THE GREAT RISING OF 1857

A BRIEF HISTORY BASED ON
DR. SURENDRA NATH SEN'S
"EIGHTEEN FIFTY - SEVEN"

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ventilate his feelings. Lord Dalhousie wanted to abolish the royal title altogether and to remove the family to a less conspicuous residence on the outskirts of the city. The Court of Directors, however, advised Dalhousie to defer action till Bahadur Shah's death. Already old and infirm, the King was not expected to live much longer. After his death, the unworthy descendants of Shah Jahan and Alamgir were sure to be expelled from their ancestral palace unless something unexpected happened.

But the unexpected happened. On the morning of 11th May 1857, the Meerut rebels crossed the Jamuna at Delhi by the bridge of boats. The city was still unaware of the outbreak at Meerut. Everything was quiet that morning. Suddenly an alarm spread that horsemen from Meerut were at the city gates. They had killed the Toll Collector and set fire to his office. The summer morning that began so peacefully witnessed a horrible massacre.

The King was as much surprised as the British Commissioner. A tumult below the palace windows warned the old man of the arrival of the mutineers. The aged Emperor was not inclined to face a violent crowd. So he asked Captain Douglas to go down and meet the crowd. Douglas told them to move away as they were causing annoyance to the King. Meanwhile Simon Fraser, the Commissioner, and Hutchinson, the Collector, arrived at the palace. An attempt was made to hold the gates. But there was no lack of sympathisers within.

Outside, the word soon spread throughout the city that the sepoys had killed the Europeans at Meerut and had come to Delhi to fight for the faith. This emboldened many, who regarded the English as trespassers and usurpers, to join the fray. As waves of exultant horsemen surged in, their ranks were swelled by local rowdies.

The rebels dashed towards the palace. The guards offered no resistance, but made common cause with the sepoys. Fraser, Douglas and Hutchinson were killed in the palace. Mr. Jennings, the chaplain, his daughter, and Miss Clifford, her friend, shared the same fate. The

mutineers then called upon the King to assume command. The old man pleaded poverty and infirmity, but the rebels would not be denied. They had come to serve their king and to fight for their religion. The King continued to waver, because European troops from Meerut were expected any moment. But hour after hour passed and no troops came from that quarter. As the day advanced the situation became hopeless. The unwilling King still hesitated. And it was not until nightfall that he decided to cast his lot with the rebels. What part the princes played at this momentous hour can easily be guessed. Here was an opportunity for reviving the glories of their house; the alternative was expulsion from their ancestral home and abolition of the imperial title. Naturally, the emperor's sons Mirza Moghul, Mirza Khazr Sultan, and Mirza Abu Bakr made the most of the opportunity that chance had thrown their way. Meanwhile the mutiny had grown into a rebellion. At midnight, twenty-one slavos announced the restoration of the Moghul empire with the helpless old Bahadur Shah as Emperor.

Unlike Meerut, Delhi had no European troops. The cantonment was located in the nearby village of Rajpur, now covered by the University campus. Some of the Delhi sepoys were still hesitating. The 54th N.I. actually followed Colonel Ripley to the Kashmiri gate but refused to fire even when their commander was cut down and officers were shot dead. The rest joined the insurgents from Meerut. That settled the fate of Delhi. In the meantime the city had been cleared of most of its Christian population, Indian and European. Most of them were put to the sword. A large number of fugitives took shelter in the Flagstaff Tower, but seeing no prospect of relief, they set out in different directions under cover of night.

The city was abandoned, the cantonment was evacuated, but the magazine was not tamely surrendered. Lieutenant Willoughby, officer in charge of the magazine, supported by eight brave Englishmen defended the position against a raging crowd for several hours. At last surrender was demanded in the Emperor's name and ladders were brought

for carrying the place by assault. Finding that it was impossible to hold out longer, Willoughby blew up the stores of ammunition and a tremendous explosion announced that the magazine was gone. The explosion killed hundreds of mutineers. Of the nine brave Englishmen, three died at their post. Willoughby and five others escaped with their lives though the brave lieutenant was shortly killed by a mob on his way to Meerut.

For the next few weeks the sepoys were left alone. No European troops came from Meerut, and what was happening elsewhere they did not know. But the Emperor was in a sorry plight. Accustomed to have everything provided for him, he was now called upon to make provision for the troops.

On 12th May he summoned to his council some of the Muslim nobles of the city and asked them to form an executive council. Disorder prevailed all over the capital; bad characters set upon men of wealth and rank on the pretext of searching for Europeans and Christians; shops were closed and business was totally suspended. There was no money in the treasury and funds were needed for financing the army and restoring law and order. The King's earnest appeal evoked little response; one of the invited nobles even refused to serve on the council. Nevertheless, a governor was appointed.

Mirza Moghul was appointed Commander-in-Chief and high military ranks were conferred on other princes. But the princes were as incompetent as the King; they were hardly the persons to control troops who had already tasted indiscipline.

A Court or 'military and civil management Committee' was then appointed to restore order in civil and military establishments. The Court was under the Commander-in-Chief, but in the last analysis the Emperor's authority was final. The Court functioned till the British recaptured Delhi, but in actual result it achieved nothing. It could not check military licence, or exercise any influence over the officers of the short-lived government.

As the month of May progressed the King was faced with fresh troubles. The administration suffered from shortage of funds. The bankers of the city were therefore summoned to the fort and asked to contribute to the treasury. Under great pressure from the King, the newly appointed officers and city bankers raised one lakh of rupees for payment to the troops. But how far could a lakh meet the emergency?

The lack of preparation on the part of the English, however, gave the mutineers a long respite. From the 12th May, the day following the capture of Delhi by the rebels, to the 8th June, when the British retook the Ridge, the leaders of the revolt had ample time to prepare themselves for the inevitable attack. But they wasted their opportunity. June found the sepoy army divided against itself, the business class unfriendly to the military and the King vainly trying to protect his subjects from the excesses of the princes and the soldiers.

General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, was in Simla when he got word of the fall of Delhi. John Lawrence, Commissioner of the Punjab, implored him to hurry and to strike a decisive blow at Delhi. But Anson had his handicaps. The Ambala sepoys were in uncertain temper and, above all, he had to secure the necessary transport, ammunition and stores before he could march against a fortified city, defended by troops trained by the best British officers. At length, the General moved from Ambala to Karnal, intending to march thence on Delhi, but Anson was not destined to reach the Capital. The British troops were not used to marching in the hot months of summer; cholera and sunstroke took a heavy toll. And on 27th May, Anson himself died of cholera.

Sir Henry Barnard, who succeeded him, was new to India. The Meerut contingent under Brigadier Wilson joined him at Baghpat according to plan. They had two successful engagements with the rebels at Ghazi-ud-din Nagar (modern Ghaziabad) and the river Hindon before they crossed the Jamuna. On 8th June they met the rebels

at Badli-ki-Serai, five miles north-west of Delhi. In the battle that followed the rebels were defeated. The sepoys put up a brave fight, but superior generalship won the day. That very day the victorious army pushed forward and occupied the Ridge, the low range of hills that forms the outer rampart of Delhi. Thus the British found themselves back at their old cantonment on the 8th June, within a month of their expulsion.

The Ridge faced only the north side of the city and commanded three of its principal gates. The troops of General Barnard were too few to attempt a siege. Moreover, the Mathura Road was open throughout, and rebel troops from Oudh and Rohilkhand, from Jhansi and Kanpur, from Nasirabad and Nimach, found no difficulty in reinforcing Delhi. Likewise, British communications with their base of operations at Ambala were seldom threatened. The first thing that Barnard did was to secure strategic points on the Ridge. To this end he posted pickets at various points, the most important of which were Hindu Rao's house on his right and the Flagstaff Tower on his left. It was Hindu Rao's house that felt most the fury of the sepoys' assault.

If the British demonstrated their strength by the occupation of the Ridge, the rebel army was not idle either. On the 10th June the sepoys threatened the rear of their enemies; the British in their turn occupied Metcalfe House and posted a picket there. Then followed a daily but desultory artillery duel in which the rebels displayed superior calibre and marksmanship.

On the 15th the sepoys again sallied forth in a vain attempt to recover Metcalfe House. Two days later was fought a more desperate action, when the sepoys tried to raise a battery on the Idgah, an enclosed place of prayer, near Hindu Rao's house. The sepoys unfortunately had no officer of ability to guide them, and when they gained some advantage they did not know how to press it home. After a respite of three days the sepoys again returned to fight. It was the centenary of the battle of Plassey and it had

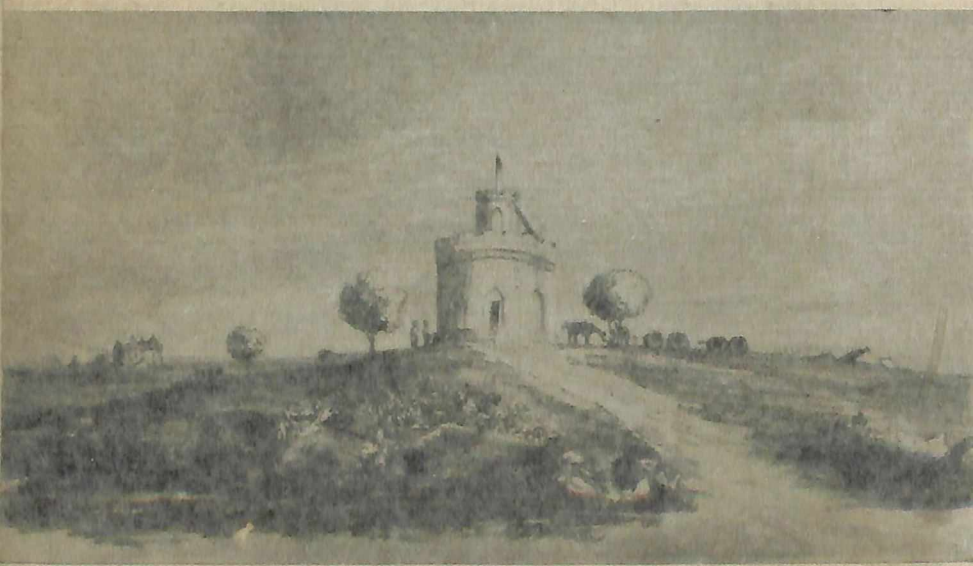
been confidently prophesied that the Company's rule would come to an end just one hundred years after Clive's victory. The sepoys fought desperately, believing that the stars in their courses were also fighting for them. Major Reid, whose post (Hindu Rao's house) was in serious danger, wrote: "No men could have fought better. They charged the Rifles, the Guides and my own men again and again, and at one time I thought I must have lost the day. The cannonade from the city, and the heavy guns which they had brought out, raged fast and furious, and completely enfiladed the whole of my position." But science ultimately triumphed over numbers and brawn yielded to brain. The British position was saved though casualties were heavy. There were as many victims of sunstroke, cholera, and dysentery as of the sword and the bullet.

Meanwhile, reinforcements were steadily pouring in from the Punjab and the strength of the British force reached the neighbourhood of seven thousand. But the rebel army at Delhi had also been reinforced. The Bareilly troops arrived at Delhi on the 2nd July; on the same day their commander Bakht Khan waited on the King and was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the rebel army in place of Mirza Moghul. A man of supposedly noble birth and forty years' military experience, Bakht Khan did not really possess the qualities of a commanding officer. But he had paid his troops six months' pay in advance and assured the King that he would not trouble him for funds. He had brought sufficient treasure from Bareilly, and for the time being the King was largely relieved of his financial worries.

The King had other troubles, however. Essentially a man of peace, he could not endure increasing military high-handedness. Whatever might have been his shortcomings, Bahadur Shah honestly tried to do his duty by his people. Tradesmen were in panic and closed their shops. This was bad, for provisions had to be obtained for the troops or anarchy would prevail. The King therefore ordered all shops to be opened, if necessary by force. At the same

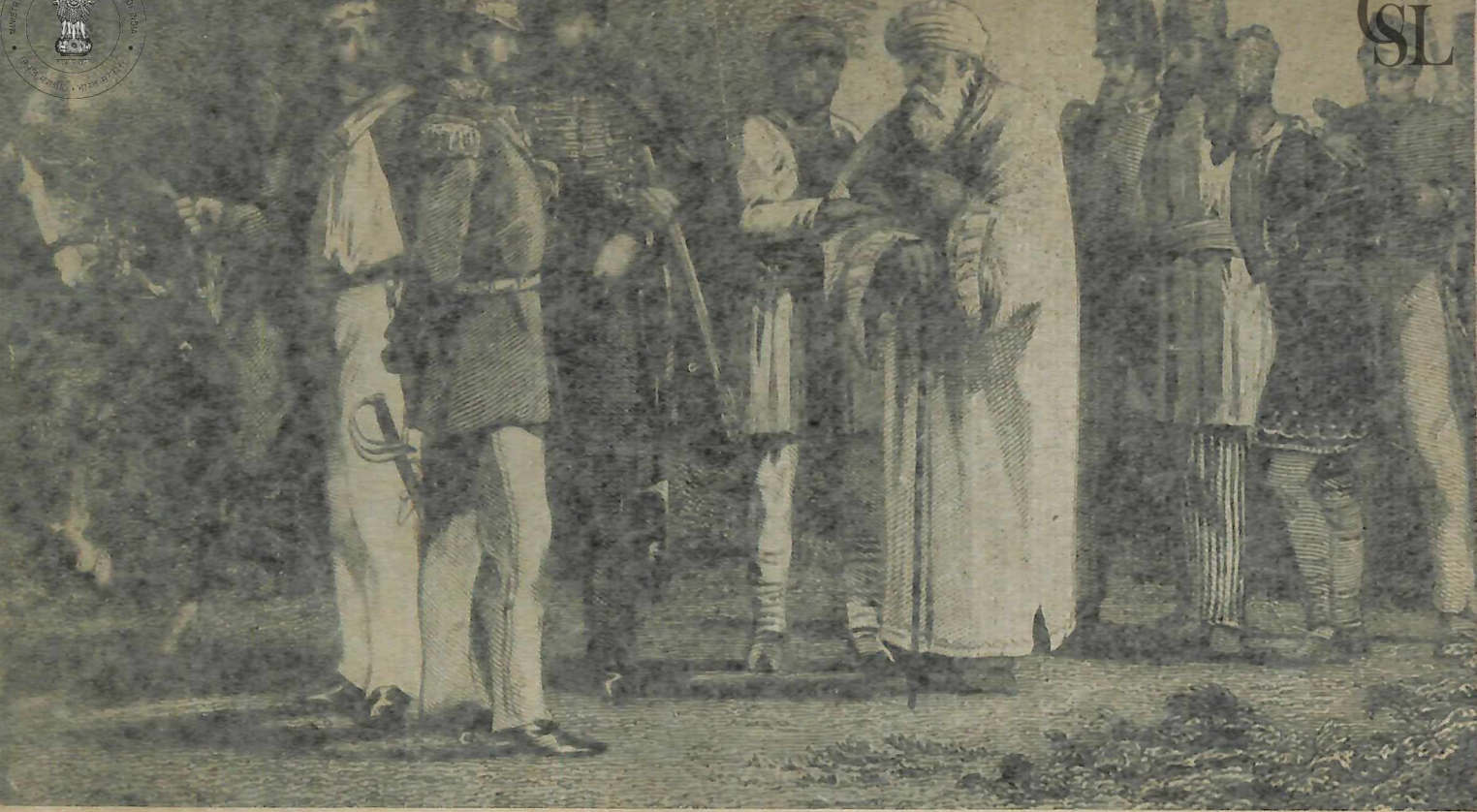
Emperor Bahadur Shah of Delhi

The fortified city of Delhi, defended by many regiments of rebel troops, defied for months the might of the British. A siege-train consisting of 50 heavy guns was, therefore, brought by the British from the Punjab for the capture of Delhi



The Flagstaff Tower on Delhi's Ridge where the British took shelter at the outbreak of the Mutiny. The British recaptured it after a month of their expulsion from the city and used it as their base in the battle for the recovery of Delhi

The storming of Kashmiri Gate by British forces in the battle for Delhi, September 14, 1857



The surrender of Bahadur Shah after the fall of Delhi, September 21, 1857

time, he expected the soldiers to leave the city people alone and obtain whatever they needed by fair purchase. But the soldiers were not amenable to discipline. Despite the King's best efforts to maintain order there were frequent incidents of loot and plunder; even women were not spared molestation.

In the British camp, morale was reasonably high but supplies of ammunition and heavy guns were by no means abundant. Added to this there were instances of treachery by sepoys, three of whom were hanged. Above all, the English soldiers had no confidence in General Barnard. A man of advanced years, he at last succumbed to excessive physical exertion and died of cholera on 5th July. General Reed, who succeeded Barnard, was practically an invalid. Though the British were not yet prepared to assault the city, the period was not altogether uneventful. A severe action was fought near Subzi Mandi which resulted in heavy casualties on both sides. Another action was fought on the 14th, when the mutineers fiercely attacked Hindu Rao's house and the Sabzi Mandi pickets under cover of heavy artillery fire from the city walls. Two days later, General Reed, now a broken man, relinquished his command in favour of Wilson.

Despite the loss of three Commanders-in-Chief in quick succession, the spirit of the British troops was not damped. They knew that things were not well within the city walls either. There were reports of sepoys clamouring for pay and deserting in large numbers, of harassed bankers and citizens anxiously awaiting the return of the English. There was also the possibility of a conflict between Hindus and Muslims on the occasion of Id. The reports were not all well founded. The real weakness of the rebels was their financial position.

As the festival of Id approached, the King firmly informed the General and officers of the army that "no cows were to be killed within the city during the festival of the Id, and if any Mohammedan should do so he would be blown away from a gun." The King himself set an

example by sacrificing a sheep at the Idgah. So on the 1st of August, the day of the Id, there was no internecine war in Delhi. Instead, Hindus and Muslims made a stern attack on the British position that day. The battle raged throughout the afternoon and night and continued till noon the next day. It was a heroic fight. Again and again the sepoys threw themselves against the British defence, only to be mowed down by a steady fire from the batteries. Nothing daunted they returned to the assault. As fresh rebel regiments reached Delhi from the outstations an attack on the Ridge was made to signalise their prowess and determination. Thus for two months they gave their enemies relentless fight, but there was no considered plan and no master mind to conduct the campaign. Repeated failures soured their spirits, and the sepoys attributed their ill success to treachery in high quarters. Their suspicion fell upon Hakim Ahsanullah Khan when a magazine exploded on the 7th August. The Hakim's house was raided, and in spite of the King's intervention he was placed under arrest.

Now the sepoys openly accused Queen Zinat Mahal of treachery and bad faith. She had been trying to secure the succession for her son, Jawan Bakht, but the Mutiny upset her plans. Now she put forward the proposition that if the British agreed to guarantee the old pension and privileges of the King and restore the status quo, the King's party would contrive to destroy the bridge of boats, win over the army and admit the British into the city. But by this time, the military position of the British had considerably improved. Confident of ultimate victory, they refused to entertain these overtures.

The mutineers did not quite know that the King himself had opened negotiations with the British as early as June and that the King was not alone in designing betrayal. The King had no strong liking for the rebel troops. Their failure to dislodge the British troops from the Ridge could not but make an unfavourable impression on him. He openly complained that they had brought ruin on a kingdom that

presence, began salamming us in the most abject manner and saying he was 'burra kooshee' (very glad) to see us." He still sought to divert himself with his favourite muse; not having paper or pen, he wrote verses with a burnt stick on the wall of his cell. An examination of the evidence tendered at the King's trial leaves no doubt that he was a victim of circumstances. He was physically and mentally incapable of checking the tide of events. It is true that he resented the abolition of the *nazar*, but it is equally true that he did not incite the Mutiny; nor was he in any way responsible for the murder of the English who were in the palace. At one time, it was suggested that he should be sent to the convict islands of the Andamans, but he was ultimately banished to Rangoon, where he died a few years later. Bahadur Shah had none but himself to blame for his misery. Had he died fighting at the head of his army, he would have earned the respect of his countrymen and an honoured place in history. But instead, he tamely yielded, first to the temptation of power held out by the sepoys, and then to the temptation of life held out by his counsellors. And then he died, a plaything of fortune, in a foreign land, unhonoured and unsung.

A terrible fate befell Delhi and its people. General Wilson had strictly forbidden violence against women and children. But where is the soldier who obeys the dictates of mercy at the moment of victory? The city was sacked, and people were indiscriminately butchered by British soldiers, who thirsted for vengeance, as well as by Indian mercenaries. On September 21, Griffiths, an English observer who has recorded the scene, found the streets "deserted and silent; they resembled a city of the dead on which some awful catastrophe had fallen. It was difficult to realize that we were passing through what had been, only a few days before, the abode of thousands of people. The portions of the town we passed through on that day had been pillaged to the fullest extent. Dead bodies of sepoys and city inhabitants lay scattered in every direction, poisoning the air for many days, and raising a stench which was unbearable."

