a door of relief was, however, closed to the stay-at-home caste-bound Kshatriya lordling of Hindustan. The houses of Jaipur and Bikaner had sprung to first-rate rank in Rajasthan as helpers in the making of the Mughal empire ; but this race supplied not one lieutenant in England's conquest of the East.

CHAPTER XXV

Shah Alam's Wanderings, 1758-1771.

§ 1. *Shah Alam II, his character.*

When the Emperor Alamgir II fell under the assassin's knife (29 Nov. 1759), his eldest son and expected successor, Prince Shah Alam, was a homeless wanderer on the face of the earth, still lying under the public ban of imperial repudiation which the domineering wazir had extorted from his terrorised father. More than twelve years were to pass before his wanderings ceased and he entered the throne-city of his fathers as sovereign. During this period the capital remained kingless, but there was no interregnum, as Shah Alam had proclaimed himself Emperor and celebrated his accession in his camp (23 Dec.) as soon as he heard of his father's demise, and the legal rights of sovereign belonged to him, though he had not the means of exercising his full royal power in practice. There was no rival Emperor in the realm, except for the nine months (30 Nov. 1759—10 Oct. 1760) when a puppet of Imad-ul-mulk occupied the Delhi palace under the title of Shah Jahan II.

Mirzā Abdullah, better known by his titles of Ali Gauhar (conferred on 16 Aug. 1754) and Shah Alam

(conferred on 24 April 1756 and borne as Emperor), was the eldest son of Alamgir II. At the time of his father's death he had just completed his 30th year. Though he was not gifted with the extraordinary genius and energy required in the redeemer of a fallen monarchy, he was the ablest of the princes of Delhi then alive. The life of neglect and captivity that he had shared with his father till the age of 25 had prevented him from acquiring experience of men and affairs, or developing his latent faculties. But his character was as yet free from vice and sloth. He had learnt self-control in the school of adversity and was willing to improve himself by study and inquiry. Above all, he had not yet fallen under the deadly benumbing influence of that vacuity of life which springs from a sense of the impotence of one's position and the futility of all attempts to better one's lot, and which drives its victim into utter indolence and self indulgence as his only solace.

He had tasted misery and hardship, not only during his first twenty-five years as the prisoner of a rival royal branch, but even after his father's accession, when he had to flee away from the jealous fury of the all-powerful wazir. Nor was he without some experience of office administration and warfare, though it was for too short a time and in too small a sphere. The French captain Jean Law, who was often with him from 1758 to 1761, draws a pleasing picture of the young prince.

He writes, "The Shāhzāda 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 inquiring mind, naturally gay and free in his private society, where he frequently admits his principal military officers in whom he has confidence." [*Mémoire*, 329.]

§ 2. *Cause of Shah Alam's failure ; the moral decay of the Mughal nobility.*

In short, Shah Alam's character at this time was one of promise. Given proper instruments and favourable circumstances he might have succeeded in restoring the Delhi monarchy. But it was the tragedy of his life that he was called upon to set right a world that was out of joint morally even more than politically. Nowhere could he find a single faithful friend or able lieutenant. All the men who gathered round him during his struggle for a kingdom were selfish men, shady adventurers, or pretenders to baronies or public offices, whose one aim was to use his prestige as lawful Emperor to oust the men in possession of the coveted

landed estate or Government post. Even an angel would have to beat his wings ineffectually in such a foul atmosphere, heavy with the inertia of an age-old decadent society and State. The character of the peerage that now represented Yamin-ud-daulah and Sadullah, Mir Jumla and Asaf Jah, filled every true friend of the Delhi monarchy with despair. As Jean Law spoke in the bitterness of disappointment to the historian Ghulām Husain Khān (in April 1759),—"I have travelled everywhere from Bengal to Delhi, but nowhere have I found anything from any one except oppression of the poor and plundering of wayfarers. Whenever I wanted that one of these famous potentates, like Shuja, Imad and their peers, out of a regard for honour and a desire for the regulation of the Government, should undertake to put in order the affairs of Bengal and suppress the English [usurpers of that province], not one of them felt any inclination to this task. They did not once weigh in their minds the praiseworthiness or shame of their conduct . . . The Indian nobles (*umara*) are a set of disorderly inconsistent blockheads, who exist solely for ruining a world of people." [*Siyar*, ii. 257.] Shah Alam himself, after years of bitter experience, came to the same conclusion. As he wrote in 1768 : "Through the perfidiousness of the nobility and vassals this anarchy has arisen, and every one proclaims himself a sovereign in his own place, and they are at variance with one another, the strong prevailing over the weak . . . In this age of

delusion and deceit, His Majesty, places no dependence on the services or professions of loyalty of any one but the English chiefs." [*CPC.* ii. 1101, 836. Shākir, 107.]

The highest noble in the land and hereditary claimant to the imperial Chancellorship was Imad-ul-mulk. But apart from the deadly malignity which he bore to Shah Alam and his kin, Imad had fallen off from the high standard of capacity that he had displayed in the struggle with Safdar Jang six years earlier. He seems to have now taken after his maternal grandfather, the former wazir Qamruddin Khan Itimad-ud-daulah, and found the highest wisdom in letting matters drift and doing nothing himself. But he lacked that gay toper's uniform courtesy, geniality of spirit, and aversion to bloodshed. Though his intellect was very keen, his capacity for action seems to have been paralysed. To the licentiousness and sloth which he shared with most other nobles, he added a deceitfulness, cowardice and sadistic love of cruelty all his own. Jean Law, who often met him, writes, "I have not seen in his conduct anything but much deception and a cruelty that revolts. He has almost always the 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." [*Memoire*, 179.]

