

FIRST EDITION : September, 1960.

Price : Rs 6.25

Published by Radhey Mohan Agarwala, Managing Director,
Shiva Lal Agarwala & Co., Private Ltd., Publishers, Hospital
Road, Agra. and Printed at the Agra University Press, Agra.

CONTENTS

	Pages
1. Muse of History Through Ages ...	1
2. Impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal Contrasted	7
3. A Ramble into Hindi Literature in Search of Orissa and the Jagannath ...	17
4. Dacca and its Medieval History ...	25
5. Origin of the Bahmani Sultans of the Deccan	33
6. The Jats and the Importance of their History	42
7. Churaman Jat of Sinsini ...	49
8. Some Side-Lights on the Character and Court-life of Shah Jahan ...	65
9. Prince Muhammad Dara Shikoh and Mirza Rajah Jai Singh Kachhwah ...	74
10. Fragment of a Bhao-Ballad in Hindi ...	85
11. Religious Policy of the Maratha Empire under the Peshwas ...	102
12. Some Side-Lights on the History of Benares, Political & Social ...	118
13. Amir-Nama or Memoirs of Amir Khan Pindari by Basawan Lal ...	124
14. Jadunath Sarkar as a Historian ...	137
15. Islam Transformed in Bengal ...	170
16. Some Reflections on the Fall of the Maratha Power in the Eighteenth Century ...	187
17. A Study of the Prophet as a Statesman ...	200
18. The Prophet as an Ideal Citizen ...	205

MUSE OF HISTORY THROUGH AGES

The cynical old Dr. Johnson caught history and historians between the horns of a dilemma by enunciating his dictum thus :

The historian tells either what is false or what is true. In the former case he is no historian; in the latter he has no opportunity for displaying his abilities, for truth is one, and all who tell the truth must tell it alike.

Lord Macaulay attempted to reply to this charge, and suggested a way out of the horns of this dilemma. Unfortunately, the race of Johnson is not yet extinct; nor historians by their achievements have been able to remove the scepticism of the layman.

The War of Nations to-day is a totalitarian war to be fought by scientists, philosophers, economists and historians and mill-hands ranged behind the armament of a nation or groups of nations. There is no escape even for those who ascend above the zone of storm and common turmoil and meditate on the Philosophy of History and assume the role of interpreter of the Spirit of History.

Macaulay's Confession

No two historians tell the same thing about the same event though all of them claim to be scientific in their methods. This difference and diversity bewilder the man of abstract reasoning, that admits of no diversity, nor degrees in assessing truth. No historian should ever pretend to have discovered the truth or given the whole truth.

Macaulay had, centuries ago, made this frank confession, and the greatest truth a historian can discover for himself is to admit like pious Arab historians, "God knows truth best!" in everything and always. There is no answer, however, to those who rule out God from human affairs.

The Muse of History through ages according to Time

and Terrain has changed her garb and character though not her function. Out of the mist of myth she emerged into light and behind the smoke-screen of propaganda of Ism-s, creeds and militant nations she will hide herself perhaps in bewilderment on the cross-road. In the infancy of mankind History was three-fourths poetry and imagination and a romance in the age of man's adolescence.

Herodotus amuses and fires juvenile imagination, Thucydides explodes myths and leaves a lesson behind, and Tacitus warns civilization against under-estimating the vigour and virtues of barbarism. Aristotle made History bear its first fruit, Political Philosophy, which was perhaps the proverbial Aina-i-Iskandari or the Magic Mirror given by God to Alexander who saw, therein, things of the world reflected and coming events cast their shadows.

Ancient Orient and History

The Ancient Orient had its own conception of History and mode of presentation. It is said that though the Hindus have the word Itihas in the Aryan vocabulary, they had no history. The Mahabharat and the Puranas pass for history caught in the cobweb of religion, ethics and sectarian propaganda. Hindus begin their History with the bursting of the Egg of Brahma, and Muslims with Baba Adam; and both in Islam and Hinduism History is considered a branch of study subsidiary to religion. But there was a practical secular purpose in the undercurrent of the history of the Orient.

The problem that faces India today, namely, the evolution of a secular State out of the conflicting communal elements, a synthetic culture out of a legacy of rooted fanaticism and mutually repellant moral factors, to instil a sense of oneness and kinship into India's heterogenous peoples, to create a new nation by throwing everything old into the melting pot—perhaps received its first solution, however crude, in the Mahabharat as history.

Ancients' Pious Fraud

The ancients practised either a pious fraud or gave

currency to the innermost feeling of oneness that pervaded the masses of India. The great solvent of colour and racial prejudice and differences of religion, culture and moral standards was the genealogy of the children of the legendary Yayati according to which all the then known races from the Hindukush to the Cape Comorin are made first cousins. The aboriginal races like Nishadas and Shabaras sprang according to the Mahabharat from the pores of hairs on the body of the Divine Cow (Surabhi), in the hermitage of Rishi Vashishta to protect her and the innocent Rishi from the grasping clutches of the impious warrior caste drunk mad with the monopoly of power. If so, how is it that the high caste worshipper of the quadruped progeny of Surabhi today hold the black bipeds who sprang from her as defenders of Dharma as unclean and untouchable? Once again what our ancients believed, in ignorance of Ethnology, Modern India shall have to accept the same without questioning under the clarion call of the oppressed humanity out for vengeance. The Semitic counterpart of Aryan Yayati is Abraham from whose children all the peoples of Africa and Asia, white, black and yellow are said to have sprung.

Unlike the Hindus, the Muslims have created the richest and most diversified historical literature in the world, ancient or medieval, barring that of unexplored China. Besides, Islam and not Christianity was the heir of the legacy of the learning of heathen Greece during the Middle Ages. Islam was the bridge and plank between the Orient and the Occident. Islamic culture and civilization was verily modern in comparison with the other contemporary cultures and civilizations of the world. With Damascus as the first seat of the Arab Empire under the Umayyads Islam looked for and received light from the West through the Hellenism of the prostrate Byzantine Empire. With the transfer of the seat of the Caliphate to Baghdad Islam made as it were a right about turn towards the Middle and the Far East, and her civilization and culture drew sap from the buried civilizations of Assyria and Babylonia of yore, and of decadent Iran and India and even of distant China. However, the main spring of Islamic civiliza-

tion continued to be Greek in the realm of Medicine, Philosophy, Mathematics, Music and Astronomy. It is said that Emperor Constantine had imprisoned Plato and Aristotle with other masters of Heathen learning in a monastery of Spain for the future safety of Christianity and the Church ; because he rightly suspected that a creed based on justification by faith and an ecclesiastical hierarchy founded on authority had much to fear from profane Logic and unchained reason. Aristotle is said to have had appeared to Caliph Mamun, son of Harun-al-Rashid, and in order to oblige Mamun that the locks of the imprisoned treasures of Greek learning were broken and camel-loads of manuscripts were sent to Baghdad. To the Muslim goes the credit of conservation and propagation of Greek learning and of first antiquarian research into the history and ancient learning of Egypt, Iran and Hindustan from which the Arabs drew liberally to replenish their empty stores of many a branch of Science and Art.

History was courtly and aristocratic in character in the East as well as the West during the Middle Ages till far into modern times. The Arabic saying goes: History for kings and warriors, poetry for woman and arithmetic for the shopkeeper. Historians degenerated into panegyrist and sycophants in the decadent days of the Abbaside Empire. Once the historian Muskhwani was visited by a friend at his own house, and on being asked what he was busy at, replied: "I am piecing together all the falsehoods on earth to please the fancy of the Sultan." The Sultan was Azduddaula of the Buwayyid dynasty ruling in Iraq, Iran and Mesopotamia as the Mayor of the Palace of the puppet Abbaside Caliph. However, history and historiography rose above the then known standard and scientific level at the hands of Ibn Khaldun, who was the father of Political Philosophy in Islam and outside during the Middle Ages.

The career and character of History in the West in modern times is too swift, too wide and too complex to be treated in a limited space. History, as we are told, suffers from all the evils of a young girl who has been introduced to literature and science over her realm. Like

everything into the world, History too has assumed a scientific character definitely. But the result at first was that what history gained in esteem and usefulness it lost in popularity, charm and the power of appeal. It goes without saying that what is not science shall never stand and that which is not literature shall not live. History was democratized and made to breathe a new spirit first in England. There she turned her back on the pageant of defunct royalty and scenes of blood and revelry of the baronial hall, and came down to the countryside and the business thoroughfares. What was formerly a dynastic *History of England* appeared in the role of *History of the English People*.

As regards the treatment of history, the Teuton prefers microscope and analysis whereas the Celt excels in handling the telescope and in brilliant synthesis, though often elusive and superficial. The great historian Gooch made a masterly survey of *History and Historians of the Nineteenth Century*. The Prussian School of History created the modern German nation out of peoples of Germany under the heels of Napoleonic occupation. It has left a lesson as well as a warning to those who in India look for a so-called national school of history. This school served an immediate purpose no doubt, but these were no histories but well-written and powerful political pamphlets dying out like a seasonal crop. European nations flourished on the cult of hatred and were taught through history to hate and envy others so that they might each love their country and people better. The Teuton was taught to hate and look down upon the Celt in the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth the Hitlerite School of History along with Philosophy injected a recipe of hatred in the blood of the prostrate German nation after World War No. 1. Hitler believed that an injection of artificial barbarism was the only cure of the disease of civilization from German body politic she was suffering then. Such history gave Europe an Attila the Hun, thousand times more powerful and destructive than his archetype. History is no less potent of evil than of a good, double-edged sword that cuts both ways. The Soviet Russia is

said to be developing a School of History harnessed to the services of the State. Ideas penetrate and conquer where the mightiest army dare not tread. If the German School of History conjured up an Attila, the Soviet School may call back to life the dread Janghiz Khan, whose heritage has come down to Stalin.

To come nearer home to Hindustan, History in our country is still in its Chronicle stage of evolution lagging a century behind the West. Not to speak of Philosophy of History, the history of this sub-continent is only in the making. In the field of Indian history we have no doubt a fairly decent number of men engaged in digging the past. We have Indologists of the front rank, fairly good compilers of biography and brilliant essayists. But these are after all masons and brick layers lacking the genius of an architect of History. A Lecky or a Fisher India cannot hope to produce in this generation. Those who are engaged in researches in medieval history belong to "the kettle-drum and trumpet school of history" as William Irvine humorously remarked. Within a smaller canvas Sir Jadunath has attempted with success the history of the decline and fall of the Moghal Empire what Gibbon in grand style and on wider canvas achieved in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

Today, History is in a dilemma on the cross-roads of Nationalism and Internationalism. There are other Ism-s also cutting a zigzag course of labyrinth across these highways. Some people have a day-dream of One World, One Government, and they would like to have only one history, the *History of Man* superseding the histories of Englishmen, Frenchmen or the Germans, or that of every other nation or creed. Free India is pledged to the Cult of Love and Peace with all, which it is the duty of the future historians of India to implant on the universal soul of humanity. If History does not rise equal to the occasion, Free India may in despair put a ban on History and the historians as Aurangzeb did when he found that the verdict of history was sure to go against him.

IMPACT OF ISLAM ON ORISSA
AND
BENGAL CONTRASTED.

It is perhaps known to some of you that this very city of Cuttack is a sacred place of pilgrimage to me. Though sentiment does not become the cold intellectualism of a student of History, yet being now on the wrong side of fifty, old recollections overwhelm me on this occasion. Thirty years ago it was here in the house of the patriarch of Mughal India, Acharyya Sir Jadunath, that I had my intellectual as well as spiritual rebirth, and my *Sher Shah* was written under his guidance in nineteen months. I have come here to breathe afresh the old atmosphere of scholarship surcharged with the memories of the happier days of my master.

You will bear with me, ladies and gentlemen, if my thoughts turn to Orissa and its people for a while. The land of Utkal through the ages shoots on the screen of the panorama of history before my mind's eye. I hear the distant tramp of foot Utkal's vaunted strength of the *nava-koti* (nine crores) infantry as against the *nava-laksha dal* (nine lakh armament) of Bengal's boast—mobilised on the plains of Katak, or in its full form *Vijaya-Katakam* (Cantonment town) of the days of the Lords of the three-Kalingas. Kalinga or Orissa in defence of her liberty gave Asoka the satiety of blood and war, and indirectly turned the grim imperialist to the path of *Dharma*. Orissa too had later on, her dream of imperialism, having her one eye fixed on the holy Triveni of South Bengal if not on Gour, and the other peering through the wilderness of Telingana to Adam's Bridge. The idol *Sākshi-Gopāl* (Gopāl the Witness) in its captive home near Puri hardly remembers now the far distant city of Kānchi from which he was torn off as a trophy of Utkal's valour in the days of yore. In the beginning of this millenium of ours the white waves of the Ganges turned black, as the panegyrist's vaunt puts it—, with the collyrium of the eyes of the widowed Rādhā and Vārendri. When *Radha* and Vārendri (West

and North Bengal) lay prostrate before the invincible lance of the Turk, it was Orissa that wiped off the disgrace of Bengal by chasing the panic-struck. Turkish hosts of Tughrāl Tughan Khan from the neighbourhood of Bishnupur Bankura down to the ferries on the Ganges opposite Gour. This is perhaps transgressing the bounds of Mughal India.

However, here in Orrissa on this side of the heavenly stream of the Vaitarini, we are not culturally in the Muslim or the Mughal India, but on the fringe of it, though politically Orissa was a *Subah* of the Mughal Empire. The impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal presents a significant contrast. At the initial stage of the Muslim invasion of Eastern India, Bengal lost half of its territory and kept the Muslims at bay for about three quarters of a century. During the pre-Mughal period Gour was called a *bulghak-pur* (land of strife), and internal dissensions kept the Muslims too busy to think of Orissa except at long intervals and that too with ill-success. Their contemporary Rulers of Orissa were at this time on the aggressive, and the feudatories of the King of Orissa were strongly entrenched in the Birbhum and Medinipur districts which bear to this day the traces of colonisation by the Utkals. This extension of Orissa northward accounts partly for the Hindu majority in West Bengal. On the sea the Rulers of Orissa were equally powerful, having no rivals to contend with till the advent of the Portuguese. As late as 1540 A. D. when Malik Muhammad Jaisi wrote his *Padmavat*; the poet takes his hero right through the wilderness of C. P. to Orissa, and makes Ratan Sen and his followers sail for Simhala in boats lent by the pious and powerful Gajapati.

It was not till after the conquest of Bengal by Sher Shah that Orissa for the first time felt the shock of conquest and colonisation by the dreaded Pathans. These were the turbulent Lohani Afghans, who fled from the hated domination of the Surs to Bengal and Orissa successively. Roughly from 1535 to 1585 the Lohanis held Cuttack and settled on the border districts to the north of the Mahanadi river. But the fight for

independence was kept up by the Utkala Rajah from his improvised capital at Khurda. Long before Akbar contemplated the conquest of Bengal, he sent envoys to Rajah Mukund Dev of Orissa with the ostensible object of cementing on alliance against a common enemy, Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal, who had been a scourge of Orissa and in league with the redoubtable Ali Quli Khan Khan-i-Zaman, who defied Akbar's authority. Later on relations changed no doubt, but the first imperial army consisting mostly of Rajputs and the Hindu zamindars of Bengal, led by Rajah Man Singh, came to Orissa as an army of emancipation from the tyranny of the Pathans under Qatlu Khan. Rajah Man Singh removed this Pathan pest permanently from Orissa and forced them to quit the country bag and baggage after the death of Qatlu Khan. The Rajput chief, however, showed impolitic zeal by an attempt to dispossess the Rajah of Khurda and Ganjam for which Man Singh received a censure from Akbar. Since then Orissa remained an annexe of the *Subah* of Bengal, though later on Orissa was itself constituted into a *subah* of the Mughal empire. Orissa was rescued from the bigotry and misrule of Nawab Alivardi's nephew Saulat Jang by the avenging army of Raghuji Bhonsla under the command of his valiant general Bhaskar Pandit. The English too came nearly half a century later to Orissa than to Bengal, and Orissa with her orthodoxy and ancient culture invigorated by the Maratha occupation, remained almost as impervious to Western influences as to Islam, though she had to sheathe her sword under *Pax Britannica*. This is not an inglorious chapter for the much-maligned people of Orissa, who far excelled the Bengalies in powers of passive resistance to Islam.

The medieval history of Orissa has received scanty attention from scholars. Sir Jadunath has perhaps paid the first instalment of his debt for the salt of Orissa eaten by him and his pupils, in the form of a survey of Orissa under the Mughal Empire in his Patna University Readership Lecture, and by piecing together scattered facts relating to the medieval history of Orissa in the

Second Volume of the History of Bengal edited by him on behalf of the University of Dacca.

Somehow I am not satisfied with the angle of vision and the process of historical studies we have acquired, namely the process of building from the top and not from below, and treating the history of Medieval India as Pre-Mughal and Mughal, and even looking at it only as an appendix of the history of Islam in the world outside India. In fact, our efforts do not penetrate the sub-soil of history and therefore any structure of history built on such a foundation is bound to be shaky. I tried a crude process of my own when I took seriously to history as my off time curiosity turned to the medieval history of Orissa.

We had a servant hailing from the Garjat or the Hill Tracts of Orissa in the house of Sir Jadunath at Chauliagunj. My experiment began with him for an inquiry into the amount of history still preserved among the masses in the form of ballads, proverbs and countryside tales orally handed down. My informant, whose name was Apratiya, remembered only Kala-Pahar rendered a hundred times odious : Kala-Pahar wore, he said, a dress made from his murdered mother's skin, and a sacred thread made of her entrails! It points unmistakably to Jadu or the renegade Jalaluddin, a historical myth unjustly foisted by later Muslim bigotry on the son of Raja Ganesh and echoed senselessly by the Hindus. The historical Jadu or Jalaluddin, a patron of Hindu learning and of renowned Pandits like Rai Mukut Brihaspati, cannot be the legendary Kala-Pahar; because the very name Kala-Pahar is found only among the Pathans of the sixteenth century; and Indian *Kala* is equivalent to Turkish *Qara*, that means *black*, and by implication "brave" also. The actual barbarities were perpetrated in Orissa perhaps by some Pathan general of the bigoted Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal, bearing the name or epithet Kala-Pahar, though he could not be the same person as Kala-Pahar Farmuli mentioned by *Tarikh-i-Khan-Jahan Lodi* as one of the rebel Afghan *amirs* of the Eastern Provinces in the time of Babur and Humayun.

However, Apratiya did not remember to have ever heard the very word *Mughal*; nor does any average inhabitant of Orissa who calls all Muslims *Pathans*. I could however gather this much from my informant that in their part of the country there are two classes of brave people the Khandayits and Rauts. The Khandayits were those who fought on foot with *khandā* (broad sword) *i.e.* a sort of militia swordsmen, the *Raut* (Hindi, *Rawat*) was a cavalier or a gentleman-at-arms attached to some petty chieftain.

Why was a longer and more successful resistance offered to Islam by the people of Orissa than by the people of Bengal? The people of Orissa, like the Marathas and other peoples of the South, were defeated but not conquered, in the same sense that Bengal and the rest of Northern India were conquered. In Bengal and the Punjab particularly, Muslim conquest penetrated to the very core of society and culture; whereas in Orissa the Muslim conquest scratched only the political surface of its history. Bengal was not conquered by seventeen Turkish cavaliers; but by the *barah-auliya* or twelve legendary Muslim militant saints, and *pirs* who cropped up their after the seed of Islam had been sown broadcast in the plains of Bengal. Here in Orissa, Muslim armies no doubt overran the land; but itself was totally helpless against its presiding deity Jagannath; because Jagannath was not like the Somnath and Vishwanath idols housed in temples but a living god enshrined in the hearts of the children of the soil. The Muslims now and then disturbed the visible Jagannath; but they were totally powerless against the invisible One, because Islam could not reach the real heart of Orissa, which is not on the sea coast but in the impenetrable jungles and hills watered by the upper course of the Mahanadi and her feeder streams. Future researches into the medieval history of Orissa should centre round this Jagannath, who can only reveal to us the hidden forces that not only baffled Islam in Orissa, but also partly saved Bengal by feeding there the feeble stream of Hinduism before and after Shri Chaitanya, with whom Bengal has found salvation in the blue waters of the sea that wash the feet of Jagannath.

This is not an outburst of stimulated Vaishnavite *bhakti*. Some concrete facts are there to throw light on this phase of the history of medieval Orissa. Islam failed in Orissa as a religion and culture because Orissa had a backbone, physical, social and religious, which Bengal had not at the time of the first onslaught of Islam. Its physical backbone was its ill-favoured terrain that gave a tougher mould to the inhabitants than that of the soft people of the fertile plains of Bengal. The hills and jungles of Orissa, inaccessible either from the flanks or the rear, afforded a safe refuge to their defeated armies and the afflicted people at the time of a foreign invasion; whereas in the heart of Bengal there was no way of escape for the people except *Gangapravesh*, i.e. suicide by drowning, or what was more than suicide, namely, parting with their ancestral religion along with their culture and nationality. The social backbone of Bengal was also much softer than that of Orissa during its first encounter with Islam. Bengal was struck by Islam at a period of transition from a debased but popular form of Hinduised Buddhism to a strong Brahmanical revival under the Sena Kings. No sense of political or communal patriotism could grow up in Bengal as the resultant of this clash with a hostile religion and an alien race of conquerors on account of the accentuation of caste differences by the institution of Kulinism and reactionary forces first let loose by the Sena kings, and later on reinforced by the Smriti legislation of the Pandits of Navadwip: Our Maha-prabhu came rather too late for the rescue of Bengali Hindus. If anybody seeks further explanation for the helplessness of Hindu resistance in Bengal, he will find it in that curious book, *Sunnyapurana*, in which the people of Bengal rejoiced in the incarnation of *Dharma* in the guise of *Paigambar* and of gods as his Khalifas; this Yavana role was assumed by Dharma only to punish the ungodly Brahmans and to destroy their idol temples,—an echo of Buddhism in the lower strata of the people of Bengal protesting against the high class Brahmanical oppressors.

Nobody hears of such a *Puran* in Orissa, where this religious and social transformation of the people was

complete. There the Trinity of Jagannath had emerged out of the Buddhistic *Triratna*, a happy compromise by which Buddhism retained the shadow and the Brahmans appropriated the substance. It was in the premises of the temple of Puri that a solution of the present and future religious and social problems of India *minus* Islam was attained. There the Hindus of every sect and caste, touchable and untouchable from the remote corners of this subcontinent, are made to discard their born prejudices for a moment and breathe an atmosphere of equality and universal love within the otherwise water-tight compartments of exclusive Hinduism. Jagannath himself has formulated the future policy of Hindu society by cutting the Gordian knot of castes by giving the Sabaras, still a wild jungle tribe, the charge of the temple kitchen, and promising Paradise to those who would unhesitatingly partake of food cooked by these people outside the pale of the Aryandom. Bengal fell an easier victim, because there was no such *Dham* or centre of All-India national worship and pilgrimage in Bengal. In short, the cultural and spiritual isolation of Bengal placed her at a greater disadvantage in her struggle with Islam than Orissa. A constant flow of pilgrimage from every corner of India to Orissa was not only an economic but also a political asset when she reeled under the blows of Islam. This contact with the outside Hindu India from which saintly scholars and fervent religious enthusiasts came to reside sometimes permanently at Puri—served as a restorative and stimulus to the sinking heart of Orissa in adversity.

As in Maharashtra, so, too, in Orissa there was a social solidarity on account of an unenviable economic equality among the masses, all except Jagannath and his custodians being equally poor;—whereas in Bengal the contrary was the case. Orissa too had her tough irregulars, half soldiers, half robbers, recruited from the hardy semi-wild tribes of the interior. These genuine children of Orissa, the Adibasis supplied a regular flow of fresh blood to the worn-out body politic of Orissa. The aboriginal tribes have since the dawn of history

formed the substance of Hinduism and Indian polity, particularly so in Orissa. Again Jagannath was the dynamic force at work, a link between civilization and barbarism. These animistic tribes had, and still have, their imagination stirred by the presence of the mysterious Lord of the Creation living in a regal state on the shores of boundless blue waters. Bengal had no such reserve of man power to draw upon; and Islam cut the sheet-anchor of Hindu ascendancy there by converting the sturdy lower classes, and fanning the neophytes' fanaticism against the higher classes. What Orissa needs for attaining to her full political stature is a band of modern monks to carry on the work of the ancient Rishis among these people of the hinterland. If India means to live she should not leave this function to the *padree* or the *mulla*. In explaining this contrast of the impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal during the middle ages the historian cannot afford to forget Orissa's native breed of horses, the Bahrampuri tattu, a sturdy dwarfish devil with a deep chest, thick manes and a wild restless look;—the archetype of the riderless stone horses in war-trappings that face the great temple of Konarak. These can be ridden only by a short legged people of unusual agility as the Utkal cavaliers were of old. This breed of horses served the cause of Orissa's struggle for independence admirably.

If we are curious to know the dress and pastimes of the people of Orissa during the Mughal period, we have simply to attend one of their religious festivals like Chandan Jatra.

Now, to turn to the special field of this section.

The forage ground of Mughal India is primarily confined within the bounds of the three battles of Panipat and their outer fringes extending over half a century at both ends. We, who work on the political history of Mughal India, are said to belong to "the drum and trumpet school of history". It is no use concealing a fact that there is a lurking suspicion that this school of history portends evil by giving currency to the forgotten feuds and unhappy episodes of an age that ought to be conveniently forgotten in the new secular set-up of

Modern India. On the other hand, there are Muslims who regard Indo-Muslim history as their title-deed to the sovereignty of India with Pakistan as the jumping ground. If the historian is permitted to feel the pulse of his people, he has reasons for much misgiving. This rise of temperature is not a healthy sign. History also bears the lesson unheeded by the reactionaries that the path of hatred, national or communal, is easy, straight and short, like the sinner's road to hell. The Muse of History holds in one hand the cup of *Ab-i-Hayat*, and in another a cup of Hemlock of Death slow in action.

There is another group of enlightened thinkers who suggest a compromise; namely, that the Indo-Muslim period of history should be rendered innocuous by a process of hard polishing, by practising an economy of truth if necessary for the sake of communal harmony. We feel that such a division of Indian history into Brahminical, Buddhist, pre-Mughal and Mughal India is unhistorical. It appears to us that India through the ages, as Sir Jadunath has portrayed in one of his brilliant essays,—has remained the same land of the *Hindus* though many a political drama has been played by different races on this stage of Hindustan. India was never Buddhist, Mughal or British and we historians are worshippers of Time Eternal, and not panegyrists of races and creeds.

For us the question is, whether the historian should swim with the current of the contemporary politics and humour the passions and the passing mood of a people; or he should assume the role of the Superior Intelligence of a nation in its infancy. Between the two horns of a dilemma we see no other path except the Path of Dharma as chalked out by our ancients. By *Dharma* we do not mean any creed or *ism*; because, a student of history cannot pretend to have any religion or nationality when he sits in judgment over the dead at the tribunal of Truth. But what was *Dharma* in the age of the Mahabharat (*varnasrama* and *rajadharmā*) is not the *Dharma* of India of to-day, committed as she stands to

a casteless, classless and secular Democracy as her *Dharma*.

It lies in the hands of the younger generation of our historians to make the history of Mughal India either a wedge to tear asunder our national life, or make it a "bridge and plank" of social and cultural contact between India and the Islamic countries. Our Universities should now launch a campaign of "Grow more men". It is not *food* but men of character in its comprehensive sense that will save our country from political bankruptcy.

A RAMBLE INTO HINDI LITERATURE IN SEARCH OF ORISSA AND THE JAGANNATH

(1)

To use a utilitarian's simile History appears to be a spacious and convenient hold-all from which people are at liberty to take out things and return them after reshaping them by their imagination or ignorance. In this respect firy minstrels, creative novelists and care-free poets are the most skilful, who take the greatest liberty. Nevertheless they indirectly serve a purpose of History; namely, to preserve for us an echo of man and things of the past in their own age.

This paper aims at creating some interest in the non-Hindi speaking people of Orissa in the medieval Hindi poetry, where their country and its presiding deity, the Jagannath, are given respectful references. We shall deal at present with only three Hindi poems that contain such references, which are, however, fictitious and not historical. According to medieval tradition India is divided into three political zones, each with a ruler bearing an appropriate title. These are the *Gajapati* or the Lord of elephants, the *Narapati* or Lord of the host of infantry, and the *Asvapati*, the master of cavalry. Though the elephant is not a monopoly of Orissa, the king of Orissa was traditionally given the title of *Gajapati*, and with it a sort of vague suzerainty over Eastern India with the custody of Jagannath. This title was justified because of the formidable train of elephants that could be mustered by the ruler of Orissa for war and conquest. Similarly the ruler of the South was called *Narapati* as their main strength lay in their countless hordes of infantry; and such a ruler is generally identified with the emperors of Vijayanagar. People of the Punjab and Upper India excel in horsemanship, the armies of the rulers of these regions consisted mainly of good cavalry. *Asvapati* is the title associated with the lords of Delhi, whether Hindu or Muslim. A great conqueror who could sub-

due the rulers of these three categories used to arrogate to himself the title of *Tri-dala-malla*, or the vanquisher of the three hordes. Maharana Kumbha-karna of Mewar assumed this title, distorted into the familiar Hindi proper name of Todarmal, immortalised in the person of Akbar's great revenue minister.

(2)

So far as it is at present known, the earliest reference to Orissa is found in the poet Narapati Nalha's *Bisaldev-Raso*, the first in the series of *Raso mahakavyas* in Hindi. The date of the composition of *Bisaldev-Raso* is a subject of controversy which need not be noticed here. The king, whose deeds of war and love are sung in this poem was probably the Vighraharaj IV, reputed to be the uncle of the last Prithviraja of the Chauhan dynasty of Sambhar and Ajmir. His date falls within the third quarter of the twelfth century A. D. Vighraharaja-Bisaldev was a powerful conqueror. On epigraphic evidence it is proved that he conquered Dhillika (modern Delhi) and other places. He was a great patron of learning also. The site now occupied by the great mosque of Ajmir, popularly known as *Adhai-din-ka-Jhopra* once reared the great Sanskrit University of Bisaldev, who had at least two dramas, *Hara-keli-natakam* and *Lalita-Vighraharaja-natakam* inscribed on the slabs of stone here. Some of these slabs were recovered from the site of the mosque during the excavations of 1875-76. The date of *Hara-keli-natakam* as given in inscriptions corresponds to Sunday, the 22nd November, 1153.

Much is not known about the author of Bisaldev-Raso. His name was Narapati (Rajasthani Nahapa) and Nalha his family title. He was perhaps a *charan* or *bhat* (minstrel) of the court of Bisaldev. His language is rather *Apabhhrans* than Hindi, and as such difficult to understand. Nalha gives the date of the beginning of his poem as :

Wednesday the ninth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Jeth of the year 1212.

Two parts or chapters of Nalha's poem deal with the story of Bisaldev's departure for Orissa and his sojourn there.

The story of Bisaldev's adventure in Orissa is as follows:

Bisaldev of Sambhar was a much-married king, whose latest acquisition to his harem was Rajmati, the beautiful daughter of Raja Bhoj of Dhar in Malwa. They spent many a happy years in love and sport. One day Bisaldev boasted of valour to his wife and said that there was no peer of him among kings. Rajmati in half jest and half seriousness replied that vanity brings ruin, and that there were other Rajas like him; *e. g.*, the king of Orissa in whose kingdom were diamond mines. Bisaldev in anger vowed that he would go and conquer Orissa. He said to his wife, "You were born at Jaisalmir and at the age of twelve you came to Ajmir as my queen; how could you know about Jagannath of Orissa?" Rajmati then narrates the story of her previous births. In a previous birth she was hind in forest and used to keep fast without tasting even a drop of water on the *ekadasi* (eleventh day) of the bright fortnight of the month of Jeth. One day she was struck down by the arrow of a hunter. In her next birth she had her re-birth at Puri-Jagannath. There before her death God Vishnu appeared to her ready to grant her a boon. She prayed that she might not be in her next birth in *Purab-desh* (Eastern India). Bisaldev at this stage interrupts, "How is it that you were so disgusted with *Purab-desh*, where sin has no approach owing to the presence of Banaras and Gaya, whose people are so clever, through which flow the sin-destroying waters of the Ganges?" Rajmati says:

“पूरव देस को पुण्या लोक । पान फूलां तणउ तुं लहइ भोग ॥
कण संचइ कुकस भखइ. । अति चतुराई राजा गठ ब्वालैर ॥
गोरड़ी जेसलमेर को । भोगे लोक दक्षण को देस ॥” p. 35.*

*[The Mss of this poem are reported to be very defective by the editor of Nagri Pracharini Sabha edition. For text, pp. 35-36. Interpolations and inconsistencies have not been exhaustively pointed out in this edition. How could Rajmati, daughter of Rajah Bhoj of Dhar, be born at Jaisalmir? The whole passage is an echo of local prejudices and popular satires against the Purabiyas and the Southerners.

(i. e., the *Purabiya* of the eastern country take *pan*, eat flowers (?) and rice (?). They are very miserly, gathering even particles (of rice), and eat kukas(?); they are too clever. The people of Gawalior (Malwa) eat onions. The people of the Deccan are noted for their sensuality and the desert and Jaisalmir for women of peerless beauty.)

Bisaldev refuses to give up his project of leaving home for Orissa and consoles his queen saying that he will bring for her shells (*Kawri*), *taka-ul* (?) † and necklace, and worship the Lord of Jadavas (Jagannath) in Orissa. Before he starts he performs the *Sradha* and offer *pinda* for his deceased father on the new moon day of *pitri-paksa* (*Mahalaya*). Bisaldev reached Orissa and paid his respects to the king, who returned the courtesy fourfold. He passes even years there when a letter from Rajmati reaches him. This letter was brought by a *Pandit* who took seven months to complete his journey. Bisaldev seeks leave of the Rajah to depart, and is called to the presence of the queen (*Pattamahadevi*). The queen requests Bisaldev to stay on in Orissa as the *Pradhan* (Chief minister), and proposes to give him in marriage two nieces of the king, one of which is *Gauri* (fair-complexioned), the other *sanwali* (*syamali*? of darker hue). Bisaldev respectfully declines the offer, and starts for home. The Rajah gave his honoured guest the royal umbrella and band of music at the time of his departure.

Such was the country of Orissa of the poetic imagination of Nalha in the twelfth century A. D.

[In Rajputana they say, "Jaisalmir produces women (of beauty); Marwar is noted for men (of valour) and Bikanir for its breed of camel. It is not clear why the Southerners come in for satire as *bhogi* (sensualists). The standard of life of the people was of much higher than that of the North in the post-Harsha age, though its people were looked upon as effeminate and voluptuous by the rough Northerners, who ate perhaps generally dry bread with jelly of *babul*, knowing very little of the art of living and multiplying.]

† *Taka-ul* of the text yields no meaning that suits the next. The word may be *Pata-ul* equivalent to *Pattambar* (jute or silk clothes), a rarity of Orissa in those days.

(4)

Padmavat of Malik Muhammad Jaisi comes next for a notice of Orissa. Jaisi began his poem in the year of Sher Shah's accession. The poet takes his hero Ratansi of Mewar through Central India and by way of Jharkhand to the sea-coast. The Gajapati of Orissa tried to dissuade the hero from his perilous journey through seven seas to Simhala (not Ceylon—Lanka, but an imaginary island far off, farther than the Eastern Archipelego). The Gajapati seems to have well-acquainted with the dangers of the sea and commanded resources in expert sea men and strong ships to help Ratansi. The Gajapati provided him with a fleet of boats in which he with his seven hundred disciples sailed for the island of Simhala. On his return journey with Padmini a storm diverted the course of his ship to the coast of Lanka. Owing to treachery of a seeming boatman, who was really Bibhisan in disguise, Ratansi suffers ship-wreck and becomes a prisoner in the abode of the sea-god, whose daughter Lakshmi he married. The God of the sea restores all the lost property and followers of Ratansi, who is then conducted by him to Jagannath. Life comes back to the forlorn party when they step on the shore of Orissa. Ratansi with Padmini pays a visit to the temple of Jagannath, where cooked rice (*Rinda bhat*) is sold. From Jagannath they return to Chitor.

(5)

In imitation of Jaisi's *Padmavat*, Usman, a poet of Ghazipur, wrote his mystic love-poem Chitravali in the reign of Jahangir. The poet makes the emissary of his heroine search for the hero in places as far as Balandvip inhabited by the *Ingraj* (English merchants) and *Rum* (Constantinople) in the west. In east the emissary comes to Sonargaon (East Bengal), and by way of Manipur and Burma goes to China where the limit of the earth ends and that of *Swarga* (paradise) begins.

Orissa and Telingana were omitted from the geographical notice of Usman. He has, however, made

amends by adding a chapter, *Jagannath-Khand* in his poem. (p. 233).

The story of *Chitravali* is much less known than that of *Padmavat*. (This may be briefly recapitulated as follows:

Sujan Rai, son of Rajah Dharanidhar of Nepal, once went out a hunting, lost his way in the jungles and fell asleep on a spot within the jurisdiction of *Deo*. The *Deo* was kindly spirit and at night he kept watch on the sleeping prince. That night a friend of the *Deo* came and requested him not to miss the festivities of the *sal-girah* (annual birth-day celebration) of Chitravali, the princess of Rupnagar. The *Deo* was in a fix. His friend came to the rescue saying that they would bodily carry off the prince to Rupnagar and keep him in the studio of the princess without disturbing his sleep, and next morning they might bring him back where he was sleeping. So they took the prince to Rupnagar and went out to witness gaities leaving the prince in the *Chitra-sala*. The prince woke up at night and found himself in a dream-land as it were. He found the materials of painting in the room, and the fresco-portraiture of a beautiful damsel on the wall. He fell in love with the portrayed princess, and drew a portrait of his ownself by its side. Towards the close of the night sleep came upon him and he found himself mysteriously brought back to the forest. Dream became a reality to the love-sick prince, and he became a *Jogi* in quest of the original in flesh and blood of the inanimate picture. Next morning Chitravali was surprised to find the portrait of a prince of peerless beauty drawn by some unknown hand by the side of her own. She became disconsolate and sought union with the subject of painting.

The hermit prince in his search for the lady of his dream encountered various adventures. A wild elephant was about to kill him when a *Pakshiraj*, perhaps of the *Jatayu* family of the Ramayan swooped down upon the elephant and carried it in its mighty talons high up into the sky and over the seas. The prince was left off by the elephant, and he fell down on the

island of *Sagar-garh*. He married there *Kaunlavati*, daughter of Sagar Rajah and spent some years there ill at ease for Chitravali. A *Siddha-Jogi* (an anchorite), who came there showed him the picture of Chitravali. Sujan Rai took leave of *Kaunlavati* promising to take her back when he obtains Chitravali. His desire was fulfilled; but he forgot his promise to his second love. *Kaunlavati* at last manages to send Hans Misir as her messenger to Sujan Rai.

Sujan Rai came back to *Sagar-garh* and sought permission of the Rajah to take *Kaunlavati* with him. The Rajah equipped two boats that resembled an elephant and a horse. The voyage from *Sagar-garh* was perilous, and the ships were about to sink in a whirlpool. Gods took pity on the lovers and ordered Agastya, who once drank up the ocean to subdue the sea. The very name of Agastya terrified the sea-god who allowed him a safe passage to the coast of Jagannath.

The boats of Sujan Rai touched the beach of Puri-Jagannath towards the early dawn when it was yet half dark. The prince leapt on the shore and found a Brahman taking his bath there. He enquired of him what city it was. The peevish Brahman thundered, "Are you blind of sight? It is Jagannath, the light of the whole world, who is worshipped by the people of the earth, a touch of whose feet takes off the whole load of sins."

The prince had become penniless as under the stern command of the captain of the fleet everything had been thrown overboard to lighten the burden of the boats. But he wished to be first on that day to worship Jagannath. So he gathered some leaves and offered water and leaves to the idol with the prayer:

अब निरघन परदेशी जानी, मानि लेहु यह पाती पानी ॥ (p. 233)

(i. e. knowing me to be a destitute stranger, may it please you to accept these leaves and water).

Meanwhile the Brahman, who was bathing in the sea, turned up for worship and began looking intently at Sujan Rai. His eyes became heavy with tears. The prince asked him why he was weeping. The Brahman

replied that the only son of his king had gone away with a *Jogi*, and not heard of since then. Soon the prince recognised the old Brahman as his own purohit Kesi Pande. Kesi Pande narrated to the prince the story of his sojourn at Jagannath, how the sea-god whom he worshipped took him to the temple and disappeared after giving him in alms five jewels. The prince received these jewels from Kesi Pande, and enquired whether there was any Sahu there, who could appraise the price of these jewels and give him gold and silver in return. Kesi Pande named one Lachchan Sahu to whom they went with the jewels. Lachchan Sahu said that he had visited Nepal and provided the prince with large sums of money. Royal robes, crown and ornaments were purchased, and also horses and elephants. Sujan Rai took into pay one thousand Khandwaha* (swordsmen, the *Khandayat* now bereft of their swords) as his escort, and marched away in state for Nepal.

(6)

It is worthy of note that two Muslim poets of modern Uttar Pradesh showed such spiritual sympathy with the far-famed Jagannath of Orissa; and a fairly close acquaintance with the country and its importance as the much-frequented port of embarkation for the eastern seas. A thorough search may bring to light more references to Orissa in Hindi literature. At any rate we have sufficient evidence of the unity of Indian culture in spite of distances and divergence of creeds and races.

*लच्छन कहा दरब बहु आही, जो चाहिय से लेह बसाही ।
 देस तोहार मोर हे देखा, उहई आइ मै पारब लेखा ।
 सोन रुप पाटमबर आना, साजे मेहरिलु लागि बिबाना ।
 अमरन समे जराउ साजे, मूकुतमाल मोर मरहं बिराजे ।
 हाथि घोर पुनि जाए बेसाहे, सहस एक राखे खंडबाहे ।
 कटक साजि के कुंर पयाना, बाजा पुनि गहाहा निसाना ।

(*Chitravali*, text Nagri Pracharini Sabha, p. 233).

DACCA AND ITS MEDIEVAL HISTORY

The history of Dacca is generally supposed to have had its beginnings with the transfer of the capital of the Mughal *subah* of Bengal from Akmahal or Rajmahal, officially known as Akbarnagar to this little-known pargana town of mahal Dacca-Baju of the *Ain*. Nobody can definitely say why the place was known by its present name. Some say that it was so called because of perhaps an extensive *Dhak* jungle that abounded in the neighbourhood; if so, the name was certainly of non-Bengali origin as the people of the province hardly call the fiery-red *palash* tree by its Upper-Indian name of *dhak*. It is, however, an admitted fact that whatever might be the name, there was a modest town in its present site in pre-Mughal times, as early at least as the Sena rule. Dr. N. K. Bhattasali is of opinion that the temple of the presiding Hindu deity of Dhakeswari indicates a style older than any in the known history of Dacca.¹ At any rate it admits of no doubt that Dacca was a fairly important town before it was re-named as Jahangirnagar by Islam Khan Chishti, who made it the capital city of Bengal. Apart from some pre-Mughal Muslim inscriptions found in some old mosques, in the north-western out-skirts of the present city in the direction of Tejgaon half-ruined architectural memorials swallowed up by the advancing rural vegetation still await the curious eye for future study. Any one, who cared to ramble through the ruins and pause to examine the debris that lay scattered between the Dhakeswari temple and Azimpura till their clearance during the last Great War,—could pick up bits of coloured tiles used for decoration in pre-Mughal times. Nothing has perhaps persisted so tenaciously through the ages as the old architectural tradition in the subsequent evolution of Muslim architecture. The curvilinear style of roofing supported on thick and comparatively dwarfish pillars prevailed in the days of the

1. Bhattasali, *Some facts about Old Dacca (Bengal: Past and Present, Vol. II. Part I.)*

Independent Sultanate of Bengal. Some cenotaphs scattered over the site of the pre-Mughal town with curvilinear roofing may still be found. In Mughal times buildings in the so-called *Shaistakhani* style in some cases indicate an attempt at compromise by adding a broad curvilinear *sajjah* for giving a curvilinear appearance to flat roofing; *e. g.*, in the Begum-bazar Mosque of Dacca.

Dacca had its beginning perhaps as a small and straggling pargana-town during the period of the Independent Sultanate of Bengal. It occupied an important strategic position for a short-cut between the Meghna and the middle course of the Brahmaputra by water as well as by land for a journey from Sonargaon northward to Gaur through the modern Dacca and Mymensingh districts. Some old sites and place-names with a suffix of *Sara* (Sarai), though perverted in some cases indicate the trail of the famous Shershahi Grand Trunk Road from Sonargaon along the neighbourhood of Narayanganj and Dacca through Ghoraghat winding its way as far as the far-off Nilab. About four miles northwest of the old town of Dacca lies Carwan or Caravan-sarai, perhaps older than Dacca itself as the junction of a road-system of the old Pathan regime. At any rate Dacca was a key-position in East Bengal both from military and commercial facilities. The warlike Isa Khan seems to have had built the citadel of the pre-Mughal Dacca, which Mirza Nathan counts among the few old forts of Bengal of his time (*Baharistan I*, p. 57). Isa kept his uncertain allies, the Ghazis of Bhawal, in awe and definitely checked the northward expansion of the power of his formidable neighbour, Kedar Rai of Sripur, by holding in strength the town of Dacca. Later on the Mughal Urdu or Encampment was pitched outside this fort, and eastern gate of this fort is said to have been shut by Nawab Shaista Khan before his departure with an injunction not to open it till rice would sell in the city eight maunds a rupee as in his time. Old people remember this eastern gate as the Shaistakhani Gate, now occupied by the Guards' Quarters of the Dacca Central Jail. However, it is

sufficient to indicate the wide arc within which the town shifted its site from the days of the Independent Sultanate till the present time,—by the facts that the oldest mosque of Dacca, known as *Binat Bibi's* mosque stands near Dolai Khal in the present Municipal Ward No. III, and that another mosque nearly as old with the recorded date of 885 A. H. (reign of Sultan Yusuf Shah) has been found at Mirpur, about 7 miles n.w. of Dacca.² This Binat Bibi's Mosque, built in 861 A.H. lies in Ward No. 3 of the Dacca Municipality (P. S. Sutrapur), which was perhaps the busiest thoroughfare of Dacca in the second half of the 9th century A. H. The ruling Muslim aristocracy of pre-Mughal Dacca came and went out for centuries; but the industrial and mercantile communities *Tanti*, *Sankhari*, *Basak* among the Hindus remained and still remain permanent fixtures in the midst of the shifting population and changing fortune of the City of Dacca.