No wonder that cholera broke out in the deserted city and the hospitals were filled to overflowing. Meanwhile, the plunder and killing went on unabated. The floors of the deserted houses were dug and the walls tapped in search of hidden treasure. The tragedy of Somnath was repeated. Hindu idols were unceremoniously removed and their pedestals broken in the greedy search for jewels.

Ghalib, the famous Urdu poet who was in Delhi at the time, mournfully writes: "Here there is a vast ocean of blood before me, God alone knows what more I have still to behold. Thousands of my friends died. Whom should I remember and to whom should I complain? Perhaps none is left even to shed tears on my death." And again in *Dastambu*: "God alone knows the number of persons who were hanged. The victorious army entered the city along the main road. Whomsoever they met on the way was killed. The whitemen on their entry started killing helpless and innocent persons. In two or three Mohallas the English both looted the property and killed the people."

Another contemporary, Zahir Dehlvi, writes in his *Dastan-i-Ghadar*: "Sometimes innocent persons are killed along with the sinners. This is what happened after the Mutiny. The English soldiers shot down whosover they met on the way. Among the men who remained in the City, there were some whose equal has never been nor shall ever be born. Mian Muhammad Amin Panjakush, an excellent writer, Moulvie Imam Buksh Sabhai along with his two sons, Mir Niaz Ali and the persons of Kucha Chelan (it is said they were fourteen hundred in number) were arrested and taken to Raj Ghat Gate. They were shot dead and their dead bodies were thrown into the Jamuna. As for the women they came out of their houses along with their children and killed themselves by jumping into the wells. All the wells of the Kucha Chelan were filled with dead bodies. My pen dare not write more."

CHAPTER III

THE PUNJAB

The Punjab, annexed by the British in 1849, was the home of a war-like people. But the people were divided among themselves, and in their mutual rivalry the new rulers found their security. Purbiah sepoys, who formed the bulk of those who rebelled at Meerut and Delhi, were not an overwhelming majority among the troops stationed in the Punjab. Of the sixty thousand men at different stations from Ambala to Mardan, the Hindustanis numbered 36,000 against 24,000 Europeans and Punjabees. According to Cave-Brown, a British chronicler, the term 'Purbiah' was mischievously brought into use by the British on the outbreak of the Mutiny, "for it revived the contempt and hatred with which the class had ever been regarded; it widened the breach between the Punjabee and the Hindustanee, and rendered any coalition the more difficult". The Purbiah sepoy in the Punjab thus found himself in a strange and hostile country. Moreover, a prophecy that promised the followers of the Guru the plunder of Delhi was also revived, and the Sikhs were assured that the prophecy would come true under British leadership.

When the news of Meerut and Delhi reached Lahore on 12th May, the authorities in the Punjab decided to disarm the Purbiah sepoys immediately. Throughout the province unsuspecting regiments were disarmed one after the other, regardless of their past loyalty or present record. Signs of resentment or protest were met with the most terrible punishment which often amounted to the killing of a whole regiment. In pursuance of this ruthless policy,

the first action was taken at Miran Mir. There, one day at the end of the morning parade, the sepoys suddenly found themselves confronted with loaded guns and asked to disarm. The sepoys obediently piled up their arms and the operation was completed without any incident. The next action was taken at Govindgarh, which commanded Amritsar, and it proved equally easy. At Ferozepur, however, things did not go so smoothly. Apprehending harm from European soldiers and artillery, the 45th regiment rose in arms and deserted the station. Many deserters were pursued, arrested and imprisoned. Others marched off to Delhi to swell the ranks of the rebels there. At Jullundur, the 36th and 61st N.I., foreseeing the design of their officers, rose in arms and then marched on to Delhi.

At Multan it was considered impossible to disarm two thousand Purbiahs with sixty Europeans and one thousand irregulars of questionable fledelity. But before long a reliable Punjabi regiment arrived, whereupon the order to disarm was issued. Two sepoy regiments were moved from their parade grounds and cleverly trapped between a body of loyal horsemen and European artillery. The order to pile up arms was thus enforced.

Peshawar commanded the Indo-Afghan frontier. The valley and the neighbouring hills were the home of a turbulent people to whom bloodshed came as easy as the spilling of water. The barren hills gave a poor return to their labours, and, from time immemorial, they had earned their living by the sword. Lured by the prospect of loot, they might welcome the sepoy risings as a godsend. Col. Edwardes, Commissioner of Peshawar, was faced with a difficult situation; he had to watch the sepoys on the one hand and the troublesome tribes on the other. On 21st May, Edwardes decided to disarm the sepoys. On the parade ground, the next day, the unsuspecting sepoys suddenly found themselves between two columns ready to fire at the least sign of resistance, and they obediently piled up their arms. But a company of sepoys ran away under cover of night. This treasonable desertion was not to go un-

punished. A price was set on the heads of the fugitives and the tribesmen had a merry time hunting them down and earning a few honest pieces of silver.

The story of the 55th regiment at Hoti Mardan is somewhat different. There too the sepoys had shown no signs of disloyalty. Yet, troops were sent from Peshawar to Mardan under Colonel Chute and Colonel Nicholson with the avowed purpose of disarming them. Agitated by this, the men of the 55th threw off all discipline and fled in the direction of Swat. The inexorable Nicholson pursued them, killed more than a hundred and captured a hundred and twenty, of whom a terrible example was to be made. Six regiments of Purbiahs were thus effectively eliminated and the Punjab Government could now devote all their energy to the important task of reinforcing the Commander-in-Chief at Delhi.

Three detachments were disposed of at Abuzai, Shab Kadar and Michni. Chute and Nicholson marched to each of these places and disarmed the detachments in detail, without any resistance. The 10th Irregulars at Naushera was similarly disarmed and humiliated; their entire property, including their horses and women's jewellery, was confiscated. On the 21st June at Jullundur, within range of the fort guns, the 35th Light Infantry and the 33rd N.I. were disarmed. There were still six regiments with arms, and so it was decided to render them also harmless. On the 7th July, a parade was ordered at Rawalpindi, where the sepoys peacefully surrendered their arms. Two companies of sepoys, however, escaped and made for the city. They were pursued and arrested. Those who escaped were beheaded by the villagers, for a price had been set on every rebel head.

Things did not go so smoothly at Jhelum. Colonel Ellice had arrived there with a punitive force and kept his mission a guarded secret. But the drama had been staged so often that the sepoys had no doubt as to the intention of the Europeans and Multanis when they were seen approaching the parade ground. At once the sepoys

rose in arms and an obstinate flight began. Their muskets had no chance against guns and rifles, and yet, for a whole day, the sepoys fought with the desperation born of despair. One or two parties seized stray boats, only to fall into enemy hands on the other side. Of the five hundred, who fought Colonel Ellice that morning, not even fifty escaped. One hundred and twenty found their way to the Kashmir territories, only to be arrested and delivered later to the British authorities. Thus was eliminated a complete regiment of sepoys.

At Sialkot the 9th Light Cavalry foresaw danger; Nicholson was dashing for the place. To attack or be attacked were the only alternatives; and the sepoys, deciding to strike first, rose in mutiny on the morning of 9th June. The Europeans took refuge in the old Sikh fort. A number of them were killed and some were wounded on their way to the fort. In the afternoon, the rebels left for Hoshiarpur. Nicholson quickly pursued them and by a forced march caught up with them near a river. Unfortunately, the river was in spate and trapped the insurgents on a small strip of land which became an island overnight. Here they were killed by Nicholson to a man. The Purbiah regiments throughout the Punjab were thus disarmed and annihilated.

Cold-blooded Slaughter at Ajnala

The Hindustani sepoy with arms was a menace; disarmed, he still remained a problem. On 30th July, the disarmed 26th N.I. bolted in a body from their camp at Mian Mir. They had no better weapons than hatchets and knives, but they had the advantage of numbers. They rushed at Major Spender, who tried to intervene, and put him to death. The Sergeant-Major who came to his aid was also killed. If there was any hesitation or wavering, the indiscriminate firing of the Sikh levies "precipitated the murders and frightened all, good, bad or indifferently disposed, to fight". Immediately they dashed off for a hiding-place, but next day their presence on a river-island was reported by un-

friendly villagers to the Tahsildar of Ajnala, who at once attacked them with a police force. Unarmed and famished, the poor fugitives could not defend themselves and one hundred and fifty of them were done to death even before Frederick Cooper, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, appeared on the scene. Boats were procured and zealous villagers brought them ashore, their hands tightly pinioned. A few of them escaped in the melee; but the rest, numbering 282, were conveyed to Ajnala. There, 160 men were put to the sword, while the rest, reserved for a similar fate, were put in a secure building where they died of heat and suffocation. The grim tragedy of the Calcutta Black Hole was thus repeated at Ajnala.

Cooper's cold-blooded murder of the unarmed sepoys met with immediate official approbation. "I congratulate, you on your success against the 26th N.I.", wrote Sir John Lawrence. "You and your police acted with much energy and spirit, and deserve well of the State." More enthusiastic and warm was Robert Montgomery in applauding Cooper's achievement. "All honour to you for what you have done, and right well you did it . . . It will be a feather to your cap as long as you live".

Despite the strong measures which the authorities adopted from the very start, the Punjab was not altogether free from trouble. On 19th August, the sepoys of the 10th Cavalry mutinied at Ferozepore. Almost the whole regiment moved out with their horses. This was followed by the revolt of the disarmed sepoys of the 51st at Peshawar. The authorities there instituted a search in the sepoy lines, obviously for hidden arms, whereupon the regiment broke out in a body. An alarm was sounded and the Afghans at once pounced upon the sepoys. The sepoys fought well, but it was a forlorn cause. They could muster only a few swords or muskets against the rifles and guns of their assailants. They were totally destroyed. Cave-Brown observes: "Of the 870 men who, on the morning of the 28th, composed the 51st N.I., within the eight-and-forty hours not the odd 70 survived".

On the 1st September, a band of hillmen attacked Murree, but the police, who had been forwarned, repulsed them. More serious was the insurrection in the Multan district. The leader of the new revolt was Ahmad Khan, head of the Khurrul tribe. The rebels held the jungles of Gogaira and secured some initial success against their British opponents. Sir John Lawrence promptly sent there a squadron of the newly raised Punjab cavalry. The initiative then passed into British hands, but the warlike clansmen still continued to fight from their shelter in the jungles. Finally, pressed from all sides, the rebels retreated into the heart of the forest where the British troops attacked and completely routed them.

Lawrence and his colleagues did their utmost not only to save the Punjab but also to contribute to the recovery of Delhi. India had to be saved, and Lawrence did not hesitate to strain the resources of the Punjab to reinforce the thin British line on the Ridge at Delhi. The men he sent, the materials he supplied, helped in the recapture of Delhi and turned the scales in his country's favour.

CHAPTER IV

KANPUR

While Delhi rallied round the nominal Moghul Emperor, Kanpur looked for leadership to the house of the Peshwa, situated some miles north of the city. In November, 1817, Peshwa Baji Rao II had challenged the British; but a few months later, he finally surrendered on terms. The Peshwa was deprived of his territories and sent off to exile at Bithur near Kanpur with a princely pension of eight lakhs of rupees a year. There, the Peshwa led a quiet and pious life till he died in 1851. Baji Rao was childless and adopted three sons—Dhondu Pant *alias* Nana, Sadashiv Pant *alias* Dada, and Gangadhar Rao *alias* Bala. By a written will Baji Rao left his title and estates to Nana Saheb, the eldest of his adopted sons.

Baji Rao had left, in cash and kind, some thirty lakhs of rupees. The Government made it clear, during Baji Rao's lifetime, that his heirs would not be entitled to any portion of his pension. Despite this, Nana insisted that the pension should be continued, but the British rejected the demand in terms of the original agreement. Nana vainly argued that the pension had been granted to Baji Rao "for the support of himself and family", and therefore the family had a legal claim to the pension.

Soon after the Peshwa's death, the Regulation of 1832, which had exempted Baji Rao from the jurisdiction of the ordinary law courts, was withdrawn. This reduced Nana and his brothers to the status of common men, and exposed them to the vexation of being dragged to courts. Moreover, the humiliated prince was forbidden the use of his father's

seal. So, the prince made a new seal in which he styled himself as the Peshwa Bahadur. The new seal was considered even more objectionable and its use was stopped. At length, the disappointed prince contented himself with the simple title of Shriman Nana Dhondu Pant Bahadur. This fresh humiliation added to the bitterness caused by the loss of the pension. Like every dispossessed prince, Nana fondly hoped that justice might come if his case were fairly represented to the authorities in London. He therefore appealed to the Company's Court of Directors, and sent Azimullah Khan, a man of remarkable ability, to England to represent his case in person. But the Court of Directors gave a final blow to his hopes by refusing to revise the decision of the Government of India.

Early Career of Nana Saheb

Nothing much is known of Nana's early life and training. His associates did not credit him with any extraordinary ability or striking quality. John Lang, the eminent English barrister who enjoyed his hospitality at Bithur, was not impressed by him. But the prince had no scruples about food and had no objection to any kind of meat being served to his European guests. During those years Nana had been living the normal life of a well-to-do Indian prince and extended his hospitality on a lavish scale to the English officers at Kanpur. The Englishmen were so pleased by his friendly and courteous manner that when the crisis came in May 1857 they turned to him for advice and support.

Situated on the right bank of the Ganga, Kanpur was an important military station. It was the centre of a flourishing leather industry. Within a hundred miles of Allahabad and forty miles of Lucknow, it commanded the Grand Trunk Road on the one hand and the highway to Oudh on the other. In consideration of its strategic importance, the city was strongly garrisoned. In May 1857, the garrison consisted of three sepoy regiments and sixty-one European artillery men.

On 14th May, when the news of Meerut and Delhi

Nana Dhondu Pant Bahadur (Nana Saheb), the last Peshwa. The most dynamic and powerful of the rebel leaders, he fought the British till the end and never surrendered

40A

Nana Saheb with his cavalry leaving Lucknow for a fresh theatre of war

The rebel army attacking British Infantry in the battle of Kanpur— July 15, 1857

The sack of Kaiser Bagh Palace at Lucknow after its capture by the British

reached Kanpur, it caused great excitement among the sepoys. Feeling that the storm might burst any moment, General Wheeler, Commandant of the station, immediately took precautionary measures. He fortified and provisioned two old barracks to which the European community could resort in the event of danger. On the 22nd, a band of European troops arrived from Lucknow and the sepoys grew suspicious. It was believed that the Europeans had come to disarm the sepoys.

About this time, a consignment of rotten *atta* was placed in the market and offered at a cheap rate. It was suspected that the flour had been adulterated with powdered bones of pigs and cows. The sepoys naturally got excited. On enquiry, however, the report turned out to be false; but suspicion still troubled the minds of the simple people. The situation was tense and only a spark was needed to set the whole station ablaze.

At this dark hour Nana, it is said, offered protection to the English ladies of the station. He invited Magistrate Hillersdon to send his wife and other ladies to his palace at Bithur. According to one account, Nana also offered armed assistance of his own accord. Mowbray Thomson, one of the four survivors of the later massacre states that Nana took charge of the treasury at the invitation of the Magistrate. "The relations we had always sustained with this man had been of so friendly a nature that not a suspicion of his fidelity entered the minds of any of our leaders". Obviously, neither Hillersdon nor Wheeler had any reason to distrust Nana whose hospitality they had so often enjoyed, though they knew well that the Maratha prince did not feel happy about the loss of his father's pension.

The entrenchment on which Wheeler had relied as the last resort was not a strong place. It consisted of two brick-built old barracks. Azimullah, Nana's principal counsellor, ridiculed this flimsy affair as the "the fort of despair". At every alarm the women and children of the governing race hurried to the entrenchment and returned home only when

the alarm proved false. On the evening of 3rd June, there was an alarm that the sepoys were about to mutiny. The European civil population was at once ordered into the entrenchment. Next day, provisions for a month were thrown into the entrenchment and one lakh rupees were brought from the treasury. Such panicky measures only brought the mutiny nearer. It actually broke out on the night of the 4th, ending the spell of uncertainty and suspense.

The rebel troops rushed to the treasury and plundered it. Simultaneously, the prison was raided and the convicts released. Then they marched towards Delhi and halted at Kalyanpur, a few miles from the city, only to return unexpectedly in a body to Kanpur and elect Nana Saheb as their leader. This turn of events cannot be easily explained. According to one account, a deputation of some rebel officers waited on Nana and suggested that a kingdom awaited him if he joined their cause but death if he sided with the British. Nana perhaps succumbed either to the temptation or to the threat, or both, and agreed. It is also said that Nana was about to lead the sepoys to Delhi when Azimullah Khan shrewdly pointed out to him that at Delhi he could at best play a minor part whereas at Kanpur he would be the hero. It would appear that the sepoys, feeling the need of a leader of high rank, played upon Nana's ambition, and he placed himself at their head after some initial hesitation.

On the morning of the 7th, Nana wrote to General Wheeler that he was going to attack the garrison. The entrenchment was henceforth shelled from day to day during the terrible twenty-day siege which followed. Of the one thousand refugees sheltered in the "Fort of despair", fifty per cent were women and children. The defenders numbered about 400 men, and there was no lack of arms and ammunition: three to seven, even eight, muskets were allotted to each fighting man. For three weeks, the little garrison defended itself against continuous fire from the sepoys. From the very beginning, the sufferings of the re-

fugees in the garrison were intense. Sometimes a horse or a bull was shot for food when it came within shooting range. There was little protection against the scorching heat of June. Many died of sunstroke, others of thirst. The single well in the entrenchment had no cover, and the sepoys fired whenever an attempt was made to draw water. Mowbray Thomson says: "I have seen the children of my brother officers sucking the pieces of old water-bags, putting scraps of canvas and leather straps into the mouth to try and get a single drop of moisture upon their parched lips." A week after the opening of the siege the thatched barrack, where the sick and wounded were lodged, caught fire and two artillery men died in the flames. All the medical stores were burnt and no relief could henceforth be given to the wounded. Children were a source of constant anxiety to their parents. Unconscious of the danger outside and tired of the monotony of closed life within, they would run out to the open whenever they could evade their mothers' eye, and bullets made no distinction of age and sex.

With their limited resources and steadily thinning ranks, the defenders of the entrenchment could not expect to hold out long. Communications with Calcutta had been cut off; Lucknow was the only quarter from which they could expect help. To Lucknow, therefore, General Wheeler addressed a frantic appeal. But Sir Henry Lawrence, Commissioner of Lucknow, had his own troubles, and could not spare any troops. So, nothing was left but to wait patiently for the European troops the Governor-General had promised, or to come to terms with the enemy when all hope of succour failed.

Meanwhile, Nana had formally assumed charge of the government. He was not, however, the head of a purely Hindu State. With the outbreak of the Mutiny had been unfurled the green banner of Islam. However, there was no conflict between the professors of the rival faiths, since both wanted a revival of the past, the restoration of the old institutions, the return of the good old days. Many devout Muslims attended Nana's court and supported the new regime.

On 24th June, General Wheeler sent his final message to Lucknow. It was the last cry of despair wrung out of an anguished heart. "British spirit alone remains," he wrote, "but it cannot last for ever....Surely, we are not to die like rats in a cage." The defenders had suffered unspeakable sufferings and privations. The barracks became so riddled with shot and shell that they afforded little shelter. From the 21st to the 24th, the garrison was subjected to ceaseless bombardment. Obviously, the end was near. The only chance of saving the women and children was now to capitulate.

Surrender of General Wheeler

Unexpectedly, relief was at last offered by the Maratha chief himself. The bearer of the surrender terms was an East Indian woman, Mrs. Greenway. The document was brief and offered "all those who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and are willing to lay down their arms.....safe passage to Allahabad." Since there remained no alternative to an honourable capitulation, the beleagured garrison accepted the offer. On the 26th, Azimullah and Jawala Prasad, Brigadier of Nana's troops, came to the entrenchment to announce the terms of capitulation signed by Nana himself. Nana agreed to allow the British to evacuate with their arms and also to escort them safely to the riverside where boats should be ready to carry them to Allahabad. Conveyance was provided to the wounded, women and children, and the boats were provisioned with food.

On the morning of the 27th, a ragged, miserable caravan left the entrenchment for the Sati Chaura Ghat where boats were kept in readiness for the journey. Major Vibart was the last officer to board a boat. By nine o'clock all the forty boats had received their load and were ready to sail, when suddenly trouble began.

There was a huge crowd on the river bank that morning, and thousands of spectators had gathered to see their former rulers leave. Mowbray Thomson and Delafosse

survived to record their unhappy experience. Both of them were trained observers and neither of them had confidence in Nana and his counsellors. What happened at the river-front is thus related by Mowbray Thomson :

"As soon as Major Vibart had stepped into his boat, 'Off' was the word; but at a signal from the shore, the native boatmen, who numbered eight and a coxswain to each boat, all jumped over and waded to the shore. We fired into them immediately, but the majority of them escaped, and are now plying their old trade in the neighbourhood of Cawnpore. Before they quitted us, these men had contrived to secrete burning charcoal in the thatch of most of the boats. Simultaneously with the departure of the boatmen, the identical troopers who had escorted Major Vibart to the ghaut opened upon us with their carbines. As well as the confusion caused by the burning of the boats would allow, we returned the fire of these horsemen, who were about fifteen or sixteen in number, but they retired immediately after the volley they had given us."