Thus, by an irony of Fate, though Shah Alam was the lawful Padishah of Delhi, his hereditary wazir was

his mortal enemy, and this wazir was the nominee of the two strongest Powers in India, the Peshwa and the Jat Rajah. But the blood of his murdered father and slain followers ran as an impassable stream between Shah Alam and Imad. Najib-ud-daulah was probably strong enough to instal and uphold him on the throne of Delhi, provided that Imad did not bring the Marathas again to oust him and he could be sure of securing in time the rather expensive aid of Abdali in such a danger. But Najib was not prepared to make any sacrifice or run any risk of entanglement for the sake of his fugitive sovereign. Nor could Shah Alam be entirely free from suspicion regarding the Ruhela chieftain. During Ahmad Shah's invasion of 1748, the Afghans all over India had openly talked of expelling the Turki dynasty of Babur from Delhi and restoring the Afghan sovereignty that had yielded place to the Mughal. Abdali's defeat at Manupur had averted that catastrophe in 1748, but now after their crowning victory at Panipat, what Power was left in Northern India to make even an hour's stand against such a design of the exultant Afghan race? What protection had Shah Alam from the extermination of his family if he put himself helplessly within the reach of Najib? [*CPC.* iii. 270.]

§ 3. *Character of Shuja-ud-daulah.*

Thus the facts of the political situation drove Shah Alam into the arms of Shuja-ud-daulah, and as Shuja

was the actual manager of all their joint-enterprises for reconquering lost provinces and subduing rebellious vassals, and Shah Alam merely the sleeping partner who lent the legality and prestige of his name,—but no other capital,—to these undertakings, the result was determined by Shujā's character and secret policy.

Shujā-ud-daulah as a choice for the wazirship was even worse than Imad-ul-mulk. As Jean Law characterises him from personal observation, "Shujā is the most handsome person that I have seen in India. He towers over the wazir [Imād] by his figure,—the latter being small,—and I believe also by the qualities of his heart, but he has to yield to him [Imād] in all that relates to the spirit. He is occupied in nothing but pleasures, hunting and the most violent exercises." Such was his character in 1758-1761. Later, a not unfriendly English observer sketched it thus : "Shuja-ud-daulah was not endowed with the genius of a soldier. He wanted that valour, or courage, which is ever shown in the event of common danger. He evinced throughout the Ruhela war a marked pusillanimity, sheltering himself in the rear and betraying evident signs of fear. He had acquired an extensive knowledge in the practice of every species of deceit, and could perform with facility every character that was necessary to conduct the various purposes of delusion or treachery. Generosity did not form a fixed part of his disposition. He was equally rapacious in acquiring, as sordid

in preserving wealth. His excesses in venery, which knew no control, led him to commit actions derogatory from his station, as well as pernicious to his health. His harem was filled with wives and concubines, to the number, it is said, of eight hundred, from whom were born to him fifty children."*

§ 4. *Shah Alam's adventures, after escape from Delhi, May 1758.*

We have seen in Chapter 17 § 13-16 how Prince Shah Alam's attempt to carve out a fief for himself in the Rohtak district even under the Emperor's letter patent had failed, how he had defeated the jealous wazir's plan for arresting him in his Delhi mansion (19 May 1758), and how after cutting his way through the ring of assailants he had made a fresh attempt to secure a foothold in the Rohtak-Hisar region, and then, on being abandoned by his Maratha ally Vital Shivdev and even his Delhi retainers, he had "turned his face to the path of the wilderness in sole reliance on God,"

* Law, *Memoire*, 181. G. Forster *Journey*, i. 183-185. But Shujā's fairly successful conduct of revenue and war after he had secured English protection, which so favourably impressed George Forster, was due entirely to the band of able and devoted generals and civil administrators that clung to his house. Ahmad Shah Abdali, a shrewd judge of character, at once saw through Shuja's despicable character and, therefore, before leaving India in March 1761 nominated his enemy Imād as wazir of Delhi instead of his partisan Shujā. Shujā drunken (Shakir, 88); licentious *Imad-us-sadat* 66. *SPD.* xxvii 191. xxi. 127, 128.

and crossed over to the Barha Sayyids' country at Miranpur in the middle Doab, about 12th August. Here Najib waited on him on the 19th with costly presents and furniture and undertook to feed his household and troops. The rainy season was now fully on, and the prince had to halt here for some months. Here he added a Sayyid girl to his harem under the title of Mubārak Mahal. But Najib was not prepared to provoke a war with the wazir and his Maratha backers by supporting the prince in any attack upon the imperial dominions; he merely advised him to seek the help of Shujā-ud-daulah, who was the hereditary enemy of Imād and the strongest noble in Hindustan.

During this halt at Mirānpur, Shah Alam received an invitation from Muhammad Quli Khan, (popularly called Mirzā Kuchak), the first cousin of Shujā and the imperial governor of Allahabad, to come to him, with promise of support in the attempt to conquer Bihār. Leaving Mirānpur at the end of November, with a large number of the out-of-work Sayyid warriors, he crossed the Ganges into Rohilkhand, and rapidly marched south towards Lucknow, taking many Ruhelas into his service on the way. Shujā dutifully waited on him twelve miles outside his capital, on 7th January 1759 and offered him many costly presents and a lakh of Rupees. Without delaying longer than a week here, the prince started for Allahabad by the advice of Shujā, who promised to come quickly behind him after making his preparations.

Reaching Jhusi, opposite Allahabad, on 23rd January, Shah Alam halted for 18 days and resumed his march on Bihār about 10th February, accompanied by Md. Quli's contingent and also fresh levies * raised by himself with Shuja's money or mere promises. By way of Mirzapur (18 Feb.), Mughal Sarai, Sayyid Rāzi, the Karmnāsā river (6 March) and Dāudnagar, he reached Phulwāri, seven miles west of Patna on 18th March.

§ 5. *Shah Alam's first invasion of Bihar, 1759.*

Meantime, the report of the coming invasion and the prince's letters demanding tribute and homage from the governors of Bengal and Bihar had caused consternation in Patna. Rajah Rām Nārāyan, the deputy governor of Bihar, was regarded as an enemy and marked out for spoliation by Mir Jafar Ali Khan, the new Nawab of Bengal, and he had wisely secured Col. Clive's protection. He sent off frantic appeals to Calcutta for armed aid. At first the Bengal authorities knew not how to lawfully oppose the Emperor's son. But the malicious wazir Imād-ul-mulk, in order to frustrate Shah Alam once again, forced the puppet Emperor to appoint another prince, Hedāyet Bakhsh, subahdar of Bihar and issue letters denouncing Shah Alam as a rebel, 26 February. [*TALS.* 199*b*.]

There was a great delay in fitting out an army from

* Shah Alam raised a vast army by enlisting every man who came to him. *TALS.* 198*b*.