The history of Dacca under the Mughal Empire is writ large on the landscape rather than in the pages of written chronicles, with the exception of the reign of Jahangir which is covered by the *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* of Mirza Nathan. To begin with Rajah Man Singh, who made the chief military headquarters of the Mughal army for waging war with Isa Khan and his confederates, and against Rajah Kedar Ray of Sripur. His name is associated with *Raja Bagh*, and a consecrated tank of yearly Hindu pilgrimage, lying about a mile n. n. e. of the Old Government House. Nawab Islam Khan Chishti, who made it the official capital of Bengal, is remembered chiefly as the builder of the Islampura quarter of the city. During his time the old subdued baronage of Bengal also began to live in the city. Musa Khan, son of Isa Khan, had his abode in Bagh-i-

2. No archaeologist has hitherto published a notice of this interesting mosque in any learned journal. The late Shifa-ul-mulk Hakim Habibur Rahaman Khan was the first to discover it during his pious ramble in search of graves of old *pirs* and notables. He has given the full text of the Persian inscription on the mosque of Mirpur, within which sleeps venerable saint, Shah Ali Baghdadi. It tells us that the original mosque was built in the year 885 A.H., and renovated by Shah Ali of Baghdad in the year 985 A.H. (*Asudgan-i-Dacca* in Urdu, pp. 124-25; published in 1946).

Musa Khan, the extent of which is indicated by his extant triple-domed mosque within the compound of present Dacca Hall, and by his tomb at Nimtali on the east of the Railway Line. Musa's son, Munawwar Khan, is remembered by a *bazar* of his name in the city. There grew up in the time of Islam Khan³ a new quarter outside the old town known as *Mahalla Chishtian*, marked today by a solitary grave, known as the tomb of Chishti-Bihesti and situated within the compound of the High Court of East Pakistan. The site is identical perhaps with that Bagh-i-Badshahi where Islam Khan's remains were buried before their removal to the present tomb in the courtyard of the mosque of Fatehpur Sikri. Shujat Khan, the conqueror of Usman, also built a *pura*, which continued to be remembered as Shuja'at-pura⁴ till it was swallowed up by the present Ramna during the old Partition regime. The city continued to have a floating population of upcountry people with every change of viceroy, and the residue left behind at every transfer deepened the Mughal character of the city. The long vicerealty of Shah Shuja extending over a period of seventeen years marks a distinct epoch of prosperity for Dacca.

Prince Shah Shuja, second son of Shahjahan, brought with him a large number of Iranians of the Shia sect to his provincial capital of Dacca, where they were settled in a quarter later on known as Rahamat-gunj, a name that continues till today. Once these Shias and their descendants constituted the life and light of the City. A very few Shia families in miserable condition still survive in Dacca as a memorial of the days of Shuja. However, the greatest memento of the unfortunate prince is the Bara Katra, which is

3. Nawab Islam Khan Chishti built a *pura* in his own name known till now as *Islampura*, the busiest thoroughfare of Dacca. He laid the foundation of a mosque which is situated in Ashiq Jamadar Lane.

4. Shujaatpura lay south of present Shah bagh, perhaps a reminiscent of Bagh-i-Badshahi of Nathan. Shujaatpura comprised within its limit the Sikh temple and a part of Maidan of Ramna. Shujaatpura and Mahalla Chishtian were demolished at the time of construction of New Dacca or Ramna as the capital of East Bengal and Assam (Habibur Rahman *Asudgan-i-Dacca* in Urdu, p. 74).

a miniature Buland Darwaza of Dacca situated close to the river bank. Today it presents a sorry spectacle and the very sight of miserable humanity that has made it their abode reminds one of "Owls nestling in Afrasyab's tower." The interior economy of this self-contained gate-palace makes the visitor doubt very much whether it was originally designed for purpose to which it was dedicated according to the Persian inscription set on it. The Persian inscription in bold Tughra character tells us :—

"Sultan Shah Shuja was employed in the performance of charitable acts. Therefore Abul Qasim Tabatabai Husaini-al-Samani, in the hopes of mercy of God made a canonical waqf of this building of suspicious structure, together with twenty-two shops adjoining, subject to the condition that the administrators of the waqf of this building should spend the income arising out of their rent, in repairs and in relief of the poor. If a poor man alights here, no rent should be charged from him for his lodging.....This inscription was written by Sa'duddin Muhamad al-Shirazi, A.H. 1055' (A.D. 1645). A large quadrangle encloses the Bara Katra separating it from the inhabited quarters. The lofty gate-palace with apartments and accommodation enough for the temporary residence of a prince, could hardly have been meant as only an entrance to a *Sarai* for merchants and travellers. Shuja perhaps built it originally as his own residence or a pleasure resort during the rainy season. As the climate of Lower Bengal did not suit his health he used to reside generally at Rajmahal. So afterwards the quadrangle was perhaps rebuilt with rooms and an open courtyard on the model of a *sarai*, and dedicated along with the gate-palace to a charitable use in the year 1055 A.H., which is not herhaps the date of its original construction. The half-dome style of gate-way, which Forgusson calls as the best solution of giving a proportionate and graceful opening to a lofty structure in his notice of the Buland Darwazah of Fathepur Sikri—makes its first appearance in the Bara Katra, and it ever after became an essential feature of the Mughal Architecture in Dacca. This

“stupendous pile of grand and beautiful architecture”⁵ looking quite majestic with its lofty turrets of octagonal form commands an excellent view of the city and the landscape for miles that is typically Bengal of the artist’s imagination.

Shaista Khan built another *Katra* (about 1664), now known as *Chotah Katra*, because of its smaller dimensions than those of Shuja’s *Bara Katra*. Shaista Khan’s *Katra* was built on the same plane as that of *Shuja* between the *Bara Katra* and the present mahalla *Imamgunj*. There is, however, within its quadrangle a small one-domed beautiful mosque of fluted dome, displaying unique oriental luxuriance of foliage and fruit on the capitals of its elegant octangular shafts. It is a thing of beauty indeed, and has received due praise from the artistic author of the *Antiquities of Dacca*. The *Chotah Katra* itself is of the same architectural style and interior economy as the *Bara Katra*. Further down the river s.s.e. of the *Chota Katra* a mosque of Shaista Khan rising abruptly from the river as it were, was described by the author of the *Antiquities* as “the Mosque on the *Buriganga*; its octagonal, circular and rectangular forms are contrasted with considerable taste; and its breadth of plain wall kept in a composed distinct mass by rows of small pointed arches, fillets and other enrichments. In the general proportions and character of its architecture, the principles of elegance and simplicity appear to be combined; and the *tout ensemble* can scarcely fail to impress the beholder with respect for the taste and talent of its architect. This mosque rises immediately from the margin of the river, with an affect at once stately and picturesque.”

History tells us that Mir Jumla died on his way to *Dacca* at *Khazirpur* on the 2nd *Ramzan* of the year 1073. A. H., and a later tradition⁶ has it that the

5. Sir Charles D’Oyly : The *Antiquities of Dacca*.

6. ‘*Tazkira-i-Nasarabadi* (Ms), quoted by Late Hakim Habibur Rahman Khan in his book *Asudgan-i-Dacca* (Urdu, p. 136). It is written in the alleged ‘*Wasiyatnama*’ of Shaista Khan that the tomb in the said mosque is of Bibi Marium, a daughter of Shaista Khan. But this document has been proved to be a forgery by late Hakim Habibur Rahaman Khan in a paper contributed to the *Proceedings of Indian Historical Record Commission* (Nagpur Session. 1928). We have no reason to disbelieve the version of *Nasarabadi*, which accords well with the *Shia* tradition and also with the known facts of History.

coffin of Mir Jumla was buried inside the mosque, and later on carried to Mashed for final burial in the mosoleum of Hazrat Imam Raza. The original tomb is worshipped now under the name of the Rauza of Khanpur, though the people hardly suspect that it was the original grave of Mir Jumla. By the time of Mir Jumla the city of Dacca had extended in a westerly direction. Mir Jumla's lieutenant, Rashid Khan⁷, who commanded the first Mughal expedition to Assam, had his garden villa west of the city now swallowed up by the Phil-khana Cantonment. He too, it seems, died during the Assam wars, and his tomb near a mosque within the *Philkhana* receives worship as the resting place of not only a great Amir but also of a spiritually illumined soul. All that remains of Bagh-i-Rashid Khan is a tank noted for its blood-red earth.

Nawab Shaista Khan, who succeeded Mir Jumla as Viceroy, and ruled Bengal from 1664 to 1677 A. D. in the first term, and again 1680 to 1688 for a second term—is verily the idol of the popular imagination of Dacca. Though he himself lived mostly under canvas or in a wooden palace he emulated his pious nephew on the throne of Delhi in building more mosques than were perhaps needed by worshippers in his time. These are strewn all over Dacca and its neighbourhood characterised by a stereotyped style, known as *Shaistakhani*. Besides the *Bara Katra*, the *Idgah* of Dacca and the Churihatta mosque within the city are also pious memorials of the luckless Shuja.

Muazzam Khan Khan-i-Khānan *alias* Mir Jumla, the subduer and successor of Shah Shuja, as Aurangzib's first Viceory of Bengal, did not leave any memorial of his within the city of Dacca. He is remembered as the builder of military roads, and of forts on the Lakhiya and the Isamati rivers to keep off the Magh incursions to Dacca. Mir Jumla's architecture reflects the character of the man, a forceful personality of solid virtues and high ambition. Such are the bridges he constructed to span small streams crossed by his military roads to

7. For Rashid Khan, *History of Aurangzib* iii 157; his tomb and tank, *Asudgon-i-Dacca*, p. 154.

and from Dacca. Outside the city lie the remains of his two bridges, better known now as the Tangi Bridge and the Pagla-pul (Mad man's bridge). The Tangi Bridge was built over the river of that name on the Dacca-Mymensingh Road; and the Pagla-pul stands astride, the Qadamtala river leading to Mir Jumla's ruined fort of Hajgunj on the Lakhia River. Tavernier describes it as a " most elegant structure " and the author of the *Antiquities of Dacca* found it, " still exceedingly picturesque " in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Tangi Bridge is almost as magnificent in its ruined condition⁸. Mir Jumla had made the water-girt Khizirpur, situated north-east of modern Narayangunj and on the river Lakhiya (about 9 miles south of Dacca and three miles north of Sonargaon), his military and naval headquarters during his Assam expeditions. There he built a fortified residence for himself of which except a grand mosque all are in ruins marked here and there by an outer wall with a height of twelve feet. The mosque has three domes under one of which lies a tomb.

8. Vide, *Antiquities of Dacca*.

ORIGIN OF THE BAHMANI SULTANS OF THE DECCAN

Since the publication of Sir W. Haig's paper, "*Some notes on the Bahmani dynasty*"* more than thirty years ago, no fresh admirable attempt has been made to explain the origin of the Bahmani Sultans of the Deccan. But Sir W. Haig did not arrive at any definite conclusions in that paper regarding the ancestry of the so-called Bahmani dynasty. He only succeeded in proving satisfactorily that the cognomen Kanku, Gangu, or Gāngu has nothing to do with any person of that name, nor Bahmani is derived from *Brahman*. Ferishta's story of the origin and early life of Hasan Gangu has with complete success been refuted by that eminent historian. To hold that the title Bahman Shah did not originate in Hasan's grateful memory of his Brahmin master but in Hasan's claim to descend from ancient kings of Iran is hardly better than substituting one myth with another equally fictitious. Unfortunately this seems to be the tendency not only among text-book writers but also of some specialists, though Sir W. Haig himself maintains: "Both historians (Ferishta and the author of *Burhan-i-Maasir*) express some doubts as to the authority of the pedigrees which they give, and there can be little doubt that both pedigrees are fictitious. We are not concerned, however, with the genuineness of Hasan's claim, for this is a question which cannot be decided now."*

Four years after the publication of the above mentioned paper of Sir W. Haig, Maulvi Abdul Wali contributed a paper on *the Bahmani dynasty* (JASB 1909). The learned Maulvi tried to throw more light on Haig's illuminating *Notes on the Bahmani Dynasty* by quoting a passage from Amin Ahmad Razi's *Half Iqlim*, written before Ferishta's history. The English rendering of that passage runs thus:

*J. A. S. B. Old series, Vol. 73 a, Extra number I.

“The first Dynasty was that of the Kings of Gulbarga. The founder of it was Alaud-din-Hasan. As the author of the *Uyunut-Tarikh* traces his pedigree to Bahman bin Isfandiyar, so as a matter of course, the Dynasty became famous under the cognomen Bahmani”. Maulvi Abdul Wali further remarks: “The MS. of the *Half-Iqlim*, which belongs to the A. S. B. (D/347) has *Hasan Kākuya* instead of Kānku or Gangu. The word is a puzzle. Is it the Dakani corruption for *Kaikaus*, the name of the King’s father? If this knotty problem can be cleared up, the full name and title of the founder of the Bahmani Dynasty will run somewhat thus:—*Ala-ud-din Hassan bin Kaikaus Bahmani* (p. 463).

Sir W. Haig gives us his considered opinion in his chapter on the Bahmanis in the *Cambridge History of India*. He says: “Ala-ud-din Hasan claimed descent from the hero Bahman, son of Isfandiyar, and his assumption of the title Bahman Shah was an assertion of his claim. Ferishta relates an absurd legend connecting the title with the name of the priestly caste of the Hindus, but this story is disproved by the evidence of inscriptions and legends on the coins, and the name Kanku, which frequently occurs, in conjunction with that of Bahman and is said by Ferishta to represent Gangu, the name of the king’s former Brahman master, is more credibly explained by Maulavi Abdul Wali as a scribe’s corruption of Kaikaus, which was the name of Bahman’s father as given in two extent geneologies.” (Vol. III, 372-373)

Let us analyse historical inaccuracies in the passage quoted above:

1. Ala-ud-din was not a part of the original name of the founder of the Bahmani dynasty. Hasan Gangu, as Ferishta says, was a man from Northern India, and as such Ziauddin Barani, the court-historian of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughlaq and a contemporary of Hasan was likely to know full the name of Hasan Gangu more correctly than the Deccani historians who flourished about 200 years after the foundation of the Bahmani Sultanate. Ziauddin always calls him

Hasan Gangu; and so does Ahmad Yahaya Sarhindi, author of *Tarikh-i-Mubarak shahi*, written in 1434, *i. e.*, within less than 100 years of Hasan's accession. Sir W. Haig rejects Kangu or Gangu—which is as inseparable from Hasan's name as skin from the body,—because he has failed to explain it satisfactorily. Hasan's name is always found conjoined with Gangu in Barani and Sarhindi's histories. Alauddin is not a part of Hasan's *name (ism)* but a part of the *title (laqab)*, Alauddin Bahman Shah under which he ruled, as Prince Salim did under the title Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padshah Ghazi.

2. Sir W. Haig would have us banish the epithet Gangu from Hasan's name altogether, and make us believe that Gangu is a scribe's corruption of Kaikaus, which was the name of Bahman's father as given in two extant geneologies. From the time of Ziauddin Barani down to our own time Gangu or Kangu has thus been found corrupted once and once only and that too in a single Ms. Even in this case Sir W. Haig's authority, namely Maulvi Abdul Wali is not certain about the reading of the word *Kakuya*. The Maulvi only suggests whether this is Dakani corruption for Kaikaus, the name of the King's father. We say it is not. Because, the Deccan was the home of Iranian emigrants and no Persian history of the Deccan from *Burhan-i-Maasir* to *Basatin-i-Salatin* ever commits such a mistake, or uses *Kakuya* for Kaikaus, a name which a Muslim, particularly an Irani, picks up from nursery tales. Moreover, the Maulvi does not commit himself definitely to this reading. In a *footnote*, which Sir W. Haig has perhaps overlooked Maulvi Abdul Wali adds, "If the letter *s* of Kaikaus be left out, the word may give rise to the following *variants*, in Persian character—Kaikau, Kankau, Kanku, Gangu, Kaku etc." (JASB. 1909 p. 462 footnote 2). There is no reason why we should not prefer the reading Gangu, on which all the Indo-Persian histories are unanimous to a doubtful reading in a single Ms. of one history only. So Gangu cannot be rejected because it is yet to be explained satisfactorily.

3. It appears Hasan Gāngu himself never knew that Kaikaus was his father's name, or that he ever *claimed descent* from the Persian king Bahman. In that case,—if we are allowed to infer from a historical parallel,—his title on his coins and inscriptions would have run something like this : *Ala-ud-duniya wa din Abul Muzaffar Hasan Shah bin Kaikaus-i-Bahmani*; as we find on the coins of Husain Shah of Bengal—*Alauddin Husain Shah bin Sayyid Ashraf al-Husaini*. Hasan an upstart though, was too discreet to claim such a lineage, because it was sure to be ridiculed both by his Persian and Hindustani *amirs* some of whom must have remembered what his origin was.

Let us now turn to the constructive phase of the discussion. If we are allowed to exercise a little of historical imagination we may picture to ourselves the state of the historical knowledge regarding the origin of Hasan Gangu in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Evidently there were two traditions current in the Deccan when Ferishta and the author of *Burhan-i-Maasir* (Azizullah Tabataba) wrote their histories. Both the traditions originated from the two epithets of Hasan, namely Gangu and Bahman, which suggested to popular imagination that he was a slave of a Brahmin named Gangu, and to scholarly ingenuity that he was a descendant of the famous Persian king Bahman. The former version was apparently the older one, originating perhaps with the Brahmani officials of Hasan, upon whose descendants the priestly class thus hoped to establish a claim for special consideration. As people of the Deccan could not otherwise explain the cognomen Gangu, they naturally turned it to the name of a person. The second story, *i. e.*, Hasan's descent from Bahman was invented, either with or without any countenance of the later Bahmanis, by some Muslim historians whose pride revolted against the idea that the founder of the most glorious dynasty in the South could have been the slave of a Brahman. So one school of the Muslim historians rejected the alleged connection between the word Bahman and Brahman and embodied the Persian geneology of

Hasan, though they themselves pronounced this geneology to be not quite accurate.

Ferishta also gives both the Brahman story as well as the geneology of Persian descent regarding the origin of Hasan. Sir W. Haig has been unnecessarily severe on Ferishta, who committed no other fault than that of lending the weight of his authority to the story of the Brahman Gangu. It would have been extremely unfair and unhistorical if Ferishta had not noticed this legend at all. To quote a parallel case the generally accepted opinion about the parentage of Ali Muhammad Khan, founder of the family of Nawabs of Rampur is that he was a Jat, belonging to the village of Aonla in U. P. But from the time of Ghulam Ali, the author of *Imad-us-Saadat*, another story that Ali Muhammad's father was a Sayyid became current. If a modern historian passes over altogether the story of the Jat parentage of Ali Muhammad, he would be accused of suppressing facts nearer truth. So far as history is concerned, the origin of the Bahmanis suffered as much from untutored popular imagination as from interested scholarship, or false pride of effete descendants of an able upstart. It is a matter of common knowledge that poets, courtiers, and pennyrists are *inventors* of geneologies which take by surprise mighty children of the sword in their eternal sleep.

The cognomen *Bahmani* having failed altogether to give us a clue to Hasan's origin, we have the only other alternative, namely Kāngu, Kanku, Gāngu or Gangu to guide us in the search of Hasan's pedigree. The correct designation by which Hasan, the founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty was distinguished before his accession to the throne was perhaps neither Kāngu nor Kangu but *Gangu*; because Ferishta who first chronicled the popular legend current in the Deccan can be credited at least with giving us the correct cognomen which sounded like a Hindu name. We also owe to Ferishta another important fact regarding the origin of Hasan; namely, that he was not a native of the South but was born in Northern India in the

neighbourhood of Delhi. We should now examine accounts of North Indian historians on the origin and activities of Hasan.

Badayuni in his account of the reign of Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq writes: "In the year 744 A. H. during his march through Samana and Sunam, the Sultan ordered a general massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal and all the Muslims on account of his spite against Hasan Gangu* (*bar ragham-i-Hasan Gangu*). What might possibly be the connection between the Sayyids of Kaithal and Hasan Gangu? Was Hasan Gangu a Sayyid? It was not so; because Barani (text p. 480) and Nizamuddin (Newal Kishore text p. 103) do not mention any massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal and of the Muslims on the ground of their complicity with Gangu's revolt. Badayuni's original authority for the statement is evidently *Tarikh-i-Mubarak-shahi*. *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi*, however, notices the massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal, but does not connect it in any way with the rebellion of Hasan Gangu.† As a matter of fact Hasan Gangu rose in rebellion about *three years after the massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal*. The rebel for whose crime the Sayyids were punished was not Hasan Gangu as Badayuni wrongly says, but Sayyid Hasan Kithili (Kaithali), father of Malik Ibrahim, *khāritā-dār* of Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq. This Sayyid Hasan revolted in Ma'bar in 742 A. H. *i. e. two years before the massacre of the Sayyids of Kaithal*. Zia Barani mentions the rebellion of Sayyid Ahsan (Hasan?) in Ma'bar, but is silent over the punishment of the Sayyids of Kaithal while passing through Sunam: (Pers. text, p. 480-81) Nizamuddin Ahmad says that the Sultan heard near Qanauj the news of the rebellion of Hasan, father of Ibrahim *kharita-dar*, in the country of Ma'bar, and that after his arrival at Delhi, the Sultan imprisoned Ibrahim and the relations of Hasan (text p. 103). So it is proved conclusively that Sayyid Hassan, father of Ibrahim, and Hasan Gangu were not one and the same

*Pers. text, p. 231-2.

†Prof. K. K. Basu's translation of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* (Gaekwad Oriental series), p. 109.

person as Badayuni (or perhaps the careless copyist of his work) holds.

Besides the above-mentioned Sayyid Hasan Kaithali, *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* mentions half a dozen *Hasans*, each distinguished from the other by an epithet indicative either of domicile or of birth; *e. g.*, Hasan *Barwabacha* (son of a Barwa or Parwari slave), Hasan *Basri*, Hasan *Kanku* (Gangu) Hasan *Multani* and others. From this it appears. Kanku or Gangu was a well known cognomen current among the people of Upper India. Yahaya Sarhindi, the author of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* in his account of the conspiracy for the murder of Sayyid Mubarak Shah—his patron and contemporary—says, “Some villainous infidels, such as, the sons of Kangu and Kajo Khatri, whose families since the days of their fore-fathers had been patronised and protected by the royal house, and each of whom had been possessors of large attendants, vast territory and great power, some treacherous Muslims also..... made deliberations together.....” (p. 239). In a subsequent passage describing the actual murder, the same author says, “Sadharan Kangu stood with his party outside the door to prevent any outside relief” (*ibid*, p. 241) The second passage makes it clear that Kanku, Kangu or Gangu was not the name of the person, but of a Hindu caste or tribe known by this title.

It is a common fact that many of the Hindu tribes of the Punjab tenaciously cling to their tribal surnames even centuries after their conversion to Islam; *e. g.* Gakhbars, Awans, Kambhos, Jats and Gujars of the Punjab and Chaks and Batts of Kashmir, Tagas of U. P. A few illustrations of the retention of tribal epithets by distinguished Hindu converts in Medieval

**Pisaran-i-Kankuu Kaju Khatri ke az aba wa ijdad parawardah wa barawardah-i-in-khandan.....*(text p. 232)

Pisaran (sons) may lead us to infer *Kanku* (Gangu) to be the name of a person. But occurrence of such names as Sadharan Kangu, Hasan Kanku, unmistakably shows that Kanku is a tribal epithet common to a tribe, partly Hindu, partly converted to Islam. It is not unlikely that the real *name (ism)* before Kanku has been dropped either in the original Ms. or subsequent transcripts.

India: Shahbaz Khan Kambo, Muhammad Salih Kambo, Kamal Khan Ghakkar, Qiya Khan Kang (a Jat), Hasan Khan Bachchgoti (a Rajput of Oudh); Chaks of Kashmir, mostly Muslims and a few Brahmans. It was not uncommon that half the tribe accepted Islam while the other half still remains Hindu. So it is not unreasonable to infer that the Kangu or Gangu was a Hindu tribe or caste of the Punjab, a portion of which had accepted Islam. Hasan, the founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty, and Sadharan the murderer of Sayyid Mubarak Shah belonged originally to the same stock. If so, it is not difficult to identify the Kangu or Gangu with some Hindu tribe or caste still bearing this title.

Rose's *Glossary of the tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province* does not mention any tribe or caste, Kanku, or Ganku, which therefore, we may safely reject as possible variants of Hasan's cognomen. There is a Jat clan, *Gāngah*, in the Multan district and also an Arain clan, *Gango* in the Montgomery district (vol. ii. p. 278). Hasan perhaps belonged to one of these clans, more probably to *Gango* clan of the Arains, who are now almost to a man Muhammadans and strongly inclined to orthodoxy" (vol. ii p. 13). It is also important to note that Khizr Khan, the founder of the Sayyid dynasty originally belonged to Multan and that the Arains of the Punjab in general have a tradition that their original home was Uch, which is near Multan.

It is perhaps clear that Kanku cannot be a copyist's error, or a specimen of the Deccani Musalman's corruption of the famous name Kaikaus as the veteran historian Sir W. Haig is inclined to hold, because the word Kanku or Gangu evidently baffled his own attempt as well as that of Maulvi Abdul Wali. If Sir W. Haig cared to reconsider his opinion in any recent contribution in the light of new facts supplied by the Persian text of *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* (published in the Bib. Ind. series in 1932, *i. e.*, four years after the publication of the Cambridge History of India, Vol. III, 1928), he himself would have rejected the unhistorical legend

about Hasan Gangu's claim to descend from the Persian king Bahman. So far as our knowledge goes, Sir W. Haig has not hitherto revised his opinion. Therefore, we are constrained to publish a refutation of his views in the interest of historical truth. We hold that Hasan Gangu, founder of the so-called Bahmani dynasty, like founders of several independent Muslim dynasties in the last quarter of the fourteenth century,—was either a Hindu convert himself, or the descendant of a Hindu convert, belonging to the *Gango sub-division of the Arain*, commonly known as *Rain tribe* of the Punjab. Though we are not in favour of a revolutionary change of the name of Bahmani dynasty into *Gango-shahi* dynasty as facts warrant, we hope our minds should be disabused from the idea of the Persian descent of Hasan Gangu. Like Ferishta's story of Hasan's legendary Brahman master Gangu, the equally false suggestion of Kaikaus being the name of Hasan's father, and his descent from Bahman, should now disappear from our school histories.*

*Dr. Iswariprasad in his *History of the Qaraunah Turks* is inclined to hold the correctness of the view that Hasan was of Iranian blood which is an *improvement* made at first by some Persian writers of the sixteenth century and secondly by Sir Wolsley Haig—on the alleged claim of Hasan who “considered himself to be of the line (*nasal*) of Bahman bin Isfandiyar.” There would be an end of research and controversy if historians accepted without demur every *claim* of an individual or of a people regarding their own origin. The learned doctor apparently rejects Gangu as even a variant of Kangu lest it might conjure up the exploded myth Brahman Gangu to posterity. To him, “The word Kangu is a puzzle.....and for the present we have to rest content with the explanation that Hasan Kangu is the original name of the founder of the Bahmani Kingdom.”

THE JATS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR HISTORY

The Jâts are a tribe so wide-spread and numerous as to be almost a nation in itself, counting 7,086,100 souls having community of blood, community of language, common tradition, and also a common religion for not less than 1,500 years. At the Census of 1901, one-third of the population bearing this name are Muslims, one-fifth Sikhs, and about one-half Brahmanical Hindus (Ency. of Indo-Aryan Research, Volume II, Part 5, page 43). They are found in large numbers in the Punjab, Sindh, Rajputana and in some parts of the Gangetic Doab. There is also a sprinkling of Jat population in Peshawar, Baluchistan and to the west of the Sulaiman range. Tall, fair, large-limbed, with regular features, prominent nose, and expanding eyes, the Jât belongs to the same ethnic group as the Rajput and the Turk. In character he resembles the old Anglo-Saxon, and has indeed more of the Teuton than of the Celt in him. He is tough, slow, unimaginative, lacking brilliance but possessed of great solidity, dogged perseverance, with an eminently practical turn of mind. He is hardly convinced by words without concrete facts. Self-interest is his only criterion of judgment. If he listens to the Arya-Samaj more favourably, it is not for its purer doctrines or higher philosophy, but for its promise of exemption from *srâdh* ceremony, and other expensive Brahmanical rites. Old countryside proverb (in Karnal district) goes that book-learning is unpropitious to the Jat that a "Jât loses half his worth by trying to become learned!" Sturdy independence, and vigorous labour are his strong characteristics as Ibbetson says. To this is added quarrelsomeness. The Jât always requires somebody to quarrel with: "a Jât is good only when he is bound." Another trait of Jat character, which has been marked by eminent authorities is his strong individualism. "The Jât is of all the Punjab races the most impatient of

tribal or communal control, and the one which asserts the individual most strongly" (Ibbetson, quoted in Rose's *Punjab Glossary*, Volume II, page 366). Irvine remarks "In the Government of their villages, they appear much more democratic than the Rajput; they have less reverence for hereditary right and a preference for elected head-man" (*Later Mughals*, Volume I, page 83). The Játs may quarrel among themselves, but when it is a question of tribal honour, or a dispute with other castes, they readily combine. Clannish feeling like that of the men of the age of *Mahabharat* is still very strong. With his democratic ideas of government, strong tribal ties, and preserving in unbroken tradition the practice of marrying elder brother's widow, and of *Neyoga i. e.* raising issue by another man after husband's death, the Ját, though considered as a Sudra by the orthodox, seems to be the truer representative of the Vedic Arya than any Hindu of the higher castes.

The origin of this interesting people, is enveloped in the mist of obscurity which the light of scientific research has yet to dispel. Dr. Trumpp and Beams very strongly claim a pure Indo-Aryan descent for them on the consideration of physical type and language which is a pure dialect of Hindi without slightest trace of the Scythian origin (Elliot's *Memoirs of the Races*, Volume I, pages 135-137). But both these authorities were out and out philologists who are not to be trusted implicitly in ethnological questions. Language is no test of race as has been pointed out by A. M. I. Jackson (*Ind. Ant.*, 1910, Volume 39, page 65), and also by V. Smith (*Ancient India*, page 12). We find no mention of the Játs in ancient Sanskrit Literature unless we are prepared to accept the identification of the Jaratrikas—mentioned in the *Mahabharat* along with the Madrakas (Canto VIII, Slokas 2032, 2034)—with the J ts as suggested by no less eminent an authority than Grierson (*Ind. Ant.*, 1914, Volume 43, page 146), and also by James Campbell (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Part I, page 461). Grierson also expresses a doubt whether the Jatásuras—not a demon as in popular myth but name of a western

tribe mentioned by the famous astronomer Baraha-Mihira—were not the Játs (*Ind. Ant.* Volume 43, page 462). Bishnu Puran (Wilson's ed. page 192) mentions Dahas as a western tribe, whom both Elliot and Ibbetson are inclined to identify with the Dahae of Alexander and the modern Dahiya Játs inhabiting Sonepet Tehsil of Rohtak.

However, competent authorities agree on the point that the Játs are of Indo-Scythian stock. But they differ in their opinion as to what particular horde they belong. V. Smith says, "When the numerous Bálá, Indo-Scythian, Gujar and Huna tribes of 6th century horde settled, the leading military and princely houses were accepted as Rajput, while those who frankly took to agriculture became Ját" (*Journal, Royal Asiatic Society, 1899, page 534*). This cannot be true without modification. There is unassailable evidence of the existence of a Ját or Jit ruling dynasty as old as 400 A. D. (*Tod's Rajasthan, App. I, page 747-749*). Moreover the traditional enmity between the Rajput and the Ját makes it extremely probable that they belonged to different hordes, entering India at different times. We everywhere find the earlier Ját occupant of the soil ousted by the new Rajput emigrants. The Yadu Bhattis conquered Jaisalmer from the Ját and the Rathor wrested Bikanir from him. The Pramars displaced him in Malwa and Tunwar snatched away Delhi. In this connection we may suggest a different origin of the name of this city of Delhi than that assigned by popular tradition, *viz.*, that the Brahmins of Anangapal once fixed a pillar, which they declared to have stood on the hood of *Shesh Naga*, and that he, out of curiosity, ordered it to be dug out but when he tried to fix it again, it remained *dhilla* or loose. This is grotesque enough to capture uncultured imagination. Apart from this, we see the Delhi district still largely inhabited by a Ját tribe called *Dhillan* or *Dhillhon*. Folk etymology connects the name with *dhilla* or *lazy* (*Rose's Glossary, Volume II, pages 237-238*). Anangapal Tunwar might have conquered this territory from the Dhillons, and founded the city. Building of

the city cannot be credited to the Játs because they have always been an essentially rural folk. This city takes its name from the tract of country around, *i. e.*, Dhilli or the abode of lazy people.

As regards the origin of the Játs, earlier authorities namely Elliot (*Memoirs of the Races*, Volume I, page 135), A. M. T. Jackson (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume I, Part I, page 2), James M. Campbell (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Part I, page 461) who identify them with Kushan or Yuechi horde, whose greatest representative was Kanishka, seem to be right beyond dispute. The Rajputs represent perhaps the White Huns of Sixth century A. D. or later Turkish horde who developed into a noble race by entering the fold of Hinduism, as in Europe Christianity and French civilisation transformed the descendants of fierce Danes and Norsemen into the great Norman race, the finest product of Medieval Europe.

In history, the Ját is quite familiar as an industrious husbandman, a notorious cattle-lifter and a stout fighter. Where circumstances permitted, he equally distinguished himself as a bold pirate too. The Ját pirates of Dwarka and Porbander in the 7th century made their name a terror to the merchants of the Arabian Sea (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Volume IX, Appendix B, page 527). The rise of the Jats as a political power begins with the revolt of the Hindu Játs of Mathura (1669 A. D.) in the reign of Aurangzib. This was not an isolated phenomenon but only one flare of the general conflagration kindled by religious persecution from the Punjab to Maharashtra. Iswar Das Nagor describes the serious nature of the revolt and the heroism of Gokla and Rajah Ram. The latter committed an unpardonable act of sacrilege by sacking Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. He remained unsubdued till his death (Iswar Das, Professor Sarkar's Ms. page 53 a following and 131 b). Bhajja Singh of Sensani, the founder of the present ruling house of Bharatpur next assumed the leadership of the Játs (Irvine's *Later Mughals*, Volume I, page 322). He was succeeded by his son Churaman, whose career was a long and eventful one. He was

granted the rank of 1,500 Zat, 500 horse, by Bahadur Shah. Farruksiyar thought of subduing him and appointed Raja Sawai Jai Singh to the command. Nothing came out of it and the Emperor had to be satisfied with a fine and lip-allegiance on the part of the rebel. Churaman made the Ját power a political factor to be reckoned with. We do not hear much about his younger brother and successor Budan Singh. Waqia-i-Shah-Alam Sani (Professor Sarkar's Ms.) gives Ramzan 9, 1169 A. H., as the date of his death. Suraj Mal seems to have assumed the direction of affairs during the life-time of his father. He was one of the greatest figures of his times—great both in war and diplomacy—whose memory deserves to be rescued from oblivion. Under him the Játs spread beyond the Jamuna, and fought as mercenaries of Saifdar Jang, who granted the whole of Mewat to him as reward of his services. We light upon unexpected wealth of information about Suraj Mal and his successors in the Waqia-i-Shah-Alam Sani, Ibratnama of Khairuddin Allahabad and Shah Alamnama (ed. A. S. B). - The story of Ahmad Shah Abdali's bloody campaign against the Játs is told in great detail and with accuracy in a fragmentary Ms. translated by Irvine (*Ind. Ant.* 1907, Volume 36, page 46, following). Suraj Mal and Malhar Rao were intimate associates, though for sometime Malhar Rao fought against Suraj Mal as an ally of Imád-ul-Mulk. Mr. Burway's life of first Malhar Rao which was reported to be in preparation by Indore representatives in Lahore session of this commission may throw new light on the Ját history of this period. Suraj Mal was killed near Shah-Dara on 21st *Jamada*, 1177 A. H., in a surprise attack made by Muhamad Khan Baloch, an officer of Najib-ud-daula (*Waqia*, page 199).

He left four sons, Jawahir Singh, Ratan Singh, Newal Singh by one wife, and Ranjit Singh by another. Jawahir amply avenged his father's death by plundering Delhi and ravaging the imperial dominions. He captured Aligarh and re-named it Ramgarh (Ibratnama). From the accession of Jawahir Singh the Ját history acquires a new interest as showing the last expiring efforts of the French to expel the English

from India by building up a confederacy of the Jâts, Sikhs, and Ahmed Khán Bangash. M. Medoc took up service with the Raja of Bharatpur with the same motive which brought half a century after Allan and Ventura to the Court of Ranjit Singh. Memoirs of M. Law and Rene Medoc and the Calendar of Persian letters edited by Sir Denison Ross yield important information about this period. M. Medoc's dream was not realised as Jawahir Singh was too much of a fanatic and knight-errant to act consistently with statesman-like moderation. He marched defiantly beating his war-drum, through Jaipur territory to bathe in the Pushkar Lake. The Kacchwas opposed his return and a disastrous battle was fought which forms the subject-matter of a stirring ballad, the *seccá* of Jawahir Singh, still sung by the bards. He was assassinated in the Agra Fort at the instigation of the Raja of Jaipur. Ratan Singh, younger brother of Jawahir, was a worthless man. He was murdered at Brindaban by a Gossain, Sri Rupanand, on account of some love intrigue (*Waqia*, page 219). Newal Singh who succeeded him was a strenuous fighter; but he played a losing game against the genius of Mirza Najaf Khan, the last of the great foreigners who graced the Court of the Timurides. Khairuddin describes the campaigns of Najaf Khan against the Jâts at pretty length (*Ibratnama*, pages 212-270). Ranjit Singh succeeded Newal Singh and carried on the struggle for some time. Deeg fell after a siege of twelve months; Ranjit Singh fled to Kumbhir and thence to Bharatpur. Rani Kishori, wife of Suraj Mal, went to the camp of Najaf Khán to intercede on behalf of her son. The chivalrous victor granted mother's prayer and peace was concluded (*Ibratnama*, pages 346-347).

In the latter part of his rule Ranjit Singh provoked hostilities with the English by allying himself with Yasowant Rao Holkar. Major W. Thorn in his *Memoirs of the wars in India conducted by Lord Lake*, gives us first-rate information. "A chronicle of Joswant Rao Holkar's times written by Bakshi Bhawani Sankar, a constant attendant on Holkar camp and the account of various battles in Bharatpur written by another

camp-follower of Holkar” as reported in a note by the Indore representatives in the Lahore Session of this Commission—are likely to be of great value. Lord Lake appeared before Deeg on December 13th, 1804, and the X’mas morning of that year saw the British flag floating on the battlement of that strong fort which defied Najaf Khán for 12 months. Next he besieged Bharatpur with result not very creditable to British arms. Four successive assaults were delivered in course of two months in which they lost 3,100 men, and 103 officers. But the Maratha and Pindari allies of the Raja of Bharatpur fell away and he saw the futility of holding out in a fort against the whole resources of India and the superior military science of the West. He sued for terms which were granted on terms of subsidiary alliance. Here ends the history of the Játs who ceased to be an independent power under that treaty.

The importance of the history of the Játs to the student of Medieval India lies in its carrying light in the darkest and most complicated period of Indian history. It will also considerably clear the path of the Gibbon of the future in finishing the story of the Decline and Fall of the Mughal Empire left half-told by the great historian William Irvine. The Ját deserves attention as he, without caste distinction, female seclusion and with his democratic tendencies, erect moral stature and unprejudiced mind, is more in sympathy with modern age than the aristocratic Rajput who has not yet discarded his medieval traits of character, still cherishing the notion of class privilege, and contempt for productive labour. If the Ját is sufficiently enlightened, he may carry back the Hindu society with him to its Vedic purity, infusing new vigour into it, and preparing it for a more glorious destiny.

CHURAMAN JAT OF SINSINI

The Jat needs no introduction to the average student of history. This virile Indian tribe has a chequered history of political and social evolution within India and outside. The Jats claim descent from the ancient Aryan tribe of Yadu in common with some of the Rajput tribes like the Bhattis. Some historians are sceptic about it and hold them to be the Gaete of Scythian stock. As early as the seventh century, the Jats are mentioned as pirates in Dwarka, roving vendors of *jatti* cloth in Arabia; and, in their original home in the delta of the Indus, they are described as good agriculturists, doughty catle-lifters and desperate robbers. In Sindh they were a source of trouble to the Arab government of Muhammad bin Qasim, who transplanted some of them either to die or flourish in the waterlogged and malarious fens of the Shat-ul-Arab in the delta of the Euphrates and the Tigris. But a jat is proverbially hard to die or be killed by Nature, howsoever unkind. As a sage warning against the revengeful Jat, there goes the countryside proverb, "Be not sure about a Jat's death until the thirteenth day after funeral is over!" The Indian Jat and his buffalo multiplied rapidly between the sands of Arabia and the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris, where they soon proved an inconvient problem to their Muslim neighbours. From the lower reaches of the Euphrates-Tigris delta, a portion of the Jat tribes was transplanted to the No Man's Land between Islam and Christianity to plague the Byzantines. From this region it is said some of the Jats were taken away captive to Constantinople, and according to one theory, they became the ancestors of the Gypsies of Europe.

However, within India authentic history credits the Jats with relieving Mahmud Ghaznavi and Amir Timur, Nadir and Abdali of a portion of their Indian plunder in Sindh and the Punjab. Aurangzeb and the later Mughals had a very unpleasant memory of Churaman Jat's strongholds of Sinsini and Thun in the modern

Bharatpur division of Rajasthan; the Marathas knew them well as friends and enemies; and the British could not easily forget Bharatpur and Hathras. Rajah Surajmal Jat in the eighteenth and Maharajah Ranjit Singh in the nineteenth century held up high the prestige of the Jat in war and diplomacy. In their long career of revolt and fight against the Mughal empire and Amad Shah Abadali, the Jats headed a Hindu reaction against Muslim rule in Upper India and the Punjab. The career of Churaman Jat is a stirring episode of the Jat struggle for independence that had begun with the revolt of Gokla Jat of Sadabad, now a tehsil of Mathura district in the then Mughal subah of Agra (1665 A. D.)

The predatory and political career of Churaman Jat has been pretty exhaustively treated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar and William Irvine. Since then no literary sources have come to light to justify a reconstruction of Churaman's history. During my investigations into the history of the baronial house of Diggi of Jaipur State, I came across a number of *Akhabarat* written to and by the Jaipur Vakil, Meghraj. These documents throw a flood of light on the activities of Churaman, and on the Jat activities in general, during the years from about 1688 to 1700 A. D.

Churaman has not, and could not, receive justice from historians who look at the history of this period from the stand-point of imperialism and the Mughal Empire. History in general is the target of a cynical sarcasm that nothing succeeds like success with a historian also: the unsuccessful patriots are the *rebels* of history; whereas successful rebels are dubbed as patriots by historians. Churaman was admittedly a rebel, and a successful rebel too, who died in virtual independence though without regal honours and titles. The cause he fought for was the aspiration of his people to free themselves from the intolerable oppression, religious and political, during the reign of Aurangzeb. Churaman's disadvantage was that unlike other leaders of Hindu independence of this age *e. g.*, Shivaji, Chhatarsal Bundela and Durgadas Rathor, he was a man of obscure

birth of plebian origin. Time has perhaps come to give these "Village Hampdens" their meed of fame and honour and to reassess the moral values of their success.

It is not known from any contemporary source when and where Churaman was born. Iswardas, the earliest and the only contemporary chronicler, says that Churaman was a son of the brother of Rajaram Jat. Next in importance are the Persian chronicles *Masir-i-Alamigri* of Mustaid Khan, and Khan Khan's *Muntakhab-ul-Labab*. These two authorities give Churaman's father's name as Bhajja, whose relationship with Rajaram they do not mention. It is not unlikely that Bhajja, whose full name was perhaps Bhajuram, was a brother of Rajaram. As regards the original home of Churaman's family, *Imad-us-Sadat*,¹ rather a late authority, says on hearsay evidently that Churman was the son of a Jat *Zamindar* of Barsana situated between the land of Braj and Rajputana. Barsana is the reputed home of Sri Radha's father in the district of Mathura. Wendel, who visited Bharatpur in the second half of the eighteenth century, mentions a second Jat leader named Ram-chehra. He says, "Ram-chehra fell into the prince's hands, and Rajaram fled dangerously wounded."² It is not unlikely. Rajaram, Bhajja and his son Churaman, Churaman's nephew Badan Singh, the founder of the ruling family of Bharatpur—all came of the sturdy stock of the Mathura Jats, probably from Barsana, 22 miles n.w. of Mathura and 12 miles south of the Jat stronghold of Deeg. Barsana

1. Imad. text 55.

2. Wendel's Ram-chehra cannot be identified. At any rate his statement about Rajaram is wrong. The prince referred to by Wendel is prince Bidar Bakht. Rajaram died about two years before the capture of Sinsini by the prince. "Ram-chehra," who according to Wendel fell into the prince's hand, might be confusion for some other Jat leader. The only notable Jat prisoner captured by the prince was Zorawar Jat, son of Rajaram. Zorawar was taken to the South and executed in Aurangzeb's camp in the same barbarous manner as Sambhaji: son of Shivaji, (vide : Diggi Collection News-sheet No. 134, dated 19th Rabi. II., 34th Reg; middle of January 1691). Ram-chehra is mentioned by Wendel as the leader of the Jats of Soger. We have several news sheets regarding the siege and capture of Soger (about 12 miles S. W. Kumher), captured in June 1691. No leader was taken prisoner there. So Ram-chehra remains a riddle.

was the home of the Brahman diplomat Rupram Katare, who was the *purohit* and political adviser to Surajmal Jat and his successors.

Masir-i-Alamgiri is a contemporary authority which says that, after the death of Rajaram, Bhajja, father of Churaman, assumed the leadership of the Jats. But this is not corroborated by any *akhbarat* of these years. The leadership of the Jats after the capture of Sinsini went to Fatehram Jat, son of Rajaram. He continued resistance to the imperial army under Rajah Bishan Singhji from his stronghold of Pinghora, about 25 miles south of Bharatpur. Bhajja is not mentioned in any news-sheet Aurangzeb's reign.

No activities of Churaman Jat during the life-time of Rajaram, or during the siege of Sinsini, are on record. When the lime-light of contemporary history is turned upon him from 1690 till his suicide by sucking poison in 1721, Churaman reveals himself as a man of stout heart and resourceful brain, a master of guerilla tactics and tactful leader, capable of holding together mutually repellent elements and making them fight under most adverse circumstances for independence against the Mughal Empire. Churaman and Aniram, who managed to escape from Sinsini before its fall in January 1690, were put on the proscription-list of rebel leaders to be captured, dead or alive. But Churaman was equally determined not to desist from fighting the Mughals, and yet not to fall alive into their hands. A dose of poison he always carried with him to deny his enemies the credit of capturing him alive. Churaman had begun his career as the *rahzan* (highway robber) on the imperial highway between Delhi and Agra, and his first success was to be appointed *rahdar* (Protector of the highway) of the same in 1713 by Emperor Farrukhsiyar.