Then followed a pandemonium of murderous shooting and counter-shooting. Seized with panic the Englishmen jumped into the water and tried to push off the boats. But most of the boats could not be moved, and so escape was impossible. Meanwhile, the sepoys kept up a steady fire from ambushed guns; the thatched roofs of the boats were in flames. Women and children crouched behind the boats and "stood up to their chins in the river" to avoid the thickly falling bullets. All was over when shooting was stopped at Nana's order. Most of the men had been massacred. The women and children were dragged to the shore and lodged in a brick building in the city.

Of the forty ill-fated boats only one escaped. On board were Vibart, Mowbray Thomson, Delafosse and nine others. After a hard struggle, the boat escaped, though shot fell all around. About mid-day, the fugitives got out of range of the big guns but they were followed by musket fire. At night, burning arrows were shot, and a 'fire boat' was sent down-stream in order to set fire to the boat. They had a

brief respite in the morning, but the relentless pursuit was not over. Two days and nights of incessant fighting, without a morsel of food or any drink, had completely exhausted them. By the time the sepoys gave up the chase, all but four of the fugitives were dead. After six hours of swimming, the survivors—Mowbray Thomson, Delafosse and two privates—found shelter with a friendly zamindar of Oudh.

It is futile now to try to determine whether there was a deliberate plot to massacre the English who had been promised safety, and whether Nana had any hand in such a plot. But it should not be forgotten that in 1857 neither party was swayed by considerations of humanity. The massacre of Sati Chaura Ghat followed and did not precede the savagery of Colonel Neill in other parts of the United Provinces. Therefore, even if Nana is held legally responsible for the crimes of his followers, the moral guilt must be shared by Neill.

Rising at Banaras

Neill was a stern and relentless man who did not believe in half measures. Leaving Calcutta in order to help restore order in Upper India, Neill halted first at Banaras. The events at Banaras were causing the Government considerable anxiety. The city had become a resort of State prisoners of all faiths. Moreover, being situated on the line of communication between Patna and Allahabad, it was also strategically important. The news of Meerut and Delhi aroused excitement among the sepoys of the 37th N.I. posted at the station, and an outbreak was feared On 3rd June, Neill arrived at Banaras. On the 4th came the news of a rising at Azamgarh. This unnerved the military authorities who feared that the example of Azamgarh might prove infectious. Immediately, a council was called in which it was decided to disarm the 37th N. I. next day. At this juncture, Neill appeared on the scene and pressed for immediate action. The Sikh regiment was considered reliable, and so were the men of

the Irregular Cavalry. It was with their help and that of the Europeans that the suspected sepoys were to be disarmed. A parade was called at five in the evening, and the 37th was ordered to surrender their arms. No resistance was offered and six companies in succession obediently laid down their arms. Just then the European troops were seen approaching the scene with cartridges and grapeshot in their hands. In the Punjab the coming of the Europeans had meant death for the sepoys, and so an outcry arose among the sepoys that the Europeans had come to kill them. Seized with panic, some of the sepoys rushed for their arms to defend themselves, whereupon the Europeans opened a brisk fire. The Sikhs charged their guns and killed Colonel Gordon. The Europeans then turned the fire upon the Sikhs and the men of the 37th and mowed them to the ground. While the sepoys as well as the Sikhs were being mowed down by fire, Neill assumed command and completed the merciless massacre of the 37th N.I.

Not content with killing the unarmed sepoys, Neill set out to teach the mutineers and the disaffected people of the countryside that British arms were not yet paralysed. "Already our military officers were hunting down criminals of all kinds and hanging them up with as little compunction as though they had been pariah-dogs or jackals or vermin of a baser kind", wrote Kaye. A clergyman wrote a month after the occurrence that the sight that greeted his eyes was "a row of gallows, on which the energetic Colonel was hanging mutineer after mutineer as they were brought in." Neill's savagery at Banaras sent a thrill of horror throughout Hindusthan. Sepoys at Allahabad and Fatehpur, at Faizabad and Jaunpur, were shocked to learn how their countrymen had been mowed down by English gunners. They felt that even the most faithful of them was not safe against British faithlessness.

Mutiny at Allahabad

The news of Banaras reached Allahabad the very next day. A few men from Banaras had entered the lines and

spread the shocking story of how the men of the 37th N.I. had been disarmed and then massacred. The sepoys at once rose in arms. Murder, arson and pillage followed; bungalows were burnt and plundered and anarchy reigned. It was not Christians alone but Hindu pilgrims also who suffered at the hands of the rowdies. European women and non-combatants took shelter in the fort. Inside the fort the Sikhs also showed signs of mutiny, but Brasyer saved the situation by keeping them under control.

An obscure man now came forward to take charge of the rebel administration on behalf of the King of Delhi. He was Maulavi Liakat Ali, a man of humble origin from the pargana of Chail. According to one account, he was a weaver by birth and a schoolmaster by profession. That he commanded the respect of his fellow citizens cannot be doubted, for they unquestioningly acknowledged his leadership. His pre-eminence was due to his personal character and reputation for piety. He tried, though unsuccessfully, to restore order and establish the rule of law. It is no wonder that he failed, for he did not know even the rudiments of military science, which alone might have enabled him to exercise control over the insurgents.

Meanwhile, Neill was pushing on for Allahabad. The road was deserted and horses were not to be found. But that did not deter him; he made the peasants draw his coach. When he reached the fort on the 11th he was exhausted by the dash from Banaras. But the situation brooked no delay. The fort had been saved by Brasyer with the help of the Sikhs, but the town was still in rebel hands.

Both the Europeans and the Sikhs were drinking to excess; Neill immediately brought them under discipline. Then, with ruthless severity, he opened fire on Daraganj and Kydganj and the city was soon cleared of the insurgents. The Maulavi evacuated his headquarters on the 17th.

Neill did not proceed to Kanpur immediately. It was his first task to punish the guilty and terrorise the waverers. Punitive expeditions were sent throughout the district and white civilians joined the military in the mission of burning

villages and hanging "niggers". Neill's bestiality shocked all human sensibilities. The Government subsequently came to learn "that the indiscriminate hanging not only of persons of all shades of guilt, but of those whose guilt was, at the least, very doubtful, and the general burning and plunder of villages, whereby the innocent as well as the guilty, without regard to age or sex, were indiscriminately punished, and, in some instances, sacrificed, had deeply exasperated large communities not otherwise hostile to the Government."

Neill's severe measures so scared even the humble labourers that he could not secure sufficient transport and provisions for his march to Kanpur. On the 30th June, Havelock arrived at Allahabad and took over command. The news of Wheeler's capitulation at Kanpur reached him soon afterwards. Havelock ordered Renand too to march to Kanpur, but luckily for Renand, Havelock joined him before he encountered Nana's troops on the 12th July.

The news of Banaras also caused disturbances at Fatehgarh, near Kanpur. On the 9th June, all British officials with the exception of Judge Tucker left the place. The station was recaptured by the relieving army, which proceeded to cross the River Pandu on its way to Kanpur. Havelock was anxious to rescue the women and children who were believed to be prisoners in Nana's hands. As the army approached Kanpur, the sepoys put up a fight, but Havelock effected a relatively easy entry into the city on 17th July. But it was already too late for Havelock to save his unfortunate country-women.

After the massacre at the Sati Chaura Ghat, as noted earlier, the women and children were offered shelter. They were finally lodged in a building called Bibighar. When the rebel leaders were convinced that they could not hold Kanpur any longer, the unfortunate prisoners were all killed and their dead bodies were thrown into a well, shortly before Havelock's troops entered the city. The details of this ghastly massacre have been vividly described by British historians, but they are largely based on hearsay.

For the massacre of Bibighar, too, Nana has been held guilty. But to pronounce any definite verdict on Nana's share in the massacre is not easy. Nana himself denied that he had ever committed any murder. In a *Ishtahar-nama*, from his hide-out, addressed to Her Majesty the Queen and delivered to Major Richardson in April 1859, he asserted that he had nothing to do with the killing of women and children.

Nana evacuated Bithur on the 8th July under cover of night. On the 19th, Major Stephenson marched to Bithur and destroyed the Peshwa's palace. Neill was left in charge of Kanpur. As usual, he regarded it his duty to restore order in the city and to bring the disaffected people to their senses. He directed that each person sentenced to death should be taken to Bibighar and forced to clear a portion of the blood stains. The poor wretches were made to lick the blood in the shedding of which they had probably no hand.

Those who were condemned to death, and their number was not small, died with extraordinary composure. "The Mahomedans with hauteur and an angry kind of scorn; and the Hindoos with an apparent indifference altogether astonishing." "Some of the Hindoos treated death exactly as if it were a journey."

CHAPTER V

OUDH

In Northern India, Oudh was the largest of the principalities that came into being on the decay of the Moghul Empire. Nawab Suja-ud-daulah shared the misfortunes of Emperor Shah Alam of Delhi when their combined armies were defeated by the British at the battle of Buxar. By the Treaty of Allahabad that followed, Lord Clive wrested from the Emperor the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, while the Nawab of Oudh was compelled to ally himself with no power other than the British.

Sucessive Nawabs fulfilled this obligaiton, but lamentably misgoverned Oudh. Corruption and extortion were rampant. As the situation worsened, the British intervened and in 1801 coerced the Nawab into a subsidiary alliance. The original territories of Oudh were reduced to half, and the ruler's status was relegated to that of a feudatory.

Wajid Ali, the fifth and the last king of Oudh, ascended a throne already tottering. Like his predecessors, he had been called upon to introduce reforms. Like them, he promised to do so, but did not keep his word. Pleasure-loving and indolent, Wajid Ali's rule in Lucknow was synonymous with vice and corruption. Colonel Sleeman, who was specially sent to investigate the state of affairs, was alarmed at the miserable condition prevailing in the state. "Oudh is now without a government", he wrote in his report. "The King sees nobody save the singers and eunuchs, and does not even pretend to know anything about public affairs." When Outram succeeded Sleeman as Resident in 1854, he found the affairs of Oudh in the same

state of confusion. The Nawab would not heed the repeated warnings of the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, who finally annexed the State in 1856. Wajid Ali Shah was sent off to Calcutta on a liberal pension.

The new province was placed under Sir James Outram as Chief Commissioner. Consequent on the annexation, sixty thousand of the king's troops were thrown out of employment. The new political order caused uneasiness and anxiety in many walks of life. The Court had maintained a large number of artisans and craftsmen; they were now thrown out of work. The king's stipendiaries went without pension for more than a year until Sir Henry Lawrence came to Lucknow as Chief Commissioner and relieved their misery.

A new settlement of land revenue was made directly with the tillers of the soil and the talukdars lost their hereditary estates. But, contrary to expectation, the new revenue settlement brough no relief to the peasant. Under the old regime, the peasant had to pay a number of vexatious taxes and cesses. If some of these were now abolished, far more obnoxious duties were imposed in their place. As a British official of the time wrote: "We had been so very anxious to show a large balance-sheet in our favour, that we were less careful to make the people happy than to make them fill our treasuries. There was a duty on stamps, on petitions, on food, on houses, on eatables, on ferries." The new land settlement caused widespread discontent. While it burdened the peasant with heavier taxes, it wiped out the landed aristocracy altogether. The unhappy peasants sympathised with their masters. When, later, the dispossessed chiefs rose against the British, the peasantry stood solidly by them.

There was mounting discontent on all sides; and it was not until March 1857 that Sir Henry Lawrence, the new Chief Commissioner, set out to heal the wounds. The stipendiaries were paid their arrears; the talukdars received from the Chief Commissioner the courtesy due to their rank; pensions and gratuities were promptly paid. But

Sir Henry had come too late. The sepoy was already agitated over the greased cartridge. Popular disaffection grew apace despite Sir Henry's sympathetic attitude. On 18th April, a clod was thrown at the Chief Commissioner's carriage by an unknown hand. The offender might not have been a sepoy, but so gross an insult to the head of the administration was a sure indication of deep-seated discontent. The 48th N.I. showed signs of insubordination, and it was decided to remove the regiment from Lucknow. On 2nd May, the 7th Oudh Regiment refused to bite the cartridge. Prompt action was taken and the stubborn sepoys were brought to book. The regiment was later disbanded.

On May 12, Sir Henry held a public durbar to rally the loyal elements in the army and to reward the sepoys who had remained faithful during the recent commotion. He implored Hindu and Muslim sepoys not to allow themselves to be swayed by vague fears of religion. Sir Henry contrasted the repression of Hindus by Aurangzeb and of Muslims by Ranjit Singh with the tolerance shown by the British Raj. Sir Henry's appeal to sentiment and loyalty did not altogether fail, for when the mutiny broke out, no less than 500 Indians stood by their posts to defend the Residency against their countrymen. Wisely, he had summoned the military pensioners to Lucknow, and placed his confidence in them. The veterans in their turn proved that the trust was not misplaced.

On 14th May, the news of Meerut reached Lucknow; the news of Delhi arrived the next day. Sir Henry decided to consolidate his defence in the event of an outbreak at two centres in the city—the Machchhi Bhavan, a fortified old palace, and his own city residence, the Residency. These were stored with arms and provisions, and women and children were evacuated from the cantonment.

On 30th May, the sepoys at Muriaon rose in arms. The rising was easily suppressed. The loyal sepoys joined hands with the European troops in restoring order, whilst a detachment of the 13th guarded Sir Henry's house in the

cantonment. The road to the city was blocked, and the rebels could not move in that direction. It was now known who were friends and who were not. The next day, there was a rising in the city which was suppressed by the police. The prisoners were tried by a court martial and many were hanged. A gallows and a big gun were set up in front of Machchhi Bhavan to overawe bad characters. Soldiers caught in the act of mutiny were punished with death. The main body of the rebels, however, escaped and marched off to Delhi.

The outbreak of the 30th was not confined to Lucknow; soon it spread to the outstations of Oudh. In some cases official excesses drove wavering sepoys into active revolt. But there was no unity of plan and no concerted action. Each regiment followed its own way.

On 2nd June, the 41st N.I. and two regiments of Oudh Irregulars stationed at Sitapur were disturbed by a rumour that the *atta* distributed to them was adulterated with bone dust. The soldiers insisted that the suspected foodstuff should be thrown into the river. This was done, but the sepoys were not satisfied. Next day they broke out in mutiny. The Oudh Irregulars made common cause with the local sepoys. Colonel Birch, who commanded the 41st N.I., was shot dead. J. C. Christian, Commissioner of the Division, attempted to escape with his family and a party of Europeans, but most of them were killed. The armed police however remained loyal and protected their commander, Captain Hearsey.

Mutiny at Faizabad

The story of Faizabad is interesting. In February a mysterious person, later known as the Maulavi of Faizabad, appeared in the city. Nobody knew who he was or where he came from. He was variously known as Ahmad Ali Shah and Sikandar Shah, and according to one account, Arcot in the Madras Presidency was his native city. He travelled from place to place, escorted by his armed retainers, and he had disciples all over India. The Maulavi

openly made seditious speeches and declared a holy war against the *Firinghis*. The police forcibly disarmed his followers and the Maulavi was put in a military prison. He was a prisoner when the Mutiny broke out.

The Mutiny at Faizabad, like that at Allahabad, was the direct result of Neill's atrocities at Banaras. At Faizabad the sepoys took possession of the treasury and asked the European officers to leave in peace. They furnished them with boats and money, and allowed them to take their arms and belongings with them. Two boats, however, were intercepted at Bairamghat by the 17th N.I. from Azamgarh, and many passengers including Colonel Goldney, the Commissioner, were killed. The local nobles were still friendly; Raja Man Singh of Shahganj sheltered a good number of women and children from Faizabad.

There were others who displayed the same traditional chivalry. Rustam Shah of Deyrah extended his hospitality to the refugees from Sultanpur, though after the annexation of his territory, he had been deprived of much of his ancestral property. Lal Hanumant Singh of Dharpur had similarly suffered at the hands of the new rulers, and yet he readily responded to the appeal of Captain Barrow, Deputy Commissioner of Salone, and sheltered the British fugitives in his fort. A fortnight later, when Barrow solicited the Raja's help for suppressing the rebellion, he replied: "Sahib, your countrymen came into this country and drove out our king. You sent your officers round the districts to examine the titles to the estates. At one blow you took from me lands which from time immemorial had been in my family. I submitted. Suddenly misfortune fell upon you. The people of the land rose against you. You came to me whom you had despoiled. I have saved you. But now I march at the head of my retainers to Lakhnao to try and drive you from the country." Ulitmately, however, the chivalrous Rajput did not join the Mutiny.

After the outbreak of 30th May, Sir Henry transferred his headquarters from the Cantonment to the Residency. By the middle of June, 1857, British authority disappeared

almost everywhere in Oudh. But the road to the city of Lucknow was still open, and the European fugitives from the outstations had recourse to this last refuge. On 11th June the police force again broke out in mutiny. Realizing now that a great crisis was near at hand, Sir Henry hurried to complete his defensive arrangements. It was decided to concentrate the entire garrison within the Residency and to hold it until reinforcements arrived. Batteries were built round the Residency building; old walls were strengthened and new ramparts constructed. Military stores and provisions were transferred from Machchi Bhavan to the Residency. On 28th June, Sir Henry received the terrible news of Wheeler's capitulation at Kanpur. Simultaneously, news came that the rebels cheered by the news of Kanpur, had advanced in force to the village of Chinhat, only eight miles from the Residency.

British Defeat at Chinhat

Sir Henry decided to move out and to strike the first blow at the rebels at Chinhat. He set out with the 32nd Infantry and a band of European artillery and confronted the sepoys. But at the first encounter the English force suffered a crushing defeat. "The line of retreat was marked by the bodies of the 32nd, their arms, their accoutrements; men were falling untouched by ball; the heat of a June sun was killing more than the enemy. In one fatal day the 32nd have left 3 officers and 116 men to tell the tale of British heroism; but, alas, also of British failure!"

The Chinhat battle was a turning point in the mutiny of Lucknow. The rebels were now the undisputed masters of the city. Seized with panic the British were compelled to flee to the Residency for their lives. The rebels lost no time in attacking the Residency. And the great siege began. But the besieged held out with astonishing courage for more than four months till Sir Colin Campbell rescued and removed them to Alambagh in November.

There was not sufficient shelter for the Europeans; the servants therefore lived in the open. In spite of untold

sufferings some of the servants stayed with their masters throughout the siege. Women and children were accommodated in the underground rooms which offered better security against shot and shell. Every house was overcrowded, and when cholera and small-pox broke out the patients could not be segregated. In August the daily ration was reduced to half.

Siege of Lucknow Residency

Among the besieged were people of all types. There were civil servants, clerks, merchants, and men of other professions. Every one of them had now to bear arms. All the Europeans were not British. There was the French adventurer, Duprat. There was another Frenchman, M. Jeoffroy, and an Italian, Signor Barsotelli. They were not residents of Lucknow, but had been caught there by the Mutiny. Several high-ranking Indians were also with the besieged. They were under detention as a precautionary measure. The chief of them was Mustafa Ali Khan, elder brother of the deposed king, Wajid Ali Shah. Two princes of the Imperial house of Delhi, Mirza Muhammad Humayun and Mirza Muhammad Shikoh, were kept in custody as the rebels might make political use of them. There was Nawab Rukn-ud-daullah, son of the former Nawab Sadat Ali, and a potential claimant to the throne.

Communication with the outside world became a problem. Major Gall volunteered to go to Allahabad in disguise, but was detected and killed by the sepoys. The master spies in the service of the British were Angad Tewari and Missar Kanauji Lal. Angad was a pensioned sepoy and Kanauji Lal a minor employee in a mofussil court. Both of them gave evidence of uncommon daring and enterprise in carrying messages between the besieged garrison and the relieving armies.

The entrapped English garrison comprised about 3,000 men. Among them 1,720 were combatants and 1,280 non-combatants. Indians, including 720 soldiers, formed nearly

half of the total. No one knew for certain the size of the rebel force. According to one estimate it consisted of "Two regular N.I. regiments; eight Oudh local regiments; the 15th Irregulars and detachments of other cavalry; two complete batteries of field artillery; and the contingents of three of the Oudh Talookdars."

From the noon of the 2nd the sepoys maintained a steady fire on the Residency. Sepoys, dispossessed land-owners, discontented middlemen, all contributed their share to the siege. From the top of the neighbouring houses they continuously poured shot and shell with vengeance. The brave Sir Henry, who conducted the defence without any thought of personal security, was mortally wounded by a shell. Captain Wilson, unable to see anything on account of the smoke, called out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" "I am killed", came the faint answer. When the surgeon came Sir Henry asked, "How long have I to live?" "About forty hours", Dr Fayrer replied. Sir Henry did not waste the time that remained. Even after the holy rite was performed, he summoned his successor and instructed him about the defence.