Bengal, as the soldiers' pay had run into arrears for several months and the new Nawab's treasury was empty after the enormous bounties extorted by his English creators. But Clive realized the nature of the crisis at Patna and at last started with an army from Bengal, writing to Ram Narayan to hold out and to Shah Alam that as a proclaimed rebel he would be opposed by the English.

Before this, in the middle of March, when the prince arrived so close to Patna and no movement of a relieving army from Bengal was reported, Mr. Amyatt, the Chief of the English factory in Patna, vacated the city with his officers, after advising Ram Narayan to play for time and finally act as he received reinforcements or not. So, the Rajah, after taking assurances of safety, humbly waited on the prince and made presents. Through Md. Quli four *krores* of Rupees and all the artillery in Patna fort were demanded from him [*TALS.* 204*b*.] He had not even a hundredth part of this money. So, he went back to Patna after promising to collect the tribute there. The prince's supreme manager Md. Quli Khan was brave, but a fool and a pleasure-seeker. He now plunged into dissipation and the prince into daily hunting, as if the province had been already won.

On 21st March the prince removed his camp to Jafar Khan's garden, east of Patna city. Ram Narayan, being now informed of the English army's approach under Clive himself, turned out the prince's

tribute-collectors and shut the city gates in defiance. Immediately Md. Quli Khan marched out to assault the city (23rd March), but returned at the end of the day after doing nothing. The shots from the fort-walls, also, passed over the heads of his crowded ranks hitting none! This siege of Patna ended in total failure. On 3rd April M. Jean Law, invited from Chhatrapur, reached Shah Alam's camp. Next day, the prince made a desperate assault on Patna, but it was repulsed with a loss of 200 slain, though one old bastion of the city wall (near Mahdiganj) collapsed. Next morning during a council of war, Md. Quli Khan became highly angry with the prince, who was secretly trying through Yahiya Khan (son of Zakariya Khan of Lahor) to make terms with Ram Narayan. The prince personally went to his general's tent and pacified him. But next day news arrived that an English army was on the way, and had already crossed the frontier post of Bihar (Sakrigali.) An advanced detachment from it by rapid marching entered Patna on the 5th. So, the prince decamped towards the south. On the 20th he learnt that Shujā had seized Allahabad fort by treachery four days earlier. Md. Quli immediately (23rd) set out for his province, leaving the prince, who sought the help of Pahlwān Singh, zamindar of Bhojpur (27 April.) But Ram Narayan with the Bengal army under Miran raided Pahlwān Singh's country (10 May) and after a long fight defeated him and his patron, putting both to flight.

The baffled prince evacuated Bihar, and arrived near Mirzapur on 16th May. Leaving that place on 27th June, he reached Rewā, at the invitation of its Rajah, on 20th July. Here he halted for the rainy season.

§ 6. *Shah Alam crowns himself. Second invasion of Bihar and raid into Bengal, 1760.*

Towards the end of October 1759, Shah Alam left Rewā, and by way of Mirzapur (12 Nov.) marched to Saseram in South Bihar (7 Dec.), and thence to Ghotauli, (5 miles north of Son East Bank railway station) (20 Dec.) At this last station he received the news of his father's murder at Delhi (on the 29th November before), and sat on the throne, proclaiming himself Emperor under the title of Shah Alam II, on the 24th, though his regnal year was ordered to be counted from the day (1st Jamadi-ul-awwal=21 Dec.) on which he heard of his father's death. He sent his trusted officer Munir-ud-daulah to Abdali to beg for his support, and offered the wazirship to Shujā. Kāmgār Khan, an Afghan of the Main clan, and zamindar of Nurhat (in the Gaya district) joined him with five thousand men, and proved a much abler and more faithful adherent than Md. Quli Khan.

Without any regular treasure or trained army of his own, Shah Alam in his three Bihār campaigns only raised raw levies and attracted shady adventurers to lead them. Unluckily for him, these scratch troops were pitted against English-trained and English-led sepoys,

and the genius of Clive, great in war, greater still in diplomacy. The prince's sole strength lay in cavalry, of which the Company's army had none, and the Bengal Nawab's army an inferior class, fit only for pursuing broken fugitives. But the Delhi cavalry was powerless for offence against British sepoys so long as their munition was not exhausted, and broke in utter rout before the well-handled English guns, to which Shah Alam had nothing to oppose. Hence even Law's Frenchmen,—a handful, could not turn the tide of Shah Alam's defeat.*

---

* Shah Alam's expeditions into Bihar, in 1759, 1760 and 1761,—(1) Ghulam Ali's *Muqaddamah-i-Shah Alam namah*, most detailed in names and dates, authentic official history from imperial records. (2) Muna Lal merely copies this book and has no independent value. (3) *TALS* and (4) *DC.*, though very brief, are absolutely contemporary, original, and correct, and useful for supplementing G. Ali. (5) *CPC.* i., an invaluable primary source for dates and English movements and policy ; becomes detailed after 1761, but too meagre before. (6) Ironside's *Narrative* of 1760 and 1761, in *Asiatic Annual Register*, vol ii. (1800), "Miscellaneous Tracts," pp. 7-28 and (7) Caillaud's Evidence in the First Report, are first-rate original authorities from the English side. (8) Broome's *History of the Bengal Army* is a very lucid and useful compilation, though requiring correction in the light of the Persian sources not known to him, his sole reliance being on *Siyar*. (9) Jean Law, *Memoire sur l'Empire Mogol*, ed. Martineau, and (10) *Siyar-ul-mutakhkharin* valuable for what the authors personally witnessed,—the former for military operations and the latter for the diplomatic moves and events in and outside Patna ; but both were present on the scene for limited periods only. (11)

The new Emperor whiled away precious days in holding grand ceremonies and coronation rejoicings and lavishly bestowing hyperbolical titles and inflated *mansabs* which had not the remotest chance of ever being translated into reality by the engagement of any corresponding military force or grant of fiefs capable of maintaining them. Ram Narayan used this respite in completing his defence, summoned the local zamindars to his aid, and assembled a body of 40,000 men, according to rumour. These were untrained rustics, without the backbone of some expert squadrons and several experienced captains that stiffened the Emperor's army. Lord Clive sailed for Home on 5th February 1760, but he had already despatched to Bihar two complete battalions of sepoys, 300 European infantry and 6 field pieces (served by 50 European gunners) under Major Caillaud, backed by 15,000 indigenous horse and foot and 25 guns under the Nawab's son Sādiq Ali Khan (popular called Miran.) This force started from Murshidabad on 18th January, and after crossing the Sakrigali pass resumed its march on Patna on 7th February.