After the fall of Sinsini in January 1690 Rajah Bishansingh Kachhwa was appointed in place of Prince Bidar Bakht to supreme command in the Mathura district for crushing the Jat revolt. The Rajah had secured his transfer for Kohat to Mathura in 1688 by executing an agreement that he would suppress the Jat

revolt in six months with a mental reservation. It was a task which was beyond the power of Amber and the Mughal empire to be accomplished even in sixty years. Churaman's strategy had forced the imperial army to look for its safety of supplies and fight the rebels on both the flanks and the rear from the headquarters of the Rajah at Mathura. Amar Singh Jat of Kher and Rait in the neighbourhood of modern Aligarh and Nanda Jat of Jawar, two miles north-west of the later Jat town of Mursan, were in alliance with the Jat rebels of Agra and Mathura on the western bank of Jamuna. Amar Singh Jat had roused to arms the Jats of Nuh, Chandausi, Khurja, Mahaban, Sadabad and Jaleswar and proved so great a menace in the area that under Aurangzeb's express order the Amber Army under the Rajah's *ataliq* and general Harisingh Khangarwat had to be diverted to the Doab at a critical stage of the siege of Sinsini. Harisinghji defeated Amar Singh and captured his fortresses of Rait and Kher in 1689 and, before he could finish his work, he had to return to Mathura to organise a fresh campaign against the Jats of Sogor, Abair, and Pingora in modern Bharatpur territory. It was Churaman's policy not to confine himself in any stronghold, but to roam at large with a select body of horsemen, organise resistance and open a second theatre of war, before the imperialists would disengage themselves from the one on hand. His bands almost closed, except under strong armed escorts, the imperial highway between Delhi and Mathura. The Ajmir-Agra road via Hindaun and Bayana was similarly rendered unsafe by Churaman's Rajput ally Ransingh Panwar and the Jadhons of Karauli and Tahan-garh on the Chambal. Another ally of Churaman was the Maujjiya Jat of Chinkara, 8 miles south of Fatehpur-Sikri. He directed similar predatory operations in the tract between Dholpur and Agra.

Churaman himself had gone into hiding in the inaccessible jungles and swamps between Sinsini and Alwar. There he recruited a large army of outlaws from Jats, Meos, Minas and the Sekhawat Rajputs. He had a notorious ally in Kanha Naruka whose chief

stronghold was the fort of Barodah, nine miles north of Lachhmangarh in the former Alwar state. Muhamid Khan, the pious and faithless Mughal *faujdar* of Alwar, was in secret collusion with Kanha and Churaman and had his share of the booty. They established their lawless sway in this region, leaving the people the alternative of either sharing their risks and spoils or of paying the government revenue with an additional blackmail as the condition of safety to their lives and lands. It was a general practice to carry off the loyal peasants to their *garhis* and hold them up to a ransom.

The Amber general took the field against the Jat rebels in December 1691 and within a year captured a chain of formidable jungle forts that formed the backbone of the Jat resistance directed by Fatehram from Pingora, and by Churaman, not known to the imperialists from where, because he was reported to be present everywhere in the neighbourhood of the beleaguered *garhis* and yet elusive like wind. Eight miles east of Sinsini lay the *garhi* of Kasot; six miles south-east of Kasot was situated Abair; four miles further south from Abair stood the *garhi* of Sogor, and 18 miles s.s.w. of Abair lay the castle of Pingora from which Fatehram, son of Rajaram, harassed the Amber army during the sieges of Sogor and Abair.

While Rajah Bishansinghji and his general were preoccupied with the operations against this chain of *garhis*, Churaman was reported to be building other forts under the very nose of Rudrasingh Kachhwah, the Mughal commandant of Sinsini. One of these was the *garhi* of Sonkh eight miles s.s.w. of Sinsini and the other, which was completed some years after to be the capital fortress of Churaman, lay eight miles due west of Sinsini at Thun (Jatolee-Thun of the modern atlas). To the west of Abair Churaman was building up a triangular line of defence with the newly-built fort of Sonkh as its apex; a line from Pingora to Bhatauli (8 miles south-west of the Nadbai Rly. station in the Bharatpur state), forming its base, a line from Sonkh via Rasis (four miles east of Nadbai) to Pingora indicating its eastern side. The western flank of this triangle extended from the Banganga river to the hills of Mewat via Bhusawar; 8 miles due

west of Bhusawar stood the strongholds of Churaman's powerful ally Ransingh Panwar, and Garhi-Kesra of Harkishan Chauhan.

From 1690 to 1695 Churaman and his allies were, however, fighting a losing battle against the grim determination and superior generalship of Harisingh Khangarwat who carried on a cruel and devastating war against the Jats. Aurangzeb had given strict orders to kill and pursue the Jats to their remotest retreat, giving no quarters to them on any account. Every *garhi* worth defence fell one by one in Mathura district and Mewat by the end of the year 1693. Fatehram, son of Rajaram, died perhaps in the defence of his *garhi* of Pingora; so the leadership of the war of Jat independence now passed on formally to Churaman. Beaten in the Mathura district, Churaman slipped into hiding at Chinkara held by Maujjiya Jat. There the condition of things had become desperate. The *waqf* villages of the Taj and Etmad-ud-daula had not paid revenue for four years; jagirdars fared worse, and worst was the plight of the Mughal officials in the *Khalsa* parganas, particularly in Dholpur-Bari, where the land-revenue was found in arrears for eleven years.

In 1694 Rajah Bishansinghji and his redoubtable general Harisinghji were ordered to clear the Agra district of the rebels and restore law and order. Situation became alarming on account of the report that all the notorious Jat ring-leaders ousted from their *garhis* in Mathura district had moved into Agra district to fan the flame of revolt. Most of them including Churaman were actually in hiding at Chinkara. Before the lines of investment were complete, Churaman with his lieutenants escaped from the fort. Harisinghji went in pursuit of them relentlessly destroying suspect villages within a radius of thirty miles. But Churaman could be found nowhere. Meanwhile, Chinkara was captured; but Churaman's ally Maujjiya Jat had managed to escape. The fugitive Jat leaders were hanging about in the neighbourhood and their presence flared up troubles in parganas Khanwa and Rupbas. Harisinghji after a hard fight captured one thousand Jats, men, women and

children, of whom five hundred were publicly executed on the imperial highway, and the rest with a son of Alia Jat of Abair were reserved for execution on the police *chabutra* of Agra. But reverses and examples of barbarous ferocity did not break the spirit of resistance. Four miles west of Khanwa lay the Jat forts of Korasa and Sismandi in Pargana Khanwa. There the imperialists were held up for sometime, enough to give Churaman and his companions to fly and rouse the Jats in the neighbourhood of Bharatpur and Agra to a fresh rising. Bichhaundi, one mile east of the modern town of Bharatpur, Undhara (seven miles due east of Bichhaundi), Chaksana (one mile south of Undarh), and Maikanda (six miles s.w. of Agra Cantt.) formed a wide loop of revolt. Harisinghji with the co-operation of the *thanadars* of the neighbourhood mercilessly combed out the affected area meeting desperate resistance even from the Jat women in arms, who were not spared by the Rajputs. But the main objective failed. Churaman with his party gave the imperialists a clever slip and were reported to be hiding in the broken jungle-clad ravines of the Chambal, somewhere between Ratangarh and Bargaon (26 miles south of Bayana and 16 miles west of Karauli). The proscription-list of names of persons who were wanted dead or alive by Aurangzeb stood as follows :—

1. Lodha, Bukna and others expelled from Soghor.
2. Churaman, Aniram ,, ,, Sinsini
3. Nanda etc., sons of Alia Jat ,, Abair
4. Jagman and Banarasi Jat ,, *garhi* Saunkh
(14 miles s.w. of Mathura)
captured by prince Bidar
Bakht.
5. Maujjiya and others, fugitives from Chinkara
(7 miles south of Fatehpur-Sikri).

3

Defence of Ratangarh

Churaman's tactics in fighting a delaying action against the Amber army led by Harisinghji during the

dry season of the year 1694 would have done credit to any first-rate soldier of his age. He calculated on the coming monsoon to give him some respite from the relentless pursuit of the imperialists. The imperial army was still in the neighbourhood of Rupbas and Fatehpur-Sikri, meditating a south-west drive in the direction of Ratangarh. A report of Harisinghji's spies gives us a clear indication of Churaman's strategy. It was learnt that the Jats had again assembled in strength at Burgawan, 3 miles west of Jagnair, and that the rebels of Jagnair and Ratanpur were devising a concerted action against the Amber army. "When the Mughaliya Rajah (Bishan Singhji) would be marching upon Ratangarh" so the report went, "you (from Burgawan) should give the Rajah a resolute fight in front; while we from behind will be cutting off his communications via Agra-Ranthambhor Road, and plundering the villages of the pargana Rupbas lying near the highway."

This did not exhaust all the ingenuity of the Jat. The western flank of Churaman's new position at Ratangarh was protected by the Jadhon principality of Karauli, whose old chief Rajah Ratanpal had neither the power nor intention to drive away his own kinsmen, the Jadhon bandits and the notorious Ransingh Panwar, who had all taken shelter in his territory. They were ready to fall upon the Amber army from the rear, should they get entangled in the siege of Ratangarh. But the superior resources of the imperialists bore down all obstacles. Harisinghji deprived Churaman of any prospect of assistance from his bandit allies in Karauli sending a strong detachment to drive away Ransingh Panwar. The approaches to Ratangarh were cleared of thick jungles, and the Jat outside the jungle is a Samson shorn of his locks. Ratangarh was captured in the first week of June 1694; but Churaman and his followers again had made good their escape probably to the south of the Chambal.

This was a very critical period for Churaman who had lost everything except his unconquerable will and the dose of poison he carried with him. Churaman was saved by a mis-calculation of Aurangzeb who thought

that the Jat menace on the west bank of the Jamuna could now be fought by a less capable man than Harisinghji. So after the fall of Ratangarh, he appointed Rajah Kalyan Singh Bhudauriya *vice* Rajah Bishan Singhji to deal with the Jats of the Agra district and diverted the Amber army to the subjugation of Nanda Jat of Jawar, who had put an end to Mughal administration in the parganas of Mahaban, Sadabad and Jaleswar. Harisinghji died in an assault on Jawar (31st March 1695) to the great relief of Churaman and his allies. Meanwhile, Churaman had issued out from his hiding and restored the situation almost to what it had been after the fall of Sinsini. Rajah Bishansinghji captured Jawar, but Nanda's sons escaped and lived to found the principalities of Hathras and Mursan.

In 1695 after seven years of imprisonment Prince Muazzam had been released and sent to Agra as viceroy to deal with the Jats, who under the leadership of Churaman had virtually established their own predatory Raj in the country-side of Agra and Mathura districts, and by Nanda's sons in some parts of the Doab. The shadow of an impending war of succession had fallen on the Mughal empire and Muazzam was more intent on securing partisans than fighting the Jats. About a year after (July 1696) the prince with Rajah Bishan Singhji left Agra for Afghanistan under orders of transfer. This set free Churaman to consolidate his power further. Sinsini had become a point of honour with Churaman, a sort of Somnath to be avenged on Aurangzeb, a second Mahmud of Ghazni who spared no means to destroy his people and their religion. Between 1696 and 1707 A. D. Churaman rebuilt Sinsini in defiance of the Mughal government when Aurangzeb breathed his last (March, 1707). During the war of succession Churaman emerged fully into the lime-light of history. He gathered a large army and sat on the fence promising allegiance to both the rival princes and yet actively joining neither party. On the day of the battle of Jajau, Churaman plundered the camps of both Azam and Muazzam impartially and made himself more solvent than any Rajah or Mughal grandee of his time.

Churaman had built Thun a stronger and larger fort than Sinsini and rebuilt the fort of Sinsini itself (8 miles east of Thun), after it had been destroyed by Mukhtar Khan, the Subahdar of Agra in October 1705. To punish the audacity of Churaman the new emperor sent a strong army under Riza Bahadur, who marched upon Sinsini and captured it after several months' siege in December 1707, Churaman now thought it politic to make overtures of peace, which Bahadur Shah was no less eager to accept. Churaman came to Agra, repented of his conduct and returned with a *mansab* of 1500 jats, 500 *sawar*.

4

Churaman as a grandee of the Empire

A new chapter of Churaman's career began with his acceptance of *mansab* in Mughal service. A year after Churaman joined Riza Bahadur, the imperial faujdar and the last conquerer of Sinsini, in an attack on Ajit Singh Kachhwaha, the zamindar of Kama in the Mathura district, Churaman shed his first drop of blood in Mughal service; but Riza Bahadur lost his life in an attack on Kama. Ajit Singh, however, was ultimately overthrown perhaps through the exertions of Churaman who had a direct interest in removing the Kachwah thorn by his side.

Churaman with a very strong contingent of Jats accompanied Bahadur Shah in his expedition against the Sikhs in 1710. Though of same stock, religion obliterated the tie of blood between the Sikh Jat of the Punjab, and the Hindu Jats outside the Punjab. Hindus fought for their independence piecemeal, having no consciousness of an all-India nationalism. Guru Gobind Singh served against the Ahoms of Assam, and the Rajputs with their proverbial zeal and valour against the Marathas and the Jats. Churaman took the side of Jahandar Shah in the war of succession that followed the death of Bahadur Shah in 1712. He was present with the army of Jahandar Shah in the battle of Agra (January 1713), not to fight but bide his time to fall upon the baggages

and camps of both the parties in the confusion of battle; because he knew that it was wiser to provide himself amply with the sinews of war against whosoever would come off victorious. He looted to his heart's content and vanished into his jungle fastness, though his headstrong son Muhkamam Singh perhaps exerted himself somewhat for the losing side. After the accession of Farrukhsiyar, Chabela Ram, the Subahdar of Agra, was ordered to punish Churaman. Churaman had his finger on the pulse of the imperial court, torn as it was with factions, and the secret intrigues of high dignitaries against one another. He purchased the patronage of the Sayyid Wazir Abdullah with a rich present of supplies he had gathered. Chabela Ram failed, and was replaced by the easy going Khan-Dauran Samsamuddaula who soon found it beyond his power to subdue Churaman by force of arms. So he offered terms to Churaman who was always ready to bargain on favourable terms.

Churaman with a strong following and the airs of a *haft-hazari* reached Barapula about 10 miles south of Delhi, where he was received by Rajah Bahadur Rathor, a son of the maternal uncle of Farrukhsiyar's father. Churaman's faults were pardoned and he was appointed to a very lucrative post of *Rahdar* of the imperial highway from Delhi to Dholpur ferry, where none else except the Jats could guarantee any security. But the wolf did not change his nature. Churaman stretched his lawful authority to lawlessness and jagirdars and merchants soon cried for relief from the high-handedness of the Jat octroi-collectors. Rajha Sawai Singh offered to lead a campaign against Churaman, who was a thorn by the side of Amber and an ally of Ajit Singh Rathor of Marwar. In 1716 Rajah Sawai Jai Singh marched at the head of a well-appointed army, swelled by the contingents of Hadas and Gaurs, in the direction of Churaman's fortress of Thun. As regards Churaman's preparation, it was reported that he had stored grain, ghee, salt and tobacco for his garrison to last for twenty years. Churaman was quite modern in his plan of defence. He forced all non-combats and merchants to leave Thun, leaving their property behind. The story

of about sixteen months' unsuccessful siege of Thun so graphically described by Irvin need not be repeated here. The field army of the Jats under his dare-devil son Muhakam Singh and nephew Rupa¹ severely engaged the imperialists outside the walls of Thun. The imperialists only gained success enough to continue the siege.

The army of Sawai Jai Singh before Thun was in the same plight as that of prince Bidar Bakht had been twenty-eight years before. The Jats cut off trade and communications between Agra and Delhi and plundered right and left, sparing only the jagirs of the Wazir. Churaman's diplomatic agents at Court completely won over the Wazir who delayed the despatch of reinforcements to the Rajah and at last procured Farrukhsiyar's reluctant consent for a negotiated peace and the recall of the army of Sawai Jai Singh, who, however, received poor consolation at Court by being given the high-sounding title of *Maharajadhiraj*.

Soon after the conclusion of peace, Churaman was summoned by the Wazir (Sayyid Abdulla) to Delhi,

1. The name of Rupa, *nephew* of Churaman, gives a clue to establish the relationship between Churaman and Badan Singh, the founder of the present ruling house of Bharatpur. *Sujan-charit*, a Hindi poem written by Sudan under the patronage of Surajmal Jat of Bharatpur, contains a couplet in which Nawab Safdarjang of Oudh says to Surajmal, *i. e.* "Rup Singh, your uncle, and Sadat Khan (Burhan-ul-mulk, maternal uncle and father-in-law) had been friends. You have made this hereditary alliance two-fold stronger!"

If Rup Singh was an uncle of Surajmal he and his brother (younger) must have been the sons of a brother of Churaman. The genealogical table of the descent of Surajmal omits all reference to Churaman for reasons too evident. Badan Singh's father according to poet Sudan, the author of *Sujan-charit*, was one Bhao Singh who was the son of Khan Chand. This Khan Chand is praised highly for his valour. He is said to have established his Raj in Braj by defeating the armies of Delhi. But Khan Chand's name is not mentioned in any history. Khema Jat "one of Churaman's chief officers" joined the army of Muhammad Shah during its march in the direction of the Jamuna from Rajputana. This Jat, according to Irvin, was placed in charge of the Imperial rear-guard (Later Mughals. ii, p. 71). It is not unlikely that *Khanchand* of poet Sudan was the same this Khema Jat, whose relationship with Churamans remains undecided.

where an intrigue was on foot to oust the Sayyid brothers from power. He remained faithful to the Sayyids and joined Hussain Ali with his contingent, when he was on march to the Deccan with the Emperor Muhammad Shah in 1720 by way of Rajputana. After the treacherous murder of Husain Ali, the anti-Sayyid party made a high bid for the allegiance of Churaman who under inevitable circumstances wisely swore loyalty in the name of Bhagwan but with a mental reservation for the Sayyid's cause. The very first service he was called upon to render was to act as guide from pargana Toda Bhim 45 miles in straight line s. w. of Fatehpur-Sikri to some place on the Jamuna between Agra and Delhi avoiding all important towns which were under the officers of the Sayyids. The easiest and shortest route lay through Churaman's own territory, but Churaman was careful to keep it a *terra incognita* to the Mughals. So he cleverly persuaded the Emperor to take another route. Churaman led the Emperor's party through the Jagir villages of his enemy, Sawai Jai Singh, and a waterless jungle by way of Kama and Pahri to Barsana in the Mathura district. Churaman paid silently his debt of gratitude to Sayyid Abdullah on the day of the battle of Hasanpur.

After the fall of the Sayyids the disintegration of the Mughal empire set in. The Marathas had already made Malwa and Gujrat their sphere of loot, the young Peshwa Bajirao was dreaming of planting the Maratha flag on the Indus, and Bundelkhand was virtually independent under Maharajah Chhtrasal Bundela. In Rajputana the diplomacy and statesmanship of Sawai Jai Singh had expanded the principality of Amber into a fairly large compact kingdom, and Maharajah Ajit Singh of Marwar made scarcely veiled attempt at independence. So Churaman also gave up his policy of humouring the Great Mughal by alternate submission and bribe and of politic treachery and plunder. He set about organising his scattered territorial acquisitions and creating a sort of federal Jat State under the very shadow of the second capital of the Mughal Empire. With the growing Jat power, the Jat political vision also widened. There

could be no peace between the Jats and the Kachhwahas, because a river of blood was flowing between them since the time of Sawai Jaisinghji's father, Bishansinghji. It was the ambition of Sawai Jaisinghji to crush the Jats of Agra and Mathura district with the backing of the emperors and round off his expanding possessions by securing the Jat-country in Jagir. Against this contingency Churaman had already armed and himself by a defensive alliance with Maharajah Ajit Singh Rathor. Ajit was the first Rajput chief to recognise Churaman as a *Thakur*, by discarding the Rajput's aristocratic pride. Churaman is said to have had visited Jodhpur and been seated on the same carpet with Maharajah Ajit Singh. This was perhaps at the time of Sayyid Hussain Ali's campaign in Rajputana at the beginning of Farrukhsiyar's reign. However, the Rathor was an ally to be relied upon against the Kachhwah.

Churaman had crossed the Rubicon by his double treachery to Muhammad Shah. The Nizam and Sawai Singh controlled the Court politics and they could never forgive Churaman. So Churaman was again at open war with the Mughal Empire. His Rathor ally had given the worst offence to the family of Timur and to Islam by taking away his widowed daughter from the imperial harem to Jodhpur, where her *shuddi* was performed ceremoniously. Ajit Singh was called upon to surrender Ajmer, which he refused. Saadat Khan, the newly appointed subahdar of Agra, was ordered to advance against him, but Churaman barred the way. Churaman sent a strong force under the command of his son, Muhkam Singh to reinforce Ajit at Ajmer. Saadat Khan turned his army against the Jats but with the same bitter experience as that of every Mughal general who had ever ventured into the interior of the Jat country. This attempt of the imperialists only fanned the Jat conflagration. Surajmal Mishan, the author of Hindi epic, *Vamsabaskar*¹, that the Jats raised such a tumult as to create great consternation at Delhi. The last victory won by the Jats was to defeat and kill Nil-

1. This epic written in the second half of the eighteenth century is veritably a Mahabharat of Rajputana numbering 4368 pages. For Jat Singh's capture of Thun see : p. 3059.

kantha Nagar, the deputy-subahdar of Agra, who had taken a position near Fatehpur Sikri with an army of ten thousand horses and numerous infantry (26th September, 1721). But at this hour of triumph, family dissensions ruined the future of the nascent Jat power. Saadat Khan won over Rupa Jat and his nephew, Badan Singh to his side. About the same time his eldest son, Muhkam Singh, a youngman of valour without brain, had become swollen-headed by his success and reputation as a soldier. Churaman's younger son, Zulkaran, was a typical grabbing Jat, ready to defy everybody crossing his path. The two brothers quarrelled over the property of one of their wealthy relations. Churaman at the request of the *Panch* (council of elders) asked Muhkam to make a compromise, but received only abusive language and defiance from his son. So old Churaman looked for his dose of poison which no enemy but a disobedient son made him swallow and die un-noticed and unregretted in a distant and lonesome orchard.

SOME SIDE-LIGHTS ON THE CHARACTER AND COURT-LIFE OF SHAH JAHAN

The very name of the Emperor Shah Jahan conjures up a vision of the Taj, the Peacock-throne, and a lonely tower of the Agra Fort where he died a prisoner of his own son. His life-history is a long tale of romance and tragedy in which love, adventure and pathos abound. It is said that the glamour of the Tajmahal hides many an ugly trait of his character and many unhappy features of his reign—which are revealed in the accounts of the contemporary foreign travellers. We propose to keep clear of controversy, and limit our survey to a few aspects of his character and rule in the light of original Persian authorities, occasionally supplemented by Hindi literary traditions. We shall depict Shah Jahan as he loved to see himself portrayed in his Court-history, *Padshah-nama* which the great minister Sadullah Khan used to read out to the Emperor, and make necessary corrections at his suggestion.

In character the contrast between Akbar and Shah Jahan is more striking than resemblance—the latter was essentially a reactionary with a missionary zeal to exalt Islam by repressing other religions. After his accession to the throne Shah Jahan abolished many un-Islamic innovations of Akbar (*e.g.*, prostration before the throne) restored Hijri Era in the State Calendar, and revived the influence of the orthodox party who hailed him as the real *Mahdi* (Guide), after the dark regime of the anti-Christ, *i.e.*, his grand-father Akbar. During his reign the empire lost to a great extent its national character and became pre-eminently an Islamic state, governed according to the institutes of Muhammad (*Shariyat-i-Muhammadi*). But the character of Shah Jahan partook of a double nature—an actual combination of Muslim orthodoxy and a profane tradition of age of Akbar. He was Dara and Aurangzib in one; the latter representing the 'other side of the medal'.

Shah Jahan believed in the merit of even forcible conversion as the Tradition says, 'God marvels at men that are dragged to Paradise with chains.' He spared the rebels on their conversion to Islam, and those who refused his clemency were treated with genuine Turkish brutality. Rank, office and rewards were bestowed on Hindu renegades; even *Jihad*¹ was approved when it was not likely to cause a general commotion among the Hindus. In Kashmir he changed the Hindu names of places into Islamic and destroyed some Hindu shrines. He prohibited the construction of new temples on the Crown lands of the Empire, and within a few years of his accession 76 Hindu temples in the processes of building were destroyed within the jurisdiction of Benares alone. Some of the Feringi prisoners of Hughly were pardoned on their conversion to Islam while others were allowed to perish in the prison; all their images were broken except two which were thrown into the Jamna. Shah Jahan destroyed a happy picture of Hindu-Muslim unity which even the most optimistic patriot of to-day can hardly imagine. 'In the month of Rabi-us-sani, A.H. 1044, when the Imperial standard reached the neighbourhood of Bhimbar Pass at the foot of the Kashmir hills, His Majesty learnt that the *Mussalmans* of this place, owing to their primitive ignorance, gave their own daughters in marriage to the Hindus [*ba-Kufār dokhtar medehend*] and also took wives from them. There was an understanding that Hindu women married by Mussalmans were to be buried and Muslim girls were to be burnt according to Hindu custom, after death. The Emperor who is the Shelter of the Faith—ordered that the Hindus who had married Muslim women must be compelled either to renounce infidelity or to part with

1. Reference : A local officer who had undertaken a '*Jihad*' to convert a remnant of Hindu population of *Darubeki*, 40 miles south of Jalalabad is praised (Waris MS. 107b). Aunchal and Incha were given the name Sahibabad and Islamabad respectively (*Pad*, ii, pp. 49, 51); the Waqia-navis (News-writer), reports the destruction of temples in Benares, (*ibid.*, i, pp. 451-2); Christian images thrown into the Jamuna (*ibid.*, i, p. 535), Rajah Bakhtawar Kachchawa who had accepted Islam gets Rs. 2,000 in reward (*ibid.*, i, p. 540). at the recommendation of Aurangzib, Premji, the son of the Hindu Rajah of Baglana, named Sadat-mand after conversion, receives a mansab of 1,500 zat, 1,000 sawars (*ibid.*, iii, p. 142).

their Muslim wives. Jogu, a Zamindar of these parts—from whom these despicable customs had originated—through the grace of God, and *out of fear, and at the desire of His Majesty (bim o ummed-i-Hazrat Sahib-qivan Sani)*, with all his kinsmen accepted Islam, and was honoured with the title of Rajah Daulatmand.¹

Shah Jahan discontinued religious debate, and all coquetting with heathen philosophy; nor did he take any personal interest in the Hindu festivals of *Dewali* and *Rakhi-binding*. He instituted the *Shab-i-barat* as a national festival which was celebrated with much pomp wherever the Emperor happened to stay. In the year 1639 when Shah Jahan was at Lahore, Ali Mardan Khan once solicited permission to arrange a display of illumination in the Persian style in the night of *Shab-i-barat*. On the night of 11th Shaban A.H. 1049 the spacious court-yard of the Public Audience Hall of Lahore was wonderfully illuminated under the skilful management of Ali Mardan who as it were, made every inch of ground emit light. The Emperor sat on the throne and ordered fire-works to be burnt in the court-yard of the Hall, and also outside, on the plain below the *Jharoak-i-darshan* for the enjoyment of the people at large. 'On this night Rs. 10,000 was distributed in alms to the poor; and Mullah Fazil, and Mullah Abdul Hakim Sialkoti received two hundred ashrafis each as gifts out of the gold of Weighing (*az-zar-i-wazn*).'² 'The *Milad* on the anniversary of the Prophet was an occasion of great solemnity at Court, and on this day only the Emperor of Hindustan, the shadow of the Almighty (*Zill-i-Sobhani*), debased himself by descending from the throne, and taking his seat on carpet spread upon the ground. On the night of 12th Rabi-ul-awwal, A.H. 1043, the Emperor ordered a majlis to be held in the Palace (of Agra). A group of scholars, pious men, and Quran-reciters read the Quran, and narrated the virtues and noble actions of the Prophet; rose-water was profusely scattered and perfumes distributed; and trays of food, sweet-meat and *haluwa* were given to the people. As a token of

1. *Pad*, ii, 57.

2. *Shab-i-barat* celebrated at Lahore, *Pad*, iii, pp. 167-8.

reverence to this night of solemnity, His Majesty took his seat on a carpet spread on the ground, and made gifts of *Farji* (tout-cloth?), and wrappers (shawl) to the Faqirs.....Rs. 20,000 in all was distributed in charity to the poor on this occasion.¹

Shah Jahan used to send lavish presents, and gifts of money every year to Mecca and Medina ; once a candlestick (*Qandil*), studded with jewels was presented to the Prophet's tomb ; among the jewels, there was one uncut diamond which alone weighed 180 *rattis*.²

In spite of orthodoxy, Shah Jahan could not completely free himself from some of the popular superstitions of the age. Foremost among these was his regard for astrology. In fixing the auspicious moments of marriage, etc., calculation was made according to Greek and Hindu systems independently, and the Emperor was not satisfied till they reached unanimity. We are told that the *lagna* of Dara's marriage was thus fixed by the astrologers of Greece and Hindustan (*ke mukhtar-i-anjum shanāsian-i-Yunnān-u-Hindustan bud*).³ Astrologers once predicted that the Emperor was likely to fall ill, and that this could be averted by a special Weighing (*wazn*)! Accordingly the Emperor was weighed against gold on the eighth Rabi-us-sani, 1043.⁴ Shah Jahan continued the custom of weighing himself twice every year against gold and silver on his Lunar and Solar birth-days—a Hindu religious practice—*Tulā purush* adopted by Akbar. As this was an incongruity, and a violation of *Shariyat* (religious ordinance of Islam), Abdul Hamid offers an explanation for its retention, and says that it was calculated to take off evil and benefit the poor, and particularly the Ulema class among whom the gifts were distributed. On his Solar Birth-day the Emperor was weighed twelve times against the following articles successively; gold, silver, silk, perfumes, copper, *ruh-i-tutya* (quick-silver?), drugs, *ghee*, rice-milk, seven kinds of grain and salt ; and on Lunar Birth-day eight times

1. *Pad.*, i, pp. 539—40.

2. February 1648 ; Waris Ms. 10 b.

3. *Pad.* i, p. 458.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

against the following ; gold, silver, tin, cloth, lead, fruits, and vegetables. The third great festivity of the year was the Nauroz which, in spite of its un-Islamic character, had become sanctified by usage. The Court-life of Shah Jahan was indeed an unbroken round of pomp and festivity which served to alleviate the gloom of reaction. Outwardly his regime was a continuation of the Age of Akbar, though beneath the surface, the strong under-current of reaction was sapping the foundation of the Empire.

A child of the Orient, Shah Jahan could not but have in him an element of mysticism which was inherited by Dara. His hereditary devotion to Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti can be inferred from the fact that in the Court-history a biographical sketch of that saint is introduced as an auspicious preface to the narrative of his reign. He often received and returned the visits of eminent Sufi teachers of his age. We are told that on December 18, 1634 the Emperor paid a visit to the famous saint Mian Mir in his abode in the neighbourhood of Lahore, and spent sometime in discoursing on the mysteries of Truth and Gnosis.¹ 'On one occasion when singers and jugglers were entertaining the royal assembly, Shaikh Nazir who had been invited to Court on account of his fame in working miracles—suddenly fell into ecstasy and called for a glass of water. The Shaikh drank a little and passed it on to others; everyone who tasted of it declared it to be pure honey. . . Prince Dara Shukoh and Qazi Muhammad Islam submitted to His Majesty that in Agra the Shaikh had in their presence once transformed a handkerchief into a pigeon (kabutar); further they added that once the Shaikh gave into their hands a blade of grass but out of the fold came out a worm into which the blade of grass had transformed itself.'²

The reign of Shah Jahan was a period of transition from the enlightened Nationalism of Akbar to the gloomy orthodox reaction of the days of Aurangzib. However his Court remained a happy meeting-ground of Hindu and Muslim cultures, and literary merit and

1. *Pad*, ii, p. 65.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 337.

genius were liberally rewarded without any discrimination of creed. Though it is in vain that one looks for any Hindu names in Abdul Hamid's notice of poets and learned men of the age, he has preserved for us in scattered passages of *Padshah-nama*, an interesting picture of Shah Jahan's patronage to Hindu poets, musicians, and intellectual prodigies. 'On September 14, 1629, Yamin-ud-daula Asaf Khan brought to the Court two Tirhut (in North Bihar) Brahmans. Ten newly composed Hindi (*Sanskrit*) stanzas recited before them only once by ten different poets in succession—could be exactly repeated by each of these two Brahmans in same order; besides they could compose extempore ten stanzas more on those very topics and in the self-same metres. . . . His Majesty bestowed khilats on them with Rs. 1,000 in reward to each.¹ At his Court Jagannath Pandit, the famous author of *Ras Gangadhar*, wrote a poem in praise of Asaf Khan (Asaf-lahari), and a *Kavya* 'Jagadābharamam', the hero of which is Prince Dara Shukoh. This Jagannath is referred to in the *Padshah-nama*, as Jagannath Kalāwant (Musician). The following passage of Abdul Hamid shows that Jagannath also composed a panegyric in Sanskrit on the Emperor Shah Jahan—which may some day come to light: 'On the 22nd Rabi-us-sani, A. H. 1044. . . . Jagannath Kalāwant presented at Bhimbar twelve literary pieces (*tasnifat*) which in Hindustani they call Dharand (?). These songs (poems?) were composed in the name of His Majesty who became so pleased that Jagannath was weighed against silver and the whole amount Rs. 4,500 was given to him in reward.² This poet-musician was originally given the title of *Kavirāy* which was afterwards changed into *Mahā-kavi-rāy*. In the above passage Abdul Hamid apparently uses the word Hindustani in the sense of Sanskrit; because Jagannath who was a Tailanga Brahman (as we learn from a Sanskrit source), composed songs only in the Karnāṭaka language. Elsewhere he says, 'in this delightful age Jagannath Mahā-kavi-rāy

1. *Ibid.*, i, pp. 268-9

2. *Paḍ.* ii, p. 56.

heads the list of authors.¹ But his charming songs are written in *Karnātak language*, and the people of these tracts owing to their ignorance of this language, cannot understand the meaning and have to be content only with melody and tune of these songs.' This places the identity of Jagannath Pandit beyond challenge and also incidentally proves that the above-mentioned twelve pieces of composition were neither songs nor were they written in Hindustani (*i. e.* Urdu or Hindi as we understands it) but in Sanskrit. Another great Sanskrit scholar, Kavīndrachārya Sarasvati also enjoyed the patronage of Shah Jahan and Prince Dara. A list of his collection of Sanskrit works has been published in the Baroda Oriental Series and we learn from this source that Kavīndra enjoyed the friendship of the enlightened Crown Prince. According to the authors of the History of Hindi Literature *Misra-bandhu-binod* in Hindi), he was a Brahman of Benares, and besides some Sanskrit works of merit, he wrote a Hindi poem of 160 stanzas, entitled *Kavīndra-kalpalata* in which he praises the Emperor and his sons, and describes the splendour of the New Delhi, Shahjanabad, and the happiness of its inhabitants.² Kavīndra is also the author of a philosophical work *Yoga-vāsishṭa sar*³ and he was a familiar figure at Court as early as 1652. 'Kavīndra interviewed His Majesty (at Lahor), and received Rs. 1,500 in reward on the 2nd Zilqada, A. H. 1062.'⁴

Shah Jahan was himself a thorough master of the Hindi vernacular, and appreciated Hindi poetry like his illustrious grandfather. Some poets seemed to have been in the enjoyment of hereditary patronage of the Royal House. One of these was Harināth (or Harnath), son of Akbar's court-poet Narhari Mahāpātra; on January 29, 1640, he received in reward from Shah Jahan, one horse, one elephant and one lakh of *Dams* (40 *d*—1 Ruppee).⁵ According to a Hindi tradition, while Hari-

-
1. *Sar-defṭar-i-musānifān dar in zamān* . . . Jagannath Maha-Kavi-ray ast...
 . . . *Lekin az an ru-i-ke in nughmat* . . . *ba zabān-i-Karnāṭak shuyu dasht*, etc,
Pad, iii, p. 5.
2. *M. B.*, ii, p. 453.
3. *M. B.*, ii, p. 454.
4. *Wariṣ MS.*, p. 191,
5. *Pad*, iii, p. 177.

nāth was returning from the darbar with these gifts, a Brahman beggar read an extempore couplet in his praise, and asked for reward. The poet gave him a lakh of Dams.¹ Khafi Khan says that once the Emperor gave a female elephant and Rs. 2,000 in cash to a Hindi poet who recited a poem in praise of him (*Kabit ba-nam-i-Padshah guftah guzarad*)². However the most serviceable among the Hindu literary satellites of the Court was the poet-diplomat Sundar Kavirāy who is several times mentioned in *Padshah-nama* in connection with his missions to Hindu rebels, Jujhar Singh Bundela and Rajah Jagat Singh of Jammu³. He was a Brahman of Gwalior, and is the author of an erotic poem *Sundar-shringar* in which we are told that he resided at the Court of Shah Jahan, and that he at first enjoyed the title of Kavi-rāy which was afterwards exalted into Mahā-kavi-rāy.⁴ Śiromaṇi Miśra and Vedanga Rāy, Hindi authors of *Urbashi* and *Parsiprakas* respectively, are also said to have enjoyed the patronage of Shah Jahan. Among the Court musicians, Lal Khan was most popular for his unrivalled superiority in singing *Dhrupad*. He was the son-in-law of Bilas, son of Tānsen of Akbar's Court. Lal Khan's sons Khush-hal and Visram were equally proficient in this art; the former used to compose songs in the name of the Emperor (*ba-nam-i-nami khediw-iqbal taṣnifat me-bandad*)⁵. Lal Khan was given the title of *Guna-samudra*, and an elephant in reward on October 8, 1642.⁶ Another Musician Darang Khan was weighed against silver and the whole amount Rs. 4,500 given to him in reward on March 14, 1636.⁷ What strikes us most is the Emperor's patronage to an Armenian, Zulqarnin Feringi. He had written a book in the name of the Emperor and this having met with approval, he was given a robe of honour and Rs. 5,000 in cash. This man seems to have been an expert in Greek astrology and the 'book' referred to is perhaps a horoscope, though the text does not warrant such interpretation (*taṣnifi ke*

1. *M.B.*, ii, p. 470.

3. *Pad*, ii, 94: iii, p. 238.

5. *Pad*, iii, p. 5.

2. *Muntakhab*, ii, p. 707.

4. *M.B.*, ii, pp. 454-5,

6. *Ibid.*, p. 311.

7. *Pad*, ii, p. 142.

ba-nam-i-nami sakhtāh bud).¹ This Armenian secured a mansab of 500 zat, 300 sawars.²

The reign of Shah Jahan suffers by comparison with that of Akbar in every way, except in its achievements in architecture and painting. In administration it produced no first-rate genius except Sadulluah Khan, and in arms only commanders of mediocre ability like Nusrat Jang and Zafar Jang. Rajah Raghunath and other capable Hindū Diwans were kept down to their subordinate position, because the Shaikhs and Sayyids did not like the rise of a second Todar Mal. The author of *Amal-i-Salih* says, 'When the servant of His Majesty represented that it ought to be a custom to appoint a sufficient number of pious Muslims in the Revenue Department, and that so far as possible the Hindus should not be allowed to have a preponderance in offices, so that Sayyids, Shaikhs and men of virtue and piety might not be turned back by them—Rai Manidas was transferred out of this consideration from the *Tan* section of the Treasury and Mullah Abdul Latif Lashkar Khani who was wise in affairs and pure in faith was appointed in his place.'³ Similarly no Hindu general rose to the rank of 7,000 zat during his long reign of thirty years. In the field of letters Abdul Hamid and Kambo were poor successors of Abul Fazl and Nizamuddin; while as poets Haji Muhammad Qudsi and Saida Gilani were but sorry figures by the side of Faizi and Urfi Shirazi. According to expert art-critics, painters of Shah Jahan's court such as Manohar, Nadir Samarqandi, and others were even superior in skill to their masters of the Age of Akbar. The Album of Dara Shukoh occupies the same position and has the same interest in the history of the Indo-Persian Painting as the incomparable Taj in the history of Indo-Muslim Architecture. The taper of the Mughal glory indeed burnt brightest before final extinction.

1. *Ibid.*, iii, p. 138.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 748.

3. Kambu's *Amal-i-Salih*, pp. 513, 518; *Padshah-nama* says that Abdul Latif Gujarati was appointed on the demise of Rai Mani Das on 2nd Rabi-ul-awal, 1042.

PRINCE MUHAMMAD DARÀ SHIKOH AND MIRZA RAJAH JAI SINGH KACHHWAH

The life-history of Prince Muhammad Dara Shikoh is a veritable tragedy—a tale of sharp reverses of fortune, pathetic and melancholy. His is a painful story of virtue ensnared by craft, of benefits forgotten and trust betrayed, of perverse Destiny cruelly turning his own arms against himself. This good-natured and enlightened prince strived hard all through his life to revive the traditions of the days of his great-grand-father Akbar in the face of the growing Islamic orthodoxy at the Mughal Court. We recognise in him the princely hero of Jagannath Pandit's charming epic *Jagadabharanam* (The Ornament of the World), the earnest student of the *Upanishads*, the munificent patron of Kavindracharya and a host of other Sanskrit scholars, the catholic-hearted donor to Hindu temples, and the only refuge of the Hindu suppliants at Shah Jahan's Court. He had, indeed, established a fair and legitimate claim upon the loyal support of the Hindus. He thought he could safely rely, like his great-grand-father, upon the valour and fidelity of the Rajput race. The Rajputs however, with the noble exception of the Hada, proved broken reeds to him. The Sisodia belied his proud tradition, the Rathor wavered and broke his pledge, and the Kachhwah, did not stake much for a sentiment. This paper aims at throwing some light upon the conduct of Mirza Rajah Jai Singh Kachhwah during the War of Succession among Shah Jahan's sons by tracing the early relations between him and Prince Dara.

Among the minor characters of the tragedy of this philosopher-prince of the House of Timur, Mirza Rajah Jai Singh figures perhaps the most prominent. He enters the stage, along with Maharajah Jaswant Singh Rathor, as one of the twin pillars of Dara's strength and hope, trusted at a critical moment of the Prince's fortune with a high and responsible command. At first he acts with apparent zeal in the entire interests of Dara, and

brings the campaign against Shuja to a successful, though tardy, close. He slackens his efforts after Jaswant's defeat at Dharmat, makes delays in replying to the despatches of Dara and the Emperor, receives friendly letters from Aurangzib, and the moment he hears of Dara's overthrow at Samugarh he makes a clean somersault, showing little compunction either for the unfortunate prince or for the helpless Emperor. If we can believe Manucci who served both under Dara and Jai Singh and knew the latter well, the Mirza Rajah played for sometime the game of hunting with the hound and running with the hare. He advises Sulaiman to fly from his camp and sends at his heels a detachment in pursuit ! Then the Rajah joins Aurangzib with almost the whole of the eastern army of Dara, seduced from their allegiance through his efforts, accepts with alacrity the odious commission of killing, capturing or driving Dara beyond the limits of Hindustan. He dissuades, as Manucci alleges, Maharajah Jaswant Singh from joining the forlorn band of Dara assembled at Ajmir, spreads a net of diplomacy to capture Dara, and keeps up a vigorous and keen pursuit, hounding the track of the fugitive prince as far as the sands of Siwistan ; yet he was suspected, though without proof, of wilfully letting Dara escape beyond Aurangzib's reach. Such is the Mirza Rajah depicted by the friendly pen of Manucci.

The despatches from Jai Singh to Aurangzib during the pursuit of Dara after the battle of Ajmir (preserved in *Haft Anjuman* ii f. 26-37 a), reveal the Kachhwah chief as a determined enemy of Dara, bearing, as it were, some ancient grudge against that prince. Another collection of private letters and official despatches which passed between Dara and Jai Singh (dating roughly 1642-1658), have been recently discovered by Professor Jadunath Sarkar, C. I. E., among the Archives of the Jaipur Darbar. These letters, however, tell another tale, showing the existence of the most cordial and intimate relation between the two, till the Mirza chose to forsake the sinking wreck of Dara's fortune after the battle of Samugarh. We find therein a studious effort on the part of Dara to draw the Mirza Rajah closer to his person and interests by evincing (close) friendship

and readiness to oblige by doing him good services at Court. Before Sulaiman could prattle, Dara writes in one of these letters to Jai Singh : "My little son Sulaiman sends you *salam* !" We give below a few more extracts from them.

Letter No. 31—Dara to Jai Singh ; received at the camp of Aurangabad, 24th Safar, 1054 H. (1st April, 1646)

".....Received your letter to the Emperor. You have begged about the marriage of Rao Amar Singh's daughter¹As she is reported to be born of your own sister, I wish that if this marriage takes place it is well and good; otherwise if she is of any other mother you may marry her anywhere you like. My desire is that you and your kinsfolk should be connected with my son Sulaiman Shikoh..... (Ms. p. 73).

No. 34—Dara to Jai Singh; received on the 26th April, 1646. at Aurangabad

".....Kunwar Ram Singh (eldest son of the Mirza Rajah) came and saw me on the 30th March and on 1st April waited on the Emperor through me. His Majesty graciously put questions and praised him for his proper answers. I spoke for you. Ram Singh is created a *hazari* (zat and sawar)....."

No. 41—Dara to Jai Singh.....received March, 1648.

".....I have reached Kabul by forced marches by order of the Emperor and seen His MajestyKunwar Ram Singh was with the Emperor.....We greatly favour him. This is the first journey of the Kunwar.....I reported to His Majesty, and having secured His Majesty's permission for the Kunwar to go home, sent him home from Peshawar....."

No. 39—Dara to Jai Singh, dated 29th Zilqada 1064-H. (22nd October, 1654), *i.e.*, a year after the siege of Qandahar.

1. This marriage was consummated, according to Wāris (*Padshah nama*, Ms. ii, 53) on the 30th March, 1654.

“.....Your letter, full of sincere love and regard carrying the news of the birth of a grandson to you, has reached me. May the coming of the child prove happy and auspicious to you and the father!..... Another news is that the Emperor is going towards Ajmir and will pass by your home. I shall be a guest of yours. The imperial army has attacked the country of the Maharana (Raj Singh of Mewar).¹ I have been always a well-wisher of the Rana. I intend to make the loyalty and purity of the motive of the Rana known to His Majesty, so that the Rana's country may be saved from damages by the imperial army.....”