Many more officers were killed as the siege continued. The women suffered untold miseries. Meditation restored peace of mind only for a little while; the ceaseless rattling of guns was a constant reminder of abounding death.

During the long siege of the Residency the sepoy leaders made only four serious attempts to carry it by a general assault. The first was made on 20th July. The sepoys fiercely attacked the place from all directions and their fire was steady and well directed. The British defence was equally strong. They hurled back party after party of the advancing sepoys till the rebel force retreated late in the evening.

The result of the battle raised the spirits of the besieged. Two days later came still more cheering news. Angad had gone to Kanpur on the 29th June. On 22nd July he returned with the news of Havelock's victory over Nana and the prospect of early relief. Angad left

for Kanpur again and came back with a letter from Colonel Fraser Tytler, Quarter-Master General of Havelock's force. He wrote : "We have ample force to destroy all who oppose us. Send us a sketch of your position in the city, and any directions for entering it or turning it that may strike you. In five or six days we shall meet." Every day the relieving army was expected, but there seemed to be no sign of it.

While the besieged were wearily counting their days, Havelock was not idle. He had arrived at Kanpur on 17th July. On the 20th, he crossed the Ganga with the intention of relieving Lucknow. Three days later, the sepoys contested his advance at Unao. After a hard-fought battle Havelock dislodged the sepoy force from their strong position. They retreated only to challenge the enemy at the walled town of Bashiratganj. There Havelock won a second victory, this time at a heavy loss of life. The British loss in the two actions was severe. It now appeared that the rebels were determined to contest Havelock's advance at every convenient point. So the General was compelled to fall back on Mangalwar. From there he wrote to Neill at Kanpur asking for reinforcements without which it was impossible to advance further.

On 3rd August Havelock received a small reinforcement and attempted a second forward movement. The next day he arrived at Bashiratganj and occupied it after a hard contest. But he could not prevent the sepoys from carrying off all their guns and taking a stronger position a little further on. It was a critical situation. There was no alternative but to fall back. The sepoys, even after their second reverse at Bashiratganj, were not dispirited. Again they encountered Havelock at Burhia-ka-Chauki on his retreat to Mangalwar. Meanwhile, Havelock learnt from Neill that Bithur and Kanpur were threatened by a strong insurgent army. "All the country beyond this and Allahabad will be up," Neill feared. So, from Mangalwar, Havelock hurried back to Kanpur. On 16th August the battle of Bithur was fought. Once again the sepoys yielded to

superior leadership, but Havelock could not help admiring their courage and gallantry. In every battle the English had the advantage of superior arms. If the Enfield rifle caused the Mutiny, it also helped to overthrow the mutineers.

In August the besieged garrison at Lucknow suffered unspeakable privations and trials. They lost all hope of early relief. The ration had to be cut down to the bare minimum. On 6th August, the mutineers joyfully announced the coronation of a minor son of the deposed Nawab as their king.

Begam Hazrat Mahal, the mother of the minor Nawab, exercised all authority on his behalf. The coronation improved the morale of the sepoys and inspired them with fresh confidence. The death of two Chief Commissioners within three weeks followed by the second retreat of Havelock encouraged the talukdars of Oudh. Now they openly supported the Wali (the minor king), and many of them sent their forces to Lucknow. Altogether it was not a small force; in August the total strength of the rebel army in Lucknow was estimated at one lakh.

The news of Havelock's second retreat was most disappointing to the defenders of the Residency. Colonel Inglis again wrote to Havelock, piteously appealing for relief: "You must bear in mind how I am hampered; that I have upwards of 120 sick and wounded and at least 220 women, and about 230 children. In consequence of the news received, I shall soon put the force on half rations, unless I hear again from you. Our provisions will last us then till about the 10th of September. If you hope to save this force, no time must be lost in pushing forward. My strength now in Europeans is 350, and about 300 natives, and the men are dreadfully harassed; and owing to part of the Residency having been brought down by round shot, many are without shelter."

Meanwhile the garrison was not always on the defensive. Daring contests were frequently fought, in which both sides displayed uncommon courage. The most notable

achievement of August was the demolition of Johannes's house which the sepoys had been utilising to great advantage. Here was posted a sharp-shooter of remarkable marksmanship. Every bullet he fired at the beleaguered garrison found its mark. In admiration of his marksmanship the English called him Bob the Nailer. From his safe roost, he had taken more lives than any other individual on either side. The building was then raided by a surprise party; the inmates were taken unawares and Bob was killed at his post. But soon others took his place and proved that Bob was not the only sharp-shooter in their ranks. At last, on 20th August, Captain Fulton drove a mine which completely destroyed Johannes's house.

September was the lucky month for the English. It witnessed the fall of Delhi and the reinforcement of Lucknow. All the same the besieged continued to suffer, because the reinforcement that came at the end of the month was in name only; it did not mean any substantial relief.

On the 22nd Angad brought a message from General Outram, who was advancing towards Lucknow with Havelock and Neill, that "the army crossed the river yesterday, and all the material being over now, marches towards you tomorrow, and with the blessing of God will now relieve you." On the 23rd, the sound of distant guns was distinctly heard from the Residency; the reports became louder and louder as the day advanced. Then, on the 25th, Havelock and Outram entered the Residency. But the Residency was not relieved, it was only reinforced. For two months longer it remained besieged, and the city remained in the hands of the sepoys.

Earlier, the three British generals who set out from Kanpur to relieve Lucknow accomplished the journey only after much hard fighting. At Alambagh, in the neighbourhood of Lucknow, a strong sepoy force faced them. But in the combat the rebels were put to flight and the road to Lucknow lay open. The passage over the Charbagh bridge on the Gomti was again hotly contested. Fighting their way through the sepoy rings, the English columns

ultimately gained their way to the Residency, though the feat was accomplished at tremendous loss in men. Among those killed was the blood-thirsty Neill, "the idol of the British Army."

Succour was thus brought to Lucknow at a dark hour. It rescued the defenders from a perilous situation; and coming after four days of the recapture of Delhi by the English, it also marked a turning point in the fortunes of the Mutiny.

On 7th November a messenger came from Kanpur with the heartening news that Sir Colin Campbell, the new Commander-in-Chief, was himself coming to Lucknow at the head of a strong army. Sir Colin had with him a chart showing the plan of the city and the roads leading to it. He now wanted a guide familiar with the area and knowing the position of the garrison. The problem was to secure an expert guide. At this stage, Thomas Henry Kavanagh, one of the besieged at Lucknow, volunteered along with Kanauji Lal, an Indian spy. The two daring men set out on their perilous journey in disguise. After many adventures on the way, they reached Sir Colin's camp and assisted the Commander-in-Chief in planning his campaign. Kavanagh's valour earned him the Victoria Cross, though he was not a military man. The Government of India rewarded him with a cash present of 20,000 rupees and he was promoted to the office of an Assistant Commissioner. Kanauji Lal, Kavanagh's collaborator, was later appointed a Tahsildar. The other Indian spy, Angad Tewari, was similarly rewarded in cash.

Sir Colin wanted to avoid the circuitous streets of Lucknow in his advance on the Residency. Though he came at the head of a big army he refused to take risks. His movement was cautious but steady. Marching from Alambagh on 13th November, Sir Colin occupied Dilkhusa after some resistance. Next he carried La Martiniere, where his troops spent the night. From there Sir Colin signalled Outram on the 15th that he would advance on the morrow. On the 16th, Sir Colin crossed the canal and

suddenly opened guns on Sikandar Bagh. The fighting that ensued was desperate. The sepoys displayed uncommon heroism. They had no guns, but the walls of Sikander Bagh were strong and the sepoys fought resolutely till the last. But muskets were no match for heavy artillery and the place was carried by assault. Caught in a trap, the sepoys were slaughtered to the last man; two thousands of them lay dead strewn on the garden. There were many feats of individual heroism and many hair-breadth escapes. Sir Colin then planned to storm the Shah Najaf, a massive mosque on the road to the Residency. Here the rebels put up a determined fight. The British opened a continuous fire of heavy guns, but the walls of Shah Najaf defied them. All the while the rebels maintained a deadly fire of guns and musketry upon the British ranks. For the first time Sir Colin felt dejected, and success seemed impossible. At length, a daring Highlander stole through the jungle to a portion of the wall, where he detected a small hole. Through this a man was pushed in. He helped others in. Taken by surprise, the rebels were compelled to evacuate the place. At last resistance was silenced and Sir Colin succeeded in entering the city. On the 17th the besieged met the relieving force. The British lost 496 officers and men in four days' operations. Among the wounded was the Commander-in-Chief himself.

Lucknow was relieved and the besieged were rescued. But the city still remained in possession of the rebel army. It was not possible to hold the Residency with the small force that now remained. Sir Colin's immediate task therefore was to evacuate the women and children and to withdraw the garrison to Alambagh. He had no time to lose, for Kanpur was again in serious danger. But it was not easy to get out of the city,, surrounded as it was on all sides by armed sepoys. At length, Sir Colin succeeded in his plans. At this moment of success, the gallant Havelock passed away. His remains were buried in a mango grove at Alambagh. Leaving Outram at Alamgabh with a small force, Sir Colin hurried to Kanpur in aid of General Wind-

ham who had been left in charge of the city. When he reached Banni bridge opposite to Kanpur, distant cannonade announced that the Gwalior contingent of rebels was attacking the city.

The Gwalior insurgents had risen in arms as early as June. But all the while they had remained inactive and did not attack Kanpur even when Havelock and Outram were away at Lucknow. The Scindia and his Chief Minister, Sir Dinkar Rao, had kept the insurgents inactive at Gwalior by various devices. It was in October that the sepoys were roused by Tatya Tope, Nana's General, to march to Kanpur. But Tatya was a little too late. Had he appeared at Kanpur with the insurgents when Sir Colin was engaged at Lucknow there was every chance of capturing the city.

Tatya Tope

Ramchandra Panduranga, alias Tatya Tope, was one of the few military leaders of outstanding ability on the sepoy side produced by the great Mutiny. He was a Deshastha Brahman of Maharashtra. His father was one of Peshwa Baji Rao's numerous dependents. Tatya was a personal adherent of Nana and was bound to his leader by ties of deep loyalty. John Lang, who saw Tatya at Bithur, describes him thus: "He was a man of about the middle height—say five feet eight—rather slightly made, but very erect. He was far from good-looking. The forehead was low, the nose rather broad at the nostrils, and his teeth irregular and discoloured. His eyes were expressive and full of cunning, like those of most Asiatics; but he did not strike me as a man of eminent ability." Tatya had no special military experience; he probably received only such training as was open to the average youth of his time. But he had inherited the natural instinct of his race for guerilla warfare. The stories of how he eluded his British adversaries over and over again are now part of the stirring legends of the land.

On 17th November, contrary to the advice of Sir Colin, Windham moved beyond the town to strike the first blow

Begam Hazrat Mahal, wife of Nawab Wazid Ali Shah, the deposed King of Oudh. On behalf of the minor Wali she conducted the fight against the British. And when everything was lost she chose to remain in Nepal despite repeated British offers to let her return to India on a liberal pension

The boy Wali of Lucknow proceeding to battle escorted by his troops

The Ghazis fought a bloody battle with the British before Bareilly was given up

at Tatya. On the 27th, Windham, "the brave lion of the British army," was completely defeated by Tatya and his army was routed. On the 28th, Tatya mustered Kanpur and Windham was compelled to take shelter in an entrenchment.

On the same day, Sir Colin arrived at Kanpur. Luckily for him, the bridge of boats was still intact. When the Commander-in-Chief crossed to Kanpur the British army in the city was at its last gasp. Help thus arrived just in time. Tatya did not however leave Sir Colin alone. A heavy fire was directed against the British camp; the insurgents were resolute and fought fiercely. On 4th December they tried to burn the bridge of boats by fire rafts. But it was too late, since the bridge was now well guarded. On 6th December, Campbell attacked Tatya. Numerically Tatya's army was superior to Sir Colin's, but it was no match for the heavy guns that Sir Colin had brought. After some skirmishing the insurgents were completely routed. Leaving behind all their stores and magazines, the rebels fled towards Kalpi and Bithur. On the same day (December 6), Sir Colin Campbell recaptured the town. Thus was foiled Tatya's plan of holding Kanpur. But though his army was shattered and his guns captured, he still continued to be a menace to the British army.

Bithur next demanded the attention of the victors. On the 8th, Hope Grant was sent there in pursuit of the rebel army. It was reported that Nana had slept at Bithur the night before. Not only was his palace destroyed but the temples were also demolished. Nana could not carry his treasures with him when he fled to Oudh earlier in July. These had been thrown into a great well inside the palace. The well was now pumped out, and "a great quantity of silver plate—solid silver, be it understood—was brought to light." Among the valuable finds was the State *howdah* of the ex-Peshwa in silver. The sappers also fished up an

immense number of ammunition boxes tightly packed with coins and gold mohurs. The value of the coins alone was estimated at over £200,000; the plate and other valuables were worth more than a million sterling.

Delhi had been captured, Kanpur saved and Lucknow relieved. It now remained for the English to recover Fatehgarh near Kanpur. The town commanded a strategic position, being situated on the road to Agra. There was a gun-carriage factory there. At the time of the outbreak at Fatehgarh in June, the fort was commanded by Colonel Smith. About the middle of the month, some of the native officers warned Smith of the impending rising, whereupon the few Europeans of the town took shelter in the fort. Early in July, unable to hold the fort any longer, Smith and his companions slipped away in three boats. The boats were fired on, and the fugitives were captured downstream near Bithur. On 18th June, the sepoys formally placed themselves under the titular Nawab of Farrukhabad.

Sir Colin Campbell wanted to encircle the Fatehgarh rebels from all sides. On reaching Kali Nadi, the Commander-in-Chief found the bridge damaged. The sepoys were nowhere near the scene when the bridge was being repaired; they appeared and opened fire when it was too late. Fatehgarh was thus recaptured by the British without much difficulty.

The army had a long halt at Fatehgarh. The surrounding country was the home of "Muhammadans of a peculiarly turbulent character", and a punitive expedition was sent out to restore order. With the force went the Commissioner, Mr. Power, whom his English friends and admirers called 'Hanging Power'. "At each halting place, Power held a court of summary jurisdiction, and condemned to death scores of the truculent traitors who had been concerned in the atrocities at Fatehgarh the previous June. Here, at Mau itself, nearly 100 such mutineers and rebels, caught hiding in the town and in the surrounding villages during our halt there (3 days) till the morning of January 11, were

summarily tried, and hanged upon the branches of a great pipul-tree in the square in the centre of the town."

The Grand Trunk Road was now safe. Communication was possible between Calcutta and Lahore. But Oudh had not been completely cleared of rebels. In the east, Rohilkhand still remanied in rebel hands. The fall of Fatehgarh now opened the road to Rohilkhand.

The Kingdom of Oudh had already been invaded from the north on behalf of the English. Jang Bahadur, the de facto ruler of Nepal, wanted to cement his friendship with the British by proving himself a friend in need. In July a Gurkha force of 3,000 men entered Gorakhpur district, where a rebel government had been set up under Muhammad Hasan. From Gorakhpur they moved on to Jaunpur and Azamgarh. Not content with supplying this small contingent, Jang Bahadur offered his personal services. On 21st December he reached the Indian frontier with a army of 10,000 men and proceeded towards Lucknow.

Meanwhile, Outram was having a hard time at his post at Alambagh. It was too near Lucknow, and his men were too few to hold so exposed a position. Despite much hardship, he held Alambagh with great determination against no fewer than six well-timed and resolute attacks delievered by the sepoys. Once the attack was staged when part of the garrison was absent on convoy duty. On another occasion the rebel force was led by a man who had assumed the guise of the monkey god, Mahavira, possibly to inspire the sepoys with couraged and resolution. The Begum herself appeared on the battle-field on one occasion to encourage her troops. Forrest says: "The sepoys proved by their heavy losses that it was not courage in which they were lacking, but, as at Delhi, leadership. If they had been led by men who were acquainted with the operations of war, the English Commander would have found it impossible to hold his extended position and keep open the communication with Cawnpore." Thus, for three months Outram held Alambagh till Sir Colin Campbell was free to strike his final blow against Lucknow.

The Final Fall of Lucknow

On 2nd March 1958, the operation against Lucknow began. After the British evacuation in November, the sepoys had strengthened the defences of Lucknow. Earthworks had been thrown up and barricades raised in three separate lines in the city. But no thought had been given to the north bank of the Gomati; this was to prove disastrous. Outram went to the north bank and cleared the hostile troops on that side of the river. Sir Colin had nineteen thousand men when he was joined by Jang Bahadur before Lucknow. On the south side of the Gomati, the main army occupied Dilkhusa. La Martiniere was next captured. And then, one by one, the fortified palaces, the walled gardens, mosques and mausoleums were all seized. Finding their position untenable, the rebels evacuated the city. They had fought with desperate courage; 860 defenders lay dead on the central court when Begum Kothi was stormed. The Queen herself never lost heart and moved among her men with astonishing courage. But nothing availed; by 18th March all the strong points in the city were in British hands. A powerful rebel force, probably inspired by the Begum, held Musabag till the 19th. The Maulavi of Faizabad, who had earlier freed himself from jail and joined the rebel leaders at Lucknow, was more resolute than the rest. He could not be dislodged from his position till the 22nd. Lucknow finally fell, and only Rohilkhand still remained in the hands of the rebels.

Lucknow did not escape the fate of other captured cities. The wanton destruction and pillage that followed the storming of Begum Kothi has been described by Russell thus: "The scene of plunder was indescribable. The soldiers had broken up several of the store-rooms, and pitched the contents into the court, which was lumbered with cases, with embroidered clothes, gold and silver brocade, silver vessels, arms, banners, drums, shawls, scarfs, musical instruments, mirrors, pictures, books, accounts, medicine bottles, gorgeous standards, shields, spears, and a heap of things, the enumeration of which would make this sheet

of paper like a catalogue of broker's sale. Through these moved the men, wild with excitement, drunk with plunder. I had often heard the phrase, but never saw the thing itself before." In spite of much misappropriation the plunder accumulated by the Prize Agents was enormous. "Before we left Lucknow," says Forbes-Mitchell, "the plunder accumulated by the prize-agents was estimated at over £ 600,000 (according to "The Times" of 31st of May, 1858) and within a week, it had reached a million and a quarter sterling. What became of it all?"

The leaders of the revolt, the Maulavi and the Begum, had safely effected their escape. Firuz Shah, a prince of the royal house of Delhi, who was at that time at Lucknow and took part in the fighting, fled to Central India. Kunwar Singh, the rebel leader of Bihar, went to Azamgarh to give fresh evidence of his Rajput bravery.

Lucknow was a deserted city. Sir James Outram invited the citizens to return, but fear kept the people away. Meanwhile, the Governor-General, Lord Canning, issued a declaration by which all estates in Oudh, except those held by six loyalists, were confiscated. To the rebel landlords he promised immunity from imprisonment or death provided they could prove that their hands were not tainted with English blood. The ruthless proclamation infuriated the landowners. Outram did his best to conciliate the people, but the talukdars were determined to resist till the last. They moved to Rohilkhand near the foothills of the Himalayas to continue the fight.

CHAPTER VI

ROHILKHAND

In the province of Rohilkhand events took a serious turn from the very beginning. The English were expelled from all districts and stations under circumstances of great cruelty and much shedding of blood.

On 19th May, the sepoys mutinied at Moradabad and broke open the jail. There were no immediate repercussions at Bareilly, the capital of Rohilkhand. Then suddenly, on the morning of the 31st, the sepoys rose at Bareilly. Brigadier Sibbald was shot in the chest. Seized with panic Colonel Troup decided to flee to Nainital. Soon the cavalry also mutinied, and Captain Mackenzie, their commanding officer, joined the other officers in the flight to Nainital.

Khan Bahadur Khan, a British pensioner, was proclaimed Viceroy on behalf of the Emperor of Delhi. He was the natural leader of the Rohillas. A septuagenarian, he was the the grandson of Hafiz Ibrahim Khan, the last independent ruler of Rohilkhand, slain in the Rohilla war of Warren Hastings. Khan Bahadur Khan was probably a genuine friend of the British and an advocate of law and order before the Mutiny broke out. On the 30th he warned the Commissioner "that the case was hopeless, and that the Regiments would certainly mutiny". That day he shook hands with Commissioner Alexander and said *'Apni jan buchao'* (look out for your life). Nobody suspected him of complicity with the insurgents. The old man must have been carried away by the sweeping tide of the rebellion. His forefathers had once ruled Rohilkhand, but he was living on a paltry pension of one hundred rupees a month.