Meantime, Ram Narayan without waiting for these reinforcements, had issued from Patna and given battle to the imperialists at Masumpur on 9th February; but three of his divisional commanders treacherously

Ibratnamah is a later compilation and has no independent value before 1766. The Marathi records are naturally silent.

went over to the enemy in the heat of the action, the imperial army displayed superior spirit and leadership, and Ram Narayan had to retreat to his fort defeated and wounded. Four companies of English sepoys were cut off with all their three European officers, including Captain Cochrane. The Emperor came close to Patna on the 17th, but did not venture to attack it. Major Caillaud pushed up and on the 22nd completely defeated him at Sherpur. The refusal of the Nawab's cavalry to obey the English commander enabled the Emperor to retire unbroken to Bihar city (28 Feb.) *

* Masumpur, *Mussimpour*, 4 m. e. of Fatua and close to Baikunthpur, in Rennell's *B. Atlas*, Sh. 3. *Sherpur*, 4 m. s. e. of Bakhtiarpur railway station, and south of the Mahani river which runs here south of and parallel to the Ganges. Another Sherpur, 5 m. *west* of Dinapur is not the place. The Emperor's route to Bengal is thus given by Ghulam Ali (i. 144-151) :—Bihar city, 28 Feb.—Shaikhpura (18 m. e. of Bihar), 1 and 2 March—Salimpur (? *Islamnagar*, 20 m. n. w. of Gidhour), 3-5 March—Ghātikoh (? *Cowah ghat*, 18 m. due west of Gidhour), 10 Mar. Jakai(= *Chaki* or Fort Hastings, 25 m. s. of Gidhour), 11 Mar.—Asarda (? *Operbanda*, 30 m. s. of Deoghar) 19 Mar.—Jamgaon (20 m. n. e. of Pachet and s. of the Ajay), 20 Mar.—Balia (5 m. n. e. of Garh Bishnupur and s. of the Dalkishor river), 29 Mar.—Bishnupur—Damodar crossed, 5 April—Belkhas (6 m. w. of Burdwan, Rennell Sh, 7), 7 Apr. Return :—Jamgaon, 14 Apr. Deoghar—Rani Sarai (near Patna), 30 April. Broome gives his outward route thus :—Bihar—junction of the Ganges and the Mahani (*i. e.*, near Shaikhpura)—Malhipur (10 m. n. of Gidhour)—Deoghar—Operbanda—Lakar konda—Okera—Mankar—Belkhas, 6 Apr. *The pursuing army of Caillaud and Miran followed this very route, but after Okera turned eastwards to Mangalkot*, to join the Nawab.

Here, under Kāmgār Khan's able guidance he followed the bold and original plan of sending his artillery and baggage back, pushing on through the unknown hills and jungles of south-eastern Bihār with a lightly equipped body of select horse, and surprising Murshidabad, which now lay utterly defenceless. The thrust penetrated, by way of Deoghar and Mānkar and across the Dāmodar river, to Bishnupur, where a Maratha force under Sheo Bhat Sāthé joined him. But the raiders hesitated, gave up their original objective, the Bengal capital, and lost precious days. The raid failed, for Caillaud, undergoing indescribable hardships, followed close on the Emperor's track, effected a junction with Nawab Jafar Ali Khan and a detachment from Calcutta at Mangalkot (20 miles north of Burdwan) and blocked the road to Murshidabad. On 7th April, there was a skirmish and some exchange of gun fire between the Emperor's vanguard which had crossed the Dāmodar and the full English force advanced to Belkhas. Kāmgār lost heart, set fire to his tents, and beat a hurried retreat with the Emperor by the same route, and arriving again before Patna, which was now totally denuded of English troops, attacked it from a distance. But on 28th April, Captain Knox by an incredibly rapid march came up from Bengal and relieved the city. The Emperor raised the siege, and fell back on Rāni Sarāi (30th April), where he was joined by M. Jean Law. But it was too late for his success. After lingering for two months

more in South Bihar and being further disheartened by the defeat of his partisan Khādim Husain (the usurper of Purnia) by Knox at Hajipur (19 June), Shah Alam retired from the province and reached the bank of the Jamuna in August, 1760.

§ 7. *Shah Alam and Law invade Bihar again, 1761.*

At the end of the rainy season, Shah Alam invaded Bihār for the third time, accompanied by Jean Law and his Frenchmen. But his army was now without money, discipline, heavy guns, or even an adequate munition supply. In spite of this heart-breaking handicap, Law served him truly to the last. The end came on 15th January 1761, when at the village of Suān (6 miles west of Bihār city) Col. Carnac defeated the imperialists and captured Law and his French officers. All his hopes of independence crushed, and in utter penury and lack of supporters, the sovereign of the Delhi empire now sued for the mercy of the English. They, on their part, were eager to placate him and remove the taint of illegality from their late measures against him. On 6th February Shah Alam visited Carnac at Gayā and was highly honoured by him and escorted to Pātna, where he lodged in the fort and began to hold Court. Here the new Bengal Nawab Qāsim Ali Khan waited on him (12 March), paid his tribute and humbly sought imperial confirmation of the high office to which he had been lately called (20 October 1760) by the grace of the English. Kāmgār

Khan was defeated by Captain Champion, and the Emperor under pressure from the English dismissed him from his service. The English settled upon the puppet sovereign an allowance of Rs. 1,800 a day, in return for confirming their political arrangements in Bengal and Bihār.

Meantime, the battle of Pānipat had been fought, Delhi had been cleared of the Marathas, and the Durrāni conqueror had set out on his return home after nominating Shah Alam as Emperor and writing to him to come and occupy Delhi. So, the Emperor issued from Patna fort (12 April) at the invitation of Shujā-ud-daulah who undertook to escort him to his capital. The English refused to proceed with him beyond the western boundary of Bihār, and took a courteous leave of the Emperor on the bank of the Karmnāsā (22 May.) Shujā met his sovereign at Sarāi Sayyid Rāzi on 19th June and the two reached Jājmau on 23rd July, where the Emperor went into cantonments for the rainy season.