No. 43—Dara to Jai Singh, written probably in November, 1654.

“.....A great calamity had befallen the Rana.His affair has been settled through great efforts on my part ; his territory and honour remain unaffected. Let it be known to the Rajputs to what extent do I wish well of their race, and show them special favour ! My perfect good will goes with you !”

No. 47—Dara to Jai Singh, dated Rabi-us-sani, 1065-H-February, 1655.

“.....I was very much alarmed at the news that some wretch inflicted on you a wound with a spear. It gives me great joy to learn that your wound is slight and that the wicked fellow has been killed by you. You must keep me informed about the progress of your recovery, as my innermost heart is deeply concerned about your health. I have several times warned you that your enemies are many and that you should be watchful about your person. It is strange you have

¹ ‘Emperor Jahangir had imposed a condition upon Rana Amar Singh that the Rana and his successors should never repair the fortifications of Chitor. Maharana Raj Singh restored the walls of this fort in violation of this injunction. Shah Jahan sent an army to punish him ; the Rana, in fear, solicited the intercession of Prince Dara for securing the Emperor's pardon. His envoys, Rao Ram Chand Chauhan, Raghudas Hada, Sanudas Rathor, and Ganpat Das (Purohit, waited upon the Prince Dara on 2nd Zilhijja, 1064-H (4th October, 1654); Waris Ms. ii, 73—80).

been so careless that such an accident could occur twice. After this you ought to be very cautious.....”

There are some letters written by Dara complaining about the oppression of the Raja's *gumashtas*, in his *jagir*, but there is hardly any thing offending in them. Several letters show that Dara was rather over-anxious to remove the slightest tinge of suspicion and misunderstanding from the mind of the Rajah about his own motive and action. What strikes us most is the cold and inadequate response on the part of the Mirza Rajah to Dara's advances of warm friendship. The following letter of Dara to Jai Singh (written on 9th Zilhijja, year illegible) makes us infer that some suspicion and dislike lingered in the mind of the Rajah..... “Your letter addressed to Fakhir Khan was shown by the Khan to his Majesty. I am very very much surprised to learn the contents of this letter written by one who always received special attention from me and whom I count among one of my sincerest well-wishers. I wonder how you could believe in this sort unreal things on the words of selfish and designing persons who, under the pretence of zeal and friendship, work mischief..... ...You have chastised the Badgujar (a Rajput tribe) at the Emperor's command. When did I employ this rebel tribe in my service ? I trust you fully—don't believe the false report of enemies. Your son is at Court ; write to any one whom you trust to inform you what the Badgujar's name is and when I did engage him. In truth the matter is entirely false..... ..”

Now let us turn to the closing act of the drama. Dara sends the Mirza Rajah as the guardian and Chief of the Staff of Sulaiman Shikoh, who was nominally invested with the supreme command. The Rajah is found making slow marches, more intent on manoeuvring out Shuja than inflicting any sudden and decisive blow at the enemy. Sulaiman in a letter (dated 5th December, 1657) writes to the Rajah—“....I am making short marches only to enable you to join me..... come quick.” Several letters of Dara to the Mirza Rajah also urge rapid marches and fewer halts of the army. The only great and decisive victory (*i.e.*, the

battle of Bahadurpur near Benares, 14th February, 1658) in this campaign was gained at the bold initiative of Sulaiman Shikoh, though the Mirza Rajah and his followers acquitted themselves well when an action was forced upon them. Dara, however, judiciously lavishes praise and presents upon the Mirza Rajah :

Dara to Jai Singh ; dated 20th February, 1658.

“Fakhir Khan arrived on 18 February, 1658, and gave the news of your victory. May God make this victory auspicious to Ala Hazrat Shah Baba (Sulaiman), to Dada Bhai (term of endearment used by Dara to the Mirza Rajah, perhaps on account of his being Sulaiman’s uncle-in-law), to me and all the nobles of this daily increasing state ! You have delighted the departed spirit of Man Singh.....”

Dara sends a special sword and shield as *Yadgar* (Momento) to the Rajah, and a reward of Rs. 50,000, and procures a promotion of the Rajah by a thousand zat and 900 troops and of other officers recommended by him (letter to Jai Singh, received on 25th February, 1658). The following letter shows Dara’s anxiety not to give the Rajah any offence or cause of suspicion by the action of Sulaiman. Sulaiman probably wrote something to the court not favourable to the Rajah. Dara writes to the Rajah..... “The news about the other side (Shuja’s) included in my son’s letters to the Emperor is suspected by His Majesty to be fabricated through malice. It has therefore been written to my son that the news about Shuja should be written by you, so that the Emperor may credit it.....” Perhaps Young Sulaiman, eager for action, complained to the Emperor about too many halts made by the Rajah at Jitpur (?), a place somewhere between Mungir and Patna. The Mirza Rajah who was asked to offer an explanation (letter, dated 15th April, 1658), explains the situation in a long letter¹, alleging strange character of the country, strength of the enemy’s position, etc. Meanwhile the battle of Dharmat is lost by Jaswant Singh. Dara and the Emperor now cling to the Mirza Rajah as their only support and hope.

1. This letter is quoted in full at the end as a specimen.

been so careless that such an accident could occur twice. After this you ought to be very cautious.....”

There are some letters written by Dara complaining about the oppression of the Raja's *gumashtas*, in his *jagir*, but there is hardly any thing offending in them. Several letters show that Dara was rather over-anxious to remove the slightest tinge of suspicion and misunderstanding from the mind of the Rajah about his own motive and action. What strikes us most is the cold and inadequate response on the part of the Mirza Rajah to Dara's advances of warm friendship. The following letter of Dara to Jai Singh (written on 9th Zilhijja, year illegible) makes us infer that some suspicion and dislike lingered in the mind of the Rajah..... “Your letter addressed to Fakhir Khan was shown by the Khan to his Majesty. I am very very much surprised to learn the contents of this letter written by one who always received special attention from me and whom I count among one of my sincerest well-wishers. I wonder how you could believe in this sort unreal things on the words of selfish and designing persons who, under the pretence of zeal and friendship, work mischief..... ...You have chastised the Badgujar (a Rajput tribe) at the Emperor's command. When did I employ this rebel tribe in my service ? I trust you fully—don't believe the false report of enemies. Your son is at Court ; write to any one whom you trust to inform you what the Badgujar's name is and when I did engage him. In truth the matter is entirely false.....”

Now let us turn to the closing act of the drama. Dara sends the Mirza Rajah as the guardian and Chief of the Staff of Sulaiman Shikoh, who was nominally invested with the supreme command. The Rajah is found making slow marches, more intent on manoeuvring out Shuja than inflicting any sudden and decisive blow at the enemy. Sulaiman in a letter (dated 5th December, 1657) writes to the Rajah—“....I am making short marches only to enable you to join me..... come quick.” Several letters of Dara to the Mirza Rajah also urge rapid marches and fewer halts of the army. The only great and decisive victory (*i.e.*, the

battle of Bahadurpur near Benares, 14th February, 1658) in this campaign was gained at the bold initiative of Sulaiman Shikoh, though the Mirza Rajah and his followers acquitted themselves well when an action was forced upon them. Dara, however, judiciously lavishes praise and presents upon the Mirza Rajah :

Dara to Jai Singh ; dated 20th February, 1658.

“Fakhir Khan arrived on 18 February, 1658, and gave the news of your victory. May God make this victory auspicious to Ala Hazrat Shah Baba (Sulaiman), to Dada Bhai (term of endearment used by Dara to the Mirza Rajah, perhaps on account of his being Sulaiman’s uncle-in-law), to me and all the nobles of this daily increasing state ! You have delighted the departed spirit of Man Singh.....”

Dara sends a special sword and shield as *Yadgar* (Momento) to the Rajah, and a reward of Rs. 50,000, and procures a promotion of the Rajah by a thousand zat and 900 troops and of other officers recommended by him (letter to Jai Singh, received on 25th February, 1658). The following letter shows Dara’s anxiety not to give the Rajah any offence or cause of suspicion by the action of Sulaiman. Sulaiman probably wrote something to the court not favourable to the Rajah. Dara writes to the Rajah.....“The news about the other side (Shuja’s) included in my son’s letters to the Emperor is suspected by His Majesty to be fabricated through malice. It has therefore been written to my son that the news about Shuja should be written by you, so that the Emperor may credit it.....” Perhaps Young Sulaiman, eager for action, complained to the Emperor about too many halts made by the Rajah at Jitpur (?), a place somewhere between Mungir and Patna. The Mirza Rajah who was asked to offer an explanation (letter, dated 15th April, 1658), explains the situation in a long letter¹, alleging strange character of the country, strength of the enemy’s position, etc. Meanwhile the battle of Dharmat is lost by Jaswant Singh. Dara and the Emperor now cling to the Mirza Rajah as their only support and hope.

1. This letter is quoted in full at the end as a specimen.

Letter No. 28.—Dara to Jai Singh : “In these days the Emperor frequently recalls you, and says ‘To-day the Rajah is my chief general and in battle the greatest hope of mine.....Work is in him’.”

Letter No. 48 —Dara to Jai Singh : received on the 16th May, 1658.

“.....Come with Sulaiman Shikoh quickly, as I have a large army but no experienced general” Dara wrote despatches in succession to the Mirza Rajah ordering him to come only with select troops and light kit. He procured the promotion of the Rajah to the rank of the commander of 7,000. The Rajah reached only as far as Korah where the disastrous news of Samugarh broke upon him. The cautious and calculating Kachhwah was easily convinced of the folly of unselfish devotion to the cause of Dara.

With characteristic mercenary logic he now considered himself absolved from all ties of allegiance to Shah Jahan, and of alliance, political and matrimonial, with the unfortunate Dara.

Poor Dara wrote perhaps his last letter to the Rajah from Mathura. It breathes the same noble and kind sentiments of the prince who yet fondly hoped that the Rajah would join him at Delhi and fight his battles. This letter (quoted in full in the appendix) conveys to the Rajah the news of the safety of the Rajah’s sons, and of the death of Rustam Khan Firuz Jang and several other nobles.

Was there all love and cordiality between Dara and Jai Singh as the above mentioned extracts seem to indicate ?

In truth, had Dara known the art of employing language to conceal his thoughts, Aurangzib might not have so easily snatched away the crown of Hindustan from him. Admitting, however, that the Prince was gracious and sincere in his professions of goodwill and friendship, how did the Rajah take them? Cold, calculating and shrewd, the Kachhwah chief certainly regarded these

little services at Court, congratulations and flattering encomiums as too low a bid for his sword which could possibly hew a way for the Prince to the throne of Delhi. If the all powerful heir apparent who ruled the dotting heart of the old Emperor were so generous and true to him, how was it that inspite of his seniority in years and faithful services the Mirza Rajah was kept in the rank of 5,000, while his Rathor rival Jaswant rose to that of 6,000?

Even after the Mirza Rajah's victory over Shuja near Benares, his increased rank was kept lower to that of Jaswant by 100 *sawar*. No personal tie, no solemn pledge of support bound him to Dara. He owed allegiance to Shah Jahan only and when that emperor ceased to be the *de facto* ruler, could any code of honour or dictates of policy urge him to transfer that allegiance to his twice-beaten son?

The conduct of the Mirza Rajah is after all not so inconsistent and inexplicable. He went to fight Shuja as a servant of the Emperor Shah Jahan, sharing almost the feelings of his imperial master to all the princes minus Shah Jahan's partiality for Dara. The long halts and short marches were certainly meant to give time and opportunity to Shuja to retire unmolested, as Shah Jahan heartily desired, while Dara in his anger and impatience would have the Rajah take a flight on the wings of Fury for bringing him the head of his rebellious brother! Jai Singh allowed Sulaiman to escape—perhaps Dara, too—as a grateful return for favours he received from them. He perhaps dissuaded Jaswant Singh from joining Dara because he was convinced of the folly of self-less devotion to such an incapable, though high-souled, prince.

Dara was not always so kind, courteous and friendly to the Mirza Rajah as the letters quoted above would make us believe. There was actually a serious quarrel and estrangement between the two during the siege of Qandahar by Dara. The author of the *Lataif-ul-akhbar* who was present at the siege narrates the following incidents:

(1) During the interview on the 18th Jamada II, 1063 A. H. (6th May, 1653), an unseemly altercation

took place between Dara and Jai Singh. The Prince made a taunting remark to the Rajah : "This is the third time that you have come against Qandahar. If you fail this time also what answer will you give to His Majesty, and how will you show your face to the women of Hindustan? In truth women are better than men, who have returned again and again unsuccessful from this place." The Rajah gave a sharp reply, hinting at the incompetence of the prince and returned to his camp in great disgust.

(2) On the 6th Shaaban Jai Singh was sent for and Dara made a very earnest request to him, to make an assault upon the fort, holding out many bright promises. But the Rajah kept a sullen attitude without speaking a word in reply for a considerable time. At last he came away from the Prince's presence, giving him a cold and evasive reply. This attitude he maintained also on subsequent occasions of his interview with the prince.

(3) Dara again summoned the Rajah to a council of war on the 5th Shawwal, 1063 A. H. He said to the Rajah "Raja Jiu, your exertions in the Emperor's business have fallen short of expectation from the beginning. No plea will be heard now. Gird up your loins tightly for storming the fort." Jai Singh, as usual, evaded the issue, protesting loyalty with hollow phrases. Dara in anger said to him, "Your heart and tongue do not seem to agree. What is in your heart, the tongue does not give out, and whatever the tongue utters finds no echo in your heart!" Jai Singh's fearless replies on equal terms displeased the prince who said : "Whether you agree to the proposal of assault or not, I do not give order for it, no matter whether you die or conquer the fort."

(4) On the 11th of Shaaban, Dara sent to the Rajah the following message : "If you do not preserve unanimity in the siege-camp and create confusion and disturbance in the work of the Emperor, you should better go to the front *i.e.*, to Bust in the place of Rustam Khan Firuz Jang who will not grudge the sacrifice of his life and fortune for the Emperor's work."

(5) Jai Singh, having refused to carry out Dara's command to advance his trenches, Dara sent him a sharp order : "As you seem to have no desire to capture this fort,.....you shall hand over the charge of your battery to Iftikhar Khan, and march to the *Shutar-garden-pass* through which the enemy contemplates an attack upon the imperial army." The Rajah started for his new post on that very day.

(6) News reached Dara that Jai Singh's men were cutting trees from the gardens of the peasants for fuel, and oppressing them. On the 25th Shawwal Dara sent Shaham Quli to the Rajah with the following message: "I hear you are oppressing the people and cutting trees from their gardens. *Had you displayed such energy* while you were posted beneath the walls of Qandahar, you could have by this time captured this fort by destroying all its walls !" The Mirza Rajah replied. "..... Fortunately within two or three *kos* of my encampment there are no gardens from which my men were likely to gather fuel by cutting trees !" The messenger also reported that in the neighbourhood of the Rajah's camp no garden could be seen, and that the person who gave such an information must have told a lie.....

(7) On the 1st Ziqada, Dara wrote a letter to the Rajah "I intend to make another assault upon the fort on the 4th of this month. So you should with your troops be present here on that day : " Jai Singh sent a curt reply, "The assault cannot be made by me. Your Royal Highness may inflict any punishment for this fault of mine. *I have no more business with Qandahar.* On the day of return march I shall go to the presence."

Read in the light of these facts, the conduct of the Rajah during the War of Succession appears not altogether strange and unjustifiable. The proud and sensitive Rajput rather exercised moderation in revenge than otherwise. The Rajah cannot be blamed for refusing to risk the lives and fortunes of his followers in the desperate cause of a prince who proved himself unworthy of his birth-right.

As specimen of official correspondence of the Mughal Court one letter of the Mirza Rajah Jai Singh to Dara explaining his long halt at Jitpur (?) and another, perhaps the last letter written by Dara to Jai Singh, are appended herewith.

FRAGMENT OF A BHAO-BALLAD IN HINDI

On December 16, 1937, Sir Jadunath Sarkar took with him two pupils of his, myself, and another young scholar of distinction travelling *incognito*, in a trip from Delhi to Panipat. Having reached Panipat at about 12-30 p.m., we went to a Jain primary school, the headmaster of which happened to be a Maratha Brahmin, domiciled in that part of Upper India. The kind old Panditji gave us a guide, one of the teachers of his school, to accompany us to "*Kala Am*", as the site of the third battle of Panipat is known in the neighbourhood. We started on foot from the outskirts of the town, and walking right across cultivated fields for about four miles reached "*Kala Am*". But the Black Mango tree—under which Sadashiv Rao Bhao is said to have been slain—no longer exists. The Archaeological Department has raised a modest brick memorial on the spot where the historical mango tree once stood. Sir Jadunath had visited the place once before, and as such he came a second time to see something else than "*Kala Am*".

Sir Jadunath asked me,—a sort of interpreter between him and villagers,—to inquire of some cultivators working at a Persian wheel whether they knew of any *baoli* (*bavdi*=a well) near which the Marathas had a successful skirmish with a detachment of Durranis on November 22, 1760. § With these villagers I was quite in my own element, thanks to my long sojourn among the Jats. There was among these men an old peasant of about 70, a Brahmin by caste. He told me that he was acquainted with every inch of land for miles around, but he had never seen or heard of any *baoli* here with the exception of one now within the boundary of the village of Rajah-kheri, about a mile and a half from that place. I now began pumping out the old man. He incidentally mentioned that the place, where the memorial now

§ Sarkar's *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, ii, 302.

stands was formerly a village called Suwa-kheri, and that the *jogi* or begging minstrel still sang the ballad of Bhao. It was altogether an unexpected piece of information. I went to Sir Jadunath and asked him to return to Panipat and leave for Delhi, leaving me there with the villagers to explore the *baoli* and collect the Bhao-ballad.

I left "*Kala Am*" with the old peasant and two or three others who undertook to show me the *baoli* of Rajah-kheri, and promised me night's lodging and food and also the song of the *jogi*. But as we sighted the village the old man seemed to have become suspicious of my object of visit. On the outskirts of the village he began talking about me to some villagers, and pointing to a certain direction, he told me that the *baoli* was near about, which I should see and that he would wait till I returned. I went to the spot indicated by him but could see no well but huts of villagers and urchins playing in front of them. I returned disappointed where I expected to find my host ; but I found that he had given me a slip.

Quite stranded in a strage place I assumed the severe mien of a government official, and going confidently inside the village I wanted the *lambardar* and *chokidar* of the village. But being unable to find out their houses I went direct to the village *chopad* or common-hall. Fortunately for me I found the *lambardar*, a Jat of ninety summers, who was all courtesy to me. He asked one young man to take me to the *baoli* situated at the other end of the village. On enquiry I learnt that within the memory of the present generation the old *baoli* was transformed into its present state by building up staircases leading down to water.

In the meanwhile the report of the appearance of a mysterious figure had created a stir in the village. When I returned to the *chopad* (common-hall) about 70 or 80 persons had already gathered there, and more were coming in. I told the *lambardar* that he should send for the blind old *jogi* to sing the ballad of Bhao, and accordingly a man on bicycle was sent to fetch him. It was decided that I should pass the night there and

have my *roti* from the house of a *bania*. About an hour I spent with the villagers from whom I elicited much information about a historical tradition coming down from generation to generation. After an hour's suspense the man alone returned from Risalu because the *jogi* had left the village in the morning abegging. Sorely disappointed I left the village for Panipat to catch train. About five miles I trudged on drawing my belt tight to the last hole.

However, my information proved correct. Sir Jadunath had kindly procured for me the following lines of the Bhao-ballad, which had been taken down by a local gentleman of Panipat exactly as they were sung before him by the blind old *jogi* of Risalu. The text has been faithfully transcribed without any corrections and amendations of my own. But I have given them in the *Glossary of Words and Historical Notes* appended to the English translation of this ballad. I have not attempted a bare literal translation which is desirable in the case of a historical document. I have tried to be literal where it has been possible without affecting the spirit of the ballad as a whole. It may be a little difficult for a purely town-bred Hindi scholar to detect the rustic corruption of many words in this ballad. As a rule accents in the village side are *hard* where they ought to be soft : this was peculiar to the medieval Marathi also. I hope to discover some day some more Hindi ballads about the third battle of Panipat. I suspect we have already got some popular traditions about the Maratha activities during this period smuggled as accurate history in *Bhao-sahibanchi-bakhar*:

- 1 धनका सेती आ मिला वो सुरजमल ।
- 2 कहाँ खजाने गई फोज कहाँ गजदल ॥
- 3 सुनकर झन्का कंवरके आए नेत्रभल ।
- 4 दत्ताजी के मरे पर गई फोजा चल ॥
- 5 वहीं खजाने खपी फोज वही गजदल ।
- 6 २६ दिनमें सिन्धियां कीता स्नान
- 7 टसरी की घोती की मुख चाबे पान
- 8 चीरा बांधा जरीका होता शुभ ध्यान ।

- 9 पंडित बिप्र बुलाकर किया पुण्य दान
 10 माला ली कपूर की मुख भजता राम
 11 कागज कलम मंगाकर लिखता परवान
 12 नान सेती राम राम एक लिखता काम ।
 13 तान तेरे भेजे हम आए चढ़ हिन्दुस्तान ।
 14 अकल होश से करो राजमंत सोच नियत
 15 काबुल और कंधार के बड़े फील जवान ।
 16 जिस दिन उतरें नबंदा धालें धमसान
 17 गिन गिन दहरे हिन्दु के धाम
 18 साहव समरु आपना दनयाद कु मारी
 19 खालिक मालिक मुल्क का है खेलखिलारी
 20 एको चना चवावता एको पान सुपारी ॥
 21 जगत चबीना कालका है लंक हजारी
 22 हलकारा चला ब्रज से दक्खन की तय्यारी
 23 भन्काजी के सांघियेने दर शुत्र विचारी ॥
 24 पाखर भालर जरीके घुंगर धनकारी
 25 रात दिनोकी करी दौड़ जा शुत्र विचारी
 26 नानाजी तै बिनतीजा अर्ज गुजारी ॥
 27 नाना तै करता राम राम जो करी जवाहरी ।
 28 तिरे हिन्द में खय गए जोधे सूरमे अहंकारी
 29 सुनकै नाना राव ने निस आंभू डारी
 30 खवर हुई रणवासो में जानु कूज भन्कारी
 31 पिया पिया कर कुकती दक्खन की नारी ॥
 32 साहव समरु आपना सच्चा करतार ।
 33 पूने में नाना राव ने लाया दरवार ।
 34 सारी दक्खन इकट्ठी की करता जवाव
 35 हिन्दमें खप गए वड़े सूरमे फील जवान
 36 वो जिस दिन उतरें नबंदा मार करै विरान
 37 सुनकर नाना रावकी ना दिया जवाव
 38 लाभो भाउ रावको जिसका एतवार
 39 हुजरे तै नाना राव के छुटे चोवदार ।
 40 तुम याद करे हो पेशवा चलो राजकुमार
 41 नाना सेती राम रुआ करी जवाहर
 42 पास बिठा लिया पेशवा दिया बहुता प्यार ।
 43 हिन्द में भन्का कंवरने जंग दिया हार ।

- 44 करो तय्यारी हिन्द की ना लाओ बार ।
 45 मारो अहमदशाहने लूटो कन्धार
 46 अकल हौशसे करो जंग नर करो तय्यार ।
 47 भाउ उठ दरवार तै माता पै आया
 48 तिरी माता बोही प्यार से राव पास बिठाया
 49 अरे वेटा, तनै करी तय्यारी हिन्द की भूला भकाया
 50 अहमदशाह वादशाह पर तूने बीड़ा खाया ।
 51 जो कोइ गया हिन्दुस्तान में नहीं बोड़ा आया
 52 अरे ओ अन्काजी से मर्द का मार खेत डिगाया
 53 दत्ता और साहवा दूँदा न पाया
 54 मिरे घर वै ने तपै राज, मिरे बहुती माया
 55 समर निगाही सुर स्वेत । गुन रब के गावै
 56 कलन्दरावाद पानीपत में सुख बहुता पावै ॥
 57 हटरी अमर बावली क्या हमें डरावै ।
 58 मेरा लो लख नोजा दक्खनी कौन मोहरा आवे
 59 अहमदशाह ने लूटंगा तरवारां दावा
 60 अटक नदी में पागा घोड़ो जल प्यावै
 61 काबुल की पकड़ै वेगमा दक्खन को लावै
 62 आगे चविकया रखकर दाने दलवावै
 63 मुख सें मांस छुटाकर मुखपान खिलावै
 64 इतने साके कर सकें जब बोड़ दक्खन आवें
 65 जैसे सकि करग पर राजा मानसिंह पूतकमें लावें
 66 भाउ की माता कह सुन भाउ मेरा
 67 अरे मिरे इकलोती कै राक लाह नाक रै वखेड़ा
 68 अरे तू जागा हिन्दुस्तान हिया लर जे मेरा
 69 मिरी तोरां गिनतो करै रात एकसे सबेरा
 70 महलो नही चांदा पड़जागा अंधेरा
 71 जैसा चन्द छुपा घर आपने हो गया अंधेरा
 72 मैं भेजूं गालिबसिंह ने करादे निम्बेडा
 73 मिरे घर बैठो तपै राज मिरे मालब तेरा
 74 हाथ जोड़ हाजिर खड़ी भाउ की रानी
 75 माता का कहना मानले समझावे स्यानी
 76 मैंने सुपना देखा रैनका यूँही रैन विहाइ
 77 मैंने पूना देखा उतर दो फोज डूवी सारी
 78 वो बुरके पैहरो लड़ै नार मैंने सुली पठानी

- 79 हुक्म दो तो चलूं साथ सुख रहै परानी
 80 वो काबुल की वेगमा मैं दक्खन की राना
 81 मैं बांख, पटा, नेजा करं ताजन थरानी
 82 अहमद शाह के दलों में मिचा दूं धानी
 83 हुक्म दिया भाउ राव को लाओ तो रनम
 84 सुरखा सबझी मंगसी समन्द कुलंज कुमैत संजाफी
 85 केहूरी अबलक सोरग—दुमचियां जेरवंद गुलवाजे जंग—
 86 ढलके पेशबंद—घोड़ो के गत घुंगर—रण चढ़ते जंग ॥
 87 हुक्म दिया भाउराव को लाओ मन्ह ते
 88 नाग जरी के नीर मे मल दल के रते
 89 जिनके दांदों चूड़े सोहने थे ऊंचे मत्ये
 90 संदूर हिरभजी रंग में कुंजर रंग रखे ।
 91 हौदे जड़े जड़ाओं में जवाहर भंडते
 92 एक नाम दोनों व कें नारी ओर कथे
 93 गोरी सट के सूरमे सावन्त ओर संते
 94 भाउ धूरं देवता मुझे तका कर सान
 95 मेरा शमशीरो से मामला तेगो के तान
 96 अहमदशाह की हिन्द में चढ़ रही कमान
 97 और परान नदी पर पड़े खेत अब डालु धमसान
 98 ऐसा कहिये कुतवजंग समंदखां घड़ीना एव अटका
 99 तिरे सागरसे दरया ओंका मैंने खेलिया भटका
 100 अब केदे छोड़ तुझे दिखादूं लटका
 101 ग्यारा पैं सन चुहतर, पानीपत मे मया चलत्तर
 102 चांद जमादुस् सानी, दिन जुमा, रात जुमेरात की
 103 हार मरहठा, जीत दुरानी ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There came Surajmal of fame, and joined Dhanka ;
 "Where are gone the treasure, troops and the elephants?"
 Hearing this tears came to Kunwar Jhanka's eyes:
 "The army scattered when Dattaji died,
 The same field did treasures engulf, and troops and
 elephants too."
 On the twentieth day his uncle's funeral bath did
 Sindhia perform;

The *dhoti* of *tasar* he tied, and chewed the *pan*,
 A *cheera* gold-embroidered he wore auspicious,
 And *Pandits* and *Brahmins* did he invite, and made pious
 gifts.

A rosary of camphor he took, and his lips muttered *Ram*.
 Pen and paper he calls for, and writes a *parwana*

With greetings of *Ram-Ram* to Nana, and of an affair
 calamitous :

“At thy behest did my uncle march on Hindustan

And with tact, alertness and devotion did he serve
 thy cause.

And the day warriors of Kâbul and Qandâhâr, strong
 as elephants,

Did the *Narbuda* cross, and a battle terrific burst

The Hindus did sweat profuse with the sweat of
 death.”

* * * * *

Kill worldliness in thee, and remember thy Lord,

The Creator as well as the *Malik* of this world that
 plays wanton,

And makes one munch the gram of misery, and another
 enjoy the *pan*

But alas ! this world the humble and the *hazari*
 alike,—

Is but a fare of parched-grain in the jaws of Time.

Apprehensive of foe at the door Jhankajî Sindhia did
 dispatch

From Braj a *harkara* for the Dakkhan bound ;

And day and night rode he, fearful of foe,

(A horse) with armour and clinking bells and trap-
 pings of gold.

Ram-Ram, said he to the Nana, and his woeful errand
 broke :

“Thy warriors proud, before whom immortals would
 tremble,—

The land of Hind no more they tread ;

Gone are they and gone beyond the bourne of life.”

At this did Nana Rao moaned, and many a tear
shed he.

And the news spread to the lady's bower resonant
with music sweet—

“My love ! My lord ! wailed the Dakkhan women for
their mates disconsolate.

* * * * *

Mind thee of thy Lord, thy Master Great !

In Poona a *Darbar* did Nana Rao call ;

The whole Dakkhan he did assemble there for counsel
proper.

And said he, “Down went in Hind our sinewy warriors
brave ;

“The day they crossed the Narbuda and all around
havoc spread.”

They heard, but Nana did receive no response brave :

“Bring hither Bhao Rao on whom I chiefly count”
he did shout

And from the court of Nana did the *chobdar* hie.

“Come, Noble prince”, the *chobdar* cried “the Peshwa
pleaseth to remember thee.”

To Nana the Prince said “*Ram-Ram*”, and made a
reverence due ;

By his side did the Peshwa make him sit in affection
deep ;

And said he—“Kunwar Jhanka could not plant his foot
firm in Hind ;

“Get thee ready for Hind, and take no women
cumbersome.

“Slay Ahmad Shah, and loot Qandâhâr,

“Equip thy forces, and with tact and steadiness turn
the tide of war.”

The Bhao left the Court and to his mother came ;

By her side she made him sit in affection deep ;

“Ah ! my son ! a dupe thou hast made thyself by hieing
for Hind.

“How durst thou take the betel against Shah Ahmad,
King of Kings ?

Ah ! those who had gone to Hind did never see their
homes again.

Silly boy ; bravely did he strike Jhankaji down on
the field.

And no search could Datta and Sahba’s bodies
yield.

Bide here with me and rule the realm, for much is my
fondness for thee.

The valiant doth bleed for victory on the field of
battle,

But songs they would sing in praise of the Rao.

Much comfort indeed await thee at Panipat, the abode of
Qalandars poor !

* * * * *

“Away ! Ah, fond mother ! wouldst thou thus frighten
me ?

Who shall face the nine lakh Dakhini lances of
mine ?

Sword in hand will I press on Ahmad Shah and strip
him to the skin ;

And my paga-cavaliers shall not stop till their horses
drink the waters of the Attock.

“I will bring captive to the South the high-born dames
of Kabul ;

I will put hand-mills before them, and they shall grind
corn !

Their mouths shall smack of meat no longer, and they
shall chew the *pan*,

If such a fame (*sākā* §) I live to achieve, the Deccan
shall see me back again.”

“Listen, Bhaṅ, my darling,” the mother rejoins,

“Be not wilful, grant this my sole request.

Goest thou to Hindustan ? Ah, my heart trembles !

§ *Saka*—Lit. an era ; some heroic achievement of undying fame. In Rajputana, a *jaṭhar* rite was called *saka*. In its metaphorical sense *S. sak* was used in medieval Bengali also.

Days shall I count as nights when thou art out of
sight ;

Dark will my palace be my darling without,

Dark as the heavens when clouds hide the moon.

I shall send Galib Singh ; with him every detail thou
must settle ;

And here in my palace shalt thou enjoy the *Raj*, and
my Malwa will be thine.

* * * * *

Then before Bhao stood his consort with folded hands,

And full of wisdom did she urge him thus :

“Pray thee, do not disobey what mother speaks.

Yester night I dreamt a dream from which I woke and
slept no more ;

Methought two armies halting near Poona for combat—

They fought, and both did wholly perish ;

And then veiled women rushed to fight, and so too I !

And a Pathani did I pierce and on my lance I bore.

I will go with thee ; if thou wouldst permit and joy and
happiness shall be mine ;

They are but *begams* of Kabul, and I the Deccan
Queen !

Crooked dagger, straight sword and the long lance shall
I wield

And before me their Arab chargers shall quake ;

And death and destruction I shall carry to the ranks of
Shah Ahmad.”

* * * * *

And he (Nana) did order Bhao : “Take with thee
to war,

My squads of war-horse (many-hued and of mettle
true),

Brick-red and greenish grey, bay and black as *mung*, or
blushing crimson like *karanja* ripe ;

And those of saffron colour, or sun-beam bright,

Or, moon-white like water-lily at eve-tide dusk.”

Harnessed with *dumchi* and *zer-band*, and their *pesh-band*
hanging loose,

On their necks strings of jingling bells they wore,

And carrying crack riders did they gallop eager for fray.

And he ordered Bhao Rao : "Take thou from me my
elephants royal

"Bathed with the water of medicinal roots and rubbed
clean and glossy ;

"Whose tusks are bound in stout rings, and who carry
their shapely heads high."

With vermilion and red earth (*hirmiji*) the elephants
did they paint:

The *howda* on their backs sparkled with many a gem,
—Whose name signifies alike a woman handsome (?)
and a beggar's wallet (*kantha*)—

And in his train followed damsels fair and warriors bold,
brave captains of war and men of counsels
sage.

* * * * *

"Avaunt ! Thou fool of a Bhao ! what favour wilt
thou show me ?

"The sword alone doth concern me, and my sword
replies a taunt.

"Against the land of Hind Shah Ahmad twangs his bow,
and his army

On the bank of river lies encamped, and now a battle
terrific we shall fight"—

Thus said Qutb Jang—(the Bhao) did seize him and
Samand Khan, and none intervened.

"Of thine Ocean, Shah Ahmad," the Bhao rejoined,
"Unto whom dost thou bend thy course as
rivers to the sea

"The feeder streams have I quaffed off at a pull (and
the Sea remains). !

"How, then, can I release you now ?—From gallows
you must hang !

* * * * *

In the year of eleven hundred and seventy-four of the Era
of Flight, and on the first day of Jamadi-us-sani,
On Thursday night and the day of Juma (Friday),
Panipat quaked under the heels of armies closing to
combat
And defeat befell the Maratha—the Durrani came
victorious.

Glossary of Words

Line 1—“Dhanka” appears to be a mistake for Jhanka. Surajmal is Rajah Surajmal Jat of Bharatpur, an ally of the Marathas. Dhanka does not seem to be the name of any *place* “Seti”, a corruption of “sainti” has been used here, as well as in line 12,—in the sense of English *to* and not *from*.

Line 6—Sindhias were Sudras and hence the bath of purification on the 29th day.

Line 13—“Tân has been used for “tât”.

Line 16—“Narbuda” is a mistake for “the Jamuna”.

Line 18—“ku” used for “ko”.

Line 21—“Lank” used for “rank”.

Line 22—“Halkara” is not the name of a person but a corruption of “Harkara” (messenger).

Line 28—“surmen” is a corruption of “sur.mâr” (also in line 35).

Line 32—“somru” is a corruption of “somrau” (also in line 18).

Line 44—“bâr” is a corruption of “bala” (women).

Line 55—“nigâhi” and “rab” are mistakes for “niwâhi” and “Rao” respectively.

Line 65—*not translated* as allusions are vague.

Line 72—“nimbeda” has been taken to be a corruption of “nibeda”.

Line 84—“kulanj” means a wicked horse that cuts behind a walking but it does not suit the context. It is probably a corruption of either “karanja”, a well-known sour fruit familiar in the countryside or of “kalaunji” (*kala jeera*).

“kumⁱdait sanjaphi” offers a similar difficulty.

†“kumait” is a countryside corruption of “kumud”.

—“sanjaphi” means no *colour* but ‘border or fringe of garments etc.’ So I propose the reading “Sâujhâ pai”.

Line 85—“gul-baz” should be read “ghor-baz” to yield any meaning at all that would agree with the context.

Line 86—the word “Jang” here and in the preceding line, has been used “in the sense of “jangi” (war-like), or “jangra” (brave).

Line 87—“manhate” is either a mistake for “mahal-té” (from the *mahal*) or it is a word of Jat dialect, *mannah* (pronoun in the first person, singular number).

Line 88...“jari” should be read “jadi” (medicinal roots);

“rate” is used in the sense of “râtâ” (glossy).

Line 90—There is no such word as “hirabhji”; it is evidently a mistake for “hirmiji” (well-known red earth with which cloth is dyed).

Line 91—“jada” is used in the sense of “jada-u” (studded with jewels).

—“jhadte” is derived not from the root “jhadna” (to drop); because jewels cannot be believed to have been dropping from the *howda* of elephants. It seems to have been derived from the root “jhaharna” (to blink eyes with pain by too much light)—which suits the context better.

Line 93—“sur-mé” is a mistake for “sur-mâr” (very brave).

Line 94—No accepted meaning of the word “dhur” suits the text. Soft consonants when pronounced by villagers sound *hard* to townsmen; and villagers do actually sometimes pronounce them *hard*, if so, “dhur” may be “dur” (be off!). In this line “Devta” has not been used in its proper sense, meaning god or lord. Near

†“Kumait”—is drak red colour acc: to राजव्यवहारकोश *cf.* श्यामलस्तु
 कुमैतः श्यात्—164 Sanjaphi, Abalak (h) these also are shades of colours.
 Editor's note.

about Delhi, words "Devta" and "Mahatma" are used in quite opposite sense; e. g. "Devta" used with reference to a Jat (Jat-deota) carries a sense of half contempt and half pity—meaning strange or uncouth.

In this line "takâ" written as one word in the original transcript should be read "tâ ka". *Ka* means here *what*, *ta* is used in the sense of *tu*.

Line 94—"San" is the abbreviation of the Arabic word *ihsan* (favour).

Line 95—"ketân" should be broken into "ke tân".

"tân" (musical notes) does not suit the context. The correct word is "tânâ" (taunt), which is derived from the Arabic word "ta'in" (slanderer).

Line 96—"kamân charhana" (to bend a bow) has not been translated literally.

Line 97—"parân" bears no meaning reconcilable with the context. The correct word must be "padâo" (encampment, camp).

Line 98—"kahiye" should be "kahiya".

The last three words as they are written yield no meaning or sense; these should be written as "dhari na êk âtkâ". In the text "aw" is a mistake for "ek".

Line 99—"khé" should be "khâ"; there being no such idiom as "jhatkâ khélnâ". "jhatka khana" means *to receive a shock or pull*. But in this sense it does not apply to Bhao. If I remember aright "jhatka kha lena" is used by villagers *to eat up quickly or at a quaff*. It is also likely that the word "jhat" (quickly) has been expanded to "jhatka" for the sake of rhyming with "atka".

Line 100—"kede" is a typical Jat equivalent of "kaise" (how).

Line 101—"chalattar" is evidently some word coined from "chal" (movement, shaking).

Line 103—"san" or era used here is Hijri.

Historical Notes

Line 3—Jhanka is the corruption of the name of Jankoji Sindhia, nephew of Dattaji Sindhia. Dattaji Sindhia fought with Ahmad Shah Durrani

on January 9, 1760 and met with defeat and death. Jankoji Sindhia who renewed fight also received a bullet wound and was dragged out of the field by his followers. The Marathas could not recover the body of Dattaji. Mian Qutb Shah, referred to in line 98, cut off the head from the dead body and took it to the Abdali (Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire, II* 222-23). We learn from *Bhao-sahibanchi-bakhar* that Goswain Umed Gir, the Naga general of Shuja-ud-aula who joined the Abdali against the Marathas—recovered from the Abdali by the threat of desertion and a cash payment of two lakhs of rupees the severed head of Dattaji, and joining it with the trunk, performed the cremation of his body with sandal and *bel* wood. Such was the conception of duty and obligation of a Hindu to his brother-in-faith ! (pp. 58-86)

Line 16—The river Narbuda is too evident a confusion for the Jamuna. The Durrani and the Ruhelas under the lead of Najib Khan secretly crossed the river Jamuna at night preceding the day of the battle of Barari-ghat, referred to in lines 16, 28, 35, 43 and 52. (*Fall of the Mughal Empire, II*, 222).

Line 34—Peshwa Balaji received the official letter from the North on the 15th or 16th February, 1760. The *darbar* referred to was held not at Poona but at Patdur, 27 miles south-east of Jalna on 10th March, 1760. AUSA after he had crushed the Nizam's army at the battle of Udgir. (*Ibid*, p. 237).

Line 40—Sadashiv Rao Bhao was the son of Baji Rao I's younger brother, Chimnaji Appa. His mother Rukhmā Bai, and his wife Parvati Bai are the ladies referred to in the ballad. The ballad has not done justice to the mother of Bhao.

Line 53—"Sahba" is Sabaji Sindhia who fought but did not die at the battle of Barari-ghat.

Line 56—Qalandarabād-Panipat :

Qalandar is a holy Mohammedan ascetic who abandons the world and wanders about with the shaven head and beard, independent of any brotherhood.

Qalandars have many shrines in the Punjab. Shah Chokha Qalandar is the patron saint of Meos, who hold that the Shah has given away married women to abductors. "The most famous Qalandar shrine is that of Abu Ali or Bu Ali Qalandar who is buried at Panipat" (see Rose's *Glossary of Punjab Tribes*, III, p.257). It is perhaps for this reason that Panipat became known as Qalandarabad.

Line 72—Ghalib Singh is perhaps a fictitious person.

Line 74—The *rani* of Bhao referred to was Parvati Bai. She and Lakshmi Bai, wife of the Peshwa's son Vishwas Rao with a host of other women did in fact accompany their husbands. These two ladies managed to escape to the South through the exertions of Malhar Rao Holkar (Sardesai's *Marathi Riyasat*, part II, p. 204).

Line 94-100—These lines describe a scene at Kunjpura, a place about 50 miles north of Panipat. Bhao arrived before Kunjpura in the evening of 16th October, 1760. Next morning Mian Qutb Shah and Abdus Samad Khan—Qutb Jang and Samand Khan of this ballad—attacked the Marathas. Abdus Samad Khan was shot dead, but Qutb Shah fled wounded into the city of Kunjpura. He along with Nejabat Khan, governor of Kunjpura, fell prisoners into the hands of the Marathas. Nejabat died of wounds but Qutb Shah met with a more cruel fate than gallows. When he was brought before Bhao, he is said to have reviled the Marathas (Sarkar's *Fall of the Mughal Empire II*, p. 269-71).

Bhao-bakhar's narrative, though not historical, wonderfully agrees with the ballad in saying that Qutb Shah and Saimand Khan Kattalbaz (Abus Samad Khan) were both captured by the troops of Gaikwad and brought prisoners to Bhao. We read in this *bakhar* the exchange of words between Bhao and Qutb Shah, who along with Saimand Khan were afterwards ordered to death (p. 122). Qutb Shah asked for water when he was being led to the block; but the Marathas, remembering what he had done with the dead body of Dattaji Sindhia, refused him water saying, "the scoundrel should

be made to drink urine” and they cut off his head, leaving the carcass as food for crows and vultures; Saimand Khan was also similarly beheaded (*Ibid*, p. 123).

Lines 101-103—The third battle of Panipat was fought on January 14, 1761. According to *Bhao-bakhar* the battle was fought on Wednesday, 8th day of the bright fortnight of the month of *Paus*, 1682 Saka Sambat, which is not correct (P. 143).

Unfortunately, this ballad breaks at a point where the main theme, the battle of Panipat, should begin. I heard from villagers of Rajah-kheri many more interesting things which their untutored memory still retains. It is said that the Gadaria (goat-herd) in Bhao's camp was in league with the Pathan. The Pathan told the Gadaria to help him in winning the battle this time, and thereby save his credit with the Durrani. The *wali* of Kunjpura whom Bhao had refused food during captivity uttered a curse upon the Marathas that they should similarly starve during this expedition, and hence the scarcity in the Maratha camp. During the critical stage of the battle of Panipat the Bhao was induced to come down from his elephant by that Gadaria. The traitor now began to wave a blue flag from the elephant signalling to the army that all was over as the blue flag indicated the death of the commander-in-chief, namely Bhao. Then a general rout began and the Gadaria fled with the connivance of the Pathan. The Bhao then made his last stand under the historic *kala am* or black mango tree and died fighting there. Here is perhaps a faint echo of Malhar Rao Holkar's alleged treachery and his friendship with Najibuddaula, a *dharma-putra* of Holkar. The curious coincidence of the hints thrown out by this ballad with the narrative of events in the *Bhao-bhakar* regarding the Mian Qutb Shah affair at Kunjpura raises very strong suspicion that the *Bhao-bhakar* was compiled long after the battle of Panipat from popular traditions enshrined in ballads like one we have traced.

RELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE UNDER THE PESHWAS

(mainly based on a study of Selections from
the Peshwa Daftar)

The religious policy of the Maratha state had been outlined by the genius of its great founder, Shivaji, who based it on the principle of Akbar's dictum, *Peace with All*, gods of the Hindus and the God of Islam, with the saints of Hinduism as well as those of Islam.* The Maratha state was, however, a Hindu state having for its fundamental principle the protection of the cow and the Brahman, preservation of the Vedas and the social structure of the Hindus. Though it was the King's duty to respect all forms of faith among his subjects, and provide for the maintenance of their religious establishments, he nevertheless owed special duties to his Hindu subjects and to Hinduism. With regard to Hinduism the policy of the Maratha was not one of missionary zeal and expansion but one of consolidation and preservation. It did not put any indirect economic pressure on non-Hindus; nor offered any political temptations to them to change their faith—which were the essential features of the religious policy of a typical Muslim state of the Middle Ages everywhere. The Muslim subjects of the Maratha state had no cause of alarm for the existence of their faith as the Hindus under the orthodox Muslim regime like that of Aurangzib. The Maratha state far from spreading Hinduism by preaching and conversion, put on the contrary every obstacle in the way of reconversion even.

* We learn from a document (33 : S. P. D. Vol. 31) prepared for Shivaji that the lands yielding a revenue of 40 lakhs of Rupees yearly were allowed rent-free by the Mughal Empire for the maintenance of *Devasthan* (temples), *Masid* (mosques), *Qazis*, and *Fakhirs*. Shivaji also did not interfere with religious grants and *inams* of the Muslims. One Mulla Ali, son of Mulla Abdulla, the *Khidmatgar* of the mosque of *mauja* Bhabde is confirmed by Shivaji to his rent-free lands which had been conferred upon his father by Malik Ambar and later on confirmed by Dadaji Kondey (vide S. P. D. Nos. 18 and 19; Vol. 31).