Now the mutiny offered him power, and it would be unwise to miss the opportunity. But he lacked both the physical energy and mental vigour that the situation demanded. He was too weak to maintain order in the city. The sepoys threw off all discipline, robbed the rich men of Bareilly in his name and murdered English officers. As elsewhere, the riff-raff of the town joined the fray and looted shops and business places.

Khan Bahadur Khan, now Nawab Nazim of Rohilkhand, took early steps to conciliate the Hindus and to obtain from Delhi a formal appointment to his self-assumed office. He therefore, sent *nazar* and rich presents to the Emperor and in due course obtained the necessary *Farman*. Bakht Khan was given command of the rebel army with the rank of Brigadier. Sobha Ram, a *bania*, was appointed Dewan. The Nawab's establishment was almost entirely Hindu. In deference to Hindu sentiment, he forbade cow-killing in the city. But he could not control the Syeds of Nau Mahalla, and consequently private feuds often assumed a communal character. Khan Bahadur retained power for about a year, but, throughout the period, disorder was so great that peace-loving Hindus deserted the city in large numbers. The administration was particularly unpopular with the business community, for they were too frequently called upon to subscribe to the State funds. Misr Baijnath, the wealthy banker of Bareilly, was one such prominent business man. He also maintained contact with the British fugitives at Nainital and actively helped them with money and information. Baijnath's financial losses were more than made up after the restoration of British power. He was not only rewarded with the title of Raja but got large estates in addition.

Badaun fell to the insurgents without a blow. It was not a military station. William Edwards, the Magistrate, was the solitary European there. When the few sepoys posted there rose in arms, Edwards fled to Fatehgarh. Later, he took refuge in the fortified residence of Hardeo Baksh, a friendly zamindar. Thenceforth he moved from one village to another until it was felt safe to leave for Kanpur.

Bijnor has an interesting story. About the end of May, the bad characters of the neighbourhood attacked the jail. The jail guards fired upon the assailants and they dispersed. Later, when the Roorki mutineers fell upon Bijnor, a Muslim officer shrewdly argued with the rebels and saved the Europeans from molestation. The officer was Syed Ahmed Khan, the Sadr Amin of Bijnor, who later came to fame as a great educationist and statesman. But the relief of the Europeans was temporary. Nawab Mahmud Khan, a nephew of the notorious Rohilla brigand, Ghulam Kadir, soon attacked the house in which the Europeans had taken shelter. Syed Ahmed again came to their rescue and arranged an amicable settlement. The Europeans were allowed to leave for Meerut, but the district remained in the occupation of Mahmud Khan till the return of the English.

Moradabad witnessed an unexpected rising on 3rd June. There the sepoys, inflamed by the events at Bareilly, decided to defy authority. But they did not molest the officers and the English fugitives safely found their way to Meerut. The Nawab of Rampur remained steadfast in his friendship with the British. He held the district during their absence.

At Shahjahanpur the English were less fortunte. There the sepoys, armed with swords and lathis, attacked the church while the service was taking place. The death roll was heavy. The survivors fled to Powain. Finding the place unsafe they made for Mohamdi, in Oudh, where another party was awaiting safe escort. From Mohamdi, the unfortunate people set off for Aurangabad but were massacred by a party of sepoys when within a mile of their destination. Only the life of Captain Orr was saved by a Jamadar named Lachman.

For nearly eleven months British authority thus disappeared from Rohilkhand and Khan Bahadur ruled undisturbed at Bareilly. An attempt was made, in the closing months of 1857, to stir up a Hindu revolt in Rohilkhand and Captain Gowan was authorised to spend 50,000 rupees for the purpose. His efforts met with dismal failure. On the other hand, Khan Bahadur did not succeed either in dis-

lodging the handful of European fugitives from Nainital. There was no trained leader in his army, and though his fighting force was popularly estimated at 30 to 40 thousand, they lacked experience.

With Lucknow in British hands and Northern India well under control, Sir Colin Campbell was now free to turn his attention to Rohilkhand. The Commander-in-Chief planned to strike Rohilkhand from all sides. To this end, he detailed four columns which were to converge on Bareilly and there deal a decisive blow at the main rebel army. Marching from Fatehgarh Sir Colin himself entered Shahjahanpur on 30th April 1858. There, he hoped to find the Maulavi and Nana Saheb, but there was no sign of them. On the dawn of 5th May, a formidable army marched on Bareilly. The advance guards noticed the onrush of the Rohilla cavalry, and preparations were made for battle. It opened with a heavy cannonade, followed by a furious charge on the English by the Ghazis. The Ghazis came to die for their religion and they neither sought nor gave any quarter. The Highlanders composed of 42nd, 79th and 93rd, and supported by an excellent Sikh regiment, fought fiercely but the Ghazis returned the fire with equal determination. Many desperate actions were fought that day. At one time the Ghazis made a desperate onslaught on the Sikhs and then dashed against the 42nd Highlanders who hastened to their support. Sir Colin, who happened to be present on the spot called out: "Stand firm 42nd, bayonet them as they come on." Vain was their rush against so powerful an army. The Ghazis were mowed down to the last man by artillery fire. Fresh bands appeared and stray fights continued throughout the day. But at the end, the battle of Bareilly was lost by the Rohillas. Khan Bahadur Khan escaped to Pilibhit and his capital was forthwith occupied by the British.

Maulavi of Faizabad

Even after the victory of Bareilly, Sir Colin had no respite. The Maulavi of Faizabad was there. After the

defeat near Lucknow, the Maulavi turned his attention to Rohilkhand. He captured the small garrison at Shahjahanpur while Sir Colin was engaged near Bareilly. The Maulavi established himself in Shahjahanpur, executed all the pro-British supporters and pursued Colonel Hale who had fled to the jail for shelter. Hale held his post against incessant cannonade from the 3rd May to the morning of 11th when Brigadier Jones came to his aid with the Roorkee Field Force. The Maulavi, however, did not retire without a fight. Meanwhile, the daring exploits of the Maulavi had earned him great prestige and following. On the 15th he attacked Jones. Fighting lasted for several days during which Jones had a very bad time, and it was not until the 18th, when Sir Colin himself hurried to Jones's rescue, that the Maulavi evacuated Shahjahanpur.

Leaving Shahjahanpur, the Maulavi posted himself on the Mohamdi road, from where Jones could not dislodge him. On 5th June, he appeared before Powain, a small fort a few miles east of Shahjahanpur. The loyal Raja had closed the gates of his fort, and when the Maulavi, seated on his elephant, pressed forward to force the gate, the Raja's brother shot him dead. The severed head of the Maulavi was then sent to the Magistrate of Shahjahanpur, who exhibited it at the Kotwali of the town. The body was burnt and the ashes thrown into the river. The Raja got Rs. 50,444 as the price of the Maulavi's head. According to Sir Thomas Seaton, the Maulavi was "a man of great abilities, of undaunted courage, of stern determination and by far the best soldier among the rebels". Malleson pays the highest tribute to the Maulavi as a man and a patriot. "If a patriot is a man who plots and fights for the independence, wrongfully destroyed, of his native country, then most certainly the Maulavi was a true patriot. He had not stained his sword by assassination, he had connived at no murders; he had fought manfully, honourably and stubbornly in the field against the strangers who had seized his country, and his memory is entitled to the respect of the brave and the true-hearted of all nations."

Rohilkhand had been reconquered, but a large part of Oudh still remained in rebel hands. The Government now realised that military coercion alone was no cure for so widespread a revolt. The policy of indiscriminate burning of villages ultimately recoiled on the Government, for it cut the revenue supply at its sources. Conciliation was to be tried along with coercion. It was decided to persuade the great majority of the rebels to lay down their arms and return home in peace. An opportunity for such an experiment was afforded by the transfer of the Government of India from the Company to the Crown on 1st November, 1858. Queen Victoria's Proclamation, read out at a magnificent Darbar at Allahabad, announced a general amnesty, guaranteed the princes against further encroachment, and promised religious freedom.

The Proclamation did not altogether allay public suspicion. Its sincerity was challenged by another queen, Begum Hazrat Mahal of Oudh. She issued a counter-proclamation in the name of her son. It urged the people not to place their faith in the offer of pardon contained in the Proclamation, "for, it is the unvarying custom of the English never to forgive a fault, be it great or small, whereas the kindness of Hindustani rulers is well known to all." The Wali also warned his people that the assurances meant nothing. "No one has ever seen in a dream", he said, "that the English forgave an offence." The Begum's proclamation concluded by pointing out that the English "have promised no better employment for Hindoostanies than making roads and digging canals. If people cannot see clearly what this means, there is no help for them. Let no subject be deceived by the Proclamation." The Governor-General certainly did not expect that the liberal terms offered by Queen Victoria would bring resistance to an end. The Commander-in-Chief was, therefore, getting ready for the next campaign while the Proclamation was being read.

In November, Sir Colin Campbell, now Lord Clyde of Clydesdale, planned to encircle the rebel troops and gradually push them towards the Nepal frontier. There he

would crush them completely or leave them to die of privation and disease in the fever-infested forests of Tarai. The sepoy leaders imagined that the Nepal Government was favourably disposed towards them. Even after Jang Bahadur had openly ranged himself on the side of the British and actively co-operated with the Commander-in-Chief in the attack on Lucknow, Nana Saheb and the rebel leaders ceaselessly endeavoured to win his sympathy. At the beginning of the Mutiny they informed Jang Bahadur that "temples and *immambaras* have been broken down. You are also aware that the British do not care either for the religion or life of Hindoos or Mohammedans; and their cunningness and treachery as well as their forgetfulness of favours is not unknown to you". But Jang Bahadur was too shrewd a politician to play the role of defender of the faith, and he curtly replied: "As the Hindoos and Mahomedans have been guilty of ingratitude and perfidy, neither the Nepal Government nor I can side with them." Despite the rebuff the rebels still hoped for Nepalese sympathy and friendship; it was self-delusion. Meanwhile, Lord Clyde set out to reduce the rebel strongholds in Oudh one by one. Rampur Kasia, headquarters of the powerful Khanpuria clan, was the first to be assaulted. Though a fortified place, it was captured in a few days. Clyde next turned his arms against the Raja of Amethi. He summoned the Raja to surrender along with his troops and ammunition, but the Raja had no control over the strong rebel force that had taken refuge in his fort. Unable to do anything better, he stealthily left his fort and presented himself at the Commander-in-Chief's camp. Then the rebels left the fort and it was occupied on 8th November, 1858.

The next objective was Shankarpur, seat of the most valiant of the Baiswara Rajputs, Beni Madho. Village bards have immortalised his valour in ballads which are still sung by the rural population at the time of Holi. Lord Clyde assured Beni Madho that his claims to retain his estates would be considered if he submitted without further resistace. Beni Madho replied that he could not surrender his

person because that belonged to his sovereign for whom he was bound to fight, but he would give up the fort as it was his own property. He left Shankarpur under cover of night and at last retired to Dundia Khera. On 24th November an action was fought. The rebels were defeated, but Beni Madho eluded the British.

Thus, one by one, Khan Bahadur Khan, Begum Hazrat Mahal, Nana Saheb, his brother Bala Saheb, Jawala Prasad and other prominent rebel leaders were driven out of their home districts and hemmed in a narrow region on the border of Nepal. It now remained to push them north into the inhospitable land of Jang Bahadur.

One insurgent chief refused to walk into the trap. With two thousand followers, Firuz Shah turned back, crossed the Ganga and appeared near Etawah. Later he joined Rao Saheb, another brother of Nana, and Tatya Tope in Central India. He shared their adventures but luckily not their fate.

In the meantime, Lord Clyde was busy closing his net. Bala Saheb was reported at Tulsipur near the Tarai. The Raja of Balarampur was friendly to the British and with his help, Brigadier Rowroft occupied Tulsipur, though Bala Saheb managed to escape. On the 17th December, Lord Clyde reached Bahraich which, according to the information of his spies, sheltered both Nana Saheb and Begum Hazrat Mahal. But they moved away as the Commander-in-Chief approached. Major Barrow's overtures to secure their submission ended in failure. The Begum had no faith in British sincerity, and Beni Madho would not surrender so long as the Begum continued in arms. Nana would not submit unless the Queen herself or the Viceroy promised his life and their guarantee was seconded by another power. So, Lord Clyde marched towards Nanpara, where the rebel leaders were next reported. The fort of Nanpara, in the midst of a dense forest, had recently been strengthened and there Beni Madho intended to dispute the advance of the British. The rebel forces tried in vain to stop the British at Barodiah, and Beni Madho had to retreat further. Clear-

ing the country between Nanpara and the Gogra, Lord Clyde pursued Nana and Beni Madho to Banki on the river Rapti. There he surprised and routed the rebel force. Nana Saheb and the remnants of the rebel force crossed over to Nepalese territory. But Jang Bahadur informed them that they should not look to him for protection. He even permitted the British troops to come over and pursue the remnants of the rebel force.

The battle of Banki was followed by the submission of the Nawab of Farrukhabad, Mehndi Hossain, and other rebel chiefs. The life of the Nawab was spared, but he was packed off to Arabia. Tej Singh, Raja of Mainpuri, surrendered only after giving the British a hard fight. The Raja was later removed to Banaras, where he lived on a monthly allowance of Rs. 250.

The rebel leaders who found their way to Nepal had a following variously estimated from four to twenty-five thousand. The fugitives moved from place to place between Chitwan, Bhutwal and Nayakot, suffering terrible privations all the while. Some of the sepoys had even to sell their muskets to buy food. The Gurkhas were prepared to sell them rice but demanded an exorbitant price; fever and dysentery took as large a toll as starvation. The Nepal Government even employed its troops for the capture and expulsion of the unwelcome guests. It was in such an encounter that Beni Madho met his death. Nawab Mammu Khan, Khan Bahadur Khan and Brigadier Jawala Prasad, with others of lesser note, were delivered to the British authorities. Raja Devi Bakash of Gonda, Harprasad, Chakladar of Khairabad, Golab Singh of Biswa and other rebel leaders died in Nepal, unknown and unlamented. Hardatt Singh of Bundi was killed. Azimullah, Nana's friend, died at Bhutwal sometime in October. The malaria of the Tarai claimed Bala Saheb and probably Nana as well.

Earlier, in April 1859, both Nana and Bala sought to negotiate terms with the British authorities. But their letters differed widely in tone and purport. Bala sent a

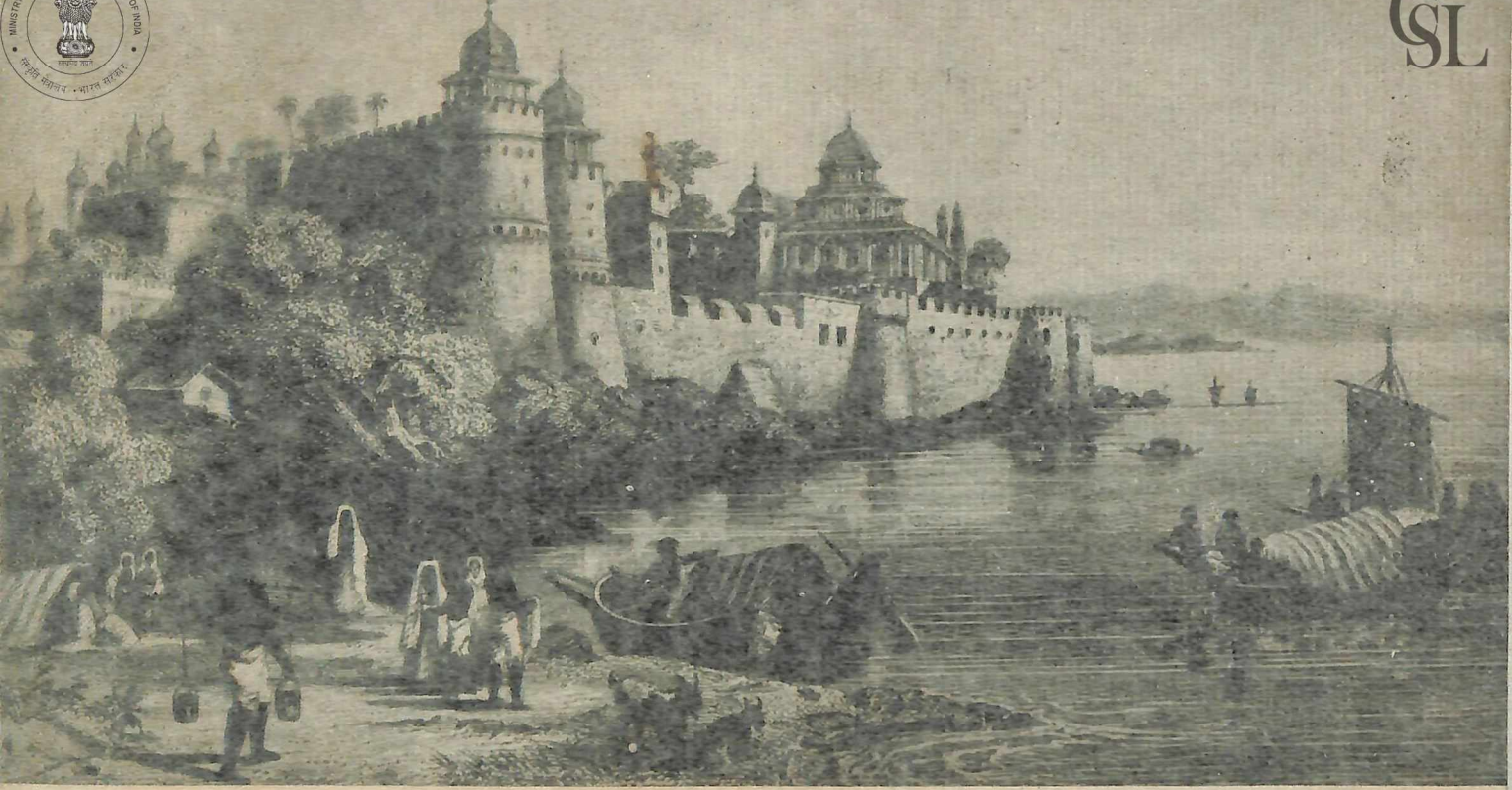
'petition' to the English, while Nana, whose whereabouts remained a mystery throughout, addressed an Ishtahar to the Queen of England. Bala threw all the blame for the rebellion on his brother, Nana. "It is in your power to do with me as you wish. You can imprison or kill or hang me," Bala submitted in his petition for mercy. But Nana was defiant though his head carried a price of one lakh of rupees. "You have drawn all to your side, and I alone am left, but you will see what the soldiers I have been preserving for two years can do. We will meet, and then I will shed your blood and it will flow knee-deep. I am prepared to die." In spite of all persuasion Nana Saheb refused to surrender on the usual terms. "I cannot surrender myself in this manner," he wrote back. "If a letter, written by Her Majesty the Queen and sealed with her seal, and brought by the Commanding Officer of the Francees (French) or the Second in Command, reaches me, I will, placing reliance on these officers, accept the terms without hesitation. Why should I join you, knowing all the *dagabazi* prepetrated by you in Hindoostan? Life must be given up some day. Why then should I die dishonoured? There will be war between me and you as long as I have life, whether I be killed or imprisoned or hanged. And whatever I do will be done with the sword only."

Begum Hazrat Mahal

Begum Hazrat Mahal of Oudh preferred to stay with her son and a small retinue in the land of the Gurkhas. She was promised a suitable pension and was assured of all honours befitting her rank. And yet she could not be induced to come back to India. She was a woman of great energy and ability. Russell said: "She has excited all Oude to take up the interests of her son, and the chiefs have sworn to be faithful to him." Even after her defeat the Begum declined to renounce the rights of her son by accepting a British pension. She thus proved more manly than her husband and lord.

Khan Bahadur Khan paid for his defiance with his life. He was tried, condemned and hanged. Bakht Khan fell back to Lucknow after the fall of Delhi. It is said that he was killed in an action on the 13th May, 1859. Jawala Prasad was hanged near Sati Chaura Ghat at Kanpur on 3rd May, 1860.

With the disappearance of their leaders the common soldiers laid down their arms and gradually returned to their village homes. By May 1859, the last embers of revolt in Oudh were extinguished.



A serious rising took place at Allahabad under the leadership of Maulavi Liakat Ali, a man of remarkable ability and idealism. The picture shows the fort of Allahabad in which the British and the loyal Sikh regiment confined themselves for safety.

Jwala Prasad, the Brigadier of Nana's forces, in chains after his capture by the Birtish

CHAPTER VII

BIHAR

The agony of the British at Kanpur and Lucknow in mid-1857 was worsened by outbreaks near Patna. Patna commanded the land and river route from Calcutta to Kanpur. The despatch of reinforcements to Kanpur and thence to Lucknow depended on the tranquility of the country around Patna. Fortunately for the British, Patna was in strong hands. Its Commissioner, William Tayler, took stern measures at the first sign of commotion. If repressive measures could ensure peace and avert mutiny, Tayler was the man that Bihar needed. The indigo planters of western Bihar relied on his strength and gave him their full support. Tayler knew that Patna was the headquarters of the turbulent Wahabi sect of Muslims, and he kept a strict watch on them.