§ 8. *Shah Alam's Bundelkhand campaign, 1762. March towards Delhi fails, 1763.*

From this place Shah Alam, entirely moved by the leading strings of Shujā-ud-daulah, started on 7th Nov. 1761 for the recovery of his dominions in Bundelkhand. Here, as well as in the adjacent tract of North Mālwā, the Maratha dominion had been shaken to its foundations by their defeat at Pānipat. All the local zamindars

south of the Jamuna and the Chambal—Jat, Rajput, Ahir, Bundela and Ruhela—had risen against the Marathas, stopped the payment of revenue and tribute, and even occupied the villages belonging to the latter. Not a pice could be collected ; the garrison of Gwalior fort had received no salary for two years. The evil was aggravated by the dying Peshwā's inability to send reinforcements and the treason of several local officers (notably Ganesh Sambhaji) who went over to the imperialists. Into this defenceless and distracted country Shujā entered early in January 1762, crossing the Jamuna at Kālpi. That post surrendered without opposition. Then Moth was taken, and Jhānsi itself (1 Feb.) after a short resistance. The Bundela chiefs of Urchhā and Datiā sent tribute to their sovereign. Shujā, whom Shah Alam had appointed his wazir in the preceding June, at last put the wazir's robes on and first signed official papers in that capacity on 15 Feb. 1762. Then, by way of Jalālpur (31 March), he marched upon Māhoba, but could not subdue its Rajah Hindupat, the great-grandson of the famous Chhatrasāl. So, the expedition returned across the Jamuna, and the Emperor encamped for the rainy season at Sheorājpur, in the Cawnpur district. [*SPD.* xxvii. 272, xxix 13. G. Ali ii. 112-140. Muna Lal, 28-53. *Imad,* 86.]

Early next year (1763), the Emperor, escorted by the wazir, marched to Sikandrabad in the middle Doab, summoning the Ruhela and Bangash chiefs to join him

and conduct him to Delhi. Ahmad Bangash had reason to fear Shujā's ambition and so proved recusant. Shujā was about to go to war with him, when Hafiz Rahmat, Dundi Khan and Najib arrived (April), interviewed the Emperor and forced Shujā to give up his designs against the Nawab of Farrukhabad. But these designs had alienated all the Afghans from Shujā. To make matters worse, a sectarian riot with bloodshed broke out between the troops of Shujā and Najib, who were respectively of the Shia and Sunni faith. The plan of installing the Emperor at Delhi by a united Muslim force broke down, the Ruhelas returned to their homes (middle of May) and the Emperor to Allahabad for passing the rainy season.*

§ 9. *Shah Alam makes peace with the English 1765.*

Early next year, 1764, a new opening for the invasion of Bihar presented itself, when Nawab Qasim Ali Khan, deposed and expelled by the English from the province (in Dec. last), visited the Emperor (February 1764) and bought his support and that of his wazir in a war for the recovery of his own, by paying them 10 and 17 lakhs respectively. The invasion of Bihar that followed and which the helpless Emperor's apologists truly ascribed to the greed of Shujā, ended in the wazir's crushing defeat at Buxar (23 October 1764) and finally

* Nur, 59-60. Ghulam Ali, ii. 145-167. *Ibrat* 112-116. *Imad-us-sadat*, 87-91 (imp.) Muna Lal, 54-60.

at Korā (3 May, 1765), and the complete prostration of Oudh at the feet of the English. The derelict Emperor, who had been insulted by Shujā before the battle of Buxar and abandoned after it, took shelter with the English and was honourably lodged by them in Allahabad fort, which they took in his name on 11 February, Benares and Chunar having been previously occupied.*

Lord Clive returned to India on 3rd May and speedily marched up country, meeting the penitent Shujā at Benares (2 Aug.) and the grateful Emperor at Allahabad (9 Aug.) He concluded formal treaties with both. By the Treaty of Allahabad, dated 16th August, the English restored to Shujā-ud-daulah all his dominions with the exception of Chunār (which was retained by the English), the districts of Korā and Allahabad (which were ceded to the Emperor), and the zamindāri of Benares including Ghāzipur (which was reserved to the family of Rajah Balwant Singh, under English protection, though legally subordinate to the Nawab of Oudh.) Shujā agreed to pay fifty lakhs to the English to cover the expenses

* Shuja's Bihar campaign (1764) and English advance to Allahabad (1765) :—*CPC.* i. (best), Broome (compilation, but well-written), *Siyar*, *Chahar Gulzar*, Ghulam Ali, ii., *Ibrat.* The best account of the battle of Buxar, a contemporary ms. in the India Office, London, printed by Oldham in *Journal, B. & O. R. Society* 1925. Treaties of Aug. 1765,—*Collection of Treaties & Engagements* (London 1812), pp. 43-54 ; Broome, Appendix liii—lvi.

of the recent war, and to bind himself with the English in an alliance of mutual armed support. After the battle of Buxar the English general had promised to give the Emperor all the territories of the fugitive Shujā. But he was now given only the districts of Kora and Allahabad, with an estimated revenue of 28 lakhs a year, and assured of the Bengal tribute of 26 lakhs per annum (from which two lakhs were reserved in writing for Mirzā Najaf Khan.) An English force was to be posted at Allahabad for the protection of the Emperor as long as necessary. In return for these the Emperor, by a *farmān* signed on 12th August (with an addition on the 19th), confirmed the English East India Company in all the possessions they held in his territories, and also granted them the *diwāni* of Bengal, Bihār and Orissa (the last subah now comprising the Midnapur district only.) This grant meant that the English were legally empowered to take all the revenue proceeds of these three subahs, after deducting 26 lakhs for the Emperor, the expenses of the administration of Bengal and the maintenance of the Nawab family of Murshidabad (50 lakhs), and the cost of the military defence of these provinces.