The Peshwas after Balaji Viswanath constituted themselves as the Jang Bahadurs or the modern Ministerial family of Nepal with the *de jure* sovereign (the King of Satara) resembling the King of Nepal, a convenient political figure-head. But there was this difference that the pensioned sovereign of the Maratha state was denied the honour of being regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu and as the head and stabiliser of the society and religion, whose command alone can bring within or push outside any individual or tribe within the pale of *hukkah and water* with the Nepalese. In Maharashtra the reverse was the case. Here the Peshwa was regarded as the incarnation of Vishnu (*Shri-cha avatar*), and exercised most complete sway over the Hindu society and religion for about three quarters of a century. Having been Chitpawan Brahmans with strict orthodox traditions the religious policy of the Brahman Peshwas judged by modern and even by contemporary standards—was reactionary to the extreme. Though they continued their liberal policy with regard to Islam they enforced the code of Manu with all its religious and social injustice upon their Hindu subjects. Shivaji had made his religious policy subservient to the interests of the state : but the Peshwas reversed this fundamental principle with the result that their reactionary policy adversely affected the political destiny of the nation. Their insistence on rules of caste purity and caste differences undid the work of the earlier saints of Maharashtra like Namdev, Tukaram, Gora the pot-maker and Choka the scavenger, whose enlightened teaching of *Bhakti* had welded the heterogenous castes and tribes of Maharashtra into a homogenous people and thus prepared the way of their national consciousness and unity.

We propose to study the religious policy of the Peshwas under two broad sections; namely the policy of the Peshwas as the Defender and the Reformer of the Hindu society and religion, and secondly, their policy as rulers of a considerable non-Hindu population scattered over their wide dominion. At the outset it is necessary to remember that the Peshwa regime was a government of the Brahmans by the Brahmans and for the Brahmans,

whose slippers even a Mahadji Sindhia would be content to carry. Let us now descend from generalities to the particulars so carefully preserved in the *Peshwa Daftar* released for the public under the editorship of Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai.

One deplorable departure of the Peshwas from the courageous though un-orthodox tradition of the days of Shivaji and his mother Jija Bai was their refusal to readmit Hindus converted to Islam however pathetic their case might be. Jija Bai outwitted the Sultan of Bijapur by winning over to the national cause and to Hinduism the powerful family of Nimbalkars whose head, Balaji Nimbalkar, had been converted to Islam by the Sultan of Bijapur and given an Adilshahi princess in marriage to anchor the renegade fast to Islam. Moreover, she threw a challenge to the whole Maratha society by marrying Shivaji's daughter, Sakhu Bai to Balaji's son Mahadji Nimbalkar. So is said to have been the re-conversion in later years of Netaji Palkar, the redoubtable lieutenant of Shivaji, whom Aurangzib had enticed away from his loyalty and religion. But the period of the *Brahman raj** has other stories to tell. To cite a few instances :

- (i) Two Brahmans, Nandram and Hariram, who (whose ancestors?) had become disciples of Pirzada and followed Muhammadan customs for one hundred years, solicited readmission to their caste. About fifty families of their nearer kinsmen admitted them to caste after necessary puri-

*During the time of Bajirao I reconversion was allowed :

- (a) A relation of Sankarji Kadam who had gone to Islam permitted to be taken back after *Prayachit* (SPD. Vol. 22; No. 79; 19-7-1773).
- (b) Ramji Pawar who had fallen a captive and forced to apostatise ordered to be readmitted to caste after penance (*Ibid* No. 103; 26-4-1735).
- (c) A state order is issued to the Brahmans to readmit to caste one Babji Yesaji Prabhu excommunicated for eating food in every place (*Ibid* No. 137; 5-6-1739).

Here it must be noted that all the three persons readmitted to caste were of warrior and writer (Prabhu) castes. There seems to be a little relaxation of the policy of exclusion with regard to non-Brahmins whereas Brahmans as examples cited in the text shows that Brahmans as a rule were not allowed back to caste perhaps to preserve the purity of that caste.

fication. But the Peshwa writes to Malhar Rao Holkar "to deal necessary punishment to Nandram and other Brahmans for their irreligious behaviour". (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 8; 12-5-1764).

- (ii) One unfortunate man Narhari Ranalekar had fallen a prisoner after the disaster of Panipat and been forcibly converted to Islam. When he returned home the Brahmans of Paithan "purified" him and admitted him back to caste. A complaint having been made by other Brahmans to the Peshwa, the issue was referred to a meeting of the Vaidiks and Pandits, who declared that one who remained a Muslim for ten or twelve years was not fit to undergo purification. Under the Peshwa's order the Paithan Brahmans who refused to accept the verdict of the Shastras—were excommunicated and debarred from interdining with Ahmadnagar Brahmans [*Ibid*, No. 25; 28-8-1772(?)].

Hard was the punishment under the plea of religious purity on those who would rise above the senseless prejudice against reconversion. But the Peshwas themselves would not hesitate to throw Shastric injunctions to the four winds when anything concerned their own sentiments. They were careful to preserve the illegitimate harvest of the Brahmanical seed for their own caste. It is notorious now Baji Rao I attempted to invest Ali Bahadur, born of Mastani, with sacred thread. We also read of several instances of the anxiety of the later Peshwas to procure Brahmanical brides and bride-grooms for their own children by dancing girls (*nataka-shala mule*) of their Hall of music and drama. They, however, expiated for their sins by giving greater attention to the cow and the Brahman than it had been the case under the secular government of Shivaji and his sons. They prohibited cow-slaughter within their territory, abolished death sentence on the Brahmans except perhaps for high treason; and severely punished *Brahmahatya* by non-Brahmans. To take up the case of the cow first:

- (i) One *Fakhir* named Daud Shah fined Rs. 60/- for killing a cow. (SPD. Vol. 22; No.227; 23-1-1773).
- (ii) Two butchers of Poona and their ringleader Jamal Kassab who killed a cow secretly were dragged to the police custody with hand-cuffs and leg-bars to await further proceedings against them. (*Ibid.* Vol. 43; No. 144; 13-5-1776).
- (iii) Keshvrao Jagannath reports to the Peshwa that three persons of Mang tribe stole a cow and killed it at night-fall. The Patil (village headman) and a Berad (tracker belonging to a wild tribe) with sepoy were sent to investigate. One sweeper of Kalyan discovered flesh in a house. The house was confiscated and the three Mangs were brought into the fort. The *havildar* of the fort showed remissness in dealing with the case. He is not fit to be in charge of the fort of Singh-gadh. The offenders should be meted out exemplary punishment. (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 147; 27-10-1793).
- (iv) Officials of Konkan are directed to help Antaji Naik Ajurkar especially appointed to take steps for cows being exported from the *Desh* country by the butchers of Salsette and Bombay. (*Ibid.*, No. 148).
- (v) Kesho Bhikaji Havildar reports the acknowledgment of reprimand of the Peshwa to the effect that he had not been sufficiently vigilant in stopping cow-slaughter by the Musalmans of Tugad and Karkada : submits that he will in future carry out the order vigorously. (*Ibid.* No. 150).

Next come the Brahmans with whom the department of Niayadhish (Justice, Censorship of Morals and Religion combined into one) had been particularly busy throughout. The policy of the Peshwas was to concentrate all powers in matters social and religious into their own hands. They would not suffer any social and religious innovations which were according to them as

impious as *bidat* or innovations in the eye of the orthodox Mulla. Their policy was not only reactionary but also vexatious on account of its over-interfering character. Between the age of Bhababhuti (who makes his hero Ramchandra cut off the head of a Sudra ascetic)—and that of Ram Shastri there was this much relaxation that the latter recommended the commutation of death sentence for its milder equivalent *Sarvaswa-haran* or confiscation of property in the case of Sudra who would behave like a Brahman (*Dwija-lingi*). The following cases will illustrate the range and scope of this phase of their religious policy :

- (i) One Lakshman Bhat was charged with the offence of teaching *Rudra* to a *Jangam* to the Sudra caste. A decision is given to this effect: Lakshman Bhat must hand over whatever he got as *dakshina* (remuneration), live on barley (*yavanna*) for a year observing *brahmacharya* (abstinence); and make gift of 90 cows besides other penances. The Sudra according to Manu deserves death at the hands of the ruler for behaving as a Brahman (*i.e.*, wearing the sacred thread and reading the Vedas etc.). But the death sentence may be commuted for the confiscation of his whole property. (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 110).
- (ii) Letter of Bagaji Yadav Goswain: Brahmans of Paithan performed some Vedic sacrifices involving the killing of an animal with *pishta-pashu* (substitute made of wheat or barley) with the sanction of the Nawab in the Muslim territory. Why should the Nawab give an opinion regarding our Shastras? The Government should intervene in this matter and punish the offenders. (*Ibid*, Vol. 23; No. 11).
- (iii) One Jangam was caught in the act of performing *Rudrabhishek* for a Baniya who was not allowed to do so by the *Shastras*. The *Baniya* held only the vessel of *abhishek*, who fled when detected but caught after three days. Both were to be tried for such an offence (*Ibid*, Vol. 43; No. 108).

- (iv) Ramchandra Babaji Shenvi and others were summoned to the presence on the charge of having performed *prayachit* without the government sanction (*sarkar ajna sivaya*). They are fined Rs. 3000/-, half of which is to be paid immediately; and half in the month of *Vaisak*. (*Ibid*, No. 78).

Down to the death of Peshwa Bajirao I the religious policy of the Maratha state had been less bigoted than what it became after his death. Bajirao I was in temperament and conduct more of a Rajput grandee of the Mughal Court than what became a Chitpawan Brahman. Wine, woman and war were the ruling passions in him, and he was the first Brahman who is known to have scandalised his community by taking wine and fowl curry in the company of his Muslim combine Mastani. There was a state brewery at Poona in the time of Baji Rao I and it is on record that bursting of the *bhati* caused the death of twelve servants and spoiled about two maunds of wine—as Bajirao enters it in his Diary (SPD. Vol. 22; No. 375; 27-4-1738). His successors, however, lived a more orthodox life and at the instance of Sadashiv Rao Bhaos an edict was issued restricting the manufacture and sale of liquor. The edict was enforced perhaps on the Brahman community only so far as the use and sale of wine was concerned. We quote a few instances below:

- (i) Peshwa Balaji to Trimbak Rao Vishwanath: If the *kalals* (brewers) of Poona and other places do not obey regulations they are to be imprisoned. (*Ibid*, Vol. 23; No. 59; 27-2-1754).
- (ii) One undated letter: “Received orders prohibiting the manufacture of wine by *kalals*. Beg to inform you that today *bhati* has been forbidden strictly.” (*Ibid*, Vol. 43; No. 36).
- (iii) “One Dravid Brahman woman was caught with about twenty-five bottles of wine and goat’s meat in her house at Narayan-peth in Poona. She was brought to the *thana*.....Sin is rampant in the villages. Strict punishment should be meted out.....” (*Ibid*, Vol. 43; No. 144; 13-5-1776).

This shows wine and meat were surreptitiously sold to Brahman customers in Poona as late as 1774 A.D.

- (iv) One Balaji Dondo Kulkarni is accused of having lived with a dancing girl (*kalabantin*), and eating meat and drinking wine in her company. He might be readmitted to caste if he performs penances according to the *Shastras* and bathe in the Ganges.....(*Ibid*, undated).

The solicitude of the Peshwas to bring about a moral uplift of the Brahmans perhaps hardly succeeded better than that of Aurangzib for the Muslims among whom throughout Hindustan there was not a third man who did not drink wine except himself and his Shaikh-ul-Islam" as that Puritan monarch once cried out in despair. Mannuci further adds that Shaikh-ul-Islam had no objection to European wines. Gopika Bai, wife of Peshwa Balaji Bajirao suggested another reform; namely the abolition of the evil custom of selling brides by the Desh Brahmans. This does not seem to have been abolished by law at any time. The long prevalent custom of remarriage of widows among the lower classes was tolerated; but the government levied a tax on widow remarriage for which a permit by the local official was necessary (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 64). Intercaste and irregular marriages were dissolved by the state authority, and permission for remarriage of such brides given. Forced marriages were heavily punished. Not only marriages but every form of caste dispute was a recognisable offence. A few examples are quoted below:

- (i) The Peshwa issues authority to Sadashiv Nagnath to celebrate his daughter's marriage with another bridegroom as her first marriage was performed forcibly with another without the performance of such ceremonies as *Devaka-pratista*, *Nandi-shardha* and *Kanyadan*. (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 53; 19-11-1780).
- (ii) The marriages of the daughters of one Bawaji Malhar Tatu were prohibited by the Government as his brother happened to be married to a girl of the same *gotra*. (*Ibid*, No. 55).

- (iii) One Jano Manakeshwar writes to the Peshwa that his five years old daughter was taken by one Madhaji Shivnath to his own house for taking food. She was then taken to the temple of Rameswar and there married in the *pishach* form without *mantra*. He solicits permission to give her in marriage a second time according to proper rites ; and the permission is granted. (*Ibid*, No. 72; 9-3-1759).
- (iv) Joshi who abducted the daughter of Trimbyak Dharan and married her is ordered to be taken in procession along with his accomplice, a cousin of his—through the town with the beat of drum crying out their crime and then imprisoned in the *top-khana* ; the culprits are to beg their food in the villages (*Ibid*; No. 145; 20-6-1778).

The contemporary documents hitherto brought to light support the allegation of the non-Brahman schools of Maratha historians that the government of the Peshwas was a government of the Brahmans, by the Brahmans and for the Brahmans under which other castes were relegated to a secondary position. There might be no objection to granting special privileges to the Brahmans in society as the custodians of religion, or practising liberal charities towards them, as the *ulema* class in a Muslim state and the clergy under Christian government during the Middle ages also enjoyed such honour and emoluments. It was also a fact that the criminal law during the Middle Ages was a respecter of persons and classes both in Europe and Asia. Though Islam theoretically made the law no respecter of person, and under strong and pious rulers the *ulemas* were subjected to the same treatment as any other Muslim, extreme penalty of law was very rarely meted out to them. The Peshwas following the injunctions of Manu made the Brahmans a privileged class with regard to criminal law. There was a great discrimination between a Brahman and a non-Brahman offender accused of murder, adultery etc ; and offences against Brahmans by non-Brahmans were more heavily punished. To quote a few examples :

- (i) Two families of Despande Brahmans of Phaltan had a free fight in which Apaji Chimaji Despande struck Shyamrao with a sword which caused his death ; a brother of Chimaji also died at the hands of Shyamrao.....For this offence Apaji was excommunicated ; but he sought the protection of the *Sabha* of Brahmans who prescribed for him certain penances and a pilgrimage to Benares, Rameswar and other sacred places. An official makes a report that Chimaji had carried out the injunctions of the Brahmans of Phaltan who were therefore persuaded to dine in his house and readmit him to the social communion.

But we hear of no capital punishment inflicted on the Brahmans by the State for man-slaughter. (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 131; 14-8-1761).

- (ii) Ramshastri issues an order to the Brahmans of Sevagaon for the excommunication of the family of one Mahadev Bhat (whose wife had caused the death of a Brahman) till the couple should perform certain penances. Afterwards the Shastri relents to the extent that as the culprit was a woman the *parikrama* around the temple of Shri-Triyamkeshwaram ought to suffice. (*Ibid*, No. 151)
- (iii) One Govind Bhat of Sakri outraged a Brahman girl of ten years which caused her death. For such a heinous crime the offender, a Brahman was sent to Benares for penance, and ordered to feed 125 Brahmans after return! (*Ibid*, No. 153).
- (iv) Balaram Maniram had cast a lustful eye (*bad-nazar*) on a Brahman woman for which he was fined Rs. 1000/- (one thousand).

For the realisation of this fine his house and property are sold and goods confiscated (SPD. Vol. 22; No. 224; 26-9-1772).

- (v) One Babaji Vishnu Prabhu (a Kayeth) committed the murder of a Brahman. He was put under arrest, his house and property confiscated

in the first instance ; and the case reported recommending capital punishment on the offender. (*Ibid*, Vol. 43; No. 165)

- (vi) The Peshwa asks his brother Narayanrao to confiscate all grants and rights of the Brahmans and Patils of Pravarasangam, who had on the day of the burning of Holi killed the son of Dhorbhat Khare (*Ibid*, No. 136; 15-4-1769).

The last is the only instance of severe action against the Brahmans. It also appears that a discrimination was made between a Maharashtra Brahman and a non-Maharashtra (*e.g.*, Kanaujiya) accused of the same kind of offence against a Maharashtra Brahman woman. One Kanaujiya Brahman of Ahmadnagar abducted a Brahman woman who died in his house. For this offence he was imprisoned and offered release only on the payment of a fine of two thousand rupees (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 138). But against this case another is on record showing that the son of one Babu Patak having defiled the daughter-in-law of one Rajoba Dange made a compromise with the latter's son paying secretly a compensation of Rs. 800/ for marrying a fresh wife after discarding the first one. (*Ibid*, Vol. 43; No. 61). The terror of excommunication and intervention of the government on the side of the orthodoxy made a race of moral cowards of the whole people. The religious policy of the Peshwas and the terror of social ostracism could not in any way retard the pace of decay of public and private morals of the people of Maharashtra. Brahmans were a liability on the Maratha State. On an average about two lakhs of Rupees were spent on *Shravana-masi-dakshina* at Poona every year, and almost the same amount in gifts on other auspicious days. And these vast charities which benefitted a pampered priestly class were provided by every Peshwa from Bajirao I downwards, though the state was financially bankrupt. The Peshwas had to borrow money even at the rate of 18% and more to defray expenses of the army, and the cry that went forth from Poona to generals operating in Northern India was '*Paika*', money and more money! The Peshwas and their vassals bled the Jat and Rajput states white to run

their government impoverished by senseless charities at home. No state undertook to do so much for the ruling community ; and none was so ill-served by the same community as the Brahmanical kingdom of the Peshwas by the Brahman community itself. Their religious policy did neither foster a strong communal sense, either Hindu or Brahmanical. We quote below an interesting petition of one Bapuji Bhikaji, a Brahman *Mirjafar*, demanding two lakhs of Rupees as *dakshina* from the English Company for whose success over Bajirao II he performed certain mysterious rites :—

“.....I foretold that evil days were coming for Gangadhar Shastri.....But Bapu Mairal did not pay my *bakhshish*.....and (Bapu Mairal) died miserably at the hands of the Sahibs. Then ill-luck came upon the Sahibs, on account of which the Sahibs ordered that for their sake some religious rites of two lakhs worth should be performed.....When on the 11th of *Aswin* at nightfall the troops (of the British Residency) were besieged, Shrinivas Rao came and said that whatever necessary must be done so that the Bara Sahib might defeat the enemy. So I offered prayers to *Sri Ganpati* and *Sri Mahalakshmi*.....Brahmans and hermits sat to perform *jog-jag* (meditation and oblations to sacrificial fire); five lakhs of Brahmans were fed..... So the Sahib may kindly order the payment of my *bakhshish* of two lakhs of Rupees for these services.....(SPD. Vol. 41 ; No. 167).

The Peshwas assumed the role of the Defender of the Faith both in the south and the North within their sphere of influence. It was one of the steadfast objects of their foreign policy to secure the control of Hindu religious places in *Braj* (Mathura District), Prayag, Benares and Gaya, and make them safe and comfortable for pilgrims. Numerous documents are extant showing the efforts of the Peshwas in this direction. It must be said to the credit of the Peshwas that their religious policy in spite of its reactionary character rendered one great service ; namely to put prostrate Brahmanical faith

reeling under centuries of fanatical persecution of the militant Islam again on its legs, and infuse a new life into it. Every Hindu sacred place even to this day enjoys the benefit of the generous piety of the Peshwas and their vassals, Sindhia, Holkar and others. As regards their policy to non-Brahmanical Hindu sects it was generally one of toleration and non-interference. But those who would encroach on idol-worship were severely punished. It is on record that Rajah Madho Singh of Jaipur, a subordinate ally of the Maratha State, took heavy vengeance on the *Shravakas* (Jains) of Jaipur who in a fit of religious frenzy had defiled the Hindu idol of *Sadashiv*,—and levied from the aggressors a fine of fifteen lakhs of Rupees. This was evidently done at the instance of the Peshwas (SPD. Vol. 43; No. 46). With regard to the religious policy of the Peshwas to Christianity and Islam it may be said in general that they wisely restrained the forces of Hindu reaction from retaliatory spite against these religions, though the Hindus had many old scores to settle with them. The Portuguese of Goa had in their days of power made forcible converts and inflicted humiliation on the Hindus. But when the Marathas became supreme on the western coast they did not attempt any reconversion or persecute the Christian clergy. The Diary of Peshwa Bajirao I has an entry as follows : *Khairat-kharch* (charity expenses) to be paid yearly to Padre Feringee of Bessein is sent with Sankaraji Keshav" (SPD. Vol. 22; No. 134; 1-7-1739). This might not be a solitary example. The policy of the Brahmanical Peshwas towards the Muslims deserves a more detailed notice.

It may be of some interest to enquire whether the Marathas stooped so low as to give the average Muslim rulers the compliment of imitation on the point of destruction of places of worship. Facts that can be gleaned from the Marathi and Persian sources point to the conclusion that though there were perhaps a few cases of demolition of mosques these had no sanction of the Peshwas. To cite the examples :

- (i) During the military operations on the Western coast it is reported that the mosque at Cheul

was dismantled by one Ramaji Mahadev Biwalkar (SPD. Vol. 24; No. 265)

- (ii) Ranoji Sindhia built a Shiv temple at Ujjain on the site, it is said, where a mosque had been built by Iltutmish by destroying the temple of *Mahakal*.
- (iii) Malharrao Holkar after the occupation of Benares began destroying Aurangzib's mosque built on the ruins of the temple of Vishwanath. But the Brahmans of Benares appealed to the Peshwa to restrain Holkar from such an act; and consequently Holkar gave up the project. (*Bhao Sahibchi Bakhar*).
- (iv) The author of *Imad-us-sadat* says that Sadashiv Rao Bhao during his interview with Rajah Surajmal flared up at the sight of the Mathura mosque, thundered at the Jat: "You profess to be a Hindu; but how is it that you have kept this mosque standing so long?" However, this was a momentary reaction of fanaticism ingrained almost in every man, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian or the Musalman as history proves. But the better sense of Bhao Sahib soon prevailed. When he reached Delhi he distributed his charities to the Hindu hermits on the bank of the Jamuna as well as to the *fakhirs* at the Jama' Mosque. (*Imad*. 78, *Waqat-i-Alamgir Sani* 178).

It is proved beyond doubt that the Peshwas continued old grants to mosques and tombs, and there was provision in the budget for expenses of *urs* (aniversery) of some Muslim saints, *Id-ul-Fitr* (*Chand-ratri*) festivity, and the up-keep of Muslim places of worship even in places like *Singhad* and Purandar forts. They were believers in the efficacy of worship paid at the shrines of Muslim Pirs and vowed offerings to them in times of difficulty. We quote a few entries below to illustrate the above statements :

- (i) Peshwa Bajirao I's Diary: "Rs. 24/ (twentyfour) given to Fatu Mahut for redeeming a vow to distribute *shirini* (sweets at the mosque) made at the time of cutting the tusk of the elephant

Fathe-lashkar. (SPD. Vol. 22; No. 64; 16-4-1731).

- (ii) Peshwa Madhavrao : "Paid Rs. 1400/- assigned for the repair of shrines of Sayyid Sadat and Shaikh Salla in Poona. (*Ibid*, Vol. 22; No. 200; 8-4-1768).
- iii) "As in previous year this year also some money was given as *khairat-kharach* on the (Vijaya) Dasami day to the shrine of Shaikh Salla at Poona. (*Ibid*, No. 171).
- (iv) The head of a Kabirpanthi establishment at Poona died without any heir leaving only a widow. The *chelas* of the Fakhir one a Hindu, Santa Gosavi, and the other Shah Musalman claimed to succeed their Guru. The local official after investigation adjudicates in favour of Shah Musalman who was to receive the yearly state grant enjoyed by the deceased ; and further he recommends the widow for a subsistence grant. (SPD. Vol. 23; Nos. 3 and 4; 1741 ?)

- (v) Budget of expenditure at Singhad :

"To be paid in cash

Rs 6/ for the procession taken out by the Musalmans of the Fort.

Rs. (?) for expenses of *Chandratri* (night of Id) e.g. distribution of betals to people and for firing *tops* and *jajails* on that night (*Ibid*, Vol. 45; pp. 39 and 40).

It is interesting to note *Chandratri-kharch* is entered as an item along with *Shiv-ratri-kharch*.

- (vi) Oil for lighting the *masjid* within the fort of Purandar. (*Ibid*, p. 49).
- (vii) Among certain persons exempted from payment of house-tax of Rabiwar-peth of Poona, were Imam Mulana and Fakhir Chand. (*Ibid*, 43; No. 21; 1800).
- (viii) Dispute over the routes of the Muharram *taziyas* of two rival shrines of Said Sadat and Shaikh Salla invariably ending in a free fight is referred to the Peshwa for decision. (*Ibid*, No. 33; 1741 ?)

Thus the tolerant and enlightened religious policy of

the Peshwas present a happy contrast to that of Aurangzib towards the non-Muslims. The Muslim subjects of the Peshwas served the state even more loyally than many Maratha chiefs. The conduct of Ibrahim Khan Gardi as contrasted with that of Malharrao Holkar in the third battle of Panipat shall ever remain an eloquent testimony to the success of the policy of the Peshwas towards Islam. There was no sign of a general Muslim reaction against the Maratha rule on the eve of that fateful day. Shujauddaula and the Ruhelas joined the opposite camp not on religious grounds but on pure political calculations they had in common with the Jats and the Rajputs against the rapacity and faithlessness of the Marathas. The policy of *Peace with All* adopted by the Peshwas was an echo of the enlightened policy of Akbar the Great. But the Peshwas did not preserve that attitude of neutrality which characterised the policy of the Mughal Emperor. Their policy of indulgence towards the Brahmans resulted in the inevitable orthodox reaction that invariably arrests the growth of a nation in its mid-career.

SOME SIDE-LIGHTS ON THE HISTORY OF BENARES, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL

(based on a study of the Selections from the
Peshwas' Daftar.)

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the importance of the Selections from the Peshwas' Daftar as an indispensable contribution to the historical sources of India in the second half of the eighteenth century. We propose to consider here some of the extracts from the Selections throwing light on the history of Benares.

Balwant-nama of Khair-ud-din Allahabadi is the earliest contemporary chronicle of the present Benares Raj. We learn from it that down to the eighteenth century remnants of the great Gahadaval race were still ruling small principalities and the ruler of one of these had retained the unofficial title of King of Benares. Mansa Ram, the founder of the Benares Raj, though a Bhumihaar Brahmin, traced his descent through the female line to one of these so-called kings of Benares. He started his career as a servant of Rustam Ali Khan, the *Nazim* of Benares under the Nawab Wazirs of Oudh. He secured a *nazimship* of sarkars Benares, Jaunpur, and Chunargarh in the name of his son Balwant Singh by betraying his own master. Mansa Ram died in 1739 and was succeeded by his more ambitious son Balwant Singh. But Mansa Ram's brothers resented it and demanded a share in the family possessions. One of them, Dasa Ram, fled from Benares and began to intrigue with the Muslim zamindars of the Shahabad district for overthrowing the power of Balwant Singh. But Khair-ud-din is silent on the relations of Balwant Singh with the Marathas and the Delhi Court. Kashi Bai, the mother of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao, who was on a pilgrimage to the sacred places of Northern India under an imperial safe-conduct, came to Benares in April 1747 with a strong

Maratha escort. Dasa Ram took this opportunity to seek the protection of the Marathas which the kind-hearted lady could not refuse. But the affair took a political turn, and the Marathas perhaps thought of using Dasa Ram's claim for some less pious object. Balwant Singh wrote to the imperial court complaining that Dasa Ram with his family had been taken along in the train of Kashi Bai, and that she had threatened to send a Maratha force against Balwant Singh if he did not give Dasa Ram half of his territory. The representation was backed by Nawab Safdar Jang's agent at Delhi. The Maratha agent, however, who like an ambassador of the Elizabethan age, "lay abroad to lie for his country's benefit", disavowed it and said that they had nothing to do with Dasa Ram, except that he was released from the prison of the Governor of Patna (*Patankar*) (Vol. 2, pp. 4-5).

The Maratha power was at this time being consolidated in Bundelkhand by Govind Pant Bundele, and so it is not unlikely that the Marathas would cast looks of pious greed on Benares. Though nothing came out of Dasa Ram's affairs, there is ample evidence in the Selections that the Marathas began since then to covet the possession of Benares. We get a glimpse of it in the following letter of the Peshwa's agent Vasudev Dikshit from Benares, who writes to Raghunath Rao (Dec. 1757 ?):—.....None before him (Balwant Singh) ruled Benares so well as Bariwand Singh (Balwant Singh) has been doing for the last fifteen years.....the Wazir (Imad-ul-mulk?) issued a parwana granting this place to you, and the Rajah was also written to this effect. The Rajah.....showed twenty-five letters [from the Wazir] not to give possession of it.....So you should renounce it. Till now the Rajah has saved this place.....people are panic-stricken and to them the Ganges is the last resort.....if you come personally it is all right; otherwise please send ten or fifteen thousand horses under a Sardar as soon as this letter reaches you. When they will reach the neighbourhood the Rajah will also join them with five or seven thousand troops.....the Rajah should be saved.....Here people have no place to retire for safety; when any calamity appears they with their

families drown them selves in the Ganges.....An interview has taken place with me ; if he is helped; he will be of much use in future.....the Rajah has sent also his petition (Vol. 27, No. 209). Perhaps it was in 1756 that the Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk played this game of duplicity with the Marathas. The invasion of Benares that was rumoured was evidently that of Imad-ul-Mulk himself who had been sent by the Abadali with Jang Baz Khan and two Mughal princes to re-occupy the Doab and overthrow the power of Shuja-ud-Daula (Sarkar's Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. II, pp. 131-136).

Shuja-ud-Daula had invaded Benares in the beginning of 1757, put Balwant to flight, captured Latifpur, and granted peace to the Rajah by extorting an indemnity of twenty-five lakhs of rupees (Vol. 2, No. 170, 22nd March 1757). The Marathas had not given up their designs on Benares along with two other sacred places, Gaya and Allahabad. They reopened negotiations for securing a *sanad* for these places from the Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk in 1759. But Imad-ul-Mulk, being friendly to Shujaud-Daula to whom Allahabad and Benares belonged, refused compliance with this demand. Besides at this time the Marathas were anxious to make the Ganges all along its course down to Benares, if not further down, their boundary, as the letter of Rajah Keshab Rao to the Peshwa suggests (Vol. 27, No. 240, dated 30th July 1759). This Religious weakness which to a certain extent shaped the policy of the Peshwa cost the Marathas very dear in the long run; because both the Ruhelas and the Nawab of Oudh, though natural and hereditary foes, could agree on one point, namely, to keep the Marathas to the south of the Ganges which was strategically essential for the defence of their respective possessions. Shuja-ud-Daula perhaps would not have joined the Abadali if the Marathas had not entertained any such design against this part of his territory.

Now something about the social and economic life of the city of Benares as reflected in the Selections :

Benares was in the eighteenth century, as in the twentieth, a city of Brahmins without any ostensible

means of livelihood. Its people were timid and cowardly, preferring suicide with their whole families to manly risks in self-defence in times of danger. The temples and ghats were in a deplorable condition. The Maratha pilgrims and sojourners gradually formed a colony of their own in the city. It was perhaps from the time of the first Peshwa Balaji Vishvanath that the Maratha government undertook the restoration of temples and ghats in Benares. Letters of Sadashiv Naik to Baji Rao and Chimaji Appa written from Benares bear an account of the sad conditions of ghats and temples, and also schemes of repair with estimate of expenses (Vol. 18, Nos. 36 and 37). Pancha-Ganga, Manikarnika and Dasashvamedh were the three important quarters of the city but without any good bathing ghat (Vol. 30, No. 131). This Sadashiv Naik was also a secret political agent, who kept the Peshwa informed about public opinion and the attitude of some influential Muslim nobles regarding the projected invasion of Delhi by Baji Rao I. Radha Bai visited Benares in 1736 and spent large sums in charity. One Narayan Dikshit writes that she made an unfair discrimination in distributing *dakshina*No Maharashtra, a (Deshastha Brahman) got a farthing; whereas every Chitpavan got Rs. 5, 7 and even 10.....(Vol. 30, No. 147). The Peshwas were the first to build *Dharma-salas* and to endow free eating houses for Brahmins and other works of public utility in Benares. The price of land went high because Nagar Brahmins began to compete with the Marathas in buying it for religious purposes. The Government *haveli* or house of the Peshwa stood near Mangal-Gauri, where under orders from the Peshwa one blind saint Atmananda Saraswati was to be lodged (Vol. 43; No. 119). The Brahmins of Benares had their quarrels and mutual jealousy at that time as now. One Brahmin officiated in a sacrificial ceremony in the house of an Ambashta, and for this offence he was declared an outcaste by the Brahmins. Balkrishna Dikshit decided to re-admit that Brahmin to society after *prayashchit*, and this was opposed by one Lakhshman another Maratha Brahmin (Vol. 43; No. 122). The Patankar Dikshits of Benares belonged to the family of Baji Rao I's *guru*.

Maratha pilgrims were not so safe in their journey through Bihar as in other parts of India. Yesu Bai complains to Raghunath Rao of the ill-treatment that her party suffered in travelling from Gaya to Benares. ".....Kamdhar Khan charged Rs. 9-4-0 per head from us; Rao Vishwanath Vaidya was taken away as security for Rs. 3,500 due by us. Men were killed and the Karkun received many wounds.....at Daudnagar and other *chokis* one rupee per head was levied : Nandaram, Foujdar of Benares, also.....took *zakat*.....we handed over to him the letter of Srimant Peshwa of which he took no notice." This ill-treatment of Maratha pilgrims roused a sort of crusading spirit among the Maratha chiefs and this sentiment was shared by their women also. A letter to Raghunath Rao, written probably by Kashi Bai, breathes this spirit; she blesses Raghoba for his assurances that he would take her to Prayag after having freed that place from the enemy's control. Saguna Bai's party suffered even more during their journey through Bihar and the expenses of the pilgrimage of her party mounted to Rs. 65,000, of which she alone was to pay Rs. 10,000 (Vol. 18; No. 146). A letter of Mahipat Rao written to Peshwa Madhav Rao dated 20th July 1772 describes Benares thus:—....."the place is small; Brahmins innumerable and number of the needy large.....Gangaputras are giving great trouble;.....Brahmins are obdurate (in their demands)"Elsewhere the same writer gives us an idea of the harassment of pilgrims by the Gavalis, and Gangaputras of Benares and the Pandas of Prayag, who are still notorious for their exactions and unscrupulousness. Only a few years back during one of our historical tours, one Panda of Benares offered to take my Muslim students around Hindu sacred places provided that they dressed as Hindus. Vices and hypocrisy were perhaps as rampant in Benares at this time as they were in the days of Kabirji who exposes them so vehemently in his *dohas*.

Benares in 1810 (?) witnessed some natural calamities and portents of nature; one night in the month of Bhadra of that year "shooting stars fell, fire broke out

in the bazar and earth began to shake; one old temple fell down and several houses cracked.....one day terrible roaring sound was heard.....:" (Vol. 43; No. 66). This letter also gives us a list of prices of food-stuff in different seasons in Benares; rice of average quality sold at 16 to 22 seers per rupee, wheat 16 to 30 seers, gram 20 to 32 seers, molasses 14 to 16 seers, milk and curd 20 to 27 seers. Neither fish nor meat is to be found in the vegetarian's list.

AMIR-NAMA OR MEMOIRS OF AMIR KHAN PINDARI BY BASAWAN LAL

Amir Khan, the founder of the Muslim state of Tonk in Rajputana, lives perhaps in the memory of the average man of our country as the accursed leader of the Pindari hordes who desolated Rajputana and Central India by their violence and rapine. History can not be said to have as yet done justice to this last great Pathan military genius of India. Materials for an exhaustive and critical study of the biography of Amir Khan are abundant, though scattered in the Imperials Records of India and the State-archives of Indore, Gwalior and the Rajput states of Jaipur, Kotah, Jodhpur and Mewar. We have a very valuable nucleus of a biography of Amir Khan in Basawan Lal's Persian Memoirs of Amir Khan known as *Amir-nama*.*

The author Basawan Lal, son of Nainsukh Rai, a Saksena Kayath of Bilgram tells us in the preface that he had been in the service of Amir Khan as the *naib-munshi* and *peh-dast* (Head Assistant) of Amir's Dewan, Rai Dataram, son of Himmat Rai. He began writing this history at the suggestion of the Amir and also received encouragement from the Amir's son, Wazir-ud-daula Bahadur, Nawab of Tonk. It was begun in the year given, by the chronogram, *yadgar-i-Amir-i-Salar ast i.e.* in 1240 A. H. (1824 A.D.). More than one hundred years back, a translation of *Amir-nama* was published by Henry T. Prinsep under the title of "Memoirs of the Pathan soldier Mohummud Ameer Khan", Calcutta, 1832. As this translation was not available to me at Dacca, I have used Sir Jadunath Sarkar's transcript of *Amir-nama* from Oriental Public Library, Bankipur (Catalogue, VOL. VI; no. 531; p. 201-2). Apart from its biographical importance, *Amir-nama*

* Catalogue of Persian Mss. in the British Museum, Vol. III, p. 1019.

is an indispensable contemporary source of our knowledge of the history of every Indian state of Malwa and Rajputana for the last two decades of the eighteenth and the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

The history, Amir-nama, is divided into four unequal *babs* or part; Part I deals with Amir's ancestry and early life ; Part II gives a historical notice of the Deccan powers; Part III of the alliance of Amir Khan and Maharajah Jaswant Rao Holkar and Part IV with the Pindari War waged by the English and their treaty with Amir Khan. Part III is the longest and most important part of the book, giving us a glimpse of Amir's political game of weakening the Maratha states and prevention of any joint action on the part of the Marathas against the English with the ulterior object of establishing Muslim ascendancy in Malwa and Rajputana under his own leadership. He was ambitious, as this book clearly indicates, of gaining the indirect but *de facto* control of the Maratha confederacy under the guise of upholding the interests of his weak ally, Jaswant Rao Holkar. This book is full of human interest too, which is rather rare in dry chronicles of official history. In Basawan Lal's book, the grim Pindari leader assumes no stiff official pose; but allows himself to be depicted as a genial care-free soldier of fortune with own code of free-lance morality and chivalry. We shall give only as much of the life of Amir Khan as would perhaps suffice to interest our younger generation in a more detailed study of one of the dark spots of our history.

Tale Khan, grandfather of Amir Khan belonged to the Salar-zai sept of the Bunerwal clan of the great Yusufzai tribe of Pathans. During the reign of Emperor Muhammad Shah Tale Khan left his native village of Jauhar in the Buner valley and settled in Narana near Sambhal. He joined the predatory bands of Zaman Khan *jamadar* and other Afghans and lived by plunder. When the Imperial army under Muhammad Shah marched against Ali Muhammad Khan and besieged Aonla, Tale Khan assisted by a single servant defended himself for 8 days in a house. When he at last came out, the

Emperor offered to take him in service, which Tale Khan bluntly refused.

Amir's father Muhammad Hayat Khan was a minor at the time of his father's death. Dundee Khan, who at this time had become the master of that tract, took him in service in consideration of Tale Khan's services to the national cause. After the death of Dundee Khan when Kutehr (Rohilkhand) was lost to the Afghans, Md. Hayat Khan returned to his birth-place Narana, and having no liking for service, settled down to a peaceful life in his jagir, and attached himself to Shaikh Yahaya and Khan Sahib Ghulam Muhiuddin Khan. He was skilled in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and other sciences. Amir was born in 1180 A. H. When he became 7 years of age, Amir used to play the king with boys of his own age. Whatever he got from home he would distribute among his comrades as pay; if no money were available he would take away grain and distribute it heedless of the censure of his father. Morning indeed showed the day, and the restless spirit of military adventure of his grandfather was early noticable in Amir Khan. He twice fled from home in search of independent livelihood as a soldier. Finally he left home in 1202 A.H. accompanied by a band of young Ruhela adventures who elected him as their chief (jamadar).

He made his way to Mathura where General De Boigne was then recruiting soldiers on behalf of Mahadji Sindhia. But Amir was not taken in, being too young for service. He then went to Sekhawati and entered the service of Najaf Quli Khan through the recommendation of Yusuf Khan, a Risaladar of Najaf Quli. After having served Najaf Quli for two months he entered the service of Bagh Singh, a *rais* of Khetāri in Shekhawati. He served Bagh Singh of Khetāri for four or five months, and afterwards for about the same period he was in the service of Maharajah Bijay Singh of Jodhpur.

During this time Bijay Singh was defeated by the Southerners (at the battle of Patan). From Jodhpur Amir went to Nagore where Ismail Beg Khan had arrived after sustaining a defeat at Ganaur (?). He now joined service of Ismail Beg with whose army he proceeded to

Palanpur; and when after the reduction of that place on behalf of the Rajah of Jodhpur Ismail Beg Khan returned to Jodhpur, Amir parted company with him and entered the service of the Raja of Idar with 300 to four hundred men. There his services were not required for more than two or three months. From Idar he started for Surat, and during the journey half of his men left him owing to privation and hardships, and starvation that faced them. One day Amir had to sell his own charger for buying food for his men. During this time on the night of Shab-i-barat it seemed to be the lot of Amir and his followers to go without food. Amir went to the house of a pious Maulvi who was keeping an open table for Muslims on that night. When the Maulvi asked Amir to take his meal, Amir replied, "I have not the heart to fill my belly when two hundred followers of mine are feeling pangs of hunger there". The Maulvi taking compassion on the Amir taught him a name of God, which he was told, if regularly repeated 100 times a day would save him from every difficulty. Indeed relief came immediately. A Pandit in Gaekwad's service whom the English at Surat refused to pay their arrears of *chauth* on seeing the smallness of his forces, now offered to take Amir and his men into pay till the recovery of *chauth* from the English. The story of the recovery of *chauth* from the English by a bold bluff, which is given in detail in the Amir-nama was the first notable achievement of Amir Khan.

From Surat Amir again without employment took the road to Kokan. Amir like Babur was prodigal in his expenditure and would disdain to think of the morrow, playing alternately the amir and the faqir in his long and eventful career. One day when he was passing through Kokan, neither he nor any of his followers had a single *kauri* left with them. One of his companions not to be outdone in the spirit of sacrifice by his chief, went to the bazar with his *setar* (three-stringed musical instrument), sold it for Rs. 1/4, bought four anna worth of opium, and one Rupee worth of gram. The gram was boiled and opium mingled in water, and this was distributed among them by Amir. Early in the next morning he reached Nasik, where he was entertained as a

guest for one whole week by the hospitable chiefs of that country. There he served for four months under a Pandit who was the subahdar of Nasik. After the rainy season was over, one Pandit Naro Shankar, whom Srimat Peshwa had appointed subahdar of Ujjain with four districts (*ilaga*) of Malwa—arrived at this place and took Amir's *risalah* into pay. He served the Maratha chief for one year.

During this time civil war broke out in the Bhopal State, and Amir found therein an opportunity to push his fortune. At first Amir espoused the cause of the rebels who had sought refuge in this camp against Nawab Ghaus Muhammad Khan. Later on through the mediation of Rajah Himmat Rai of Bilgram, *mustaufi* of Bhopal, he accepted the service of the Nawab. Amir failed in an attempt to succour the garrison of Hoshangabad, which had been besieged by the Bhonsla of Rajah of Nagpur. Soon after Amir left Bhopal, and having reached Sironj waited on Lakwa Pandit, an officer of Daulat Rao Sindhia. Having been refused service after attendance on him for one week, he realised nevertheless his pay for these days by a show of force. Next he went to Bala Rao Ingliya, another officer of Sindhia, in search of service. Bala Rao after detaining him for ten days in expectation at length wanted to dismiss him without paying him the expenses of his halt there. One day Amir with a dagger concealed under his arm-pit went inside the fort, and when he met Bala Rao (perhaps alone), he compelled him to pay down his dues at the point of dagger held to his chest, and cut his way out of the fort by performing prodigies of valour.

Next comes the story of Amir's alliance with Rajah Jai Singh and Durjansal Khichi of Raghugarh against Bala Rao Ingliya an officer of Sindhia. These Khichi chiefs having been expelled from their ancestral home of Raghugarh by Daulat Rao Sindhia had taken to predatory warfare plundering the Maratha territories of both Sindhia and Holkar in Malwa. Amir Khan then joined Rajah Jai Singh Khichi who promised him half of the conquests made by their joint effort. The Marathas found more than their match in Amir Khan

as a master of elusive tactics in predatory warfare. Bala Rao Ingliya divided his troops into four brigades and drew a cordon around the Khichi chiefs and Amir Khan on all sides. They baffled every effort of the Marathas to bring them to an action and would not encamp for twenty four hours in the same place. During this time it so happened that for 18 days Amir Khan went on raiding Maratha possessions in spite of such a close pursuit by the Marathas that Amir and his cavaliers did not alight from their horses except to answer calls of nature. They used to knead plundered flour of wheat on horse-back, gather fuel with lance-heads, light fire with *chakhmaq* flint-stone, bake *chāpāthis* by holding them on fire with lances, and eat their food on their saddles. We hardly come across a more graphic picture Pindhara life than this. Another feat of Amir Khan was a bold attempt on Bala Rao's life in his own camp. However when hostilities ceased between Jai Singh and Bala Rao, Amir with one thousand men entered the service of Bala Rao on a poor pay Rs. 4 per mensem for every footman and Rs. 10/- for every trooper. When Amir's followers raised murmurs against such poor pay, he promised to give them something more. They asked, "Wherefrom wouldst thou give it?" Amir gave the characteristic reply, "Wherefrom I have hitherto given." This he did by supplementing his pay by the plunder of helpless peasants of the country along his route.

Bala Rao stationed Amir Khan to hold the fort of Fathgarh in the vicinity of Bhopal against the Nawab on behalf of Bala Rao's protégé Murid Muhammad Khan. When provisions ran short in the fort, Amir ordered several shots to be fired into city where his ally Murid Muhammad Khan was encamped. Murid Muhammad Khan sent him a message, saying that Amir's behaviour was far from the Afghan code of honour. Amir wrote in reply, "What observance of the Afghan code of honour on your part is this that you eat to surfeit while I am left to starve here?" Murid Muhammad sent cooked food inside the fort for Amir and his followers. Every day Amir would secure his ration by firing a few shots similarly as warning. Bala Rao could have forced the Nawab of Bhopal to become

a tributary to the Maratha State had not at this time urgent despatches from Daulat Rao Sindhia did not reach Bala Rao and Bapuji Sindhia for arresting a chief named Lakhwa. Amir left Bhopal on the conclusion of a treaty between the Nawab and the Marathas.