The news of the outbreak at Meerut caused widespread disquiet in the out-stations of Bihar. Many Europeans left their posts in the countryside and appeared at Patna for shelter. Tayler apprehended danger at Danapur, an important cantonment 10 miles from Patna. Three sepoy regiments, a company of Native Artillery, Her Majesty's 10th Foot and a Company of European Artillery were posted there. The Danapur sepoys came mostly from the neighbouring district of Shahabad. Early in June, they heard the story of Banaras and showed signs of unrest. From the very beginning Tayler urged General Lloyd, who commanded the station, to disarm the sepoys. But the General refused, saying that he could keep them under control. Frustrated in his attempt, Tayler did whatever he

could to ensure the safety of the Europeans; he converted his residence into a stronghold, and, on 8th June, summoned a loyal Sikh battalion to Patna.

Nothing happened at Danapur in the month of June. In Patna, however, there were signs of increasing commotion: the Wahabis were said to be engaged in a general conspiracy against the Government. On 12th June, a Muslim who was found spreading sedition was tried, found guilty and hanged. Tayler felt that it was the hour to act. Prominent amongst the Wahabis were Shah Mahomed Hussen, Ahmed Ulla and Waiz-ul-Haqq. Tayler decided to put them in custody. He invited the three to his residence, ostensibly for consultation on public affairs, and treacherously arrested them. The arrest of the Wahibi leaders was followed by a proclamation requiring all citizens to surrender arms. It was also forbidden to remain outdoors after nine o'clock at night.

On 3rd July, a large body of Muslims paraded the streets flying flags and beating drums. The demonstration soon turned into a riot in which Mr. Lyall, Assistant to the Opium Agent, was shot down and then beheaded. The rioters were dispersed by the Sikhs. Forty-three rioters, including their leader Pir Ali, a Wahabi, were arrested and summarily sentenced to death or to various terms of imprisonment. For these harsh measures and illegal proceedings Tayler incurred the displeasure of the higher authorities, who dismissed him from his post. If Tayler's tyranny kept Patna out of danger, it produced serious repercussions at Danapur.

In spite of growing agitation amongst the sepoys, General Lloyd, who was in command at Danapur, did not apprehend mutiny. The Government of India had left the responsibility of disarming or not disarming the sepoys to local discretion. But the General hesitated all the while; he doubted the wisdom of such a harsh measure.

At last, on 24th July, Lloyd made up his mind. But lack of conviction led him to seek a middle course. He decided to take away only the percussion caps from the ma-

gazine and from the possession of the sepoys, without subjecting them to any humiliation. By a show of force he succeeded in securing the caps from the magazine. Believing he had scored a success, Lloyd sent back the European troops to barracks and left to his officers the easy task of collecting the caps from the sepoys. But the men refused to surrender the caps in their possession and broke out in open mutiny. The European officers were fired upon. The guards at the European hospital saw the officers running, and fired the signal guns. This brought Her Majesty's 10th to the scene. The European patients went up to the roof of the hospital and opened fire, killing "about a dozen of scoundrels". A good number of sepoys did not at first join the fighting; but when the European soldiers started fire from the roof of the hospital, they joined the mutineers. In the ensuing chaos, the mutineers hurried to Arrah, headquarters of their home district. Some of them left their wives and children behind; obviously, the rising was not premeditated.

Lloyd made feeble efforts to pursue the deserters. Finally, on the exhortation of Tayler, the General equipped a steamer to pursue the rebels. On 29th July, the pursuing steamer set out with a small force under Captain Dunbar. The expedition ended in disaster. One of the first to fall was the Captain himself. "From the front of our column, from the right flank and from the left flank came through the darkness, with fatal effect, the heavy shower of musket balls." The next morning the retreat became a rout. "Of the four hundred men who had gone out on the day before full of health and hope, one-half had been left behind to gorge the vultures and the jackals, and of those who returned only about fifty were unwounded." The shock of the disaster was so great that it upset even the lion-hearted Tayler.

The rebels could not take Arrah by surprise. Tayler had warned Magistrate Wake, whereupon the women and children were sent to Danapur. The house of Mr. Boyle, a railway engineer in Arrah, was provisioned and fortified

as an entrenchment in the last resort. On the 26th, as the sepoys approached, fifteen European residents with fifty loyal Sikhs threw themselves into the small building of Boyle, afterwards known as Arrah House. On 27th July the sepoys entered the town and placed themselves under the command of Babu Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur.

Kunwar Singh

Kunwar Singh was long past the prime of life; he was about seventy at the time. His health was already broken. Kunwar Singh had extensive landed estates, the total rental of which amounted to Rs. 3,00,000 and he paid an annual revenue of Rs. 1,48,000. But he was illiterate and did not have the training to look after his estates, which were heavily under debt. Commissioner Tayler was convinced that he had been cheated by his unscrupulous creditors. His own servants took advantage of his ignorance. Tayler wrote: "Baboo Kunwar Singh is a proprietor of extensive and valuable estates in Zillah Shahabad—a man of noble and ancient family—a generous and popular landlord much beloved by his tenantry and respected throughout the district both by natives and Europeans. But like most of the Rajpoot nobility the Baboo is altogether illiterate and thus has ever been an easy prey to the designing and a puppet in the hands of his interested agents, while a liberal disposition and habits of hereditary extravagance involved him in a profuse expenditure which was only sustained by borrowed funds." Kanwar Singh's debts totalled 13,00,000 rupees and he petitioned the Government to take up the management of his estates and liquidate his debts. In his earnest desire to save the nobleman from ruin, Tayler strongly suported the proposal. The Board of Revenue ultimately turned down his proposal and in 1857, Kunwar Singh found himself on the brink of bankruptcy. He was naturally deeply attached to his ancestral estate, and wanted to save it. The Mutiny offered him a chance and he plunged headlong into it.

Considerations of his own safety must have contributed

to the decision. When, in June, the Wahabi leaders were being arrested in Patna and the suspected rioters hanged, Wake, the Maistrate of Shahabad, openly accused Kunwar Singh of intrigue with the sepoys. In July, Tayler summoned him to Patna to discuss these reports. Kunwar Singh postponed the visit on grounds of ill-health. He knew from the fate of the Wahabi leaders what an invitation from Tayler might turn into. Wake's open accusations and Tayler's invitation had put the old chieftain on his guard. While he was thus apprehending violence, the mutinious sepoys came to Arrah and asked for his leadership. He was their natural leader, for most of them were Rajputs and his tenants. Though he had no military training, he felt supremely confident as a Rajput. Among the principal lieutenants of Kunwar Singh were his brother Amar Singh, his nephew Ritbhanjan Singh, his Tahsildar Harkishan Singh and his friend Nishan Singh. The Rajputs of Shahabad were out to prove that the valour of their race was not a thing of the past.

At Arrah the sepoys released prisoners from the jail and plundered the treasury. Then they set forth to hunt for the Europeans, and attacked Arrah House. Kunwar Singh had two old guns but no proper ammunition. Hammered balls of iron and brass door handles were therefore brought into use. The Sikhs were the soul of the defence. Dr. Halls, one of the besieged says: "Had the Sikhs who were with us been treacherous, they might have eaten us up for breakfast." And there was no lack of temptation. The sepoys appealed first to their racial and religious sentiments and then tried to bribe them. Each man was offered five hundred rupees as the price for desertion. But the Sikhs remained loyal. When the water-supply failed they dug a well eighteen feet deep. When there was shortage of animal food Hukum Singh, the Sikh Jamadar, and his men stole out and brought in some sheep. When the sepoys began to lay mines, it was Hukum Singh again who discovered and foiled the attempt. "Kooch-purwa nahin" was his laughing response to every cannon shot directed at

men were cut up, they maintained to the end of the day their determined attitude." In this manner he reached Shiupur Ghat and crossed the Ganga with incredible speed and dexterity before General Douglas could catch up.

Kunwar Singh was now heading for his ruined home at Jagdishpur. The old lion went to his lair only to die. While crossing the Ganga, a cannon-ball smashed one of his arms. The story runs that with a single stroke of his sharp sword the old man severed his injured limb and threw it into the sacred stream as his last offering. He had hardly two thousand men, war-worn and ill-armed. Captain Le Grand of Arrah wanted to repeat Eyre's exploits in the same jungle. The enthusiastic Briton forgot that the dying lion could still strike and strike like lightning. Of Le Grand's troops only the Sikhs displayed some fighting quality. The Europeans were as chaff before the wind. The defeat was disastrous. Le Grand himself and a full hundred out of his 150 men were killed. The day following this great action, Kunwar Singh expired (on 24th April), a victor. Against Englishmen as such the Rajput bore no hatred. On the contrary, his dignified manners and love of sports had won for him many English friends. He fought the British under the necessity of protecting his honour and property. But throughout his bitter fight he maintained the traditional code of Rajput chivalry. Not even his worst enemy could accuse him of shedding innocent English blood.

On Kunwar Singh's death the command of his troops devolved on his brother Amar Singh. He too had no military training, but only the courage and resolution inherited from his ancestors. Supported by his devoted tenants, Amar Singh ran a parallel government in the district of Shahabad. He appointed his own magistrates and judges, and even had his own prison. Just as the British Government had set a price on his head, he set a price on the heads of high British officials. Samuells observes that "the movement in Shahabad had all the dignity of a national revolt and was supported by many of the minor zamindars

Babu Kanwar Singh of Jagdishpur (Bihar) : he proved that Rajput valour was not a thing of the past

the entrenchment. He even threw brickbats at the rebel force from the top of Arrah House.

For seven days, the besieged repelled every attack and held out with uncommon gallantry. On 31st July, they were told of the rout of the relieving force and yet they stood firm. At length, Major Vincent Eyre of the Bengal Artillery came to their rescue.

Eyre was waylaid by the sepoys. Fierce actions were fought near a wood which Eyre had to cross, but the sepoys' muskets proved ineffective before Eyre's artillery and Enfield rifles. Kunwar Singh again contested his advance at Bibiganj and the Fusiliers were steadily losing ground before his resolute attack. A bayonet charge however broke the rebel chief's right flank and the sepoys gave way. The action was fought on the night of the 2nd August, and the next morning Arrah was relieved.

From Arrah, Kunwar Singh retired to his ancestral castle at Jagdishpur, where Eyre pursued him. Stiff resistance was offered, but once again muskets yielded to superior arms. No one was spared; even the wounded sepoys were hanged in revenge. The new temple, built by Kunwar Singh at enormous cost was demolished. The Jagdishpur palace and other buildings were reduced to ruins.

Kunwar Singh's army was defeated, his stronghold was destroyed, but the old lion was not tamed. Dislodged from the jungles of Jagdishpur, he turned his steps to the hills of Rohtas. There he threatened the Grand Trunk Road, the life-line of British communications. Then he made bolder plans. Early in September, Kunwar Singh appeared in Rewa, but his final destination was believed to be Delhi. The loyal Raja of Rewa offered him resistance and Kunwar Singh was forced to leave his territories. At this stage, the old chieftain was deserted by the majority of the sepoys and he was left with only five hundred followers. Throughout September he hovered around the Mirzapur-Rewa region; in October he arrived at Banda where the Nawab had already identified himself with the rebel cause.

It is said that Kunwar Singh had been invited by Nana to join him in an attack on Kanpur.

By this time Delhi had fallen and Kunwar Singh had to adjust his plans to the changed circumstances. So from Banda he went to Kalpi, at the invitation of Nana or the Gwalior contingent or both, to participate in the second assault on Kanpur in November. If Nishan Singh is to be believed, Kunwar Singh was present at the battle of Kanpur in which Tatya won a memorable victory over Windham. After the subsequent defeat of Tatya at the hands of Sir Colin (6th December), Kunwar Singh did not accompany the Maratha chiefs to Kalpi. Instead, he went to the most important theatre of war, Lucknow. There he was warmly welcomed by the boy Wali, who invested him with a robe of honour.

In February 1858, Kunwar Singh was somewhere between Lucknow and Dariabad. In March he was more active than ever. The Gurkhas had been clearing the Azamgarh area of the rebels, but when they left the area to aid Sir Colin Campbell in his final assault on Lucknow, the eagle-eyed old Rajput pounced upon Atrauli, a village twenty miles from the town of Azamgarh. Colonel Milman, who commanded the station, marched against him but was outmanoeuvred and put to flight. Kunwar Singh next occupied Azamgarh. Colonel Dames, who had hurried from Ghazipur to recapture the city, was repulsed with heavy loss of men. Two successive defeats coupled with the fall of Azamgarh were a heavy blow to British prestige, which was rehabilitated only after the capture of Lucknow.

Soon afterwards a vast army came to recapture Azamgarh. Finding that he had no chance against so formidable a force, Kunwar Singh decided to return to Bihar, his home province. In the course of his march he fought a series of brilliant rear-guard actions with his pursuer, General Douglas. One such action is thus described by Malleson: "He kept Douglas at bay till he had secured two lines of retreat for his main columns, which he had divided. He then fell back leisurely, and though many of his

Tatya Tope's force : for its lightning dash it became a nightmare of the British army

Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. She defied the I. ...guinary battles, only to fall victim to a stray b...et

Tatya Tope : for eight months he kept the British army at bay in a series of remarkable exploits

and more or less openly by all the Rajput population of the District."

Amar Singh was pitted against heavy odds. Three British armies now combined against him. In an open fight, the Rajput chief had no chance. He therefore adpoted the tactics of harassing the enemy's movement and cutting off his supplies. When Jagdishpur was lost, Amar Singh took shelter in Latawarur. Lugard tried to cut broad roads through the jungle and capture the rebels, but they formed themselves into small groups and eluded the British. The rebels were not always on the defensive; they raided the countryside periodically and punished the loyal zamindars.

In July 1858, the rebels again raided Arrah and burnt Mr. Victor's bungalow in the outskirts of the town. The next month, they again threatened Arrah, looted some few shops and houses and released prisoners. A party raided Gaya and broke open the jail. In desperation Douglas attempted to encircle the jungle and squeeze out the rebels. Seven columns entered the forest simultaneously, but the whole move ended in failure. At long last mounted columns were requisitioned to the task and, on 20th October, the rebel army was destroyed. But their leader escaped with a small band to find shelter in the Kaimur hills. In November 1858, Douglas routed him there and the West Bihar campaign came to an end. But Amar Singh was still at large. In October 1859, Jang Bahadur reported that Amar Singh of Jagdishpur had lately joined the rebel camp in the Tarai and was likely to assume command of Nana's troops.

The landed aristocracy of Bihar supported the British Government. At one time the loyalty of the Maharajas of Darbhanga, Dumraon and Hatwa was suspected, but no harm came from them. Other landlords helped the Government with men and money. There were troubles in Gaya, Champaran and in Deoghar, but these were not comparable to the rising of Shahabad under Kunwar Singh.

CHAPTER VIII

JHANSI

Jhansi was a small Maratha state which owed allegiance to the Peshwa. On the downfall of the Peshwa in 1818, the State entered into alliance with the East India Company and became a British protectorate. Gangadhar Rao, the last ruler of the line, was a patron of art and letters. He built up an excellent Sanskrit library and improved the town of Jhansi. In November 1853, Gangadhar Rao died without issue. The day before his death, he adopted a boy from another branch of his family in the presence of the principal nobles of his court and Major Ellis, Political Agent of Jhansi.

Gangadhar Rao handed over to Major Ellis a *kharita* by which he entrusted his widow and the child to the care of the Government. "In consideration of my loyalty," he prayed, "the Government should treat this child with kindness. The administration of the state should be vested in my widow during her lifetime as the sovereign of this principality and mother of the child adopted." In a subsequent memorandum to the Governor-General, the widowed Rani of Jhansi cited the loyal services which the rulers of Jhansi had rendered to the British and their right to adopt an heir under the Hindu law. But Lord Dalhousie was not to be moved. He refused her the right of adoption and, in spite of the entreaties of the Rani, declared that Jhansi had lapsed to the paramount power. In March 1854, Jhansi was, therefore, annexed to the British Indian dominion.

The Rani was endowed with a life pension of sixty

thousand rupees per annum. She was exempted from the jurisdiction of the British courts and, during her lifetime, her personal retinue was also to enjoy the same privilege. Though the adopted son, Damodar Rao, was not recognised he was entitled to the family treasure and the personal property of his adoptive father. The high-spirited Rani at first refused to accept the pension. When ultimately the Rani reconciled herself to her lot, she found that the pension was subject to many deductions including even Gangadhar Rao's debts, which were properly the liability of the State. Furthermore, the Government gave a rude shock to popular feeling by taking over the villages assigned to the temple of Mahalakshmi, the family deity of the rulers of Jhansi.

What must have offended the Rani in particular and the Hindus in general was the permitting of cow-killing, which had long been prohibited in the town of Jhansi under Maratha rule. The Rani, however, still hoped that justice would be done to her and the child if their case were represented to the Court of Directors. Therefore, like other dispossessed princes, she sent her agents to London. The mission cost the Rani sixty thousand rupees, but the Directors found no reason to revise the decision of the Governor-General-in-Council. The Rani was a high-spirited young woman, barely twenty years of age. According to Major Malcolm, she bore "a high character", and was "much respected by everyone at Jhansi." The annexation gave a rude shock to the people who regarded the whole business as atrociously cruel.

Rani Lakshmi Bai

Rani Lakshmi Bai was of humble parentage. Her father, Moropant Tambe, belonged to the personal retinue of Chimnaji Appa of the Peshwa family, and lived at Banaras with him. Here, it is said, a daughter was born to him by his first wife, Bhagirathi Bai. The parents named her Manikarnika, but she came to fame under the name of Lakshmi Bai which was given to her at the time of her wedding. Nothing much is known about her childhood and

the date of her birth. The eminent historian Parasnis says that she was born on the 19th November, 1835, and that she was a playmate of Nana Saheb in her childhood; for at that time her father was attached to the Court of Baji Rao at Bithur.

After the Mutiny innumerable legends grew around her. John Lang, the eminent lawyer, whom she had consulted after the annexation of her State, has left the following pen-picture of the Rani: "She was a woman of about the middle size—rather stout but not too stout. Her face must have been very handsome when she was younger, and even now it had many charms, though, according to my idea of beauty, it was too round. The expression also was very good and very intelligent. The eyes were particularly fine, and the nose very delicately shaped. She was not very fair, though she was far from black. She had no ornaments, strange to say, upon her person, except a pair of gold earrings. Her dress was a plain white muslin, so fine in texture, and drawn about her in such a way, and so tightly, that the outline of her figure was plainly discernible—and a remarkably fine figure she had. What spoilt her was her voice."

When Major Ellis communicated to her the Government's decision to annex Jhansi, she is reported to have declared in a clear and ringing voice *Mera Jhansi nehi denge* ("I will not surrender my Jhansi"). This was probably the outbrust of an impulsive heart, for no resistance was offered to the annexation. Then, Lakshmi Bai quietly left her husband's residence in the fort for the palace assigned to her in the city and resigned herself to the routine of a Hindu widow's life. Her troops were dismissed and a regiment of the Bengal Army was posted in the fort. Everything went on peacefully and the British rulers saw no cause for anxiety.

But the greased cartridge caused a commotion at Jhansi as elsewhere. When in May the news of Meerut arrived at the station, Capt. Dunlop, Commander of the garrison, found no sign of disquiet among the sepoys. In June, it

is said, a sepoy "brought a chit from Delhi stating that the whole army of the Bengal Presidency had mutinied and, as the Regiment stationed at Jhansee had not done so, men composing it were outcastes or had lost their faith." The taunt went home, and on the 5th June mutiny broke out at Jhansi. The European families of the town at once threw themselves into the fort. They could not expect help from any quarter and they had to depend entirely on their own resources.

The Jokhan Bagh Slaughter

Bakshish Ali, the Jail Darogah, assumed the role of leader of the uprising. At his order the sepoys not only shot Captain Dunlop, Lieutenant Turnbull and Ensign Taylor but also two Havildars and a sepoy who had tried to protect the officers. The fort was henceforth blockaded and it seemed only a question of time before the fugitives died of hunger. On the 8th, Captain Gordon was shot through the head; Lieutenant Powys was killed by an Indian servant inside the fort. In the afternoon, the fugitives came out, possibly on the assurance of safe conduct, but the whole party—men, women, and children—were put to the sword. The dead bodies remained exposed for three days in Jokhan Bagh, where the massacre took place, and were then buried in a common pit. Bakshish Ali took a leading part in the indiscriminate slaughter. Only one woman with two children escaped.