The result of it all was that the Emperor became an English pensioner, and Shujā a protected British vassal in effect, though disguised under the title of an equal and independent ally, who had afterwards to reduce his army and secure English approval in appointing

his ministers, but merely as instances of the purity of his friendship with the English. In July 1766, Lord Clive held a "Congress" at Chāprā (in north Bihar), which was attended by Shujā-ud-daulah in person and the evoys of the Emperor, the Jāt Rajah and the Ruhela chiefs. Here a treaty was entered into by them for mutual defence against any Maratha aggression. The Emperor, who had conferred the wazirship of the empire (as distinct from the subahdāri of Oudh) upon his son on being abandoned by Shujā at the end of 1764, now under pressure from Clive restored the Chancellorship to Shujā. [*CPC.* ii. 1044.]

§ 10. *Why Shah Alam was eager to go to Delhi.*

Now began for Shah Alam a long period of settled and comfortable residence (1765-1771) at Allahabad. He was a sovereign without a capital or any hand in the administration no doubt, but he was also saved from starvation and guarded from attack, thanks to the English. Of this uneventful period in his life a detailed account would be out of place in our history. But it was impossible for him to cease hankering for a return to Delhi, as a visible symbol of his full sovereignty. This natural desire had been recognised by the English who had promised as early as 26 May 1761 to escort him to Delhi with their forces. This promise had been repeated year after year, and even

by Lord Clive in 1765; it still stood at the end of 1767; but it was never fulfilled; at one time the war with Haidar Ali absorbed all the English forces, in other years the pledge was to be honoured "after the rains."* At last Shah Alam became convinced that these rains would never end, for the English persisted in advising him, through their devoted instrument at his Court, Munir-ud-daulah, that it would be a danger and loss to him to leave the security of Allahabad and venture on to Delhi. Munir-ud-daulah's success in keeping his English patrons pleased and securing the regular payment of the Emperor's pension enabled his policy to triumph in the council of the royal exile. The pro-Delhi party, led by Hisam-ud-daulah, would probably never have gained the upper hand there but for the utter break-down of Najib's health and spirits, which forced him to resign the guardianship of the Delhi palace and the royal family within it, when faced with the irrepressible and ever-increasing Sikh forces. As early as October 1765, Najib had asked the Emperor to come personally to Delhi, and now in February 1768 he definitely tendered his resignation. This development threw Shah Alam into the greatest perplexity: who would guard his mother and Heir in that city after the withdrawal of Najib? And, if he recalled all his family from Delhi, the Sikhs, who were now officially masters of Sarhind and practically supreme over

* *CPC.* i. 1186, 2688. ii. 660. iii. 399.

Hariana and the upper Doab, would take unopposed possession of the capital, and it would be impossible for Shah Alam to recover it from their strong hands. The holder of the capital was naturally in the position of a king-maker. What was there to prevent the Sikh lords of Delhi from crowning a puppet from among the swarm of beggarly vagrant Shahzadas, and under cover of his legal authority conquering the empire for themselves ?*

The question of the Emperor's residence in Delhi thus became a live issue from 1768 onwards. Just at this time the Indian world at last became convinced that Ahmad Shah Abdali would not come to India again, and all hopes and fears from that quarter definitely ceased. Now was the time for all loyal vassals to unite and restore their suzerain to his capital. A Maratha agent suggested (in Nov. 1767, *SPD.* xxix. 192) the project of such action by the English, the Peshwa, the Rajput Rajahs and the Ruhelas in concert (but despite probable Jat opposition). The Jat power ceased to count in North Indian politics after the death of Jawahir Singh in July 1768. The last ray of the hope of getting armed

* *CPC.* i. 2735, 2735 A, ii. 1101, 846, 847. Jassa Singh, the Sikh sardar, had invited the Emperor (Jan. 1768) to come to Delhi, "assuring him that the whole empire would be again united and restored to him." Shah Alam had replied that he could not take that action unless the *whole body* of Sikh sardars formed a binding confederacy to escort him and sent a written pledge to that effect. (ii. 849.)

aid from the English in the journey to Delhi flickered and died out in the course of the next year. And the Emperor looked out for new friends to help him in carrying out his heart's desire. The Ruhelas were eliminated as openly hostile to his house. Shujā, nominally the first minister of the Crown, when called upon to support his master, evaded compliance as long as he could, and finally (in 1771) compounded for his abstention from personal participation in the march on Delhi by contributing to its expenses. For his tools the Emperor, therefore, had none but the Marathas to turn to.

§ 11. *Shah Alam makes an agreement with the Marathas to escort him to Delhi, 1771.*

They had come to the north once more in full force, under an accredited plenipotentiary of the Peshwa (Ramchandra Ganesh) and great sardars like Sindhia and Holkar, at the beginning of 1770. They had first humbled the Jat and set about restoring their authority in the Doab and the country near Delhi. [Ch. 22 § 12-14.] Najib's death a few months later (30 Oct. 1770) forced the Emperor's hands; now or never must he make effective arrangements for holding Delhi, as Najib's successor was too young and inexperienced to make any stand against the Sikhs. So, on 27th December Shah Alam sent Saifuddin Md. Khan to negotiate with the Maratha sardars then in the Doab for an alliance to

restore him to his capital. The envoy entered the masterless city on 7th February 1771, opened the Delhi Gate (which had been closed in fear of the Maratha and Gujar bands then out on the east bank), reassured the citizens, and from the Jāmi' Masjid proclaimed the authority of Shah Alam.

Two days later (9th Feb. 1771), early in the morning the Marathas bombarded Delhi from four sides, so that the Asad Burj of the fort was demolished. There was none to resist, and at noon the capital opened peace parleys. At sunset the smaller gate of the fort was opened. Next day Bālā Rāo entered the fort by capitulation, established his own control, and posted his guards at the gates. Saifuddin, who had not expected the Maratha appropriation of the capital, went off to complain to the Maratha chiefs ; so also did Shaikh Qāsim, the imperial qiladar. On the 15th Yaqub Ali held a long private talk with Ramchandra Ganesh. The following terms were agreed upon : (i) The Marathas were to be paid 40 lakhs of Rupees and assigned Mirat and seven other mahals. (ii) The Emperor would cede the districts of Karra (Jahanabad) and Kora to the Marathas, or in default give them equivalent territory near Delhi. (iii) The Marathas undertook to escort the Emperor to Delhi in two months. (iv) The Emperor would pay ten lakhs (out of the forty) in twenty days, on receiving which they would restore Delhi fort to his agent, and then he would come. (v) After arriving at Delhi;

Shah Alam would grant them 15 lakhs worth of mahals, thus leaving a balance of 15 lakhs which was to be cleared in seven months. To a memorandum containing these terms the Heir affixed his seal on behalf of the Emperor. [*SPD.* xxix. 89.] The terms were ratified by Shah Alam from Allahabad and all the Maratha sardars were presented (on 22 March) to the Heir and given *khilats*. A part payment made, Delhi fort was handed back to Saifuddin by the Maratha troops, who vacated it (2 August.) [*DC. CPC.* iii. 717.]