We do not propose to refer to Amir's alliance with Jaswant Rao Holkar, Amir's part in the Maratha civil war between Sindhia and Holkar, and his feats generalship in the war between the English and Jaswant Rao Holkar as these are already, well-known facts of history. We resume the thread of narrative from the opening of negotiation of peace between Jaswant Rao Holkar and Lord Lake at Jallandhar.

When peace negotiation with Jaswant Rao and the English had almost reached completion, Jaswant Rao Holkar's Pathan chiefs withdrew from his camp. Amir refused to be a party to the treaty, and he severely rebuked Holkar for his unmanly submission. But the English envoy insisted on Amir's seal being fixed on to the treaty. Jaswant Rao Holkar persuaded Amir to return to his camp. Amir Khan had a soft corner for Jaswant Rao Holkar, whom he had generously forgiven more than one act of treachery. There happened at this time an interesting episode. Jaswant Rao Holkar having despaired of any hope of his release from the grip of his inconvenient and overpowerful ally, Amir Khan formed a plot to administer poison to him. He gave a packet of cobra-poison (*halahal*) to a Maratha page of Amir Khan. But the boy revealed every detail of the plot to his master, who, however, hit upon a device to teach Jaswant a lesson. One day during a friendly and unofficial interview Amir told Jaswant Rao that one Maulvi had given him a miraculous medicine for strengthening sexual power (*Quwwat-i-bahah*). Jaswant entreated Amir to give a dose of it to him. Amir told him that this medicine could be taken secretly under his own directions and requested Jaswant to come on another occasion if he would care to take it. Jaswant and Amir sat face to face in a retired place and the packet of *halahal* was handed over by Amir to his

friend. Jaswant at once burst into profuse tears and told Amir that this was the work of some wicked persons, who were interested in discrediting him in the eyes of the Amir. However, Amir forgave him and their friendship remained intact.

When Maharajah Jaswant Rao Holkar and Amir Khan had fled towards Lahor pursued by the army of Lord Lake (1805 A. D.), Holkar's family was given shelter in Jodhpur by Rajah Man Singh Rathor. During this time the Jodhpur Rajah opened negotiation with Maharana Bhim Singh of Mewar for the hand of his daughter Krishna Kumari who had been betrothed to his predecessor and cousin, Rajah Bhim. "During this time a serious quarrel broke out between Maharana Bhim Singh and Raja Man, as the latter had seized Khalirao, a fief of Mewar, which one of the ancestors of the Maharana had given away in dowery to Kumar Singh. Rajah Man without caring at all for the near kinship of the Rana with that chief (Kumar Singh) expelled him from Khalirao. The Rana in great resentment opened negotiation of a matrimonial alliance with Rajah Jagat Singh of Jaipur and declared that he would not give Krishna in marriage to Rajah Man Singh. He wrote to Jagat Singh that he should send his troops to occupy the *Ghat* (pass), so that the enemy might not secure its possession. Rajah Jagat Singh having heard of the great beauty of the Mewar princess sent a *darogha* of his named Khush-hal Singh with a detachment of troops to accomplish this business.

Khush-hal Singh reached Udaipur and occupied the pass. He sent to Raja Jagat Singh a portrait of the princess painted by the magic brush of an excellent painter. This made the Raja more restless for union with her. (Ms. p. 85) Now Rajah Man Singh of Jodhpur wrote openly about this affair to Maharajah Daulat Rao Sindhia, Subhadar of Jodhpur, who during this time was encamped in Udaipur district. Accordingly Sindhia marched towards Udaipur and drove away Khush-hal Singh from the Ghat. This added fuel to Jagat Singh's anger. After the departure of Sindhia Rajah Jagat Singh again sent to Udaipur

Rai Ratan Lal, a trusty confidant of his with a force. Having heard this news Rajah Man Singh asked the advise of Sawai Singh of Pokaran, a near kinsman of his on this affair. Sawai Singh who had been at heart insincere to Rajah Man Singh.....said that it was a fight for prestige and honour, and instigated him to lead an army against Jaipur.

Rajah Man Singh by rapid marches covered fifty *kos* and reached the neighbourhood of Pushkar. He sent off his *Bakshi* named Indraraj with a detachment to bar the path of Jaipur forces, which had already reached as far as Shahpura on their way to Udaipur. Indraraj told the Jaipur troops either to give up the idea of going to Udaipur or give battle. Rai Ratan Lal who was a cautious man, considering any conflict at that place inadvisable sent his troops back to Jaipur and himself went to Pushkar to pay a visit to Maharajah Holkar. At this time Holkar accompanied by Amir Khan had reached Malpura in Jaipur territory, and having dismissed Amir Khan from that place to manage the Jaipur affair (of realising tribute), marched to *Harmara* one stage from Malpura. There he left his army, and accompanied only by 2000 light horse reached Pushkar with the object of bringing back his family which had been left in Jodhpur at the time of his march to Lahor. There he met Rajah Man Singh and had his family back from Jodhpur. Here Ratan Lal saw Holkar and in order to end the ruinous feud between the two royal houses, entered into an understanding with Rajah Man Singh, whereby both Man Singh and Jagat Singh were to give up the idea of Udaipur marriage, and a daughter of Man Singh was to be betrothed to Jagat Singh and the latter sister to Man Singh.

In the meanwhile the Amir after having settled the affair of Jaipur reached Pushkar by a rapid march attended only by one thousand horse. Rajah Man Singh expressed a desire to meet the Amir, who in reply to Maharajah Holkar's communication of it to him said that if the Rajah would come out to receive him, and accord him a welcome as an equal without deviating in the least from the most delicate rules of

the *darbar* etiquette, he had no objection to the interview. "I am not going for an interview with the Rajah," said the Amir, "as you did when during the interview proper ceremony and rules of etiquette were not observed, and your turban went off your head in the crowd". Maharajah Holkar did not like that the Amir should be exalted above him in the eyes of people by a more honourable reception than that what he himself had from the Rajah. So, double-tongued as he was, he told the Amir on one hand that the Rajah was not prepared to receive him as the Amir would expect; and on the other hand, he said to the Rajah that it would be difficult to get away if at the time of interview any thing unpleasant should happen from the conduct of Amir's troops who were unruly Afghans creating troubles for their arrears of pay; the Rajah should better postpone it for some future occasion, as he and Amir being one and the same, there was hardly any necessity for seeing the Amir.

In short Maharajah Holkar settled the affair of Jaipur through Rai Ratan Lal on ten lakhs of Rupees publicly, but in secret a *nazarana* (of the same amount) was promised to him on the condition that he should sever his alliance with Rajah Man Singh, and the sum was to be paid to him when he should reach Kotah after evacuating the Jaipur territory. Holkar dismissed Amir Khan with a *nishan* for realising the Jaipur tribute. Amir marched to Jaipur and encamped near the city. Rajah Jagat Singh after some hesitation was at length persuaded by his advisers to meet the Amir on terms of equality, insisted on by the latter. The Rajah came as far as the Ghat *darwaza* to receive him and showed him due honour and respect. After interview with the Rajah, the Amir stayed there for a few days to realise the war indemnity (*zar-i-jangi*). He further secured the lease of *pargana* Tonk in lieu of two lakhs of Rupees on the condition that the officials of the Raj should be left in charge of it for one year. He left there Rai Himmat Rai for the collection of its revenue. At Jaipur he happened to meet Muhammad Iyaz Khan who held an appointment there. Muhammad Iyaz Khan's daughter

was betrothed to him, and a few months after the marriage was celebrated in Ajmere.

After the marriage the Amir came to Maharajah Holkar for obtaining leave of dismissal *rukhsat* as he intended to convey his family to Shergarh. He told Maharajah that after realising the tribute from Jaipur and releasing Khande Rao from the custody of army officers to whom he had been given as a security for their arrears of pay—he should ally himself with Rajah Man Singh of Jodhpur, who had braved the wrath of the victorious English by giving a refuge to his family during his retreat to Lahor. Holkar, who on the consideration of a *nazarana* had come to an understanding with Rai Ratan Lal of Jaipur to separate himself from Rajah Man Singh and depart for Kotah,—turned a deaf ear to Amir's eloquent appeal to his honour. Having received from Ratan Lal, a *nishan* of two lakhs of Rupees for settling the affair *i. e.*, dispute over the Udaipur betrothal, and the secretly stipulated *nazarana* of ten lakhs of Rupees, he decided to march away from Pushkar. He gave one lakh of Rupees to the Amir and turned his attention to the release Khande Rao by paying up arrears to his troops. Having no other option, the Amir issued *parwana* to his troops to evacuate Jaipur and reassemble at Muzzamābād in Jaipur territory. Having made assignments on Jaipur for one sixth *Chātāhāt* of the pay of his troops, he marched away from that place and reached Sheogarhā plundering on the way Lawa and inhabitants of Sawai Madhopur and other places.

In the meanwhile Rajah Man Singh had marched back from Pushkar to Jodhpur, leaving behind 500 Rathor horse with Holkar. This he did in compliance with Holkar's request for a contingent of auxiliaries upon whom he could rely for personal safety against his own discontented and turbulent mercenaries, mostly Pathan. Maharaj Holkar with the Rathor contingent of horse left Pushkar for his camp at Harmara in Jaipur. He had Khande Rao released from the custody of troops by clearing off their dues with *hundi* (draft) on Jaipur, and sent him to Indore.

When the officials of the Rajah of Jaipur saw the cavalry of Rajah Man Singh in the retinue of Maharaj Holkar, a false suspicion arose in their mind. They thought, now that Rajah Man Singh had sent his troops in the company of Maharaj Holkar for bringing away the daughter of the Rana, Maharaj Holkar would certainly go to Udaipur and secure her by force, and the cavalry of Man Singh escort her to Jodhpur. Having become suspicious of the attitude of Holkar, the Jaipur *darbar* took into pay some of the ex-army officers of Holkar, such as Mir Makhdum Haidarabadi, Wahid Khan, Khuda Buksh, Mir Sadaruddin Sarangpurwala, Mir Mardan Ali, Nawab Sahib Khan and others,—who had in disappointment and disgust separated themselves from Holkar at the time of Holkar's conclusion of a treaty with the English and threatened the very life of Holkar for arrears of pay.

Sawai Singh, chief of Pokaran and Rajah Surat Singh of Bikanir, who secretly bore great enmity and hatred toward Rajah Man Singh Rathor, wanted to entangle him in a war with Jaipur. So when Man Singh returned from Pushkar giving up his contention for the hand of Krishna Kumari, these chiefs censured him for his unmanly surrender of the claim to the hand of that princess and incited him to make war upon Jaipur. These traitors at the same time sent the news of hostile preparations on the part of Jodhpur to Rajah Jagat Singh of Jaipur, whom they had instigated to take up the cause of Dhonkol Singh, nephew of Bhim Singh and place him on the *gadi* of Jodhpur by supplanting Man Singh.

Thus war broke out between Jodhpur and Jaipur, and both sides were eager to secure the services of Amir Khan's mercenary bands. And in this bid, Jaipur forestalled Jodhpur. Rajah Jagat Singh sent Mahatab Rai and Muhammad Gafur Khan to the Amir for negotiating a pact with him. About this time disturbances and rebellion broke out among the followers of the Amir whom they virtually made a prisoner. The Amir feigned dysentery, and for two or three days went to the privy frequently. One night within the screen of the privy, he changed clothes with a servant of his named Hayat, and made his

escape to a place of safety by tearing open the *kanat* of *paikhana*. However, the Amir accepted the offer of Jaipur, and the agreement was sworn between the parties. Shortly after this, an officer of Holkar named Jamna Bhao waited on the Amir, and requested him to side with Rajah Man Singh. Jait Mal *munshi* of Rajah Man Singh came direct from Jodhpur and offered handsome cash, and grant of territory worth several lakhs if he should join Rajah Man Singh. The Amir told them plainly that he could not break the solemn agreement with Jaipur at that moment. The Amir mobilised his forces at Lakheri Ghat. At Lakheri Ghat, he joined the army of Jaipur and invaded Jodhpur. But during the progress of the campaign, Amir went over to the side of Rajah Man, and made a hurried march for Jaipur. Jaipur lay defenceless and helpless against the Pindari chief. A sister of Jagat Singh sent several trays of *mohurs* and jewels along with her own scarf to Amir Khan. She sent a message to the Amir that at Jaipur only women were now left from whom he could expect no martial reception. Amir chivalrously sent back her presents with the message that he was going where men to fight with him were to be found and assured her of his honourable pledge of protection. Amir secretly connived at the flight of Rajah Jagat Singh when he was all but captured by the troops of Marwar.

Amir now became the arbiter of affairs at Jodhpur. At the request of the Ranis and the Heir-Apparent, he murdered Sangi Indra Raj and raised Bhim Singh to the gadi of Marwar. Again the question of the hand of Krishna Kumari was raised as a point of national honour by the Rathors, and Rajputana was to have no peace so long as Krishna were alive. The tragedy that followed is a notorious fact of history, and the author of Amir-nama adds no word of apology for Amir's share of guilt in this inhuman affair.

JADUNATH SARKAR AS A HISTORIAN

(1)

It is approximately correct to say that the historiography of Medieval India begins with Al-Beruni and Kalhana. Al-Beruni stands even to this day as an arch-type of what a student of Indo-Muslim history should be sober, critical and yet sympathetic. Kalhana set an example of writing a regional and dynastic history on a comprehensive scale with an independence rare among court chroniclers of later times. But their examples were not followed up. History became a handmaid of courts and kings. Historians of the pre-Mughal period were exclusively Muslim who wrote with an eye to court patronage and the applause of the orthodox. However, they did not wilfully falsify facts though religious bias was strong. Among the Hindus, historical tradition was kept alive in the twelfth century by the Raso literature of Rajasthan, Sanskrit panegyrics (e. g. *Prithviraja-Vijayam*), dramas, and the unwritten bardic tales.

The age of Akbar was the golden age of historiography. Abul Fazl was its hero unsurpassed for centuries later in scholarship, moral purity, catholicity of mind and a secular outlook on history though an imperialist to the core. Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama* with its supplement *Ain-e-Akbari* was, in design and spirit, a literary reflex of the idealism of his unlettered patron and friend, Akbar the Great. Though he lacked the critical acumen and freedom of his great predecessor, Al-Beruni, Abul Fazl followed the path of Al-Beruni in his study of the early history and cultural heritage of India, a revival which was for the first time seriously attempted by Akbar. Akbar under the advice of Todarmal made Persian the official language of the Mughal Empire. This was a momentous step in the sixteenth century like the introduction of English as the official language of British India

in the nineteenth century. Persian remained no longer an alien language of the unclean *malechhas*. Hindus soon mastered Persian, and within a century equalled if not excelled the Indian Muslims in their literary skill in Persian. What was most important, Hindus caught the contagion of love for history from the Muslims. Ishwardas Nagar in the reign of Aurangzeb was the first Hindu historian of Aurangzeb as Sir Jadunath is in the present century.

(2)

Bengal had been the land of poetry, jurisprudence and logic in ancient times, but not of history and historians; and so did her cultural tradition remain in the middle ages. Hindus of Bengal could not boast of a history like *Rajatarangini* in their days of independence. Sandhyakar Nandi's *Ramacharitam*, a historical panegyric and that too in subtle metaphor, is the only work to Bengal's credit. It seems the soil of Bengal was unsuited to history. Even the Muslims of the Bengal took the path of Hindus turning away from history which was flourishing so luxuriously in other parts of India. A phenomenal change came upon Bengal under the impact of British civilization. She became the seed plot of the Indian Renaissance, of the Reformation and of the Revolution as well.

The historiography of Modern India dates from the establishment of British rule in Bengal. Muslims as well as Hindus turned to reconstruct the history of Bengal, everyone within his own sphere under the guiding English genius. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, *Tarikh-e-Bangala*, and Hamidullah Khan's *Tarikh-e-Chatgam* were the first fruits of Muslim scholarship and enthusiasm; and Ram Ram Basu's Bengali biography written in the first decade of the nineteenth century was the first Hindu attempt at historical composition in prose. We need not follow the subsequent phases of progress in this direction which did not perhaps determine the career of Sir Jadunath as a historian.

(3)

Sir Jadunath has not revealed the forces that weaned a student from English literature to Indo-Muslim history.

We only learn this much from a radio talk of his (later on published in the Bengali Journal, *Prabasi*) that it was his father who implanted a love for history in his young mind, and that it was through the gate of Western history that he had entered the field of historical researches in Indian History. This is understandable as Jadunath once remarked that he had to read the Italian historian, Sismandi, to appreciate Dante better. European history, therefore, preoccupied him as an essential subsidiary of English literature, apart from its being one of the subjects of his Honours course of the University of Calcutta. This is in our opinion the most potent influence in the make-up of the Jadunath as a historian. If Jadunath stands out today as an individualist, unique and unparalleled for insight and farsight into different ages and epochs of world history of which history of India is but a chapter, he owes it to his early grounding in European history and to intellectual discipleship to the great historians of nineteenth century, Ranke and Mommsen, Acton and Maitland, Macaulay and Gibbon. Had Jadunath started with Indian history only, he like some other illustrious historians of our country, would not have been able to take a detached view of men and matters, or to cultivate the calm disinterested judicial temper on which historical science depends. He always impressed on his pupils that any specialisation which is not broad based on a decent amount of general knowledge of the subject as a whole is bound to miscarry in the field of Humanities.

(4)

It is common knowledge that Sir Jadunath Sarkar did not take his M. A. degree in History, though he took first class Honours in it at the B. A. stage. He started his career as a teacher of English literature and not of history, and his allegiance to literature is almost sentimental even to this day. This may appear rather embarrassing to the present generation. We know of some bright scholars of English literature who taught history exclusively and with eminent success up to the highest university standard, though they did not write history. The fact is that in Jadunath's days students

of English literature were required to read more of European history than students read today for their M. A. degree in History. Jadunath like his younger contemporary G. M. Trevelyan at Harrow, a truant from the classics to History, might as well say, "Shakespeare and Milton, Keats and Tennyson" meant to him "quite as much as Gibbon and Macaulay, Carlyle and Ruskin." Though aware of the shortcomings of Macaulay as a historian, Jadunath seems to have been under the spell of Macaulay as a stylist. As a master of vigorous historical prose Macaulay and not Gibbon must have been his model, though both were inimitable. The other favourite author of Jadunath was Green, sections from whose *Short History of the English People* he would read aloud before starting any new chapter of his books. Sir Jadunath's *History of Aurangzib* and his *Fall of the Mughal Empire* reveal that Macaulay and Green were for narration, Irvine seems to be another historian who deeply contending in him besides Napier influenced Jadunath's style and method of writing in the early stages.

(5)

Jadunath required a terra firma of history as distinguished from prosaic archaeology, epigraphy and numismatics to suit his literary genius. He preferred the Muslim period on account of its wealth of historical literature and a virgin field for digging in for new materials, ancient India being rather barren of bona fide political history. He chose Aurangzeb as the subject of his life's work. At the start it was a hazard and a speculation for the young scholar. He was a Hindu, and no other Hindu after Ishwardas Nagar and Bhimsen Burhanpuri in the reign of Aurangzeb had ventured to write anything original on Aurangzeb. Jadunath clearly realized the immensity of the task in view of the fact that almost all the sources were available in Persian and Marathi both of which he did not know. If the challenge was extremely formidable, Jadunath's preparation was equally strenuous and well-planned, and everything in him was movement and zeal. He began Persian from the alphabet, and gradually learnt

enough to tackle the Persian chronicles in manuscript. Jadunath's *India of Aurangzib : its Topography, Statistics and Roads*, published in 1901, was a surprise to his contemporaries, and at once hailed as a model of neat and exact scholarship.

A few years after a political storm burst over Bengal and rapidly spread all over India with the Bengal Partition of 1905 during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. A wave of anti-British feeling filled every genuine heart, and Jadunath could not but have a shaking. He was, however, the most moderate of his family. His more inflammable younger brother, Bijaynath, B.A., C.E., after a conflict with his British superiors in the Central Provinces, lost the post of the Executive Engineer, and took to Swadeshi with full ardour. Jadunath prepared a sober broadside which hit the British Indian Government at its weakest spot, namely its economic policy. His *Economics of British India* came out in 1909 and received a warm welcome throughout India from general readers and students of economics alike for its irrefutable logic and the charm and vigour of its style. Down to our college days (1918) our classmates used to commit passages from his book to memory and recite them to fan the patriotic fire of the slugged amongst us. This book went through four editions, till the author himself withdrew it from the market when History made it impossible to keep himself up-to-date with Indian Economics. Though Jadunath's book was a vigorous attack on British economic policy in India, Sir Theodore Morison appreciated the courage and independence of the author of *Economics of British India* no less than his "conscientious investigation of detail".

(6)

Jadunath's first two volumes of Aurangzeb came out in July 1912. These volumes were at once acknowledged as the "best authority" on the subject. The author was complimented for "his manner of treating the subject (which) might as well serve as a model to writers dealing with periods of Indo-Musalman history". (*Sir E.D. Ross*) Maulana Shibli, an ocean of Islamic learning, in spite of his differences of opinion with Jadunath, was generous

enough to acknowledge the value of his work and help him in tracing the manuscript of *Haft Anjuman* in Benares. In order to understand a Muslim one must understand Islam, and the key to Islam lies with Islamic history. Jadunath spent a couple of years over Islamic history and culture outside India so that he might do justice to Aurangzeb who was much less an individual than an ideology that had inspired the Muslim community at every critical period. Chips from Jadunath's workshop came out in the form of *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, *Historical Essays* (November 1912), the Persian text of Hamid-uddin's *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*, and as if a counterpoise in the direction of the author's inherited faith, a monograph on *Chaitanya : his Pilgrimages and Teachings*, in 1913 (afterwards *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, 3rd edition, 1932). Our saintly C. F. Andrews wrote of this book as "a work of surpassing value, full of human interest from beginning to end."

Four years' interval between the publication of the first two volumes and the third were years of strenuous preparation for Jadunath. The moral and religious Regulations of Aurangzeb, Jihad and Jaziya, temple destruction and the Hindu reaction were highly controversial and inflammable topics when the anti-national Muslim communalism fanned by the sinister influence of British imperialism was dreaming of a Muslim India by garbling history. The historian's mission was to discover "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the past," which had unfortunately become a live issue at the time of writing the third volume and was heading for its first triumph by the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms of 1919, the year of the publication of the fourth volume of the *History of Aurangzib*. The whirlwind of political passions could not disturb the juristic equanimity of the stern historian, equally indifferent to praise and blame of any but the Illuminati of humanity.

The third volume was released from the press in 1916. It created a stir in the country. The Muslims as well as the Hindus felt aggrieved for opposite reasons. English education has done at least this much good to

the intelligentsia of India that it has alerted our conscience and created for us a code of moral equity and fairness in literary criticism. Jadunath's method of putting his case in the spirit of a judge giving direction to the jury of humanity, born and unborn, came as a challenge to the Muslims, particularly so resentful of the interpretation on Islamic institutions by a Hindu. But facts spoke for themselves clearly enough, and the testimony of Aurangzeb himself corroborated by the historical evidence of equally good Muslims, created a desperate situation for the apologists of Aurangzeb.

The Hindus on the other hand suffering as much from a fever of reactionary communalism complained that Jadunath had branded the champions and martyrs of Hindu independence in the seventeenth century as rebels and robbers, to whom his pen was no more lenient than Aurangzeb's sword. Maharashtra was particularly perturbed because Jadunath was preparing to invade the realm of Maratha history in his next volume and fight the Maratha historians with their own weapons, and on their own ground. Jadunath brought out his *Shivaji and his Times* in July, 1919, and the fourth volume of Aurangzeb (dealing with the Deccan in Shivaji and Shambhuj's reigns) in the month of December of that year. Thus Shivaji and Aurangzeb confronted each other on the shelf of reviewers and scholars competent to pronounce judgment on them both. In the course of reviewing the *History of Aurangzeb* for *History* (1922), old H. Beveridge remarked: "Jadunath Sarkar may be called Primus in India as the user of Persian authorities for the history of India. He might also be styled Bengali Gibbon." The veteran historian V. A. Smith on the eve of retirement from the field of active research commended him for "learning impartiality and critical ability" and wished him to continue his "good work of giving honest history"! But honest history was becoming risky in India. Jadunath's treatment of the nature of Jaziya was resented by some of the faithful as unfair and inaccurate, though he had simply summed up "the agreed judgments" of Muslim Jurists without any comment of his own. But facts were so inconvenient for

them that both Islam and Aurangzeb could not be exonerated in the same breath.

Jadunath has touched upon Aurangzeb's temple destruction rather lightly to satisfy historical justice. Yet there was a protest by a Muslim that Jadunath had not been fair to Aurangzeb by omitting the notice of Aurangzeb's Banaras Farman, whereby he granted certain lands to the Vishwanath Temple. Half informed critics usually do not get the compliment of a reply from Jadunath. But when the same charge was repeated at intervals he published a reply that silenced his critics for good. The Farman had been issued during Aurangzeb's struggle with Shuja just by way of a political move to win for the time being the goodwill and co-operation of the Hindus for capturing Shuja, and had nothing to do with his spirit of toleration.

Jadunath's patience with legitimate criticism is great. The Shivaji-Afzal Khan affair is an example. Professor A. F. Rahman questioned his authority and reasons for his view that the murder of Afzal Khan was a "preventive murder." As the authorities were almost evenly balanced he pursued the affair for twenty years, and added an appendix to his fifth edition of *Shivaji* (pp. 72-3), replying to his friend's criticism by producing the testimony of a good Muslim, Mir Alam, the famous Wazir of Nizam-ul-Mulk and historian, who says, "..... the Khan intoxicated with the pride of being a hero gripped Shivaji very hard in the act of embracing and struck him with his belt-dagger."

(7)

Maharashtra got a mixed shock with the publication of Jadunath's *Shivaji and his Times*. Public indignation against Grant Duff, verily the greatest pioneer in Maratha history, was no doubt allayed to some extent, and the Marathas rejoined at Jadunath's irrefutable logic clenched with facts in clearing Shivaji of the charge of "the murder of an invited guest." But they were unhappy over a more heinous crime of Shivaji namely, the acquisition of Javli "by a deliberate murder and organised treachery on the part of Shivaji" (fifth edition, p. 43). Jadunath owes much to the labours of his predecessors

and contemporaries, like Khare, Purandare and Sardesai who had been most assiduous in making almost a house to house search in the Deccan for every bit of historical papers relating to Maratha history. They started with the laudable ambition of giving their country-men a history of Maharashtra written by Marathas and for Marathas. But there was a lack of constructive historical genius among them till Jadunath and Sardesai appeared in the field; the former from without and with a disinterested passion for truth, and the latter from within with a broad outlook tinged only with a laudable bias for his own nation. There were others who like Goldsmith's *Schoolmaster* though defeated could argue still. A reviewer, himself an author of several histories and a reputed historian, attacked Jadunath on the Javli affair, pleading that the murder of the three Mores was prompted to found a Hindu Swaraj. (*The Mahratta*, 31 August 1924). However, better sense gradually prevailed, and the Maratha people became accustomed to stomach authentic history

This book was well received by reviewers and critics. H. Beveridge wrote: "All his books are good; but perhaps the best of them is the *Life and Times of Shivaji*." Sir Richard Temple hailed this work as "indeed History treated to the right way and in the right spirit." V. A. Smith said that it was "a bold and deliberately provocative book" meriting "the closest study."

Jadunath's *Shivaji* was undoubtedly a bold and provocative invasion of a special preserve of Maratha historians. He does not try to stir up patriotic passions to white heat. The book is cool, severe, and does not show regards for people's sentiments wrought up by the memory of their past looming so magnificent beyond proportions through the magnifying coloured glass of a school of national history. Jadunath's thesis that before the rise of Shivaji there was no Maratha nation, that Shivaji failed to create an enduring state and weld together the Maratha people into a nation, and that the Marathas did not attain nationhood under the Peshwas, was the greatest provocation he gave to Maharashtra chauvanists. He is no pessimist. He has

rehabilitated Shivaji in all his real glory in the heart of every patriot throughout this sub-continent. In the midst of political gloom Shivaji came as a ray of hope for Hindu India. The real significance of Shivaji's life according to him is that he "has shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage.....; it can put forth new leaves and branches; it can again lift its head up to the skies." (*Shivaji*, p. 390)

(8)

Five years intervened between the publication of volume IV and volume V of Jadunath's *History of Aurangzib*. These were years of strenuous activity. Besides the completion of the last volume of *Aurangzib* he had to undertake the editing and publication of Irvine's *Later Mughals* at the request of his daughter. He was at sea with the mass of papers and notes bristling with dates and references, many of them beyond his immediate reach. And he was not accustomed to take anything on trust where history was concerned. So he had to get photos and transcripts of all the original authorities with a margin of fifty years ahead of the period covered by Irvine's labours. His knowledge of the Marathi, other indigenous and foreign sources was brought to bear upon the period of Irvine's specialised study which had been based on Persian sources mainly. Such a Herculean task was completed in a manner that might have been a surprise to Irvine himself if he could have risen from the grave. Jadunath checked every date, emended authorities, and clipped off unwieldy though learned foot-notes. He himself added three chapters to bring the story to the invasion of Nadir Shah (1739). On this enlarged historical canvass appeared the Sikhs and Jats, Bundelas and Marathas, with a background of the early history of each of these new factors. A man without the fine sense of literary proportions possessed by Jadunath would have been lost in the wood in the attempt to edit such a book. Once Sir Jadunath humcrously remarked that if he had not used his discretion in omitting much

of what Irvine had written against the Sikh community, he would have been by that time become a martyr. The History of the Later Mughals came out in 1922 in two thick royal octavo volumes covering only thirty-two years' history of the Mughal Empire after Aurangzeb's death. It was admitted that "no more competent an authority than Professor Jadunath Sarkar could have been found to edit it (Irvine's life's work)." The famous English historian P. E. Roberts said, "It drives a broad pathway through a very tangled jungle.....clears up many disputed points, throws a flood of light on the manners, customs and characters of the time and certainly will always remain one of the chief authorities of the period...." (*English History Review*)

With the publication of his last volume on Aurangzeb, the historian at last comes out the wood, takes a panoramic view of it, and falls into a pensive mood of philosophic contemplation over this tragedy in five acts of the drama with Aurangzeb as its hero. He then begins to think over his country's past and future in the light of the colossal failure of Aurangzeb, "who was above the joys and sorrows, weakness and pity of mortals, one who seemed to have hardly any element of common humanity in him, who lived in the world but did not seem to be of it." In the last two chapters Jadunath assumes the stern tone of a monitor of his people, and delivers his message with the clear vision and emphasis of a seer. "If India is ever to be the home of a nation able to keep peace within and guard the frontiers, develop the economic resources of the country and promote art and science, then both Hinduism and Islam must die and be born again. Each of these creeds must pass through a rigorous vigil and penance, each must be purified and rejuvenated under the sway of reason and science." Under pressure of the public demand for a condensed account of Aurangzeb, Jadunath published a *Short History of Aurangzeb*. It gave a general relief and satisfaction, and to meet the requirements of the general readers its Hindi translation was also brought out.

(9)

Jadunath had already established fame as a brilliant

essayist by publishing his *Studies in Mughal India* in 1919, and *Mughal Administration* (combined volume in 1924). His essays were pronounced "charming" and authoritative, miniature ivory caskets of fine literary workmanship. His *Mughal Administration* is a model of condensation without the sacrifice of clarity. It remains the standard book on the subject, indispensable for every student of Indo-Muslim history. Jadunath's *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign* (third edition, first in 1933) consisting of a series of essays "of the most entertaining description" (*Asiatic Quarterly Review*) was another valuable publication. Essay on Jahanara, Zeb-un-nisa, and a Muslim heroine (Sahibji) give a glimpse of the noble womanhood of Mughal India. Other essays: *Daily Life of Aurangzib*, *Education of a Mughal Prince*, *Industries of Aurangzib's Empire*, *Aurangzib's Letters*, are interesting and authoritative; while *Firingi Pirates of Chatgaon* and the *Mughal Conquest of Chatgaon* break a new ground.

His small book of 99 pages, entitled *India through the Ages* shows his unrivalled skill in handling the telescope of history. The first three chapters dealing with the Aryans and their legacies the work of Buddhism and its life story in India fall outside the scope of our author's special field of study. Though in the preface he explicitly disavows any claim to originality for this portion of his work, there is a freshness of outlook which we miss in the wood of Indology explored by specialists. This small book has weight and charm beyond its stature coming in as it does as an indispensable handbook to the intelligentsia of free India, so far as a bird's eye view of India's progress through centuries, and an insight into "the composite development of the India of present day" are concerned. The last chapter, *How the British lost India*, strikes a balance of our loss and gain under British rule, out of thirteen points eight being in favour and five against it. He concludes thus: ".....A class of professional politicians (*i. e.*, persons without ostensible means of livelihood, as defined by the Bihar Government to the Simon Commission) has risen to power, and are only held back from doing incalculable mischief by a few giants at the top.....political detention is proclaimed as a qualification

for a ministership, a coat without a collar is the symbol of true patriotism..... ..Patient constructive workers for the nations uplift are taunted with having made no sacrifice compared with the white cap patriots. Patriotism of this type is sometimes cashed into bogus joint stock banks" (pp. 98-99). Nevertheless the aged historian was a staunch nationalist but he foresaw that fifty years hence "England's marvellous achievement in India will be appraised in a just balance in calm of mind, all passion spent." Here speaks out the last of the Victorian stalwarts in the Indian sub-continent. His analysis and prediction will hold water if England in her resentful mood of superiority complex does not do any greater mischief to India during the next fifty years.

If any person of scanty leisure cares to read one single book of Jadunath he should take up his *India through the Ages*. Similarly, if a specialist wants to have a peep into Jadunath's laboratory of tests and his method of processing raw materials of Maratha history, he should consult Jadunath's *House of Shivaji* (first edition 1940, third edition 1955). Its first six chapters provide a background of Maratha history and the biography of Shahji Bhonsla in the light of Bijapuri State-papers. In Chapter VII Jadunath compares the relative historical value of Persian Akhbarat discovered by him with that of "thousands of letters of Shivaji's time in the Marathi language printed by Rajwade and others.....purely private legal documents".....Important court letters have also been given in translation. The Dingal letters in the Jaipur Archives supply faithful reports of "the conversation held in Ram Singh's house daily at night after his return from the Emperor's court or during the visits of Shivaji to the Kachhwaha prince."

The lives and labours of four devoted scholars and enthusiasts in Maratha history, namely, Rajwade and Sane, Khare and Parasnis, have been sketched in four brilliant essays, worthy tributes to his great fellow-workers in the field. Jadunath's technique of textual criticism finds proper scope in the fragmentary Sanskrit text of Shivaji's poet laureate, Kavindra Paramananda and an epic on Shambhaji by Govinda. A startling fact

is revealed that the fall of Shambhaji was due not so much to his own worthlessness and to his evil genius Kavi—Kalas, as to a religious issue between Vedic Brahmanism of Maharashtra and the newly imported Tantrik worship from Northern India since after Shivaji's second coronation. Religious jealousy blinded the patriotism of Maharashtra Brahmans, whose collusion with the Mughals accounts for Shambhaji's surprise and tragic murder. Strange are the ways of man and his history.

(10)

Jadunath took twenty-five years to complete his *History of Aurangzib*, in 1924, and the next twenty-five years to plan and execute a more difficult project, namely, the history of the fall of the Mughal Empire in four volumes. The first volume was published in 1932 and the last in 1950. As regards the relative popularity of the two works, the *Fall of the Mughal Empire* scores a higher mark even with those who are not history-minded as doctors, journalists, lawyers and businessmen. The author does not deny the fact that the writing of the *Fall of the Mughal Empire* was a harder task. First two volumes of it were comparatively less exacting than the third and the fourth. In his preface to the third volume we read : "In fact, this third volume has taken twice the time of its immediate predecessor to write, because of the immensity, variety and confused character of the historical sources on which it is based. The date of thousands of laconic Marathi despatches had to be ascertained the textual reading and arrangement of the Persian manuscript sources had to be corrected, before a single page of my narrative could be composed."

Secondly, *Fall of the Mughal Empire* is history of a higher order than the *History of Aurangzib*, which is but a biography writ large with an ample background. Jadunath gains more in ease, humour and eloquence shows a greater mastery over historical narrative, and a higher literary workmanship, keeping a wonderful balance between synthesis and analysis by handling the telescope and microscope of history in his *Fall of the Mughal Empire*.

Thirdly, Jadunath's *Fall of the Mughal Empire* has a wider appeal to the people of India, and also of Europe than his *History of Aurangzib*, each volume of which imparts fine shades of colour to the picturesque carpet of the evening twilight of our medieval history. Here, in these volumes, the historian is on a more severe trial with regard to his impartiality and balance of judgment as the parties concerned are too many. He has to make his award between the Mughal and the Maratha, the Jat and the Ruhela, the Sikh and the Afghan, and between the English and the French, whose long-drawn rivalry throws a chequered light on the dark recesses of this unexplored jungle of history.

This work in four volumes tells the story of the fall of two empires and the rise of the third. The historian's verdict runs thus:—"The Mughal Empire and with it the Maratha overlordship of Hindustan fell because of the rottenness at the core of Indian society. This rottenness showed itself in the form of military and political helplessness. The country could not defend itself; royalty was hopelessly depraved or imbecile; the nobles were selfish and shortsighted; corruption, inefficiency and treachery disgraced all branches of the public service. In the midst of this decay and confusion, our literature, art, and even true religion had perished". (Vol. IV, 344-45)

(11)

Jadunath's own work as an author has not deprived the country of his active cooperation with other historical projects. He was a collaborator in the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV to which he contributed four chapters (1937). He undertook the duties of an honorary general editor of the second volume of the Dacca University *History of Bengal*. He himself had to write ten and a half out of its twenty-six chapters, besides the bibliography. The historian thus concludes: "When the sun dipped into the Ganges behind the blood-red field of Plassey, on that fateful evening of June, did it symbolise the curtain dropping on a tragic drama? Was that day followed by a night of eternal gloom for

India...?" Replying in the negative Jadunath says : "In June 1757, we crossed the frontier and entered into a great new world to which a strange destiny had led Bengal. May our future be the fulfilment of our past history!" Bengal's past, "as narrated in these pages shows how the diverse limbs of the country and warring tribes and sects of the people were fused into one by the silent working of time and a common political life till at the end of the Muslim period a Bengali People had become a reality. But not yet a Bengali nation, for the pre-requisite of a nation was then wanting." (*History of Bengal*, Vol. II, pp. 498-99)

A close perusal of the works of Sir Jadunath Sarkar mentioned in the preceding section reveals unity of conception, of theme, and of action, and an artistic literary presentation in a style that knows no immaturity of early age nor any decay at eighty. At eighty-two Jadunath began another supplementary work on the Military History of India beginning with Alexander's invasion down to the last battle fought by Wellington on the Indian sub-continent (1803). So far as one can judge from articles on this subject published in the Sunday issues of the *Hindusthan Standard*, there was no slackening vigour and poignancy of style, or in his clarity of vision and judgment. He had all through his works revealed himself as a "sage counsellor and judge" treating history as an object lesson to his people for all ages to come.

(12)

Howorth in his *History of the Mongols* holds the view that the historian is an architect who need not also be a digger and stone-dresser descending into the mines of original sources. Such a view of the function of a historian may hold good in certain spheres of historical study and only in advanced countries like England, where an army of diggers into the original sources of history has been working for generations. It is particularly untenable in the case of Indian history. If a student of Indian history wants to build anything enduring, he must be a digger and explorer of new materials within reach anywhere in the world as well as an architect. India today in the field of historical research is almost

in the beginning of the nineteenth century in comparison with the West. Hence our scholars have to carry on building and quarrying simultaneously, or face the risk of rearing up a thousand-pillared Hall of Rocksalt.

So far as we know of Sir Jadunath he is not content with what he has done. His ambition was to sit down in old age and edit and publish a corpus of original materials in different languages utilised by him in his constructive works. For sixty long years he has been an indefatigable digger of original materials available in the libraries and archives of India. Though he has not travelled abroad to visit famous libraries of Europe, he can legitimately claim that through the catalogues of these libraries aided by a historian's instinct he has been able to spot all the essential materials and secure these by transcripts, rotary bromide prints and photostats, as well as microfilm copies for his own use.

One of the greatest though accidental discoveries of Jadunath is Mirza Nathan's *Baharistan-e-Ghaibi* from Paris library where it had been entered as a novel. This book proved to be a history written by a Mughal military officer fighting in Bengal under Jahangir's Viceroy. This discovery created a sensation. A fairly good English translation of it was published by Dr. M. I. Borah of the University of Dacca. His next great discovery was the importance of the archives of Jaipur Darbar. He was permitted to report on the value of these papers and secure transcripts on the condition of his writing a History of Jaipur. This History of Jaipur is lying in manuscript with the Maharaja of Jaipur because of some differences of opinion between the Darbar and the historian, who declined to modify his views for making this history acceptable to the Darbar.

It may also be pointed out that Jadunath was in the habit of translating the whole or fairly large portion of every manuscript whether in Persian, Marathi, French or Portuguese that came into his hand. For example, he made full English translations of the histories of Ishwardas Nagar, Bhimsen Burhanpuri and *Maasir-e-Alamgiri*, only the last of which was published in the Bibliotheca Indica series in 1947; while bundles of slips

written in ink or pencil bearing translations of other works are lying on the shelves of his library. He also edited a new up-to-date edition of Jarret's English translation of *Ain-e-Akbari* for the Bibliotheca Indica, of which two volumes have already come out.

Jadunath's project of a corpus will perhaps remain an unfulfilled ambition. Its huge expenditure is beyond his private resources, beyond the capacity even of a provincial exchequer. The only man who can do this work may not be available when our Central Government would awake to the necessity of having a corpus of Indo-Muslim history replacing the pioneer work started by Elliot and Dawson. The Government of Bombay have been most sympathetic to the suggestions of Jadunath. It was at his instance that the publication of the *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar*, and later on of the *Poona Residency Correspondence* and *Historical Papers relating to Mahadji Sindhia* (Persian) were undertaken by the Bombay Government. The main part of the work fell to the share of Sardesai, the greatest historian of Maharashtra. Jadunath himself has edited Vol. I. of *Poona Residency Correspondence* (1936), Vol. VIII. (1945) and Vol. XIV; others having been done by some of Jadunath's pupils under his guidance.

(13)

Jadunath's ambition was to found a Seminar of Historical Research on the lines of Seminar of the German historian Ranke. But twentieth century India is not even nineteenth century Europe. He used to invite students to live with him at his own expense, and pick up the technique of historical research; but the response was poor. Then he organised a Seminar at Sardesai's residence at Kamshet near Poona in 1939, and invited students on whom he could rely for continuous devotion to clio from all over India, and gave them good grounding in the study and research in history. He forged the raw iron ore into tolerably good steel in his workshop good enough in later times to fill the chair of History at several Universities. But Jadunath is less fortunate in his pupils than Ranke none of whom having

grown up even to waist high the master's stature in fame and achievements.

One of the greatest services rendered by Sir Jadunath to the cause of historical research is to pick up a Dara Shukoh from among the common run of Murads of the decadent ruling houses of Hindustan. This prince is Maharaj Kumar Raghbir Singh of Sitamau. The Maharaj Kumar is the youngest of Jadunath's pupils, a D. Litt. of Agra University and an author of renown in English and Hindi. Dr. Raghbir Singh spent almost his whole fortune like Dara in building up a splendid research library at Sitamau. For researches in Indo-Muslim history, Dr. Raghbir Singh's library is admittedly a self-contained institution, better even than Jadunath's own library.

A survey of Jadunath's zeal for the discovery of original materials will remain incomplete without a notice of his work as the President of the Indian Historical Records Commission for many years since its inception. Its annual session became an institution of pilgrimage for scholars of medieval and modern periods of Indian history. It was hailed as a sort of annual stock exchange of the progress of research and discovery of historical materials. Old veterans, young budding scholars, representatives of universities and research institutions gathered there every year; papers were read and discussed under the presidency of Jadunath, who was the main attraction of the session. Grain was separated from chaff at its meetings, and sometimes forgeries of Persian manuscripts and documents foisted on unwary scholars became exposed under the fire of Jadunath's criticism. Through these meetings a large number of young scholars from every part of India received great inspiration from Jadunath thus widening the circle of his distant pupils.

(14)

Outside Bengal it is not generally known that Jadunath has been a devoted student of Bengali literature, and that the nineteenth century Bengali historical prose owes much to him. His oldest research pupil was a merchant's office clerk who had not crossed the door of a college. It was a miracle wrought by Jadunath who turned this

clerk into the best original researcher in Bengali and made him a prolific writer of historical books of approved worth on modern lines. This pupil of his was Brojendra Nath Banerjee, whose loss the old patriarch of many a scar mourned like the departure of a child of his own loins. Brojendra Nath's achievement in constructive historical research relating to Bengal is greater than that of Jadunath himself. A splendid monument of Brojendra Nath's critical skill and superhuman industry of many years, with the handicaps of monetary want and a desolate home, is his *Sambad-patre sekaler katha* (now in its third edition, in 2 large vols.), an indispensable book of references for any research in the nineteenth century history of British rule in Bengal. Jadunath has always given to the people of Bengal the first fruits of research, though in a fragmentary way in the form of articles in Bengali monthlies, particularly the Prabasi.

(15)

Jadunath has no peer in his own field in India and abroad. He is pre-eminently a product of the Western School of History though his subject is Indian. His charm of style and vigorous portraiture of men and things suggest a comparison with Macaulay according to some admirers; whereas others hold him to be the Gibbon of Hindustan for bridging the channel over the gulf between Medieval and Modern India. But he is neither a Macaulay nor a Gibbon. These two are inimitable in many respects. These three are masters of narration, each in his own way. As an essayist Macaulay wields a hatchet with the strength of a giant; whereas Jadunath handles the chisel and needle of a thoughtful stonemason working at the Taj. In historical narrative both of them show a rare power of concentration. In producing 'effect,' Jadunath could not approach Macaulay, because the Indian lacks the impetuosity, vehemence, bias and boldness of Macaulay in taking a rhetorical jump without calculating the risk of overstatement. Jadunath never wrote for sheer effect, but always for measured accuracy. Nobody can complain that like Macaulay, Jadunath "describes but does not explain," nor can it be said that the In-

dian as a historian is "neither a thinker nor a prophet." If Jadunath is anything today he is the stern prophet of Free India in his writings and speeches.