Some attributed the mutiny and the massacre to the machinations of the Rani of Jhansi. The Rani herself later pleaded that she was a helpless spectator of the tragedy. Sir Robert Hamilton, who conducted an enquiry a year later, did not expressly accuse the Rani of complicity with the rebels. He believed the statement of a sentenced sepoy who was definite that "the insurgents previous to the mutiny did not consult the Ranee." The sepoy added : "The mutineer sepoys, placing their guns in position, threatened all the rest with immediate death if they refused to join them. The *sowars* and sepoys were thus prevailed upon.

the 3rd June. The officers and their families escaped to Udaipur. The insurgents made their way to Delhi. Nimach was soon afterwards occupied by contingents from Mewar, Kotah and Bundi. Similarly, Nasirabad was reoccupied on 12th June without any fighting.

Shahzada Firuz Shah

Nimach, however, was threatened next by a royal adventurer of remarkable ability, Shahzada Firuz Shah. He was the son of Nizam Bakht, a direct descendant of the first Bahadur Shah. He had left Delhi in 1855 for Mecca and returned to Bombay in May 1857. He was still in his twenties. A century earlier a young man of his personality and ability might have carved out a kingdom; a century later he might have risen to eminence as a popular leader. As conditions were, his adventure ended in failure. Proceeding to Delhi from Bombay, he appeared near Sitamau in June. Next he came near Mandisore where he unfurled the green banner of Islam and declared a Jehad or religious war against the British. The Governor of Mandisore expelled him from the town and he betook himself to an obscure mosque.

A prince in a fakir's garb is an even more potent force than a prince at the head of an army. Firuz Shah soon attracted a considerable following, the majority of whom were Afghan and Mekrani Muslims. They seized Mandisore and took the Governor and the Kotwal prisoners. Then Firuz Shah was formally installed as King, and one Mirzaji was appointed his chief minister. He addressed circular letters to the neighbouring princes, calling upon them to acknowledge the new power. None, however, responded except Abdul Sattar Khan, a scion of the ruling house of Jawra. By September the followers of Firuz Shah numbered seventeen to eighteen thousand. In November the Shahzada felt strong enough to extend his jurisdiction and sent his troops against Nimach. They defeated the opposing force at Jiran and laid siege to the fort of Nimach. The station would have been lost but for the timely appear-

ance of Colonel Durand, the Governor General's Agent in Central India.

Mutiny at Indore

The Central Indian Agency had under its supervision six Indian States—Gwalior, Indore, Dhar, Dewas, Bhopal and Jawra. The headquarters of the Agency was Indore, where stayed the Agent, Colonel Durand. Tukoji Rao II was a young man of twenty-one when the Mutiny broke out at Indore. The Holkar had an army of 7,500 of all arms, but Durand had no confidence in its allegiance. There were British roops at the nearby cantonment of Mhow, but there the native troops far outnumbered the Europeans.

On 1st July, Holkar's force rose in arms and attacked the Residency. Sadat Khan, an officer of Holkar's cavalry, galloped into the thick of the armed rebels and announced that it was the Maharaja's order that the Sahib should be killed. The Bhopal contingent and the Bhils immediately joined the insurgents. The expected British reinforcements from Mhow did not arrive. After a brilliant defence of two and a half hours, Durand found himself in a precarious position. He was then compelled to evacuate the Residency. His first idea was to flee to Mhow, but the Sikhs suggested Sihor as a refugee. So to Sihor, outside Holkar's jurisdiction, Durand retired. Durand suspected the loyalty of Holkar, though the later was not to blame. Holkar had plainly warned Durand that he had no control over his army and had implored Durand to take necessary precuations.

The trouble at Indore was, within a few hours, followed by an outbreak at Mhow. There, the mutinous sepoys killed three of their officers and left for Indore on their way to Delhi. Captain Hungerford, who commanded at Mhow, found that he had to assume responsibility as the Governor-General's Agent until the reappearance of Durand. He opened correspondence with Holkar on the one hand and the Government of Bombay on the other. He too suspected Holkar's loyalty, and addressed him a straight-

Then all went to the palace of the Ranee with loaded guns and demanded assistance and supplies. She was obliged to yield and to furnish guns, ammunition and supplies." These statements agree with the Rani's own account of the mutiny as conveyed to Major W. C. Erskine, Lieutenant-Governor of the Sagar Division.

On 12th June the rebels left Jhansi for Delhi after extorting a large sum of money from the Rani. That very day the Rani despatched a loyal message to Erskine. Two days later, she sent another letter describing the events at Jhansi. The Rani wrote, "The Government forces, stationed at Jhansi, thro' their faithlessness, cruelty and violence, killed all the European Civil and Military officers, the clerks and all their families and the Ranee not being able to assist them for want of guns and soldiers, as she had only 100 or 50 people engaged in guarding her house, she could render them no aid, which she very much regrets. That they, the mutineers, afterwards behaved with much violence against herself and servants, and extorted a great deal of money from her...." In the end, the Rani submitted that though she assumed the responsibility of administration on behalf of the British it would be difficult for her to carry on against such heavy odds. She implored the Lieutenant-Governor to send troops for the maintenance of law and order.

Erskine did not suspect the Rani's sincerity. He told the Rani "to collect the revenue, to raise police and to do everything in her power to restore order, and that accounts will be settled with her when officers reach Jhansi when she will be liberally dealt with, and I have also sent her a proclamation to issue (a translation of which I enclose) calling on all inhabitants of the District to obey the Rani agreeably to the custom of the British Government who will for a time make proper arrangements."

The Governor-General, however, was not satisfied with the Rani's account although he accorded a conditional approval to Erskine's action. In any case, the Rani assumed the administration of Jhansi at the direction of the British

authorities and with the knowledge of the Governor-General. During this period, the Rani never relaxed her exertions to maintain friendly relations with the British. When Sir Robert Hamilton returned to Indore after leave, the Rani addressed to him an earnest appeal for help. In her distress, she sent similar appeals to the British authorities at Jabalpur, Agra and Gwalior.

Meanwhile, the enemies of the Rani gave her no respite. Old feuds were revived and the turbulent Bundela chiefs found an opportunity to settle old scores. Sadashiv Rao of Parola, a distant nephew, had earlier claimed succession to the throne of Jhansi. Taking advantage of the prevailing turmoil, he marched against Jhansi and assumed the title of Maharaja. The Rani's men however foiled his designs, took prisoner the self-styled Maharaja and lodged him in the fort of Jhansi. The Rani had now to face more formidable adversaries. One of them was Nathe Khan, the Dewan of Orchha, who took advantage of the prevailing confusion to challenge the Rani. Scornfully the Rani rejected Nathe Khan's ultimatum, whereupon the Bundela chief marched against Jhansi at the head of a big army. In her distress, she appealed to the loyalty of her barons and the feudal chiefs rallied round the Rani of Jhansi. It was at this crisis that the Rani for the first time appeared at the head of her troops. Finally, the Orchha troops were repulsed.

In her letter to Sir Robert Hamilton, dated the 1st January 1858, the Rani complained, "Taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country, the Chiefs of Dutiya and Orchha first took possession of the district of Jhanse Illaka, that lay on the borders of their respective states, both to the East and West. On 3rd September (both these Chiefs acting in concert) the Forces of Orchha, composed of the Thakoors and relations of the State and amounting to 40,000 men with 28 guns, invaded Jhanse itself and made other Chiefs support them." She concluded, "As these short-sighted individuals seem unmindful of the British supremacy and do their best to ruin myself and the whole country, I beg you will give me your support in the best way you

can, and thus save myself and the people who are reduced to the last extremity and are not able to cope with the enemy." Sir Robert Hamilton did not reply to this appeal for help. Major Ellis had already sent reports of the Rani's suspected complicity with the killing of the Europeans on 5th June. The British were led to believe that the Rani was no friend of theirs.

Following the defeat of Nathe Khan the Rani herself got involved with the rebels. Among her new recruits there were many mutineers who knew no discipline; among her allies were many ambitious barons. Intoxicated with power, they were now spoiling for a fight. So difficult was her position that even in February 1958, the Rani was prepared to restore to the British the territories formally entrusted to her. On the 26th January, the Rani sent a Vakil to the Commissioner. If the Vakil was treated kindly, she would not fight the English but return the districts to them. On the contrary, if the British officers showed displeasure, she would fight to the last. She had been watching the British, and though she was unwilling to fight, she was preparing against all eventualities.

At length, the Rani became exasperated with British indifference. Suspicion had taken deep root in the heart of the British; it appeared that they were determined to avenge the massacre of Jokhan Bagh. Sir Hugh Rose, commander of the Central India Field Force, was already heading for Jhansi, and his intentions did not appear friendly. For the Rani to submit to the British was to court dishonour, to fight was to save honour though everything else might be lost. She realized that there was no alternative but to fight. Once determined, the Rani proved herself to be a resolute and bitter enemy of the British. Even her adversary, Sir Hugh, complimented her as the best and bravest of the rebel leaders.

On 21st March, Sir Hugh Rose arrived before Jhansi. He was struck by the strength of the massive fortress. Standing on an elevated rock with guns pointing from very high positions, it commanded the country far and near. It

was surrounded by a massive wall, eighteen to thirty feet high, "and was garrisoned by 11,000 men, commanded by a woman who possessed all the instincts, all the courage, all the resolution of a warrior of the type so well known in Consular Rome."

On the evening of the 22nd the siege of the fort began. For the seventeen days that followed, the defenders, inspired by the Rani, fought a heroic battle; they maintained an incessant shower of shot and shell on the besiegers. On the 26th, the British batteries began to cannonade the ramparts, but the defenders returned the fire with resolution. In the evening, the Rani herself went round the defences to enthuse her men. The fort was strong, her men were devoted to her person and she expected reinforcements from outside. They were not long in arriving. On the 31st, 20,000 men under Tatya Tope were advancing from the north to relieve the fortress. After his defeat at Kanpur by Sir Colin, Tatya had fallen back on Kalpi. From there he suddenly appeared at Charkhari in Bundelkhand and captured it. Having thus raised a big force and secured twenty-eight guns, Tatya was now marching to the aid of the Rani of Jhansi. Sir Hugh marched to intercept Tatya with a part of his force, without abandoning the siege. When, the following morning, Tatya's forces came within striking distance, Sir Hugh opened fire. A number of fierce enagagements were fought. But ultimately Tatya's forces were dispersed and all his guns were captured.

With Tatya's repulse, Sir Hugh could now devote all his attention to the conclusion of his operations at Jhansi. The defeat of Tatya had not dispirited the defenders, for, when the final assault was made on the fortress on the morning of 3rd April, they opened a devastating fire on the enemy. They hurled at the stormers all sorts of missiles, earthen pots filled with powder, logs of wood, whatever came handy. At last, the postern gate was blown to pieces and the British soldiers made a rush; but the opening was blocked by huge pieces of rock, and the main assault from the right was beaten back. Then an assaulting party found

a foothold on the ramparts, crossed in and made a heavy charge. After this, the morale of the defenders was on the wane.

The assaulting party now reached the road leading to the palace. The battle raged furiously from street to street, from house to house and even from room to room. "When even the courtyard of the palace was reached, it became apparent that the resistance had only begun. Every room was savagely contested. From chamber to chamber the enemy were driven at the point of the bayonet. At length, the palace itself was gained. The opposition, however, had not even then entirely ceased. Two hours later, it was discovered that fifty of the Rani's bodyguard still held the stables attached to the building." Street fights continued the next day and the city was ruthlessly sacked. To the English every dark face was an enemy, and non-combatants suffered as heavily as the combatants. "Those who could not escape threw their women and babes down wells, and then jumped down themselves."

The British soldiers were thirsting for vengeance. They believed that the Rani was the person responsible for the massacre of their countrymen. Their feelings have been faithfully reflected in Dr. Lowe's account: "No maudlin clemency was to mark the fall of this city. The Jezebel of India was there—the young, energetic, proud, unbending, uncompromising Rani, and upon her head rested the blood of the slain, and a punishment as awful awaited her".

But the Rani was not to die the death of a felon. Dressed like a male, she left the fort under cover of night with her adopted son, and galloped along the road to Kalpi. She had with her an escort of faithful Afghans. The Rani's father lost his way and was found the following morning before the gates of Datia, faint with bleeding and exhausted by riding. He was forthwith arrested and sent to Jhansi, where he was hanged at Jokhan Bagh.

The Rani rode on and covered twenty-one miles in one night, but her escape became known to the British camp in the morning. A pursuit was immediately ordered. Captain

Forbes and Lieutenant Dowker pushed on with the 3rd Light Cavalry and the 14th Light Dragoons. Forty of the Rani's faithful troopers turned back and gave them a fight, but they were slain to a man. The pursuing column once came in sight of their quarry, but the Rani was an excellent rider. A bullet put the foremost member of the column to the ground, and the pursuit was given up. On the morning of the 4th, Sir Hugh occupied Jhansi. The occupation of the town had cost him 343 killed and wounded, including 36 officers. The rebel loss was estimated roughly at 5,000.

Jhansi fell, but Kalpi, the headquarters of the rebel force, still remained to be taken. It had become the meeting place of all the rebel leaders. Rao Saheb, the most energetic member of the Peshwa family, was there. And now there was also the Rani of Jhansi. Tatya had lost his guns in his battle with Sir hugh, but with characteristic resourcefulness he made up for his loss. Leaving a small force at Jhansi, Sir Hugh marched towards Kalpi on 25th April. On May he fought the rebel army at the stargetic town of Koonch. The rebels fought with great courage, but failing to hold the place they fell back on Kalpi. On 22nd May the British delivered their attack on Kalpi. "The battle that ensued was one of the fiercest and most hotly contested of that terrible war." At last the rebels were defeated and they were compelled to evacuate Kalpi, their last stronghold. The next day, the victorious General received a message of congratulations from the Governor-General: "Your capture of Calpee has crowned a series of brilliant and uninterrupted successes. I thank you and your brave soldiers with all my heart."

After the fall of Kalpi, the rebel leaders held a council to choose their next field of operation. The sepoys wanted to go to Oudh; the Rani preferred some place in Bundelkhand. Ultimately, at the suggestion of Rao Saheb, it was decided to enlist the support of the Scindia of Gwalior to continue the fight in the Deccan.

Scindia was a faithful ally of the British. But the

Gwalior contingent was not loyal to him. It was a well-trained, well-armed contingent and the men were as much moved by the story of the greased cartridge as other people in Oudh and the North-Western Provinces. As early as June 1857, the sepoys of the Gwalior contingent had shown signs of mutiny; later most of them joined Tatya at Kalpi. The allegiance of the Gwalior regiment apart, Tatya had potential supporters in the city of Gwalior. So the Rani and Tatya boldly marched towards the city.

Against Dinkar Rao's advice, Scindia went to oppose the rebels at Morar, but the Scindia had none of the martial qualities of his ancestors. The insurgents raised a loud cry of 'Din', whereupon the Scindia's forces joined hands with the rebels. On June 1, Gwalior fell without a blow. The Maharaja, followed by his nobles, hurried to take refuge at Agra. The ladies of the palace led by Baiza Bai took shelter in the fortress of Narwar. The rebel leaders did not want to interfere with the Scindia's administration. They wanted money and provisions and an unopposed passage through Gwalior to the Maratha country. The city was not looted. All the principal civil and military officers, who had chosen to stay behind, were confirmed in their former posts. But the hoarded treasures of Scindia were appropriated for the payment of the troops. Rao Saheb did not relax his efforts to conciliate the representatives of the ruling house. He wrote repeated letters to Baiza Bai inviting her to assume the administration, but she made no response.

The Death of the Rani

The sudden capture of Gwalior took the British by surprise; but Sir Hugh Rose did not lose a moment. He left Kalpi on the 6th and by forced marches arrived in the neighbourhood of Morar on the 16th. The following morning he attacked and completely defeated the rebel force posted at Morar. General Smith of the Rajputana Field Force pursued the rebels and attacked them between Kotah-ki-Sarai and Gwalior . In this contest fell the Rani of Jhansi.

There are two accounts of the death of the Rani.

Macpherson writes: "Near the Phoolbagh batteries, I may observe, fell the Rani of Jhansi. She was seated, says her servant, drinking sherbet, 400 of the 5th Irregulars near her, when the alarm was given that the Hussars approached. Forty or fifty of them came up, and the rebels fled, save about fifteen. The Rani's horse refused to leap the Canal, when she received a shot in the side, and then a sabre cut on the head, but rode off. She soon after fell dead, and was burned in a garden close by."

Sir Robert Hamilton, who made an enquiry on the spot, gives a somewhat different account. He writes: "The fact that the Rani had been killed was not known in Brigadier Smith's camp until he heared of it by a note from me. It occurred from all I could ascertain whilst the Rani with a group in which were the Rao Sahib and Tantia were looking at the advance on the heights early in the day. The Rani was on horseback, and close to her was the female (a Mohammadan who had been long in the family) who seems never to have left her side on any occasion. These two were struck by bullets and fell. The Rani survived about 20 minutes. She was carried towards Pool Bagh, the Rao Saheb attending her. This event quite upset the Chiefs, and caused the greatest consternation. Arrangements were instantly made for burning the body, which was conveyed in a *Palkee* to the bank of the river between the Phool Bagh and the Fort, and from hence, it not being practicable to get the *Palankeen* over the enclosure of a garden near a temple, the body was lifted out and carried by the attendants over the enclosure to a spot under some fine large trees, where it was burnt. Hardly had the ceremony been performed when the charge of the 8th Hussars came almost up to the garden and temple. Six or seven of the persons who had fled from it were said to have been cut down. It was evident that the ceremony had been interrupted, for when I went to the spot Dr. Christison picked up fragments of bones, which proved that the usual custom of sifting the ashes had not been performed."

The Rani thus died on the battlefield a hero's death.

Next to Nana, she was probably the person most hated by her enemies. In spite of her best efforts to keep on friendly terms with the British, she was driven by their suspicion and tortuous diplomacy to the other camp. Thousands of unsophisticated villagers still sing the glory of the heroic woman who held her own against her Bundela enemies and challanged even the might of the British.

On the 19th the British won the battle of Gwalior; on the 20th the fort was captured and the Maharaja was escorted back to his palace. The battle for the capture of Gwalior was distinguished by many acts of desperate courage reminiscent of mediaeval chivalry.

The victors celebrated their triumph in a fitting manner by firing a royal salute at every principal station in India. Tatya and Rao Saheb crossed the Chambal and fled to Rajputana. They had lost their guns, they had but a small following, and yet their spirit was unbroken.

CHAPTER IX

RAJPUTANA AND CENTRAL INDIA

In Rajputana the area under direct British administration was very small. It included three important military stations—Ajmer, Nasirabad and Nimach. The States were ruled by Rajput princes who boasted of their ancient traditions of chivalry and patriotism. In 1857, however, the princes and nobles of Rajputana generally remained loyal to their British overlords.

Nevertheless, Rajputana was not free from trouble. When the Mutiny broke out, the security of Ajmer became the first concern of the British. Colonel Dixon, Commissioner of Ajmer, requisitioned a Mair regiment to the station and sent away the suspected 15th N.I. to Nasirabad. The Mairs were an aboriginal people; they had no prejudice against grease and, therefore, no grievance against the Government.

Ajmer was saved, but mutiny broke out at Nasirabad, not far away. There were stationed two regiments of Bengal sepoys and the 1st Bombay Lancers. In May the stories of flour adulterated with bone-dust reached the station and the sepoys were agitated. Then there was a rumour that a European force was coming from Deesa to disarm the sepoys. Upon this, the infantry broke into revolt. On 28th May, the insurgents rushed at the guns and seized them. Two officers were killed and two were wounded; others had no alternative but to leave the station with their women and children.

Nimach is about 120 miles south of Nisirabad, near the border of Mewar. There, the sepoys rose in arms on

forward enquiry. He had heard that His Highness had helped the insurgents with arms, ammunitions and provisions. "These reports," Durand wrote, "are probably very much exaggerated : I do not believe them. You owe so much to the British, and can be so utterly ruined by showing enmity towards them, that I do not believe you can be so blind to your own interests as to afford aid and show friendship to the enemies of the British Government. Let me understand, therefore, from yourself what your wishes are."

Holkar sent his Prime Minister and his Treasurer with his reply, which was most reassuring. "No one in the world regrets more than I do the most heart-rending catastrophe which befell at Indore and at Mhow. The tale is a painful one, and will be described to you in detail by Rao Ramchander and Bukshee Khooman Singh, who are bearers of this to you. I have not even in a dream ever deviated from the path of friendship and allegiance to the British Government. I know their sense of justice and honour will make them pause before they suspect, even for a moment, a friendly chief who is so sensible of the obligations he owes to them and is ready to do anything for them; but there are catastrophes in this world which cannot be controlled, and the one that has happened is one of the kind." Hungerford was satisfied.

The rumour that Holkar had joined the mutineers led to disorder outside Indore. The Raja of Amjhera attacked the small town of Bhopawar. The few Englishmen at the station found asylum with the minor Raja of Jhabua, but his Arab troops demanded their death. The Raja, however, took the precaution of guarding the Englishmen with his faithful Rajput retainers. From this insecure position the party was at last rescued by horsemen sent by the Holkar.