§ 12. *Shah Alam marches from Allahabad to Delhi*, 1771.

In the meantime, the Emperor had advanced from Allahabad (13 April) to Sarai Alamchand (20 miles to the west.) Here he halted for 19 days, planning his march on Delhi and waiting to be joined by Shujā. At the first talk of leaving the British protection, civilised comforts and regular income so long enjoyed by his family and entourage at Allahabad for the privations, danger and poverty of Delhi, a universal lamentation broke out in the exiled Court and among its dependants. But the Emperor, led by Hisam-ud-daulah, held firmly to his purpose, Munir-ud-daulah having entirely lost his hold on his master. As a last chance, the miserable courtiers clung to the hope that when Shuja came, his voice would overbear that of Hisam and the march on Delhi would be abandoned. But Shuja did not

object ; he supplied 12 lakhs in cash, besides carriages, tents and other necessary articles, and thus secured excuse from personal attendance in the campaign. He detached a body of 10,000 horse and foot of his own to attend the Emperor.

Leaving Sarai Alamchand on 2nd May, Shah Alam marched by way of Shujaetpur and Kora to Jajmau (23 May), where Shujā who had borne him company so long took leave for his own province (3 June.) Then, by way of Cawnpur the imperial camp reached Bithur, where General Sir Robert Barker refused to proceed any further, bade formal farewell to the Emperor on 28 June, and came back with his two English battalions to Cawnpur and Benares. So, also did Munir-ud-daulah, who had persistently opposed this undertaking. The Emperor continued his progress to Qanauj and then to the neighbourhood of Farrukhabad, whose Nawab, Ahmad Khan Bangash, had died on 17 April. An imperial demand was made for escheating all his property to the State, but the late Nawab's man of business Bakhshi Fakhruddaulah replied to it by gathering a large force of Ruhelas from the neighbourhood and preparing for war. The helpless Emperor appealed to Mahadji Sindhia, who approached with a vast army, the report of which cowed Fakhruddaulah and he agreed to pay six lakhs (two lakhs down) on condition of Ahmad's son Muzaffar Jang being recognised as Nawab of Farrukhabad and confirmed in his father's estates. This success achieved, the Emperor

moved on to Nabiganj, 19 miles south-west of Farrukhabad, and there encamped for the rains.

Three months later, Saifuddin Muhammad and other officers came from Delhi fort and interviewed the Emperor on 15th November, at Nabiganj, and Mahadji Sindhia did the same on the 18th. The royal progress to the capital was resumed shortly after, and the Court reached Surajpur (15 m. n. w. of Sikandrabad) on New Year's Day, 1772. The Empress Mother, the Crown Prince and other princes came out of Delhi to Gharroli ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles south-east of Shahdara) and welcomed the Emperor in advance (3rd January.) Accompanied by them, he rode into his capital at a quarter past eight on Monday, the sixth of January, and entered the palace fort by the Delhi Darwaza. The day on which the monarch's exile ended happened to be exactly the close of the Muslim month of fasting and the eve of the *Id* rejoicings.*

* *DC.* and *CPC.* iii 693-810 (best.) *Ibrat.* 196-281. G. Ali, ii. 267-282. Muna Lal 109-120. *Siyar*, iii. 84-85 (meagre.)

Corrections and Additions to Vol. II.

P. 23, l. 20, *for* 10 June *read* *c.* 10 June.
39—2, „ Musa „ Musavi
47—19, „ chapter 22 „ chapter 23.
71—27, „ Maler Kot „ Maler Kotla.
78, *add to footnote, Chandrachud Daftar*, i. 49.
„ l. 2, *add at beginning* § 10.
206, *add to footnote, Chandra. Daft*, i. 137.
227, „ Kharé, i. pp. 32-34.
243, l. 20, *for* Narwar *read* Pauri.
247, *add to 2nd footnote*, Pahāri stands for *Pauri*, 20 m. n. w. of Shivapuri (Sipri) in Gwalior State.
249. *add to footnote, Purand. Daft*, i. 387.
252, l. 28, *for* at Agra *read* near Mathura.
253, *add to footnote, Chandra Daft.* i. 51
256, „ Peace terms in Bhau's letter of 16 Sep. *Purand Daft*, i. 389 (best.)
263, l. 16, *add,* *Purand Daft*, i. 389.
270, *add to footnote,* „ 391.
299, l. 25, *add* „ 391.
311, *add to footnote,* Kashiraj states that Atai Kh's own contingent of 2,000 Durrani horse was joined by "nearly 10,000 irregulars in greed of booty, and. . . they marched forty *kos* in one day" to effect the surprise.
314, *add to footnote, Purand. Daft*, i. 392.
331, *in plan, shade 25 half black.*
351, *add to footnote, Purand Daft*, i. 417, 425.
354, „ „ „ 397, 417.
360, „ „ „ 393—426 (primary.)
362, l. 4, *after* Joshi *add* and another written on 14 Nov.

FALL OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE, Vol. I.

Times (London).—Sir Jadunath Sarkar has undertaken a duty of real importance. His wide scholarship, his deep knowledge, his independent judgment, admirably fit him for the task; and his first volume (1739—1754) shows that the work when completed, will provide valuable information till now inaccessible to the English reader; nowhere else will he find a more authoritative estimate, or more poignant detail, of the state of the country before the rise of the English Power. (17 May, 1934.)