Old Beveridge hailed Jadunath as as "Bengali Gibbon." But a review compliment, however sincere and just, cannot make a Gibbon of him in the estimate of the world at large. Jadunath's vast learning, the excellence of his English, and his power of drawing a magnificent background for his tragic canvass of the *Fall of Mughal Empire* impressed the greatest modern British authority on Muslim India deeply enough to elicit this high compliment for our Indian author. But there is not much in common between Jadunath and Gibbon as historians except in their skilful execution of a task of cyclopean magnitude. If Jadunath like Gibbon had written his epics of history in his own language, if he could have the advantage of Gibbon in having the raw materials dug out by generations of scholars before him, if decaying Delhi had been smouldering Rome, and above all if the historical knowledge of the present generation about Indo-Muslim history had been on a par with that of Roman history of Gibbon's contemporary Europe, then only could Jadunath have had the scope to rise to the stature of a Gibbon. Jadunath could not afford to be picturesque without being suspected and challenged at every step. He was under the necessity of letting chronicles and news-letters speak convincingly to the audience, and of always hedging himself round by a mighty array of authorities. This means interference with the even flow of narrative.

(16)

Trevelyan in his brilliant essay on *Bias in History* remarks: "The problem of bias is fundamental and all pervading. No one can teach or write history for ten minutes without coming in contact with the question whether he is aware of it or not. Because history is not an exact science but an interpretation of human affairs, opinion and varieties of opinion intrude as inevitable factors. We cannot get rid of the element of opinion (or bias); we can, however, endeavour to make

it the right kind of opinion,—broad, all-embracing, philosophic not a narrow kind that excludes half or more of reality”. (*An Autobiography and other Essays*, p. 68).

This is a homely truth honestly confessed. So, bias there must be in Jadunath also whether he is aware of it or not. Now the question is whether his bias is of the right kind or not. That Jadunath’s bias is not of “a narrow kind that excludes half or more of reality” will be admitted by any sensible person, who cares to glance over any piece of his writing. This bias has not affected an objective study on approved scientific basis. It may be said that a certain amount of bias and warmth for Shivaji and Rather Durgadas is perhaps noticeable in Jadunath. But this bias is in the right direction, and an echo of the sentiment of contemporary India for the defenders of their religion and honour against Aurangzeb’s aggressive bigotry and intolerance. Similarly, his bias has been all through for Aurangzeb till he chose to assume the role of a reactionary agent of Islam, and his ill advised policy threatened the welfare of the State and everything that the majority of subjects held dear. Aurangzeb has received more than his due by being painted as the awe-inspiring hero of a tragedy preordained by “an inexorable Fate”. Between Mirza Rajah Sawai Jai Singh and Maharajah Jaswant, Jadunath’s bias is for the former for his unquestioned ability. But here perhaps his bias is less justifiable; because Jaswant’s failings deserve more sympathy. In his *Fall of the Mughal Empire* his bias turns against the Marathas, particularly the ruling Chitpavan Brahmans, whose view-point he could not understand, “hundred knots in one span” of a Brahman having borne down the patience of the historian. The Abdali and Najib-ud-daulah have received higher admiration and praise from the historian who admires tact, valour and efficiency wherever they are found. The historian does not share the grief of Maharashtra after the catastrophe of the third battle of Panipat, because the historian has nothing to choose between the Peshwa and the Abdali, the Abdali having a better justification to come to the rescue of the Delhi monarchy and the Ruhelas, whose

very existence was threatened by Maratha aggression from the south. Panipat was a purely political and military issue, and not a stake for the emancipation of the Hindus, most of whom in Northern India feared worse rapacity and unblushing bad faith in the event of a Maratha victory. The Sikhs and the Jats also while fighting in the cause of the country receive the historian's approbation.

Jadunath's historical characters owe their brilliancy and vivacity as well as their photographic realism to his skill in presenting them with charming make-up, an art which no master can teach his pupil, a gift endowed by nature. So we may say without exaggeration that Sir Jadunath possesses "all the sterner virtues" of a historian, which dominate his "human virtues" not to the detriment of truth. He lives today, like Ranke in the nineteenth century, as the greatest historian of India beyond comparison. Unlike Ranke, Jadunath at the age of eighty-seven had a desolate home. But his face beamed when he told his grandchildren, "I have another and older family, my pupils and their pupils." This large family was the only solace of his years of lonesome life.

IMPACT OF ISLAM ON ORISSA AND BENGAL CONTRASTED

It is perhaps known to some of you that this very city of Cuttack is a sacred place of pilgrimage to me. Though sentiment does not become the cold intellectualism of a student of History, yet being now on the wrong side of fifty old recollections overwhelm me on this occasion. Thirty years ago it was here in the house of the patriarch of Mughal India, Acharya Sir Jadunath, that I had my intellectual as well as spiritual rebirth, and my *Sher Shah* was written under his guidance in nineteen months. I have come here to breathe afresh the old atmosphere of scholarship surcharged with the memories of the happier days of my master.

You will bear with me, ladies and gentlemen, if my thoughts turn to Orissa and its people for a while. The land of Utkal through the ages shoots on the screen of the panorama of history before my mind's eye. I hear the distant tramp of foot of Utkal's vaunted strength of the *nava-koti* (nine crores) infantry as against the *nava-lakshadal* (nine lakh armament) of Bengal's, boast—mobilised on the plains of Katak, or in its full form *Vijaya-Katakam* (Cantonment town) of the days of the Lords of the three-Kalingas. Kalinga or Orissa in defence of her liberty gave Asoka the satiety of blood and war, and indirectly turned the grim imperialist to the path of *Dharma*. Orissa too had later on, her dream of imperialism, having for one eye fixed on the holy Triveni of South Bengal if not on Gour, and the other peering through the wilderness of Telingana to Adam's Bridge. The idol Sakshi-Gopāl (Gopāl the Witness) in its captive home near Puri hardly remembers now the far distant city of Kanchi from which he was torn off as a trophy of Utkal's valour in the days of yore. In the beginning of this millenium of ours the white waves of the Ganges turned black, as the panegyrist's

vaunt puts it—, with the collyrium of the eyes of the widowed Radha and Varendri. When *Radha* and Varendra (West and North Bengal) lay prostrate before the invincible lance of the Turk, it was Orissa that wiped off the disgrace of Bengal by chasing the panic-struck Turkish hosts of Tughral Tughan Khan from the neighbourhood of Bishnupur Bankura down to the ferrics on the Ganges opposite Gaur. This is perhaps transgressing the bounds of Mughal India.

However, here in Orissa on this side of the heavenly stream of the Vaitarini, we are not culturally in the Muslim or the Mughal India, but on the fringe of it, though politically Orissa was a *Subah* of the Mughal Empire. The impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal presents a significant contrast. At the initial stage of the Muslim invasion of Eastern India, Bengal lost half of its territory and kept the Muslims at bay for about three quarters of a century. During the pre-Mughal period Gaur was called a *bulghak-pur* (land of strife), and internal dissensions kept the Muslims too busy to think of Orissa except at long intervals and that too with ill-success. Their contemporary Rulers of Orissa were at this time on the aggressive, and the feudatories of the King of Orissa were strongly entrenched in the Birbhum and Medinipur districts which bear to this day the traces of colonisation by the Utkals. This extension of Orissa northward accounts partly for the Hindu majority in West Bengal. On the sea the Rulers of Orissa were equally powerful, having no rivals to contend with till the advent of the Portuguese. As late as 1540 A. D. when Malik Muhammad Jaisi wrote his *Padmavat*, the poet takes his hero right through the wilderness of C. P. to Orissa, and makes Ratan Sen and his followers sail for Simhala in boats lent by the pious and powerful Gajapati.

It was not till after the conquest of Bengal by Sher Shah that Orissa for the first time felt the shock of conquest and colonisation by the dreaded Pathans. These were the turbulent Lohani Afghans who fled from the hated domination of the Surs to Bengal and Orissa successively. Roughly from 1535 to 1585 the Lohanis held Cuttack and settled on the border districts to the

north of the Mahanadi river. But the fight for independence was kept up by the Utkal Rajah from his improvised capital at Khurda. Long before Akbar contemplated the conquest of Bengal, he sent envoys to Rajah Mukund Dev of Orissa with the ostensible object of cementing an alliance against a common enemy, Sulaiman Karrani of Bengal, who had been a scourge of Orissa and in league with the redoubtable Ali Quli Khan Khan-i-Zaman, who defied Akbar's authority. Later on relations changed no doubt, but the first imperial army consisting mostly of Rajputs and the Hindu zamindars of Bengal, led by Rajah Man Singh, came to Orissa as an army of emancipation from the tyranny of the Pathans under Qatlu Khan. Rajah Man Singh removed this Pathan pest permanently from Orissa and forced them to quit the country bag and baggage after the death of Qatlu Khan. The Rajput chief, however, showed impolitic zeal by the an attempt to dispossess the Rajah of Khurda and Ganjam for which Man Singh received a censure from Akbar. Since then Orissa remained an annexe of the *Subah* of Bengal, though later on Orissa was itself constituted into a *subah* of the Mughal empire. Orissa was rescued from the bigotry and misrule of Nawab Alivardi's nephew Saulat Jang by the avenging army of Raghuji Bhonsla under the command of his valiant general Bhaskar Pandit. The English too came nearly half a century later to Orissa than to Bengal, and Orissa with her orthodoxy and ancient culture invigorated by the Maratha occupation, remained almost as impervious to Western influences as to Islam, though she had to sheathe her sword under *Pax Britannica*. This is not an inglorious chapter for the much-maligned people of Orissa, who far excelled the Bengalis in powers of passive resistance to Islam.

The medieval history of Orissa has received scanty attention from scholars. Sir Jadunath has perhaps paid the first instalment of his debt for the salt of Orissa eaten by him and his pupils, in the form of a survey of Orissa under the Mughal Empire in his Patna University Readership Lecture, and by piercing together scattered facts relating to the medieval history of Orissa

in the Second Volume of the History of Bengal edited by him on behalf of the University of Dacca.

Somehow I am not satisfied with the angle of vision and the process of historical studies we have acquired, namely the process of building from the top and not from below, and treating the history of Medieval India as Pre-Mughal and Mughal, and even looking at it only as an appendix of the history of Islam in the world outside India. In fact, our efforts do not penetrate the sub-soil of history, and therefore any structure of history built on such a foundation is bound to be shaky. I tried a crude process of my own when I took seriously to history as my off-time curiosity turned to the medieval history of Orissa.

We had a servant hailing from the Garjat or the Hill Tracts of Orissa in the house of Sir Jadunath at Chauliaganj. My experiment began with him for an inquiry into the amount of history still preserved among the masses in the form of ballads, proverbs and countryside tales orally handed down. My informant, whose name was Apratiya, remembered only Kala-Pahar rendered a hundred times odious: Kala-Pahar wore, he said, a dress made from his murdered mother's skin, and a sacred thread made of her entrails ! It points unmistakably to *Jadu* or the renegade *Jalaluddin*, a historical myth unjustly foisted by later Muslim bigotry on the son of *Raja Ganesh* and echoed senselessly by the Hindus. The historical *Jadu* or *Jalaluddin*, a patron of Hindu learning and of renowned Pandits like *Rai Mukut Brihaspati*, cannot be the legendary *Kala-Pahar*; because the very name *Kala Pahar* is found only among the Pathans of the sixteenth century; and Indian *Kala* is equivalent to Turkish *Qara*, that means *black*, and by implication "brave" also. The actual barbarities were perpetrated in Orissa perhaps by some Pathan general of bigoted *Sulaiman Karrani* of Bengal, bearing the name or epithet *Kala-Pahar*, though he could not be the same person as *Kala-Pahar*. *Farmuli* mentioned by *Tarikh-i-Khan-Jahan Lodi* as one of the rebel *Afgan amirs* of the Eastern Provinces in the time of *Babur* and *Humayun*. However, *Apratiya* did not remember to have

ever heard the very word *Mughal*; nor does any average inhabitant of Orissa who calls all Muslims *Pathans*. I could however gather this much from my informant that in their part of the country there are two classes of brave people the Khandayits and Rauts. The Khandayits were those who fought on foot with *khanda* (broad sword) *i. e.*, a sort of militia swordsmen, the *Raut* (Hindi, *Rawat*) was a cavalier or a gentleman-at-arms attached to some petty chieftain.

Why was a longer and more successful resistance offered to Islam by the people of Orissa than by the people of Bengal? The people of Orissa, like the Marathas and other peoples of the South, were defeated but not conquered, in the same sense that Bengal and the rest of Northern India were conquered. In Bengal and the Punjab particularly, Muslim conquest penetrated to the very core of society; and culture whereas in Orissa the Muslim conquest scratched only the political surface of its history. Bengal was not conquered by seventeen Turkish cavaliers; but by the *barah-auliya* or twelve legendary Muslim militant saints, and *pirs* who cropped up there after the seed of Islam had been sown broadcast in the plains of Bengal. Here in Orissa, Muslim armies no doubt overran the land; but Islam itself was totally helpless against its presiding deity Jagannath; because Jagannath was not like the Somnath and Vishwanath idols housed in temples but a living god enshrined in the hearts of the children of the soil. The Muslims now and then disturbed the visible Jagannath; but they were totally powerless against the invisible One, because Islam could not reach the real heart of Orissa, which is not on the sea coast but in the impenetrable jungles and hills watered by the upper course of the Mahanadi and her feeder streams. Future researches into the medieval history of Orissa should centre round this Jagannath, who can only reveal to us the hidden forces that not only baffled Islam in Orissa, but also partly saved Bengal by feeding there the feeble stream of Hinduism before and after Shri Chaitanya, with whom Bengal has found salvation in the blue waters of the sea that wash the feet of Jagannath.

This is not an outburst of stimulated Vaishnavite *bhakti*. Some concrete facts are there to throw light on this phase of the history of medieval Orissa. Islam failed in Orissa as a religion and culture because Orissa had a backbone, physical, social and religious, which Bengal had not at the time of the first onslaught of Islam. Its physical backbone was its ill-favoured terrain that gave a tougher mould to the inhabitants than that of the soft people of the fertile plains of Bengal. The hills and jungles of Orissa, inaccessible either from the flanks or the rear, afforded a safe refuge to their defeated armies and the afflicted people at the time of a foreign invasion; whereas in the heart of Bengal there was no way of escape for the people except *Ganga Pravesh i. e.*, suicide by drowning, or what was more than suicide, namely, parting with their ancestral religion along with their culture and nationality. The social backbone of Bengal was also much softer than that of Orissa during its first encounter with Islam. Bengal was struck by Islam at a period of transition from a debased but popular form of Hinduised Buddhism to a strong Brahmanical revival under the Sena Kings. No sense of political or communal patriotism could grow up in Bengal as the resultant of this clash with a hostile religion and an alien race of conquerors on account of the accentuation of caste differences by the institution of Kulinism and reactionary forces first let loose by the Sena kings, and later on reinforced by the Smriti legislation of the Pandits of Navadwip. Our Maha-prabhu came rather too late for the rescue of Bengali Hindus. If anybody seeks further explanation for the helplessness of Hindu resistance in Bengal, he will find it in that curious book, *Sunnyupuran*, in which the people of Bengal rejoiced in the incarnation of *Dharma* in the guise of *Paigambar* and of gods as his Khalifas; this Yavana role was assumed by *Dharma* only to punish the ungodly Brahmans and to destroy their idol temples,—an echo of Buddhism in the lower strata of the people of Bengal protesting against the high class Brahmanical oppressors.

Nobody hears of such a *Puran* in Orissa, where this religious and social transformation of the people was

complete. There the Trinity of Jagannath had emerged out of the Buddhistic *Triratna*, a happy compromise by which Buddhism retained the shadow and the Brahmans appropriated the substance. It was in the premises of the temple of Puri that a solution of the present and future religious and social problems of India *minus* Islam was attained. There the Hindus of every sect and caste, touchable and untouchable from the remote corners of this subcontinent, are made to discard their born prejudices for a moment and breathe an atmosphere of equality and universal love within the otherwise watertight compartments of exclusive Hinduism. Jagannath himself has formulated the future policy of Hindu society by cutting the Gordian knot of castes by giving the Sabaras, still a wild jungle tribe, the charge of the temple kitchen, and promising Paradise to those who would unhesitatingly partake of food cooked by these people outside the pale of the Aryandom. Bengal fell an easier victim, because there was no such *Dham* or centre of All-India national worship and pilgrimage in Bengal. In short, the cultural and spiritual isolation of Bengal placed her at a greater disadvantage in her struggle with Islam than Orissa. A constant flow of pilgrimage from every corner of India to Orissa was not only an economic but also a political asset when she reeled under the blows of Islam. This contact with the outside Hindu India from which saintly scholars and fervent religious enthusiasts came to reside sometimes permanently at Puri—served as a restorative and stimulus to the sinking heart of Orissa in adversity.

As in Maharashtra, so, too, in Orissa there was a social solidarity on account of an unenviable economic equality among the masses, all except Jagannath and his custodians being equally poor;—whereas in Bengal the contrary was the case. Orissa too had her tough irregulars, half soldiers half robbers, recruited from the hardy semi-wild tribes of the interior. These genuine children of Orissa, the Adibasis supplied a regular flow of fresh blood to the worn-out body politic of Orissa. The aboriginal tribes have since the dawn of history formed the substance of Hinduism and Indian

polity, particularly so in Orissa. Again Jagannath was the dynamic force at work, a link between civilization and barbarism. These animistic tribes had, and still have their imagination stirred by the presence of the mysterious Lord of the Creation living in a regal state on the shores of boundless blue waters. Bengal had no such reserve of man power to draw upon ; and Islam cut the sheet-anchor of Hindu ascendancy there by converting the sturdy lower classes, and fanning the neophytes, fanaticism against the higher classes. What Orissa needs for attaining to her full political stature is a band of modern monks to carry on the work of the ancient Rishis among these people of the hinterland, If India means to live she should not leave this function to the *padree* or the *mulla*. In explaining this contrast of the impact of Islam on Orissa and Bengal during the middle ages the historian cannot afford to forget Orissa's native breed of horses, the Bahrapuri tattu, a sturdy dwarfish devil with a deep chest, thick manes and a wild restless look; the archetype of the riderless stone horses in war-trappings that face the great temple of Konarak. These can be ridden only by a short-legged people of unusual agility as the Utkal cavaliers were of old. This breed of horses served the cause of Orissa's struggle for independence admirably.

If we are curious to know the dress and pastimes of the people of Orissa during the Mughal period, we have simply to attend one of their religious festivals like Chandan Jatra.

Now, to turn to the special field of this section.

The forage ground of Mughal India is primarily confined within the bounds of the three battles of Panipat and their outer fringes extending over half a century at both ends. We, who work on the political history of Mughal India, are said to belong to "the drum and trumpet school of history". It is no use concealing a fact that there is a lurking suspicion that this school of history portends evil by giving currency to the forgotten feuds and unhappy episodes of an age that ought to be conveniently forgotten in the new secular set-up of

Modern India. On the other hand, there are Muslims who regard Indo-Muslim history as their title-deed to the sovereignty of India with Pakistan as the jumping ground. If the historian is permitted to feel the pulse of his people, he has reasons for much misgiving. This rise of temperature is not a healthy sign. History also bears the lesson unheeded by the reactionaries that the path of hatred, national or communal, is easy, straight and short, like the sinner's road to hell. The Muse of History holds in one hand the cup of *Ab-i-Hayat*, and in another a cup of Hemlock of Death slow in action.

There is another group of enlightened thinkers who suggest a compromise; namely, that the Indo-Muslim period of history should be rendered innocuous by a process of hard polishing, by practising an economy of truth if necessary for the sake of communal harmony. We feel that such a division of Indian history into Brahminical, Buddhist, pre-Mughal and Mughal India is unhistorical. It appears to us that India through the ages, as Sir Jadunath has portrayed in one of his brilliant essays,—has remained the same land of the *Hindus* though many a political drama has been played by different races on this stage of Hindustan. India was never Buddhist, Mughal or British and we historians are worshippers of Time Eternal, and not panegyrists of races and creeds.

For us the question is, whether the historian should swim with the current of the contemporary politics and humour the passions and the passing mood of a people: or he should assume the role of the Superior Intelligence of a nation in its infancy. Between the two horns of a dilemma we see no other path except the Path of Dharma as chalked out by our ancients. By *Dharma* we do not mean any creed or *ism*; because, a student of history cannot pretend to have any religion or nationality when he sits in judgment over the dead at the tribunal of Truth. But what was *Dharma* in the age of the Mahabharat (*varnasrama* and *rajadharmā*) is not the *Dharma* of India of to-day, committed as she stands to a casteless, classless and secular Democracy as her *Dharma*.

It lies in the hands of the younger generation of our historians to make the history of Mughal India either a wedge to tear asunder our national life, or make it a "bridge and plank" of social and cultural contact between India and the Islamic countries. Our Universities should now launch a campaign of "Grow more men". It is not *food* but men of character in its comprehensive sense that will save our country from political bankruptcy.

ISLAM TRANSFORMED IN BENGAL

Bengal Past was an Arcadia to her children and Bengal Present is an enigma, being in a melting pot today. Medieval Bengal was "a hell full of good things" (*Dozak pur niamat*) to Aurangzib, who in the train of his rebellious father, Prince Khurram had shared the hardships and perils of an uncertain future at Rajmahal, and where as a young child he had enjoyed the stolen pleasure of eating some tempting plantains kept by his father for Mirza Nathan, author of *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*. During the time of his grandfather, Jahangir, a Muslim poet of Upper India in his Hindi poem, *Chitravali* describes *Bangala* as land of eternal verdure, and of warm friendship, but without good roads, good water and *dal-roti* (pulse and bread) and yet where the people are happy with their seven *armits* (coveted niceties): e. g., *kela* (plantain), *kanji* (fermented rice-water), *pan* (betel leaves), *ras* (juice of *khajur* date-palm), *sag* (vegetable), *machhli* (fish). It is curious enough that good Musalmans, who had gone to this "hell" from Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey in medieval times,—or in our own days, hardly care to return from this land of plenty and pestilence. The Muslims of Bengal call it the holy land of twelve auliyas, and politically it was the troublesome territory of "Twelve Bhuinyas".

One French writer remarks, "To understand the Mussalman one must understand Islam. To understand Islam one must understand the Bedouin of Arabia; and to understand the Bedouin one must know the Arabian desert". Seed, soil and environment determine the growth of an organism in the vegetable world; so do they build up the psychology of a race, Islam normally forms the subconscious element of an average Bengali Muslim. But circumstances sometimes make Islam in him overconscious and creates momentarily an abnormal psychology. Such abnormal psychology reveals itself

also among Hindus and Christians, but in such cases it is in defiance of the teachings of their religions. The "Seed" that determines the psychology of a people partakes of double nature, racial and cultural. "Soil" is the most mysterious and most pervading influence. It leaves an indelible stamp on soul, body and speech, easily detectable by an outsider. Though Islam knows no geographical barrier, yet, in spite of all denunciation by the orthodox, race has been a factor in forming political and cultural groups within the folds of Islam since after the expansion of Islam outside Arabia. However, there is unity in diversity in Islam culturally of not politically.

As the Indian Musalmans are after all "Hindi" in Mecca, so within India there have developed provincial types of Muslims on account of a variety of reasons, which are outside the scope of our discussion. Nobody can possibly mistake a Punjabi Muslim for one of U. P., and to both the Bengal Musalman presents a sharp contrast. Ziauddin Barani speaks of the Musalmans of Indian origin inhabiting the Gangetic Doab as "rice-eating spiritless Hindustanis". As early as the days of Sultan Firuz Tughlaq, foreigners and Hindustani Muslims designated the people of Bengal as "Bengali" irrespective of differences in their religion. "Sahadev Bangali" (*Tarikhi-i-Mubarakshahi*) fought against the armies of Firuz, and Babur had his brush with "Nusrat Bengali" (Sultan Nusrat Shah). Ibn Batutah has recorded interesting details regarding the manners, dress and food of the Musalmans of Upper India, Bengal and the Deccan. The provincialisation of Islam began to go on within a century of its expansion to our province. The Musalmans and the Hindus of Bengal in thier linguistic and cultural isolation had been more thoroughly welded into one people with one language, one culture and the same socio-economic life.

This study of the psychology of the Bengal Muslims does not pretend to be scientific, because the writer has picked up his facts mostly from stray personal observations of the countryside of East Bengal. Though

a non-Muslim his only claim is that he had been a student of the history of Islam all through his life, and eaten the salt of hospitality of Muslims of every type without losing his cast or historical instinct.

To begin with my impressions about the hold of Islam of the people of Bengal. The Bengal Muslims take Islam with more seriousness, and Islam permeates their whole being more deeply than that of their co-religionists outside. They are sincere and earnest in the practice of their religion, and yet they keep an open mind. Moreover even the villager thinks for himself though steeped in superstition. How pervasive was the teaching of Islam in medieval Bengal on the life of the Muslims and Hindus alike can be guessed from a little anecdote of my own boyhood. While reading a lesson to us not to waste food at the time of eating, my mother used to say, "Fortune does not forsake a man who does not waste food, and picks up rice that falls from the plate"; and she would tell us that her cousin, a rich man of our village, did the same very scrupulously. The lesson was of course lost on us; but I often wondered wherefrom this un-Hindu injunction might originate. Only as a teacher of Islamic history I could trace the origin of this custom to the *Sunna*, i. e., the practice of the Prophet who used to pick up and eat crumbs of bread from the *dastar-khan* (table-cloth). Hindus say, *anna* (food) is like *Brahma* (the Supreme Being that knows no defilement); yet in actual practice; their Brahma is defiled even by the look of one outside his caste. But the Bengal Muslim, in fact Muslims everywhere—scrupulously avoid all wastage, and what is left over by one batch is served to the next one; and at the time of eating they observe more restraint, cleanliness, decorum and good manners than the Hindus. The proverb, *sharat-ki-roti*, i. e., scramble over food in share is applicable only to up-country Hindus of lower classes and not to Muslims. When guests sit together it is not only etiquette but also a religious merit to imitate the great exemplar, the Prophet, to push best pieces of meat and choice fruits to others sitting around on the same *dastar-khan*. It is surprising to notice

as if the illiterate villagers of remote Chittagong were instructed by Imam Ghazzali himself in moulding their conduct. The Muslims are a disciplined lot in every walk of life except when passions run high. In our old and happier days those who could afford among the Hindus and Muslims used to invite both the communities as neighbours in a feast. One marriage festivity, so we have heard though I forget the name,—turned one prodigal Muslim Zamindar a bankrupt; because he took his head to entertain all the Hindus and Muslims of the town of Chittagong (a small though in those days) in a feast. We had occasions to witness Muslim tenants bringing *bhet* (presents) on festive occasions to Hindu landlords, having been so entertained when we were young boys.

II. Social Solidarity

The Muslims are never without a *sardar* or a leader, whose word is final whether in a feast or a fray. The Muslims were given a *sidah*, *i.e.*, uncooked provisions from goat to brinjal, estimated by their chief man. A Muslim generally under-estimates whereas it is habit of the Brahman to over-estimate the requisities on such occasions. The Muslims cooked their food on the appointed place, served themselves, and after finishing the meal they washed the metal utensils and handed them back to the representative of their host. It was easier to entertain one hundred Muslims than to deal with ten Brahmans. It is all uproar and hubbub where Brahmans cook their food in a feast. Shouting, fault-finding, overeating, wastage and yet murmuring, are all that you can hear. The Brahman is niggardly in the praise of his host, and in answer to an inquiry about the quality of food, the invariable reply is "*Ek rakam*", *i.e.*, tolerable. It sometimes happens that food cooked for themselves by the Muslim guests falls below margin; and yet not a whisper, no betrayal of any sign of not getting the normal quantity for his hunger. However modest be the entertainment, they praise it highly not out of etiquette, but from a feeling of genuine contentment; and a Musalman never speaks

on such occasions one thing to the host and something else among themselves. When they return home they are all praise for the host; whereas Brahmans are always critical and say that they were invited by so and so to perform only the *shradh* of *khesari* (worst kind of pulse) forgetful of fish still creating trouble in their over-loaded stomachs.

The Muslims are generally very conservative. Though living side by side with Hindus for twelve hundred years, they still eat from Plantain leaves turned backside up, and rub oil not before but after bathing, these are points of contrast with Hindus as noticed by Al-Beruni in his *Tahaqqiq-i-Hind* in the eleventh century. An average Muslim villager, though absolutely illiterate, knows much more of his religion than an average Hindu of the same category. About fortyfive years back when a mere boy the writer heard the story of Munkir and Nakir, the angels who sit on the shoulders of the Muslim recording his good and bad actions in a book.

We were watching some Muslim labourers removing weeds from a big tank of ours. Something hard struck a man below the surface of water, and he was asked to make a dive and bring it out. But the man refused saying that it was the month of Ramzan and diving not allowed because water might spoil the book of the angels! This is something that may be expected of a Maulvi only. Many years after the writer, —then a teacher of Islamic history in the University of Dacca—heard an interesting talk of his fellow passengers in a boat on the river Karnafuli. A renowned preacher had come from upcountry to deliver a sermon in a neighbouring village. The Muslim villagers were discussing whether they should go there to hear him. Our boat-man flatly refused saying that the Maulana cared only for the rich, and that he was staying in the house of a *Mahajan* or usurer, and therefore eating his food of *haram* there; so it was sinful to listen to the words of such a Maulana, however learned he might be! Such is the logic of the countryside. Then the conversation turned on the maulvis, who had formed them-

selves into a sort of un-Islamic priestly class in imitation of the Brahmans. Just as Brahmans come to a Hindu household to perform Pujah before which children of the house could not eat sweets reserved for gods, so would the Maulvi visit houses of his clients and utter *bismillah* on cakes prepared on the occasion of the Id. "Children tired of waiting for the Maulvi would make life a hell," said the boatman, "so now we ourselves perform Bismillah, as we have as much authority to do so as the Maulvi Sahib". Thus Islam has taught every Muslim his own relations with Allah, and helped the growth of a sturdy moral stature.

Islam teaches action and active virtues; whereas Hinduism in general enjoins self-introspection and passive virtues. And this difference is noticeable in the psychology of the Muslim and the Hindu. A Hindu is content if he himself does not do any injustice to others; whereas a Muslim thinks "*Insaf*" is the best of virtues, and it is his duty to intervene for the sake of justice even in matters that do not concern him. This laudable virtue degenerates into quarrelsomeness among the illiterate masses. This propensity has become somehow a feature of the psychology of Bengal Muslims. A quarrel attracts a countryside Muslim as a festering wound attracts flies. When a riot breaks out Hindus except those that are involved take to their heels, or enjoy the fun from a safe distance when both the quarrelling parties are Muslims only. In a quarrel between two groups of Muslims, a Musalman would always discover a nephew or a cousin or pretend to believe so for justifying his taking a part in it. When in early teens we had many an occasion witnessed such frays among Musalmans on market-days in our village *hat* (market). One day towards evening a *golmal* began, and we youngsters and aged Muslims ran to a safe distance and were waiting there to see *tamasha*. A few minutes after one aged Muslim with a basket full of his purchases said, "Uncle, keep an eye on my basket till I come back to tell you what the matter is." So the uncle went and returned bleeding to tell us that he was trying to do *insaf* when somebody struck him on the

head ! We cannot vouchsafe whether such a risky notion of justice is an Islamic virtue; because the writer himself, then an under-graduate, came home from a *salis* (arbitration) with a torn shirt, because when one party proved not amenable to reason he applied force to enforce his just decree !

III. Justice and Generosity

If the Arab was famous for impartiality in doing justice, the average Muslim of Bengal also enjoyed that reputation. We have heard from our elders that noted bad characters of Chittagong or Dacca are most fair-minded in a *panchayat* arbitration: Like the Qazi of old they would keenly skin a hair (*bal-ka-khal urana*) in cross-examining both the parties to get at the truth. Islam enjoins truthfulness, though it has not made liars rare among the Muslims. However, such is the hold of religion on him that he rises equal to the occasion and tells the truth fearlessly. Our Nawab Sahib of Dacca, a good Muslim though with lapses, encountered fierce resentment of the whole Muslim community in the white heat of communal passions by decreeing in favour of the Hindus that it was a time-honoured custom not to stop music before any mosque during the Janmastami procession. It was held in Medieval Islam that "No faith need be kept with an infidel", though the Prophet is not known to have had ever broken faith with infidels. However, bad faith and treachery are not the weaknesses of a Bengal Muslim except on occasions when any unscrupulous appeal in the name of Islam overpowers him.

Islam is capable of producing the best type of man, as well as the worst type if wrongly understood. We have known and heard of two Muslims of Chittagong who were typical products of Islam. These were Mian Qazim Ali (*Shaikh-i-Chatgam*), and Mian Aman Ali (popularly known as Aman Ali Master for his having been a teacher). Mian Qazim though of affluent circumstances, lived a life of almost apostolic poverty. He spent his fortune in founding a H. E. School at

Chittagong for the benefit of the Muslims, very backward in education at that time. He tried hard to wean bad characters to honest ways of life, but without much success. He used to work hard with spade in his fields and seemed to have modelled his life on those of an Abu Bakr, or Umar. He wore a *lungi* loin-cloth and a kurta only a little better than Omar's garment of twentysix patches. He was absolutely sincere in word and action, and bore no ill-will to any man Hindu or Muslim. His sharp tongue of prolific abuses would burst forth on any offender against morality or a shirker of duty like Umar's whip on the back of even high officials for ungodly acts. An anecdote about him is still remembered at Chittagong. One newly-appointed Headmaster of his High School on his first arrival went on some business to Mian Qazim Ali's house situated in the midst of cultivated fields where he himself was at work. The Headmaster took the Mian to be an ordinary labourer and asked him the way to Qazim Ali's house. The old patriach replied, "I am Qazim Ali : your business ?" The poor teacher could hardly believe him till Mian told him that he was expecting so and so to join his school. The Mian washed his hands, sat on the *al* (embankment), took papers from him finished his business there and resumed his manual labour calmly. Only a Muslim fired with the true ideal of Islam could be so sturdily indifferent to wordly "*shan*" (shear ostentation). The other sturdy Muslim, Mian Aman Ali was the son of a lawyer. He was at first a teacher and later on a lawyer and public man. He was hardly better than Mian Qazim in his mode of life and regard for decency in dress and speech. He had a kindly heart and wished well of all men and accessible to all high and low. He was once appointed Chairman of the Chittagong Municipality and set about making reforms. There was a bye-law that nobody should wash clothes in the Municipal tank, Lal Dighi. This was respected more in the breach than in the observance by the people at large. Under Aman Ali's regime it was made impossible to wash clothes there during daytime; so the people did their business at

night. Aman Ali would sometimes come to blows with the recalcitrants during his surprise visit to the tank at night. Once he abused a Hindu clerk so violently that he resigned his job. The Chairman of the Municipality went next morning to the house of the clerk, and said, "My boy, what will your children eat now that you have resigned your service? If I have abused you, you better abuse me in the same language and rejoin your job for the sake of your children." A true Musalman of old type like Mian Aman Ali could only have such a moral courage of repenting for what he had done, and such paternal care for his subordinates. May God send us more Muslims like these!

IV. Popular Beliefs and Practices

Islam has taken off some imaginary fears and superstitions from the minds of Bengal Muslims and created a bolder attitude of life in them. The foremost among these is the spell of astrology. The most salutary reform attempted by the Prophet among his followers is to ban the belief in and the study of astrology. But astrology proved mightier than the Prophet when the seat of the Caliphate was shifted to Baghdad that had arisen out of the astrology-laden dust of Assyria and Babylon. The Iranians were as obstinate believers in astrology as the Hindus. Caliph Mansur, born of a Persian slave-girl, was the first Muslim ruler, who in spite of his undoubted orthodoxy otherwise, countenanced astrology, and entertained astrologers at court. It is said that the Caliph never started on a journey without consulting his astrologers. The Muslims brought with them the Yunani or Greek system of astrology, and about a century after the conquest fell under the yoke of Hindu astrology. It is no business of the historian to vouchsafe or refute the claim of astrology to the credence of mankind. Our great master, Abul Fazl, a very learned, rational and enlightened soul, does not conceal his own weakness or that of Akbar for astrology. Jahangir tells us in his *Tuzuk* that once in life he started on a march without consulting his astrologers, and this was in pursuit of his rebel son,

Khusrau. Shahjahan would never accept a moment as auspicious till there was unanimity according to Hindu and the Yunani schools of astrology. Aurangzib even could not completely free himself from astrology, and his uncle Shiasta Khan had in his provincial court of Dacca a Hindu astrologer, whom the servants of the East India bribed to put in a word in their favour. In U.P. the Muslims are still in the grip of the Yunani astrology, according to which a *Patra* or almanac is published every year.

The Muslim villager and the Maulvi are absolutely free from the yoke of astrology in Bengal, though they consider Fridays and Saturdays as auspicious days. But astrology is making an inroad into the minds of the educated modern Muslims, who consult the traffickers in the *Bhrigu Samhita* as the whisper went at Dacca. "Bismillah" (in the name of Allah) suffices for the unsophisticated Bengal Muslim to ward off all evils of bad stars that terrify his Hindu neighbour. He has, however, his own superstitions partly inherited from his remote Hindu ancestor at the time of change-over to Islam. Belief in witchcraft, evil spirits, evil eye and efficacy of amulets have a grip on the psychology of Bengal Muslims. Our University students were seen with amulets as a cure for fever or antidote against evils. The Maulvis ply a lucrative trade in these cures and incantations. If a *Vaid* (Ayurvedic physician) or allopathic doctor goes to a village in Chittagong, Noakhali or Tipperah,—of which I have first-hand knowledge and information—such practitioners must come to an understanding with the village Maulvi. The physician recommends his patient to seek divine aid through the Maulvi's incantations, which are not be had *gratis*; whereas the Maulvi recommends his visitors to the physician for earthly medicine. These Maulvis are invariably honest people, who sincerely believe in what they practise, because belief in witchcraft and the efficacy of the particular words of the Holy Book in effecting cure had become almost a part of Islam from the beginning through on a very small scale. When cholera or small-pox breaks out in an epidemic

form, the Maulvi writes incantations on small earthen covers (Bengali: *shara*), and these are tied to poles at strategic approaches to a village or *mahalla* to keep off the epidemic. On the main door of the *deori* (parlour) of Muslim houses, such an anti-epidemic *shara* is to be seen invariably.

The writer had the occasion to observe visitors to the houses of two saintly persons of high reputation distributing amulets, incantation-charged oil and water, etc. When a school-boy he once went to realise land-rent from the veneral Maulvi Ansarullah Sahib of a neighbouring village. He sat there for two or three hours out of curiosity to observe the business of the people coming there : a child urinates in his clothes, which is the work of a *shaitan* (lesser devil) and the Maulvi writes something on a piece of paper, rolls it up and ties it with a black thread ; this is to be put inside a copper amulet-hold (*tabiz*) and tied to the child's neck. Another man complained of chronic ill-digestion ; a wrestler of a pain in his arm ; a husband of the prolonged travail of his wife. The first and third brought water with them in *badna* (water-vessel) over which the Maulvi Sahib puffed several blows of air from his mouth (*phunk*), and this water was to be drunk by affected persons. One man approached him for the cure of his bullocks suffering from some swelling in their hoofs, and was dismissed with an amulet. A group of persons thronged around him and told him that the fighting bull of so-and-so was engaged for fighting with a bull of the another village, and that the rival party had gone to the Maulvi Sahib of a distant village who gave them a *tabiz* for their bull. The Maulvi Sahib became a little perturbed, and gave them some incanted oil to be rubbed on the horns and body of their bull on the day of fighting.

Such belief in the powers of the Maulvis and Pirs is shared by both Hindus and Muslims. One grand-uncle of mine won a law-suit in appeal by procuring an amulet from some renowned *fakir*. He had managed to make it touch the hand of the session Judge through his peshkar before the judgment was delivered. These

secrets are believed to come down through heritage. Everything is faith and intense faith that work miracle among the Muslims and Hindus. The Muslim eat together out of the same tray, drink water with the same mug from water jars kept in the mosque or during summer under shady trees in pots in the countryside. They do so without hesitation, because not to do so is a sin of violating the Sunna of the Prophet, who himself set the example. And yet contagious diseases except those congenital are less numerous among the Muslims than among the Hindus, who observe more Hygienic rules.

In the city of Dacca and its neighbourhood the Pir Sahib of Paribagh,—a Sayyid from the Pathan border in his eighties, tall, white-complexioned with a prominent aquiline nose and well shaped features, a kindly heart and smiling face—is held in the highest esteem and yet sought and dreaded for his miracles and incantations.

The Bengal Muslims are as credulous as the Hindus so far as Sadhus and Fakirs are concerned. One Maulvi of Satkania in Chittagong practised hard mystical practices and gained, they say, supernatural powers. His fame for miraculous cures spread like wild fire—and he became known as *Chunga Fakir* (*i.e.*, the fakir of bamboo tube). He sat in his place in contemplation, and breathed daily on a thousand bamboo tube-fuls of water brought by ailing persons or their agents. In general, the Muslims showed neither respect nor disrespect to Hindu idols, though they visited them on the occasion of Pujah and partook of the general mirth, but no cooked food in Hindu houses. The Hindus were ardent believers in Auliyas and the sanctity of the mosques. In our boyhood we never omitted bowing to the mosque of our market reputed to be one of special sanctity. Whenever we went to the town of Chittagong, the first place to be visited and candles and sweets offered was the tomb of Badar Sahib, the guardian-saint of the city dead about seven hundred years back.

The Bengal Muslims, like Muslims everywhere and at all times, are very much agitated over *halal* (lawful) and *haram* (unlawful). This injunction of Islam has affected deeply the psychology of Bengal Muslims. Half a century back no Musalman of Bengal practised usury. There were rich Muslims, who would not deposit money in banks for fear of earning interest. The much-maligned old school Maulvis exerted a healthy influence on society and morals by teaching the illiterate masses that not only certain things specified are either *haram* or *halal*, but also the bread of idleness and deceit. Wages do not become *halal* to any man who does not do his duty honestly and sincerely. There was a time when the Hindus would prefer unskilled Muslim labour to Hindu labour. A Muslim labourer required less supervision than a Hindu, because his inward fear that his pay would not become *halal* made him work to his normal capacity honestly. However, modern civilization taught him to "go slow" in factories and workshops.

V. Attitude to Music and Drama

Wine and music came out triumphant over Islam under the Umayyadas within half a century after the Prophet's death. Alauddin and Aurangzib lost their battle with "wine", and the Turks and Mongols in general even made a ceremony of start with the forbidden cup at court. The Afghans were the only decent people with respect to abstinence from wine, though their race have produced best musicians outside the family of Tansen. The Bengal Muslims except in cities scrupulously avoid wine, toddy, *bhang*, *ganja* almost totally. Opium is taken by a few old invalids. They, however, smoke tobacco, which has become *halal* to all. Islam could neither kill Music nor keep out the faithful in general except an eccentric few, from its "insidious" influences. The village Muslims are passionately fond of music in all its forms. They pour in numbers wherever any *Jatra* or theatre is staged. Nowadays they would stage a play in even remote villages. In Chittagong village a rich headman was induced to

bear all the expenses of a theatrical show provided that he should act Mir Qasim. He appeared on the stage in a showy darbar dress, sat on the throne and remained mute; because he could speak Chittagong dialect only,—in which dialect the play “Mir Qasim” was not certainly written. At last repeatedly teased by the *naqib*, the Nawab burst forth in his dialect in the midst of deafening cheers and laughter.

Pious and orthodox Maulvi generally keep out of any music or theatrical show. The Bengali Muslims are on the whole a merry people without any simulated Puritanism. But even the ignorant would argue whether a gramophone or a harmonium is *haram* or *halal* to a Muslim. The Maulvis would, however, debate on professions and modern household furniture like tables and chairs over their ‘lawfulness’.

Fatalism in the psychology of the Orient is a common heritage. Islam rivetted firmly ‘*Sabr*’ (patience under misfortune), *Nasib* (fate), and *Kismet* on the psychology of the Bengal Muslims. There is, however, a difference between the attitude of a Bengali Muslim and a Bengali Hindu, to the inevitability of fate and the lesson on luck and patience. The patience of the Hindu is born of despair, and he broods more and acts less looking forward only to the next world for relief.

Islam has rescued the Muslim from other-worldliness. Islam originated with a householder and bears a practical outlook of life. Celibacy and monasticism in Islam were later accretions, though there was an evitable oriental mysticism about it from the start. A Muslim thinks more of the present world than of the next; because he has a fervent faith that the Prophet would intercede for him before Allah on the Day of Judgment. The good things of the world are meant to be enjoyed by him and not to be shunned;—so he is taught to believe.

VI. Polygamy

Excessive marriage is a common weakness of Muslims everywhere and in all ranks. Hinduism and Islam

both sanction polygamy. Hinduism puts no limit; but Islam limits it to four wives at a time. But the ingenuity of man has made a limited number unlimited. This class of people are morally callous. They do not turn out a wife by divorce for fear of public opinion, and keep her only as a maidservant to serve and suffer mental agony. Some pious souls are dupes of their own learning.

About twelve years back one morning my Maulvi Sahib, a man below forty and with one wife only, sought my advice on a matter. He said that a man, who had heard of his piety and goodness, had approached him with a request to accept his sister in marriage. It was, he said, against the Sunna to refuse such an offer. The date of the marriage was fixed and I accompanied him in the bride-groom's procession. I was given a seat of honour on his right side on the dining sheet. The locality and condition of things betrayed clearly that my good-natured Maulvi had been a victim of fraud in the name of religion. A few courses were served, and when I was about to touch one, Maulvi Sahib suddenly caught hold of my right-hand and angrily asked the server to remove it at once. The Bengal Muslims, though fanatical, have no petty meanness such as making a Hindu eat forbidden things by hook or crook, and gain religious merit thereby. The poorer class generally have not more than one wife at a time.

The Muslim marriage is a contract and not a sacrament. Freedom of divorce and fresh addition to harem engender a feeling of callousness between husband and wife. In spite of it, female morals within the bounds of the Shariyat stands much higher than that of males in all the grades of Muslim society. The harem of those who enjoy a fat unearned income are compared to poultry-yards of which hardly any stock is taken. The unabashed town rake of Bengal has the same psychology as that of the same class in Upper India; namely, *ghar-ki murgi dal barabar* (a she-hen of one's own yard tasted as insipid as pulse). However, the ignorant village Muslim folk have on the whole commen-

dable morals, though a wife is often looked upon as no better than a she-fowl.