Meanwhile, Durand was chafing for action. On the 22nd July, he joined the Bombay column under Brigadier Stuart which had encamped near Asirgarh. This force relieved Mhow on the 2nd August. At the end of the rainy

season, Durand led the column against Dhar, a city of great antiquity and the capital of a small Maratha state of the same name. The Raja was a minor. His Arab and Afghan mercenaries had risen against the British as soon as they heard of the rising at Indore. Durand appeared before the fort on the 2nd October. On the refusal of the garrison to surrender, a siege began, but the defenders effected their escape before the fort was stormed. The young Raja came out to welcome the Governor-General's Agent. The fort was razed to the ground. The State was confiscated but later restored to the minor prince.

From Dhar the column marched towards Mandisore, the headquarters of Firuz Shah. The rebel leader tried to stop the column at Garoria, but was defeated. Firuz Shah, however, escaped to start operations elsewhere. On 15th December, Durand returned to Indore. The next day he made over charge to Sir Robert Hamilton.

In the meantime, all was not quiet in Rajputana, although the rulers remained loyal. At many places, excitement developed into mutiny. In August there was a minor outbreak in the Ajmer jail, but it was easily suppressed. Late in August, a few men of the Jodhpur legion at Andara stole away to Mount Abu early one morning and started shooting through the windows at the sleeping Europeans. Their fire caused only one casualty. The mutineers turned to Airanpura, where the main body of the legion had revolted. The few Europeans at the station would doubtless have been murdered but for the intervention of Risaldar Abbas Ali. The rebels next pushed on towards Ajmer through the Jodhpur territories. There, the Thakur of Awah was waging a private war with his overlord, the Maharaja of Jodhpur. The Thakur opened negotiations with the rebel legion and admitted them into his fort. On September 8, they fell on Pali and routed the Maharaja's troops. At length, General Lawrence reduced the fort of Awah and restored Jodhpur's authority. Later, the Thakur surrendered to the British authorities who spared his life.

The Maha Rao of Kotah was meanwhile accused of a serious offence. Major Burton, Political Agent of Kotah, lost his life on the 15th October at the hands of local insurgents. With him were killed two of his sons, and the Maha Rao was suspected of complicity with the rebels. The rebels, led by Mehrab Khan and Jai Lal, murdered two Englishmen and then attacked the Residency. Burton and his two sons, with none else to defend them, fought as long as they could, but were ultimately killed. The Maha Rao, who in fact remained loyal, succeeded in restoring some order with the help of the loyal remnants of his army, though part of the town remained in rebel hands till its capture on 30th March.

At Agra, the headquarters of the North-Western Provinces, was stationed Mr. Colvin, a civil servant of long experience, as Lieutenant-Governor. The news of Meerut caused a commotion and the Lieutenant-Governor took adequate precautions. It was, however, at Aligarh that disturbances began. There, a Brahmin who incited the sepoys was arrested and sentenced to death by court martial. The execution led to an open outburst of the dormant disaffection. "Behold a martyr to our faith", shouted a sepoy to his comrades, and the uprising began. There was no killing, but British authority collapsed in panic. Men, women, and children sought safety in flight and among the fugitives who reached Agra was Lady Outram. The rising at Aligarh was followed by outbreaks at Mainpuri and Etawah.

The news of these risings caused panic at Agra. Fresh news of outbreaks came from Mathura and Hodul. On 31st May two native regiments at Agra were disarmed, but this did not ward off danger. News of fresh disasters in Rohilkhand, Malwa and Bundelkhand unnerved the Lieutenant-Governor. And now information arrived of the approach of the Nimach rebels towards Agra. Brigadier Polwhele went out to intercept the rebels, but he suffered a crushing defeat at the battle of Shahganj. Luckily for the British, the sepoys did not take advantage of their victory. The Nimach men did not enter Agra, but the city mob rose and the

Christian population, nearly six thousand in number, took shelter in the fort.

At last, the Agra authorities sent out a military expedition to restore order. But it did not achieve much. It went as far as Hathras, fought a few fanatic Ghazis and came back. The rebels captured Hathras as soon as the column turned back. In the third week of September came the news of the British capture of Delhi. Cheering though the news was to the British, it was not without its dark side. Expelled from Delhi, the rebels came to Mathura; the Indore mutineers were also reported at Dholpur. The presence of the rebels so near the city caused great panic and confusion at Agra. Ultimately, on 10th October, Greathed appeared at Agra with a strong force, fought the mutineers and relieved the city.

CHAPTER X

THE LAST PHASE

In July 1857 and during the following months, disorder spread rapidly over the Sagar and Narbada territories of Central India. The districts of Sagar, Chanderi, Jhansi, Lalitpur and Jalaun were overrun by the mutineers. The Raja of Banpur and other smaller chiefs of Bundelkhand boldly asserted their independence. Generally speaking, the whole country between the Jamuna and the Narbada, excepting the towns of Rewa and Sagar, were in the hands of the rebels.

As in Rohilkhand, the British campaign in Central India and Bundelkhand was long drawn and beset with many difficulties. The task of suppressing mutiny in that region was entrusted to Sir Hugh Rose, Commander of the Central India Field Force. His brilliant record was summed up by Lord Derby thus : "In five months, the Central India Field Force traversed 1,085 miles, crossed numerous large rivers, took upwards of 150 pieces of artillery, one entrenched camp, 245 cities, and two fortresses all strongly defended, fought 16 actions, captured 20 forts and never sustained a check against the most warlike and determined enemy led by the most capable Commanders then to be found in any part of India." It was a remarkable feat, particularly in view of the fact that most of the operations were conducted under extreme heat and involved the crossing of deep rivers and ravines. Sir Hugh himself experienced sun-stroke five times and heat caused as many casualties among his men as the rebel forces did.

Tatya's heroic exploits

But the security which Sir Hugh had established after the battle of Morar and the restoration of the Scindia proved short-lived. Escaping from the field of Gwalior, the invincible Tatya Tope embarked on a career of guerilla warfare which for its lightning speed and genius ranks with the exploits of Hannibal or Napoleon. After their defeat at Morar and later again at Alipur-Jawra, Tatya and Rao Saheb moved to Rajputana. Tatya rightly thought that his safety now lay in the people's support; their goodwill he would not alienate on any account. Rao Saheb, therefore, announced that everything his troops needed would be obtained by fair purchase, indeed at prices higher than the market rate.

With the peasants and tradesmen thus conciliated, Tatya rested his hopes on the troops of the Indian States. He crossed the Chambal and turned towards Jaipur, but on being detected, he marched to Tonk. There, all the troops of the Nawab joined the rebels. Hard pressed by pursuing columns, Tatya traversed the difficult hilly region of Bundi and entered Mewar, only to be defeated on the banks of the Banas. But such setbacks did not dishearten Tatya. When everybody else thought that the river was not fordable, he crossed the Chambal and appeared at Jhalrapatan. The Raja's troops readily fraternised with the rebels and Tatya exacted from the Raja a ransom of five lakhs of rupees. In September, Tatya and Rao Saheb were within fifty miles of Indore. But General Michel, who anticipated Tatya's design, protected the city by intercepting him near Biowra.

After this defeat Tatya divided his troops and selected Bundelkhand as his next theatre of operation. He himself dashed towards the famous fortress of Chanderi while Rao Saheb made a vain attempt in the direction of Jhansi. Failing to persuade the Maratha chief who held Chanderi, Tatya made for Mangrauli on the Betwa where he was encountered and defeated by Michel on 10th October. Undaunted, the two chiefs met once again, crossed the Narbada and

entered Central India. Relentlessly pursued by the chasing columns during the next eight months but undaunted by reverses during the occasional open contests, Tatya dashed from region to region, crossing and recrossing the Chambal, the Narbada and other rivers. Defying all the attempts of his enemies to seize him, Tatya conducted his operations with remarkable skill. Crossing the Narbada for a second time, he caused an alarm which spread as far as Baroda. He arrived within fifty miles of the city, when, finding the pursuit too hot, he turned towards Chhota Udaipur. Beaten again, he headed for the Banswara jungles through Gujrat. There his position was desperate, for the cordon around him was complete. But he managed to break out and marched on Udaipur. Finding a British force on the way, he returned to the jungles; suddenly emerging thence, he baffled the enemy force and took his way to Mandisore.

The new year (1859) found him in the territories of Kotah and then, when his fortunes were at a very low ebb, he was joined at Nahargarh by a new friend, Man Singh. It was sheer adversity that brought together the two who had nothing in common. Man Singh had no grievance against the English. A Rajput chief of Narwar, he rose against his overlord, the Maratha ruler of Gwalior. His capture of the fort of Paori brought him in direct conflict with the British authorities. After his discomfiture there, Man Singh took to the jungles.

About this time Shahzada Firuz Shah with his troops joined Tatya at Indargarh, but scarcely had they advanced together when Brigadier Showers fell upon them at Daosa and destroyed one-tenth of the combined army (14th January). Once again Tatya and Firuz Shah gave their pursuers the slip. Leaving Daosa, they encamped at the small town of Sikar in Jaipur territory. Here again Tatya's force was routed, but the leaders once again effected their escape. Tatya now realised that it was impossible to fight the British any longer. From Central India he had rushed to Rajputana in July 1858; from Rajputana he had gone to Bundelkhand, from Bundelkhand to Central India and from

there to Baroda, only to be pushed back into Rajputana. Rivers like the Chambal, the Betwa and the Narmada had hampered the progress of his enemies; and though these natural obstacles had offered him no difficulty and he had moved through the hills and jungles by short cuts with tremendous speed, his daring exploits had led him nowhere.

So after the disaster of Sikar, the three leaders—Tatya Tope, Rao Saheb and Firuz Shah—decided to part. In small bands they might still hope to elude the relentless enemy and find shelter in lonely hills or remote jungles. With three attendants, three horses and a pony, Tatya took leave of Rao Saheb to seek shelter in the company of Man Singh who was soon to prove his betrayer.

Betrayal and Death of Tatya

Man Singh, though a Rajput, did not have the stamina of the Maratha Brahmin. A season's campaigning and life in the wilds sufficed to damp his spirit. On 2nd April, leaving Tatya stealthily, he entered the camp of Captain Meade and surrendered to him. He then threw out hints that he was not unwilling to betray the hiding-place of his comrade. The offer was eagerly accepted, but Man Singh's only fear was that Tatya might slip through his fingers at the last moment. Meade was anxious to participate in the enterprise, but Man Singh desired that the arrangements should be left entirely in his hands. Accordingly, a small party of native infantry was placed under him. Even the footmen had no idea of the duty on which they were proceeding. No resistance was apprehended, for Man Singh intended to catch his friend asleep.

"By Man Singh's directions, the sipahis were placed in ambush near a hollow which he and Tantia Tope had been in the habit of frequenting. He led his unsuspecting victim there and held a long conversation with him till after midnight, when Tantia fell asleep. The Sipahis were then fetched by Man Singh, and Tantia Topee was secured and pinioned, his arms being seized by Man Singh himself."

When Tatya was captured, he had on his person a

sword and a *kukri*, three gold armlets and one hundred and eighteen gold coins. The elusive rebel who had defied the concentrated might of the British for so long was brought to Meade's camp, whence he was conveyed to Sipri. On 15th April, he was court-martialled on the charge of "having been in rebellion, and having waged war against the British Government between January 1857 and December 1858, especially at Jhansi and Gwalior." The result was a foregone conclusion. "He was found guilty of the heinous offence charged and, in accordance with the law, he was sentenced to death."

Malleson says of this valiant hero of the Mutiny: "Tantia Topi was a marvellous guerilla warrior. In pursuit of him, Brigadier Parke had marched, consecutively, 240 miles in nine days; Brigadier Somerset, 230 in nine days, and, again, seventy miles in forty-eight hours; Colonel Holmes, through a sandy desert, fifty-four miles in a little over twenty-four hours; Brigadier Honner, 145 miles in four days. Yet, he slipped through them all—through enemies watching every issue of the jungles in which he lay concealed—only to fall at last through the treachery of a trusted friend. His capture, and the surrender of Man Singh, finished the war in Central India. Thenceforth his name only survived."

End of Rao Saheb

Rao Saheb and Firuz Shah crossed the Chaturbhuj pass and found a safe hide-out in the heart of the Sironj jungle. The chasing columns cordoned the jungle and searched it foot by foot, inch by inch; but when, at last, the rebel camp was reached, the British offices were disappointed: Rao Saheb and Firuz Shah had vanished.

Shortly after leaving the forest of Sironj, early in 1859, Rao Saheb sent an agent to Sir Robert Napier with peace proposals, but unable to secure honourable terms, he continued his desperate adventures. He travelled to Ujjain, whence he went to Udaipur. There his wife joined him. With her he proceeded to Delhi, probably because that

crowded city was the safest hiding-place. The couple later visited Thaneswar, Jwalamukhi and Kangra where their presence would be least suspected; eventually they settled at Chenani, in Jammu territory.

Three years later he was betrayed by a man from Maharashtra. It was learnt that he was in residence at Chenani with his wife and child. McNabb, Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot, at once proceeded to Jammu and arrested him. In the enquiry conducted by Colonel Williams about the Kanpur incidents, none of the sixty-one deponents accused Rao Saheb of inciting or committing murder. But the Bibighar massacre had to be avenged. Fresh witnesses came forward to testify against him, and Panduranga Sadashiv (*alias* Rao Saheb) was found guilty and hanged.

Firuz Shah's Adventures

Firuz Shah, too, demanded honourable terms for giving himself up. He could not think of any restriction on his movements, nor would he allow his few followers to be disarmed. Even dire adversity could not make the proud prince forget that he was a decendant of Timur and Babar. He would not relinquish the title of his imperial ancestors, and therefore addressed not a petition to the British but a *Parwana* to his 'minister', Wazir Khan. Richard Shakespear, the Governor-General's Agent in Central India, was annoyed to see that the *Parwana* was addressed to one of Firuz Shah's subordinates, and not to the representative of the Viceroy of India. It read: "From the Lord of the World and mankind, the son of the holy preceptor of the Universe and its inmates, Mirza Mahomed Firoze Shah Bahadoor, to his confidential servant Moulvee Mahomed Wuzeer Khan, dated 3rd Zilkab 1275 (4th June, 1859). As your petition has been recevied and the contents learned, I write certain conditions. Should these be agreed to, and full assurance obtained, I have no objection in coming to terms. 1st Condition: What arrangement has been made for my maintenance? 2nd: I should be allowed full liberty, that is, I should be allowed to remain or go wherever I like, with-

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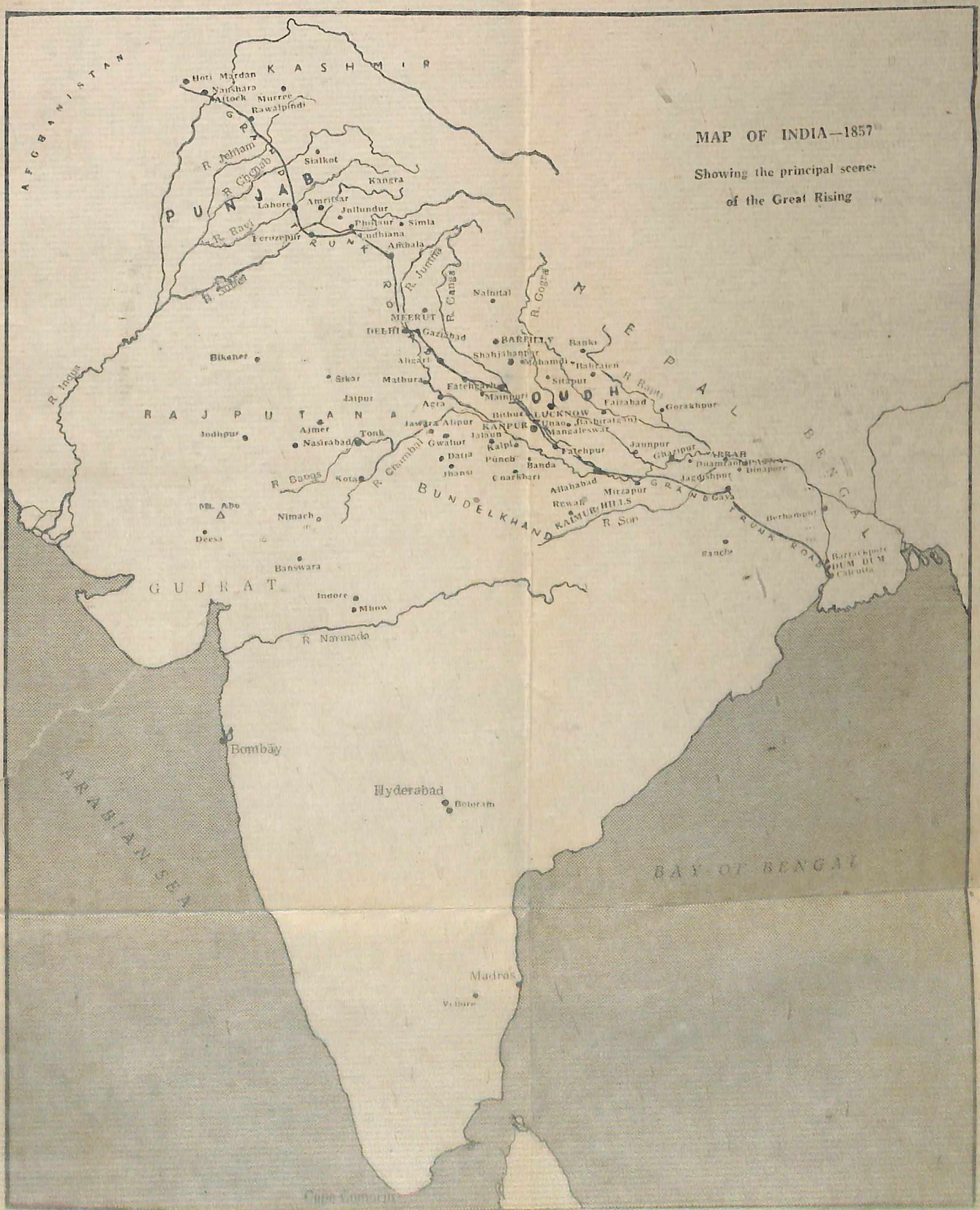
out molestation. 3rd: The arms of my followers, about ten or twenty in number, will not be given up. After obtaining an answer to the above conditions give me information." In no case would the British Government concede freedom of movement to Firuz Shah, nor would the prince accept any terms less honourable from the British.

The prince did not deem it safe to stay in India. His wander-lust had earlier taken him to lands beyond the seas; he was still in his youth, full of life and hope. In 1860, he was heard of in Kandhar. Next year he found his way to Bokhara. He was in great financial straits and lived on the charity of local princes. During the next few years he moved between Herat and Bokhara, and in 1868 he came within dangerous proximity of the Indian frontiers in the Swat valley. From Swat he travelled to Kabul, where the Amir found him an inconvenient guest. The Amir persuaded him to move to Badakshan, but he did not stay there long and was subsequently seen at Samarkand. With what object he travelled from one Muslim court to another nobody knew, but if he expected to organise an expedition to India he found no support in Afghanistan, Persia or Central Asia. In October 1872, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople reported Firuz Shah to be residing there. Privation, worry and hardship had told upon his health, and he had turned prematurely old. In 1875, Captain Hunter, reporting from Constantinople, described him "as a broken down looking man, blind, or nearly so, of one eye, and lame." He could not have been more than forty-five at the time. In June 1875, he went to Mecca and there attained eternal rest on 17th December, 1877.

It is a pity that this remarkable man left no account of his travels. It is a greater pity that few of his countrymen remember him and his patriotic adventures today.


MAP OF INDIA—1857
Showing the principal scenes
of the Great Rising
AFGHANISTAN
KASHMIR
PUNJAB
RAJPUTANA
GUJRAT
OUDH
NEPAL
BUNDELKHAND
GRAND TRUNK ROAD
Hoti Mardan
Nowshara
Attock
Murree
Rawalpindi
Sialkot
Kangra
Lahore
Amritsar
Jullundur
Phillour
Simla
Ludhiana
Ambala
Meerut
Delhi
Gazeebad
Nainital
Bareilly
Banki
Shahjahanpur
Mohamdi
Bahraich
Sitapur
Faizabad
Gorakhpur
Bikaner
Srkar
Mathura
Jaipur
Agra
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Mainpur
Aligarh
Lucknow
Unao
Kasharatgunj
Mangaleswar
Kanpur
Bithur
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Tonk
Nasirabad
Jawara
Alipur
Jalaun
Gwalior
Datia
Ralpi
Punch
Banda
Jhansi
Chirkhari
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Jaunpur
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Dinapore
Jagdishpur
Allahabad
Mirzapur
Rewah
Kaimur Hills
Kotah
Mt. Abo
Nimach
Deesa
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Mhow
Ranchi
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R. Indus
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