Times of India (Bombay)—Sir Jadunath Sarkar approaches his task in the scientific and impartial spirit which characterizes all his work . . . The learned author claims to have synthesized for the first time the Persian, Marathi, French, English, Hindi, Rajasthani and Sanskrit sources. Students of Maratha history will particularly welcome the valuable and original chapters [3 and 4] on the Maratha incursions into Bengal, replete with new material bearing upon a hitherto little-known chapter of Maratha history. Indeed, one of the most valuable features of this scholarly and erudite work is the light which it throws upon the Marathas in Northern India: Sir Jadunath Sarkar's additions to our knowledge in this field of investigation form a valuable commentary on the Maratha accounts of these events. (10 Feb. 1933.)

Modern Review (January, 1933)—That Sir Jadunath Sarkar is fully qualified to write the history of any period of the Mughal Empire in India does not require to be pointed out afresh. In two volumes, of which the work under notice is the first, he has attempted to tell the story of the fall of the Mughal Empire from the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 to the British conquest of Delhi and keepership of the puppet but still legitimate Padishah in 1803, and his attempt has been entirely successful. The work is written in a simple and attractive style, and the interest of the story is throughout sustained.

HISTORY OF AURANGZIB

Sarkar's *History of Aurangzib* is based mainly on original *contemporary Persian Marathi and European sources, viz.,* the Mughal State-papers, daily bulletins of the Mughal Court, the records of impartial non-official writers (such as two Persian memoirs by contemporary Hindu writers), the letters of Aurangzib, his father, brothers, sons, grandsons, officers and vassal kings, and other makers of Indian history, revenue returns, &c. *The fourth volume gives a new and authentic history of the Maratha kings Shivaji & Shambhuji hitherto unknown.*

Of the *letters of Aurangzib* and his contemporaries, *more than 5,000* are in the author's possession. He has also used the Marathi bakhars and historical papers, the Assamese chronicles (*Buranjis*) and the French and Portuguese archives.

H Beveridge.—Jadunath Sarkar may be called *Primus in Indis* as the user of Persian authorities for the history of India. He might also be styled the **Bengali Gibbon,**··· It is pleasant to think that England and its Government have had some share in producing such a man of wide knowledge and untiring industry as Jadunath.··· All his volumes are good, and reflect the **highest credit** on their author . . . The account of Aurangzib in the 3rd and 4th volumes is **exceptionally good.** (*History. 1922*).

Journal Asiatique.—Ce xviie siecle mongol nous est connu par les temoignages de voyageurs europeens: mais les sources persanes et les documents de la chancellerie imperiale n' avaient pas ete utilises dans une etude d' ensemble. C'est le grand merite de l'auteur d' avoir patiemment recherche et mis a contribution toutes les informations persanes et indiennes···et de nous donner une narration vivante et fidele. (1922).

Vincent A. Smith.—You are doing **first class work** ··I repeat with all sincerity that I have the highest opinion of your learning, impartiality and critical ability. I trust that you may be long spared to continue your good work of giving honest history.

Awarded the Gold Medal of the Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society.

SHIVAJI AND HIS TIMES

A new and fully detailed critical study of Shivaji's life and character based on an exhaustive use of all the available original materials—Persian, Marathi, Hindi, Dutch and English—most of which were unknown to Grant Duff.

It is the most comprehensive and correct narrative of the rise of the Marathas with minute details and exact dates. The complex interaction of Deccan politics has been clearly shown by references to the history of the Muslim Powers there in the 17th century.

MUGHAL ADMINISTRATION

Second edition, rewritten and $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the size of the first edition, 272 pages, Rs. 3.

In its present form the book supplies a complete treatise on the administrative system and constitution of the Mughal Empire, its theory and practice, its principles and aims, its effect on the people, and takes a philosophical survey of the achievements of the Mughal Empire, the causes of its downfall, and its influence upon the country.

CHAITANYA

Chaitanya, (1485-1533), the greatest saint of Bengal, caused a complete moral revolution in Eastern India by preaching the creed of *bhakti* or devotion to God as incarnate in Krishna. His faith conquered Bengal, Orissa and Assam, and also established its stronghold in several other places, notably Brindaban.

C. F. Andrews.—**Of surpassing value. . .gives the clearest picture of the Saint, and his teaching, and is full of intense human interest from beginning to end...** The picture drawn of the Saint is one of extraordinary beauty : a truly human figure comes before us and attracts our own love, even as it attracted the love of his first disciples. *(Modern Review,* Oct. 1913).

Studies in Aurangzib's Reign

18 ESSAYS, 306 PAGES, RS. 2-8.

Asiatic Quarterly Review.—A series of essays on Aurangzib and his times of the most entertaining description.

Indian Antiquary.—All the essays are brightly written and several contain information not hitherto available in English.

G. Ferrand.—Comme les precedents, ces derniers volumes sont pleins d' informations puisees a des sources orientales inedites : et c'est ce qui donne une valeur particuliere aux travaux de M. Sarkar. Ecrits dans un anglais clair et agreable, ces volumes fourniront aux historiens europeens la documentation qui leur manquait sur cette periode de la domination mongole dans l'Inde. (*J. A.*)

India through the Ages

Re. 1-8

Times.—An *excellent* little compendium of the history of India···under 5 main headings. Each of these is considered as a great culture-movement···His closing estimate is *thoughtful* and *valuable.*

J. R. A. S.—Gives an *interesting* and *clearly written* review of the successive factors which have contributed to the composite development of the India of the present day.

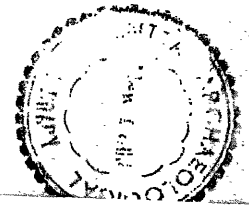
Sir E. A. Gait.—A wonderfully clear bird's-eye view of a vast subject.

A Short History of Aurangzib

511 pp. Rs. 5

J. R. A. S.—The narrative is clear and orderly, the characterization of individuals is excellent, and···there is little that could be spared. The book can be recommended with confidence to any readers who have not time to study the author's larger work, that well-known classic, *The History of Aurangzib*, in 5 vols.

Published by S. C. Sarkar of M. C. Sarkar & Sons, Ld., Calcutta
Printer : M. C. Das,
PRABASI PRESS, 120-2, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta



"A book that is shut is but a block"

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

GOVT. OF INDIA
Department of Archaeology
NEW DELHI

Please help us to keep the book clean and moving.