VII. How Religion is Degraded by some

Hindu bad characters and rakes are easily tempted to become Muslims and begin their career anew. We had a class-fellow of a rich Sudra family in our Primary School. His name was Shyama, a meek and docile boy with downcast looks. Afterwards he grew up a notorious rake and spent away two fortunes, one of his own father and the other inherited through his wife. Many years after I learnt that Shyama had become Maulvi Shamsuddin, married four wives, and been appointed *imam* of a mosque, half a mile from our home. He became very popular as a pious *alim* with the ignorant Muslims, and a veritable pest to the Hindus. It so happened once that the boat carrying Shyama was a little ahead of our boat; because Shyama would have nothing to do with anything Hindu. At noon a solitary figure was seen on the *chhai* (bamboo shade) performing namaz, and our boatman cried out, "May mother Karnafuli (Chittagong river) swallow him!" So the conversation turned on Maulvi Shamsuddin, my old class-fellow Shyama. As there is a floating population of surplus derelicts among the Muslims, Shyama married four old hags for economic reasons, though his poor wives had the nobler religious impulse of pinning the new convert firmly to the Faith. Shyama had no ostensible profession except conducting prayers. Every morning he would send away all his wives for daily begging to the Hindu villages; because, Muslim women beggars avoid Muslim householders, partly out of self-respect born of the democracy of Islam, and partly because daily alms of rice is not given by the Muslims. Hindus of several villages around who used to market in the *hat* (market) twice a week had been using the tank in front of the mosque along with the Muslims since its digging. Now Shyama became the champion of Islam, and forbade Hindus to wash their feet in the same tank, where Muslims perform *wazu* before *namaz*. As communal

passions were then rising high due to outside machination, some Muslims took the side of Shyama, and the Hindus made a complaint to the Mian land-lord of the mosque and the market. The Mian scolded Shyama and threatened to drive him out from the mosque if he would tease the Hindus. But Shyama had his revenge. Formerly the Hindus were allowed to enter the mosque, and burn candles there in fulfilment of their *manot* (vow); but the renegade would not allow the Hindus to enter the mosque or burn lights there if they would not pay half-anna per head. His peculiar delight was to slaughter cows of his clients on the day of *Beku Id* for a piece of flesh.

Shyama is not an individual, but a type since the beginning of the conversion of Hindus to Islam in Bengal.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE FALL OF THE MARATHA POWER IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Marathas and Rajputs were spear-heads of Hindu national movement for the recovery of India's independence and ancient glory. But they eventually proved broken reeds. The glitter of Maratha lances and lighting flashes of the grim Rajput sword illumined the political horizon of India in the eighteenth but for while only to leave the country in utter gloom and despair till the beacon light of the West alerted her to a new destiny under the lead of Britain. This is not surely palatable to the newly-awakened national sentiments of India; nevertheless it is a lesson of History, which none but the politically blind can read clearly as a writing on the wall of the nineteenth century India.

The historian sighs with regret in pondering over the unfulfilled destiny of the Maratha nation created by the genius of great Shivaji (who dreamt of a *Hindu-pad Padshahi*, according to Sardesai, but attributed to Bajirao I by others),—when the Mughal Empire was at its height of power if not of glory in the reign of bigoted Aurangzib. What might be the cause of the ultimate failure and downfall of the Maratha power? Pages of history reveal that no single cause can explain this sad phenomenon. Causes were complex and varied. These might be classified, as with the causes of rise and fall of nations in general, under two broad heads; namely, Political and Intellectual. Political causes are to be further subdivided into

- (a) Constitutional
- (b) Military
- (c) Diplomatic
- (d) Administrative and Economic

Similarly Intellectual causes admit of further subdivisions as follows :

(i) Reactionary character of the Maratha regime, particularly of the Peshwa regime which was designed as a Brahman Raj.

(ii) Parochial outlook of the Maratha people in politics, which was the curse of its Geography that cuts up Maharashtra into narrow valleys and glens foster narrow and hostile spirit.

(iii) Degeneration of the Maratha National character.

(iv) Lack of high idealism as a cement of Maratha imperialism.

Before we proceed to the elucidation of these causes we cannot help making a few observations, that have a direct bearing on the topic.

Providence punishes original sins of man no less than the sins of a nation, and such sins great Shivaji also committed though for a noble object ; namely, the defence of *Dharma* and independence of his country. He had to practise deceit and duplicity, political assassination (e.g., of Chandra Rao More) and indiscriminate plunder of the weak and helpless in the Mughal territory to build up a kingdom and a nation in the teeth of determined resistance of Aurangzib as well as of a powerful section of the petty Deshmukhs and chieftains, whose vested interest he attacked. The Marathas could think only in terms of his petty village *watn* (home), or of caste which too was not free from regional prejudice among the Brahmans as *Deshastha* (of Desh or Sahiyadri region proper), and *Konkanstha* (of the Konkan coast). Shivaji's success was the cement of Maratha nationalism. Patriotism sat light upon them. Even Shivaji's right hand man Netaji Palkar was no proof against the seductions of Aurangzib. Marathas in the Peshwa regime had not even the saving grace of Shivaji, who had shaken off his old robber mentality after he set up as an independent ruler. But loot was the breath of a Maratha's nostrils, and his insatiable avarice was for *paika* (*paisa*, pice), the cry for which runs through every despatch from the extant Peshwa Daftar to their

officials in Northern India. Untamed predatory instinct of the Maratha had been as much responsible for the downfall of the Maratha power, as the Baniya mentality of the British cost them their first maritime empire in the reign of George III when U.S.A. came into being. The same shopkeeper mentality of the of the British bled white their colonial dependencies of their second empire, which went into liquidation after the Second World War.

Now let us proceed to the elucidation and assessment of the causes under categories as detailed above.

(a) **Constitutional**

Constitutional weakness of the Maratha Empire has not been sufficiently stressed by historians. The strong centralised monarchy administered by an efficient beaurocracy under a Council of Eight Ministers of the days of Shivaji had perished with the execution of Shambhaji and the flight of Rajaram to Jinji. During the War of Independence that followed the central government and the personal rule of the constitutional head of the State ceased to exist altogether. A new office of the *Pratinidhi* was created by Rajaram. It brought in further complications as to the status of the Pratinidhi with regard to other ministers. The Marathas recovered their power, but the power of the monarch was reduced to a shadow by the rise of a war-like feudal aristocracy, which yeilded only a lip allegiance to the representative of the House of Shivaji.

Release of the captive Shahu, son of Shambhaji, after the death of Aurangzib produced the desired fruit of Mughal diplomacy. It divided the Marathas into two hostile parties. One party headed by Rajaram's widow, Tara Bai, declared Rajaram's minor son as the true heir and sovereign of the Maratha State with its capital at Kolhapur. Shahu set up his rule at Satara, and a civil war with Kolhapur followed. The Mughal government fished in troubled waters pretending not to know who was the lawful head of the Maratha State. Maratha chiefs began a selfish bargain both in Kolha-

pur and Satara, and rapidly changed sides for a higher bid.

It was Balaji Vishwanath who saved the country and consolidated the position of Shahu as the acknowledged head of the nation. Thus began the ministerial rule of the Peshwas, which was vigorously opposed by the Bhonslas of Nagpur, Dabhades of Gujrat outside the court, and the Sachive and the Amatyas, who had made themselves virtually absolute jagirdars of large tracts—in the Council of Satara. The result was that the Peshwas were never strong on the home front. So the Nizam got an opportunity to create a strong Muslim State in the Deccan, which remained to the last a dagger in the rib of the Marathá nation.

The rise and fall of the first Maratha Empire created by the first three Peshwas covers virtually the reign of King Shahu, who had relegated the administration virtually to his Peshwas. Shahu was childless, and this was an opportunity to unite Kolahpur raj and Satara under one king, who was to be a minor prince of the line of Rajaram. This was opposed by Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, who the emergence of Tara Bai, the guardian of the minor prince as a dictator over his head. At last a compromise was reached by which Ram Rajah was recognised as the adopted heir of Shahu, while Shahu recognised Peshwaship as hereditary and almost absolute in the house of Balaji Vishwanath. Under this arrangement, the King of Satara, became as it were the outer skull within which the Peshwa became the real head and with brain as the ruler of the Maratha Empire, which had already been transformed into a loosely-knit confederation. Peshwa Madhav Rao I, the successor of Balaji, was the last of the ruling Peshwas. After him internal troubles came to ahead during the minority of Narayan Rao, when the astute and Nana Fadnavis, aspired to become “the Peshwa’s Peshwa” by “freezing” the acknowledged head of the administration into a nonentity. Nana’s only formidable rival was the great soldier and statesman Mahadji Sindhia, who had revived the imperial traditions of Maharashtra in the North, and who himself acknowledged as Vakil-

i-Mutlaq of the Delhi and Poona Courts. If there was any single cause of the fall of the Maratha Empire, it was the selfish policy of Nana to retain himself as the helm of affairs at Poona against grasping Mahadji. It was Nana who was mainly responsible to drive the only able and legitimate claimant Raghunath Rao from Maharashtra, and to show him the way to Bombay. After Nana and Mahadji, Yasowant Rao Holkar and Daulat Rao Sindhia appeared to contest for supreme position in the Maratha Empire as "the Peshwa's Peshwa". Defeat of Daulat Rao and the excesses of Holkar drove the titular head of Maharashtra, Peshwa Bajirao II, into the trap of Wellesley's Subidiary Alliance. Wellesley aptly described the Peshwa as "the frozen nose", and pointed out to his successor that by tugging at "this frozen nose", the whole body politic of the Maratha Empire might be laid prostrate at the feet of the English.

In short, this constitutional weakness was a potent cause of the fall of the Maratha power.

(b) **Military**

1. *Neglect of the Navy.* Shivaji had the foresight to realise the importance of a strong navy for the protection of trade and the costal area. Even he did not succeed in crushing the Siddis of Jingira. His successor and the Peshwas neglected the Navy altogether, and the only Maratha naval power, the Angres, were in virtual rebellion against the authority of the Peshwa. After the fall of the Mughal power, the European Merchant Companies, who had entrenched themselves in strong territorial possessions on the western and eastern coasts had become the greatest menace to Maratha Imperialism. They intrigued and helped the native Muslim chiefs against the Marathas. The only solution was to meet and crush the naval power of the West on the sea. But this was a task beyond the dream of the Marathas who had neither resources nor aptitude for sea fighting. Hence it was inevitable that the future lay with the strongest naval power in any contest for ascendancy in India.

2. *Weakness of the land armies of the Marathas.* Great Maratha historians, Rajwade, Khare and Sardesai have in particular profusely written on the subject. Khare in his Introduction to N.C. Kelkar's "The Marathas and the English" scathingly criticised all the weaknesses inherent in the Maratha system of warfare and *morale* of the Maratha army in comparison with that of the British. Some of these defects were :

- (i) the success of small bodies of European trained Indian infantry of Dupleix and later on, of the British against huge rabble of Indian light cavalry had brought about a complete revolution in the eighteenth century warfare in India. The Marathas had too little of science and discipline and too much of conservatism to transform their out-of-date light cavalry tactics. In imitation of Europeans, the Peshwa and the Sindhia particularly raised trained infantry battalions. But the rank and file of these brigades were Hindustanis, and their officers, with the exception of a few like De Boigne and Perron were the deserters and refuge of English and French armies. Under the lead of Mahadji Sindhia, these battalions gave victory to the Marathas. But when pitted against the British the new model Maratha army of Daulat Rao Sindhia and Yasant Rao Holkar miserably failed, because imitation can never succeed against original. The Sikhs succeeded better than the Marathas, because the infantry battalions of the Sikhs were officered except at the highest by Sikhs, whereas the Marathas failed to produce leaders of men and they gave the "command of their armies", as Sir Jadunath says (*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, IV, p. 344), "to French and Portuguese mestizoes, and Euroasian lads.....and illiterate European sailors".
- (ii) Superiority of the Maratha armies lay in their swift mobility, and not in strilink power. "The galloper-gun" or horse artillery of the British, attached to infantry battalions doomed the

Maratha tactics of "hit and run away" to loss and failure.

- (iii) Of the three branches of an army, the Artillery, the infantry and the Cavalry, the Marathas were too inferior in the first two, and their cavalry could, therefore, win no decisive success in the long run against the British. The Maratha armies of the Post-Panipat period ceased to be national armies. The Maratha chiefs engaged foreigners and Muslims, who were not always trustworthy. A Maratha national empire could not endure when its army ceased to be national army.

The Marathas always depended on Europeans for the supply of artillery and ammunition in the same way as India does today for the supply of modern types of arms and fighting planes. So the fate of the Marathas was a foregone conclusion, as the future of India will be if we fail to be self-sufficient in technical skill and armament. In fact the Marathas as a nation lacked this vital basis of eighteenth century warfare before which all their other defects pale into insignificance. It was British artillery and the disciplined valour of the infantry that broke the power of the Marathas, and later on of the Sikhs.

(c) **Diplomatic causes**

The Marathas, particularly the Chitpawan Brahmans, prided in the skill of diplomacy. But it was a ludicrous claim. They called Diplomacy, "Rajkaran". But as history reveals it was not diplomacy even of third grade European statesman of contemporary Europe. Their diplomacy did not take a long term view of political situation. They simply played politics at cabbages, more to hurt national interests and to further it, as the career of Nana Fadnavis, the master of this craft, painfully reveals. The Maratha diplomacy, hardly backed respectable military strength, was like a spear with the butt of a broken reed. The failure of Maratha diplomacy at the height of Maratha glory before the Third Battle of Panipat was too conspicuous. The Marathas failed to win the support of the Rajputs, drive Surajmal Jat to neutrality, and force their own ally Shujauddaula

into the arms of the Abdali. In diplomacy, Peshwa Balaji Bajirao as well as Nana Fadnavis was blind of one eye as it were. He allowed the British to steal a march upon the Marathas, by allowing the English to win the Battle of Plassey that sounded in fact the knell of the Maratha Empire. Nana Fadnavis drove the Nizam into the arms of the British, and connived at the ruin of Tipu Sultan. Had not Maharashtra been bankrupt in statesmanship, she would have spotted the British as the most potent enemy, and by concessions and compromise built up a strong coalition of Poona, Hyderabad and Mysore to crush the British. So the fall of the Maratha power was precipitated by their failure in diplomacy and statesmanship.

(d) Administrative and Economic

(i) "Lack of organisation", as Sardesai puts it, as all spheres of activity, civil and military, in comparison with the Mughal Administration, not to speak of the British foredoomed the imperialistic ambitions of Maharashtra to inevitable failure. Dr. D. N. Sen's Administrative System of the Marathas, though written for popularity with the Marathas, finds it difficult to hide this defect. The Maratha system of government and their division of the conquered country outside Maharashtra into zones of military and civil administration among the lieutenants of the Peshwa, such as the Holkars and Sindhias, Panwars in Mandu and the Gaekwads in Gujarat under the wasteful *saranjam* system created a centrifugal tendency, and their mutual rivalry and dissensions ultimately broke up their power. Every one of the Maratha chiefs saw the necessity for common purpose and common action, but every one tried to save his own skin at the cost of every other at critical times.

(ii) Maratha system of administration created a set of petty feudal tyrants and farmers of revenue, whose rapacity and violence alienated their subjects. The peasantry counted the days of the fall of the Marathas as the day of relief from misery. Trade and commerce dwindled when peace and stable government dis-

appeared, and a shameless policy of loot and blackmail came in the wake of Maratha rule.

(iii) Maratha governments were bankrupt in morals and money after the death of Shivaji. Even Bajirao I borrowed money at 24% from his guru Brahmendra Swami, and none except Indore under Ahalya Bai, and the Sindhias had any credit in the money market. Huge *dakshinas* to Brahmans in the month of Shravan and luxuries of the Poona court were no signs of prosperity, but of last gasps of economic endurance of an impoverished country.

Occasional raids satisfied temporary needs of the Marathas, but no arrangements were made for providing the state with permanent sources of revenue by fostering trade and industry, and by increasing agriculture by an intelligent system of revenue administration. Maladministration was, however, only a contributory cause of the financial bankruptcy of the Maratha power. This financial bankruptcy was inevitable, because the short span of Maratha ascendancy involved continuous warfare without any break of settled and orderly administration in the conquered country, its resources were eaten up by a vast army of occupation, almost always on the move.

(iv) Relative decay of the Maratha power in spite of the expansion of the Maratha Empire.

Sir Jadunath observes, "Bajirao I's death freed the Nizam from sure extinction, and made his dynasty permanent in the Deccan.....The death of Madhav Rao I let loose the latent dissolving forces, both domestic and foreign upon the Marathas and hastened its ruin."

The same authority remarks, "A fatal conjecture certainly occurred in the fortunes of the Maratha state at the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, when the government of Poona fell into the hands of two raw wicked youths, the Peshwa Baji Rao II and Daulat Rao Sindhia, both equally incompetent. They were suddenly faced by the brilliancy of British talent in the spheres of diplomacy and war alike. This can easily be judged if the mere personnel

is called to our mind the band of geniuses such as Wellesley brothers, Metcalfe, Kirkpatrick, Close, Elphinstone, Malcolm, and Munro pitted against the Maratha leaders like Bajirao II, Daulat Rao Sindhia and Yaswant Rao Holkar, who proved bundle of broken reeds to a prostrate nation.

Intellectual cases of the downfall of the Maratha power

During the Peshwa regime the Maharashtra Brahmans, who had the reputation—and still has—of a brainy people, astute, practical and steady, were at the helm of affairs in Maharashtra, and yet they failed to give the Maratha people a proper lead. It was because their moral nature was dwarfed by some in-born defects, casteism, communalism and regionalism, against which our Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru seems to vary in the wilderness of Free India. At any rate Modern India has an object lesson in the fall of the Maratha power in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Let us now analyse the intellectual factors:

1. Reactionary character of the Peshwa regime

No nation did ever arise without a moral standard to uphold and a mission to preach and fulfil. Shivaji succeeded, and his success sent the pulsation of a new life to the then prostrate Hindu India. The Peshwas seized this legacy of good will of the Rajputs, Jats and Bundelas to pull down the ruined structure of the Mughal Empire. But once on the saddle the countrymen of Shivaji gave a lie to the mission of Shivaji in the intoxication of power and avarice. These people eventually were meted out a worse treatment than what they suffered at the hands of Aurangzib. Maharajah Chhatrasal Bundela gave one-third of his kingdom to Baji Rao I; but Baji Rao's son and successor seized three-fourths, leaving the remainder to the Bundela chiefs to hold vassalage. Raghunath Rao after his North Indian expedition wrote home that he had made the country of the Jats, *be-cheragh* (lampless). Mewar, utterly humbled by Holkar, suffered the infamous Jamshed *gardi* (sack by Jamshed Pathan, a servant of Jaswant Rao Holkar), and the notorious Amir Khan

brought about the Krishna Kumari tragedy. If any one cares to have a sample of Maratha sovereignty over Rajputana, he should only read the contemporary and authentic history of the Kotah State in Hindi written by Dr. Mathura Lal Sharma. Space does not permit multiplying examples.

2. The ideal which the Brahmin Peshwas had before them as social reformers was the revival of orthodoxy in accordance with the dictates of Manu Smriti. This was putting the hand of clock to a point of out-of-date antiquity; rather an attempt to make the tide of the Ganges flow back from the Sangam to the glaciers of the Gongotri. Their social policy did incalculable harm to the Maratha society. It undid the work of liberal religious movement of saints from Namdev to Tukaram, whom Ranade justly called the forerunners of moral and political revival of Maharashtra, that prepared the ground for the rise of Shivaji.

A glance at the fortyfive volumes of the Peshwa Daftar, now available in print brings home to the mind the reactionary religious and social policy of the Peshwas, particularly of Balaji Baji Rao. We find the Peshwa, upon whose shoulders rested the destiny of India at a critical time, issuing orders for the punishment of a family in which a woman in her monthly course served food to Brahmans, and another, who in that state sat in a ferry boat with others. In the time of Madhav Rao I, every infringement of the law of Manu, or admitting Maratha captives back from Afghanistan on perils of their lives back to caste by their own kinsmen. When such petty things preoccupy great minds of a nation who can prevent its downfall ?

3. Religious orthodoxy affected even the administration of justice. If a non-Brahman was awarded capital sentence for murder, the punishment for the same offence of a Brahman culprit was either *jap* for several months, or a pilgrimage to Banaras, the expenses of which was borne by the State (Vide *Peshwa-kalin Maharashtra* in Marathi).

4. Shivaji aimed the political and social regeneration of the Hindu society of India and creating a

Hindu nation with the Marathas as its nucleus. But he was cut off before he could create a Maratha nation even. "The cohesion of peoples in the Maratha state was not *organic*," says Sir Jadunath, "but artificial. It was solely dependent on rulers' of extraordinary personality and disappeared when the country ceased to produce superman."

One can read the doom of Maharashtra in the following reflections of Sir Jadunath on the Battle of Poona, in which Jaswant Rao Holkar defeated the army of Daulat Rao Sindhia, and put the last Peshwa Baji Rao II to English protection:

"Before them (Holkar and Amir Khan) for many miles the roads were blocked by frantic crowds of men and women fleeing away to escape death, torture and outrage..... Behind the invaders were left only burning villages, ravished women, desecrated temples, polluted Brahmans..... Nothing green could be seen on the face of the earth.

"This was exactly the scene presented by the Maratha penetration into other provinces of India. A reflective historian can see only a vindication of divine justice in the Poona Brahmans.The wages of sin is death for tribes no less than for individuals" (*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, IV, p. 215).

The legacy of the Brahman rule at its best in Maharashtra is a legacy of hatred and moral callousness. The very memory of their rule has given rise to two rival schools of historians, Brahman and non-Brahman, each condemning the other party for the guilt of betrayal of national interests. A Brahman feels insulted if he is called a Maratha and not a Maharashtraiya ! Scene at Poona after outbreak of the news of the murder of Mahatma Gandhi by Godse when the non-Brahmans in resentment against the guilt of Brahman Godse rose in a body to loot and kill the Brahmans—is the best refutation of the theory of Maratha nation at any time.

5. The Maratha raj had no moral or historical backing. Its cause was not a Hindu revival as that of the imperial Guptas. Nor was it the cause of the South against

the North as in the case of Pulakeshin II and Emperor Harshā. Recorded history shows that Indian imperialism has always flowed from north to south and not *vice-versa*.

The Maratha rule lost all moral justification when it was buttressed up by the rapacity of the Pindaris, the worst enemies of society India did ever have.

6. The Marathas failed as miserably the Mughals, though for opposite reasons, to create an Indian Nation, a work achieved to a certain extent by the British.

The foregoing analysis of the causes of the downfall of the Maratha power has a lesson for Modern India. History may repeat itself if all those maladies from the body politic of India are ruthless purged out, and if better sense does not prevail with communities of India.

A STUDY OF THE PROPHET AS A STATESMAN

A historical treatment of the details of the Prophet's life in Medina down to the Truce of Hudabiya brings to prominence the ability of the Prophet as a statesman, diplomat, and a politician of the highest rank. God put the impartiality and sincerity of the Prophet to a very delicate test by giving him the chief magistracy of Medina. He had to handle two equally powerful tribes of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj suspicious of one another, and as ready to fall out as the Montagues and Capulets of Shakespeare. As the Prophet's camel was approaching the city of shelter, he could not decide for himself where he should alight, and it was not easy to do so. If he had decided to stay with the Khazraj, the Banu Aus would have taken it ill, and *vice versa*. So he left the decision to God's dumb animal to whom no one would impute a motive. So he chose to take up his abode where his camel, left to itself, at last stopped, and the first mosque of Islam was built on a piece of neutral ground that belonged to an orphan. A single wrong step and it would have undone Islam. So the Prophet had to walk over the *pul-i-sirat* of the tribal politics of Medina in his physical body. Next he had to provide for the safety and livelihood of the companions of his exile. The Ansars in spite of their enthusiasm for Islam would have grown restive if the Muhajirins were to prove an economic liability to the city. So he opened Medina first co-operative stores of Islam, and the born merchants of Mecca set up as shop-keepers in their new home, where trade had been, formerly a monopoly of the Jews. He established the brotherhood of Islam under which each of the exiles was to be adopted as a brother by an Ansar. This could not but be regarded in the long run as a grievance by natural-born brothers of such families. The Prophet kept his hand on the pulse of Medina,

and when he felt that bad blood of reaction was rising he at once abolished it. The Prophet never assumed autocratic powers in the name of God, though he was not likely to be resisted if he had done so. He was very scrupulous regarding the vested interests of every individual, and none had a keener insight into the weaknesses of his people. When the case of the Jews, guilty of treason, came up for trial, he left the whole affair to the chief of the patron tribe to whom these Jews were clients. The Arab was very touchy regarding his point of honour. If the Prophet himself had passed death-sentence, and left it to be carried out by any other person that the tribe whose clients these guilty Jews were, it would have mortally wounded the pride and sense of honour of the patron tribe and they might go to the length of drawing swords in defence of the clients, because a client's body was inviolable except by the patron for chastisement. During this period the sheet-anchor of the Prophet's imaginative statesmanship struck deep into heart of the Arab nation when he changed the qibla from the direction of Bait-ul-Muqaddas towards the Kaba sharif. This was no compromise with the sacred stone but a compromise with the very symbol of unity of the Pagan Arabia with Islam, and Islam increased its magnetic power million fold. A statesman is he who does not cling to the unattainable best but makes a compromise to secure permanently the possible good. His early ideal to unite all the peoples of the Book, the Jews, Christians and Muslims proved an impossibility. Under the test of hard facts, and hence he wisely gave it up in time and concentrated his resources in building up an Arab nation.

Another trial of the Prophet's statesmanship when the Muslims achieved a bloodless victory over the hostile Quraish and entered Medina in triumph. Nothing is sweeter to the Arab than retaliation in kind. But the Prophet stood between the returning exiles and the hereditary foes of Mecca namely the Ansars in their days of Ignorance eager for avenging the blood of Ohud on one hand, and the vanquished Umayyads trembling for their fate. No man ever used his victory with

greater moderation than the Prophet, and History bears no instance where a far-sighted policy was better rewarded with success. The Prophet was busy in "conciliating the hearts" of his bitterest enemies, Abu Sufiyan and his sons. It was for the sake of the future of Islam that the Prophet was content with the outward conformity of the *munafiqs*, the hypocrites to Islam, without holding an Inquisition into their state of belief. He succeeded in the difficult task of convincing the Quraish that Islam would serve much better the material and spiritual welfare than their guardianship of idols in the national sanctuary of Arabia. But for the loyalty and valour of these hypocrites, who proved best of believers in Islam's hour of trial after the death of the Prophet,—Islam could not have won so easily the War of Apostasy, and subdue the whole of the peninsula within so short a time.

None of his successors excelled the Prophet of God in strong and practical common sense. The instructions of the Prophet to the preachers of Islam deputed to different tribes would illustrate this phase of the Prophet's character: "Say unto them that God is one and without a partner, and that Muhammad is His prophet"; if they listen to you willingly say that it is pleasing to God to see the Faithful offer their prayers five times a day and observe the Fast of Ramzan; if they act according to the injunctions of the Holy Quran, say to them that payment of Zakat absolve them from sin. But the grabbing tithe collectors of Medina immediately after the death of the Prophet become more particular about Zakat than for the spiritual illumination of the people entrusted to their care, and hence the reaction against Islam, and the War of Abostasy.

If anybody cares to study the Prophet's organisation of the Islamic Commonwealth in the light of the principles of modern political science I doubt very much whether the sceptic even would be able to discover any flaw in it,—though I am not a bonafide student of state-craft. The Prophet was not the founder of that strong centralised military despotism as the Islamic State emerged in its final evolution like every other

Empire. Arabia before Hazrat Muhammad was a geographical expression indicating the home of an ethnic group speaking the same language, having a tradition of common origin and of a polytheistic pagan cult. The Prophet at first formed a fraternity of believers consisting of man and woman, free man and the slave united in heart and action, and owing allegiance to God and his Prophet alone. Islam came as solvent on the pagan society and tribal organisation. At Medina the exiled fraternity expanded into a people (*Ummat*) arose over-riding the tie of blood and territory in matters spiritual, but in temporal matters the same ties also held the people together. It was no artificial creation but a full-grown federal institution. The *Umma'* included Jews, Arabs and Christians who as citizens of Allah's Kingdom on earth obeyed God's peace of their own accord. Within the *Umma* or Community, the political unit was not the individual, but the family and the tribe, in its three-fold classes of members, free man, the client and the slave. It consisted not of individuals but of alliances. The chief aim of the *Umma'* was to unite the constituent elements for defence against external foes. Under the circumstances the *Umma* became the repository of powers of external sovereignty exclusively, and some powers of internal sovereignty so far as these rights were likely to disturb general peace or encroach upon the rights of any constituent of the *Jamma*. The Muslims formed the *Jamma'* or Assembly of the Faithful where Non-Muslims had no business. But when the Jews were expelled from the *Umma*, and degraded from the status of citizenship to that of tribute-paying subjects of the *Umma*, the *Jamma'* and *Umma* became one and identical. Later on, when Islam spread among the tribes outside Medina, the same system of federal alliances was put in force. In proportion as the Faith spread, as Wellhausen says, the *Umma* increased in strength. Medina was the capital of this Federal State; and to the Central government resided exclusively the powers of external sovereignty, whereas the autonomous tribal states were left their internal sovereignty intact almost, barring the right of secession

from the Umma, because such defection meant rejection of Islam and rebellion against God's State. Where men are too jealous and suspicious of another, they can be united only in the name God; so in the Islamic State everything belonged to God in contradistinction to every thing to the monarch in *Mulk* or Secular State. The Prophet himself was only the highest official of this state owing no private property, but enjoying only the *usufruct* of Fadak in Khyber for his maintenance and public expenditure as the head of the Umma: The Muslims were no mercenaries but God's volunteers, the Treasury was the treasury of Allah, Bait-ul-Mal and the Muslims were no tax-paying subjects, but God's People taxing themselves for the sake of God and paying Zakat for the maintenance of the poor and public safety. God is not a capitalist nor an imperialist, and as such God's Kingdom called into glorious existence by the Prophet of God was essentially a Socialistic State without the vices of Communism; the property owned by every individual belongs to God, as doth his soul, but God makes his wealth *halal* in proportion to his natural capacity and industry if he pays *zakat* and spend the remainder in accordance with the Will of God as embodied in the Shariyat.

Beyond this point we shall not proceed.

Amen !

THE PROPHET AS AN IDEAL CITIZEN

At the outset I perhaps owe you an apology for bringing down the Prophet to God and the founder of a most potent State on earth to the level of a citizen. My excuse is that in my search for an ideal citizen suited to a modern State like Pakistan I found in the Prophet of Arabia a more perfect pattern than in Pericles and Socrates of ancient Greece, or in Scipio Africanus and Brutus of Rome. *Secondly*, the modest title of this paper is an academic challenge to an injustice to the children of the East at the hands of the great German scholar, Von Kremer, who says, "A free man in a free city is unknown in the Orient; all are subjects obeying a higher power". History bears testimony to the fact that a free man in a free City was known to exist in the Buddhistic republics of Ancient India as ancient as those of Greece. Five hundred years before the rise of Free Cities of Medieval Europe the deserts of Arabia, Central Asia and Africa were strewn with tribal republics where free men in free cities were known to live. Though the Arabs in the days of *Jahiliyat* or ignorance did not know the use of water after calls of water, they knew fairly well how to govern a State, how to live as free men in free Cities. Time has come when we, Orientals, should study afresh the history of these neglected back-waters of ancient civilizations. The political philosophers of the West point to the forests of Germany as the original home of democratic institutions and parliamentary form of government. We, Orientals, are put down as disciples of the West learning the lessons of Democracy at their feet. Indeed, the West has taught us with vengeance, and today we are suffering from the legacy they have left; namely political corruption, the Vote and the Party and an ingenuity to hide mean action under super-saintly profession.

Today we seem to have fallen on evil days after the dawn of liberty. Some are bewildered taking liberty for licence; a few cowed down by initial difficulties have given way to despair and pessimism; and all seem to have forgotten the Duties of Citizenship though wakeful of their Rights. Here one old villager is said to have censured a Railway ticket-collector whether he was not ashamed of demanding a ticket from a free man; there comes a complaint that subordinates shirk work and break discipline; and from another quarter is a grievance for squandering public money to no purpose. In short, people have begun behaving, they say, as if political emancipation has made all posts and offices mere sinucures to be enjoyed at leisure. The foremost problem before us is to get rid of legacy of political servitude for two centuries in form of perverse morality, of idolence and pessimism, of an unscrupulous craze for promoting private self-interest. This disease of our body-politic requires an indigenous method of treatment for permanent cure. Such ills appeared in Islamic society and State at intervals in Damascus and Baghdad, in Ispahan and Merve; and each time a cure was effected by reformers and rulers by reviving the ideal of the Golden Age of Islam. That Golden Age was a reflex of the personality of the Prophet and the fruition of his Sayings and Acts as an ideal citizen of Allah's Kingdom on earth. Nowhere did we find an example correspond with precept as in the life of the Prophet. So for an ideal we need not travel abroad. A State in the throes of its births will find life and light if its citizens if they care to turn their eyes to the Prophet not as the Founder of Islam but as the re-builder of God's Kingdom on earth and as its first citizen. We propose to treat the life of the Prophet in the light of modern science of Civics to exmine how far does he come up to the highest standard of a good citizen of a State of the twentieth century.

Mecca was the most progressive City State in the Arabian Peninsula even before the birth of the Prophet. It was a close oligarchy ruled by the two clans, Banu Hashim and Banu Umayya of the Quraish tribe. The

unit of a tribal republic was family, and not the individual as in the City States of Greece. In such State even grey-beards might remain political minors under the tutelage of a grand-father or uncles. Nevertheless the pre-eminence of Mecca like than any modern State depended on the civil capacities of her citizens. In the days of Ignorance even the fame of Abu Bakr and Omar had spread among the Arab tribes outside Hijaj for their clean justice and impartiality. The Prophet in his character as a citizen of the infidel State of Mecca became known as al-Amin or the Trustworthy one among friends and foes alike. Arabia was then in the tribal stage of social evolution, and hereditary feud between family and family, clan and clan, tribe and tribe, faction and faction was the rule rather than exception in such a society. The prestige and nobility of a family or clan was measured by the number of swords and their sharpness which a family could muster on the field against its rivals. Today it is exactly the case in the country-side of the Punjab and among the Border Pathan tribe. The family of Hashim was being gradually eclipsed in power by the superior birth-rate among the Banu Umayya and their grasping ambition. It is well-known what vow the grandfather of the Prophet did make to have a good number of male children. The unsophisticated Arab understood no less than Hitler the importance of birth-rate for a State. The Prophet fell certainly short of the expectation of his infidel kinsmen by his comparatively weak health and smallness of the number of his children. Though he kept himself aloof from the petty family and tribal politics his patriotism of a higher standard to the City State of Mecca was unquestioned.

It is a matter of common knowledge that three things considered hindrances to good citizenship in a modern State as in those of ancient and medieval times. These are (i) Indolence (ii) Private self-interest, and (iii) Party Spirit. Let us now examine in the light of the Prophet's early career whether any of these charges stands good against him as a citizen of Mecca. In his boyhood he tended the flock of his family and sweated

in the sun to make his bread *halal* to him. Later on, he entered the service of Bibi Khadiza as her steward and many journeys he undertook outside for commerce. Indolence is the worst vice in a citizen, because it gives rise to a spirit of indulgence and indifference. Such a spirit never characterised the life of the Prophet at any stage. He rather over-strained his poor physique and powerful mind for the common welfare, and for doing maximum service both at Mecca and later on at Medina. If there is any vice common among the people of Bengal, Hindus and Musalmans, it is the vice of Indolence heightened by pessimism. It has generated in us the evil of looking upon "everybody's business as nobody's business", and made us notorious as evaders and shirkers. We consider it a capital feat if we can cleverly shift our own share of labour and duty on to the shoulders of another. What is more dangerous, we generally console ourselves with the idea that we are adepts at intellectual pursuits. Here we may take a lesson of unmeasured activity, physical and mental, from the life of the Prophet. The ideal citizen does not behave like villagers of our fable, each of whom poured a jar of pure water in the tank ordered by the State to be filled up with milk, each having been under the happy illusion that everybody else would pour milk enough to dilute his own deceitful jar of water.

Political Science brands "Private Self-interest" as another vice of a bad citizen. This one vice is the offspring of unbridled Democracy born to kill democracy itself. And therefore it is the most intractable problem with our newly State as it is with others also. "Private Self-interest" was not unknown in the City State of Mecca or Medina, though the Prophet was far above such a vice. He, as a ideal citizen, had no self-interest, and even no Self which he had submerged into his *Ummat* or Community. He started to combat this evil in the city of Mecca by changing the political and moral outlook of his fellow-citizens helpless as they were in the grip of Ignorance. The ruling oligarchs of Mecca looked upon their own kith and kin in a narrow sense as equals proper ; the subordinate Arab tribes and emancipated

slaves at *quasi-man*; the slaves in open and the women at heart were put down as non-man. How far did the Prophet succeed in changing this un-human and pagan outlook on humanity is a matter of common knowledge.

The third characteristic of a bad citizen is a tendency to form cliques and factions, to serve his Private Self-interest either for leadership or for material gains ; and that too under a super-saintly cloak of common good. Party system is, however, considered essential for a modern democracy. But Islamic democracy had, and can have no party except the party of Allah against the devil in man. The theocracy of Islam perished as soon as Parties and Factions came into being during the time of the third Caliph. Under the infidel City State of pre-Islamic Mecca the Prophet had no axe of his own to grind; and not the slightest political tinge coloured his action or influenced his thought. He was known to be wise beyond his years, and his advice was occasionally sought by his fellow-citizens on important matters. Even before the descent of the Message he admonished his fellow-citizens to be just and generous and to cultivate a higher moral sense as did the Hanifs of his time. After he had started his career as Prophet a small group of sincere and devoted believers in his great mission gathered round him. No stretch of political thought can designate the following of the Prophet as a clique or faction, or even a party; because it had no political aim, no party cry except the eternal cry of the human soul for Truth. It may be, however, argued that the preaching of God's Message and the formation of this dissenting group threatened the very foundation of religion, society and the body-politic of the city-State of Mecca; and as such the Prophet's activity was far from that of an ideal citizen. But modern science of Civics would say that the Prophet would not have been considered a tolerably good citizen even, if he had not raised his voice of protest against what was eternally-damned untruth. If Darkness trembled of itself by the descent of Light no mortal could help it.

According to our current political thought the true or good citizenship has two aspects, one ethical and the

other intellectual. A true citizen must be ethically inspired, though not to the extent of establishing a religion for himself or his fellow-men. A good modern authority, Lord Bryce, says that the pre-eminent virtues of a good citizen are intelligence, self-control and conscience. Can authentic history deny any of these to the Prophet of God, whose every breath almost we can count by the *Hadith* and the *Sunna* ? The nearest parallel of position of the prophet as a citizen of Mecca is only that of Socrates in ancient Athens. We brand Alcibiades as a bad citizen, because he had a first rate political and military genius bereft of self-control and conscience. He did not hesitate to turn a traitor for avenging his personal wrongs on the city of his birth. Socrates, on the other hand, goes down as an ideal citizen because of his virtues of self-control and conscience ; and for his superhuman moral courage to die calmly for his conviction. Wrongs done unto the Prophet by the majority of his pagan fellow-citizens are quite well-known. But how did he avenge himself? When the clans were about to come to an open fight over the claim of putting the sacred Black Stone back on the altar of the rebuilt Kaba Sharif, al-Amin proved their last resort and saved them from a calamity. Prophet been a citizen like us, he would have refused to have anything to do with the matter so that the infidels might cut each other's throat to the great relief of himself and his followers. The Prophet never thought of opposing violence with violence even in self-defence at this stage. To save the city from trouble on their account the Muslims went on a self-chosen exile to Abyssinia, and the Banu Hashim patiently suffered economic blockade and social ex-communication for their refusal to declare the Prophet and out-law. Though the Muslims were few in number there were several fire-brands who might create trouble for the infidel Quraish. Had he not possessed extraordinary self-control he would not have been able to control the fiery Muslims smarting under wrongs. As regards conscience it is a matter of common knowledge how he refused the earnest prayer of the infidel Quraish to give a semi-divine status to the idols Lat and Marat

and even to pronounce their names except in depreciation. Had he allowed this compromise with his conscience he would have been hailed perhaps as the first citizen of Mecca. But his loyalty and love for Mecca were far more genuine and lofty than those of the self-seeking infidels. He pictured to himself that glorious position that Mecca holds today, and he did live to achieve it through the only path of Truth, namely, Islam. It is again his delicate conscience as a citizen of Mecca that shrank from the eventuality of any blood-shed in the city of Abraham. He departed in silence with his followers for Medina so that his misguided fellow citizens might live in peace at Mecca.

Let us now review the career of the Prophet as a citizen of Yathrib, renamed Madinat-un-Nabi in his honour. The city of Yathrib was also a City-State ruled by a military aristocracy with a subject population of the Jews. For a long time before the advent of the Muhajirs, the two tribes of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj constituting the ruling aristocracy were at daggers drawn over their family feuds. The two tribes suspected each other to such an extent that they could not come to an agreement to confer the Chief Magistracy of their city-state on anybody from amongst themselves. Like the later Italian City-States of medieval Europe Yathrib would rather invite a foreigner to rule over them as the constitutional head of the State. It was in response to such an invitation that the Prophet betook to Medina. At Medina the Prophet was not only the Messenger of God but also the elected Chief Magistrate of a City State. There his work as a preacher of Islam was rather an easy sail, because the ruling aristocracy rallied round him as Ansars or Helpers though he could not win over the Jews to his faith. But every little movement of his as a temporal ruler was jealously watched, and every word of his was weighed by the two-rival tribes. To steer the ship of State between the narrow strait of tribal jealousy was a trial for the Prophet as delicate and risky as walking over the Pul-i-Sirat. Apart from the internal tribal politics of the Ansars the Prophet was faced with the problem of pro-

viding for the safety and livelihood of the Muhajirs in the new city of their adoption. He could have easily solved this problem by confiscating the lands of the Jews who refused to accept Islam. But such an act in the beginning would have meant an attack on the vested interests of Banu Aus and Banu Khazraj, whose clients these Jews had been. The Muhajirs started business in the city as small shop-keepers, because the Ansars had no trade of their own.

The position of the Prophet as the Chief Magistrate of Medina was no ornamental office like that our provincial Governors. Many did offer their own houses to the Prophet; but the Prophet could not accept the hospitality of one tribe without the risk of displeasing the other. So in Medina he left himself to the guidance of his camel for his future abode; and the camel did not land him to any debatable ground. The Prophet experimented his scheme of restoring Allah's state on the earth at Medina. We are not concerned here with the details of the constitution of such a State. It was, in short, an ideal Democracy in which the elected chief ruled in accordance with advice of the majority represented by family patriarchs. In such a State the ruler was expected to be the foremost in everything except in the race for material gains and enjoyment of life. Though the unquestioned head of the flourishing City State of Medina, yet poverty was his lot. The Prophet and his two immediate successors owned no private property. The State set apart such portions of land, *e.g.*, Fadak in the life-time of the Prophet, the income of which went to meet the expenses of the head of the State in entertaining State guests and foreign envoys. No portion of this money was to be spent for entertaining his private friends. When a friend one day became the guest of the Prophet he had no money to buy flour. So he asked one of his dependents to go to a Jewish moneylender and borrow some money on the promise of paying back the amount on the first day of the next Rajah. But the Jew demanded a security, and so the Prophet mortgaged his armour to have money from the Jew. If he had nothing to spare to relieve

poverty and misery he had his bleeding heart for the poor. Whoever among the Prophets before the last Prophet of God had ever ruled Allah's kingdom in the name of Allah displayed more solicitude for the poor than for the rich and the powerful. It is said that Hazrat Sulaiman used to take his seat by the side of the poor among his own subjects whenever he happened to pass by them. The Prophet himself, the first and the best citizen of Allah's Kingdom founded on Islam, prayed to God to live and die as a poor man, and to be raised along with the poor on the Judgment Day. Hazrat Ali was once asked to define an ideal Muslim and the ideal citizen of Allah's Kingdom. His reply was, "One pinched with famine, dry with thirst, and blear-eyed with tears"; and herein Ali certainly had in mind his uncle and father-in-law.

An ideal citizen should be foremost to fight for the defence of the State and his fellow citizens, however intellectual he might be. And so the Prophet of God fought on many a field. The Prophet was not allowed peace in Medina by the infidel Quraish, who repeatedly led their confederates against the city of the Prophet. As a true child of Mecca his heart yearned for Mecca, and God at last turned the Qibla for him from the direction Jerusalem to that Mecca. The Prophet accepted the Truce of Hudaibiya only to avoid bloodshed of his fellow-citizens in Mecca, and at last he obtained a bloodless and glorious victory over the infidels. He sought no satisfaction of wrongs he had suffered at the hands of the family of Ummayya. His treatment of the city of Mecca bears many a lesson of ideal citizenship. He conciliated the hearts of those who deserved capital punishment, because, it would have unwise in an ideal citizen to close the road of friendship and amity with neighbours and fellow citizens. He left the City State of Mecca and autonomous unit of the Commonwealth of Islam; and the importance of Mecca was not allowed to suffer in any way in comparison with Medina.

Let us now turn to lessons on Civics embedded in the Sayings of the Prophet. The Prophet's parting

words to the Muhajirs of the first *Hijrat* were meant to make the Musalmans ideal citizens wherever they might go, or live even under a non-muslim government. These Muhajirs gained by their conduct the first moral victory for Islam in a foreign land, and it is such a code of social and political morality that in later times the Muslims won the hearts of non-muslims, and gradually won a considerable number of foreigners to their faith in Indonesia, China and Africa. By his own example he taught the Muslims the great political maxim, "Live and let others also live". Once two citizens of Medina came to the Prophet over a dispute for holding water in his own field. The Prophet satisfied both the parties by saying that a man was allowed to retain in his field only ankle-deep water by raising embankment. To-day a Prophet is badly needed to teach humanity the fundamental lessons for creating a family of Nation; otherwise, how could Sudan think of ruining Egypt by diverting the waters of the Nile only to spite her parent State ? The greatest problem before the Democracies of the world today is Poverty writ large on the materialistic civilization of today. There seems to be poverty everywhere in both the hemispheres. Britain pleads poverty, they say, for not paying her creditors. The Dollar Lord of America cries for gold, more gold, to provide for evil days of nationwide poverty. Among us who is there quite content with his own lot ? The world needs a cure for the poverty of the soul much more than one for real poverty of the masses. The problem appeared to Socrates also, and he solved it by curtailing his need to the minimum and wearing one coat through winter and summer. But the modern economist thunders against curtailing needs, and says that it would mean an end to progress, peace and happiness if our needs do not multiply for every minute. A current fashion of today is to proclaim that the only solution of this problem is Communism. I am innocent of all "Ism-s" born after the Third battle of Panipat, and therefore not competent to judge its efficacy. It, however, appears that this violent remedy was once tried in the bosom of Islam by the Kharijis. A modern communist does

not possess even one-tenth of a Khariji's fanatical faith in himself and his cause; and yet the Khariji failed. Even if all available assets divided equally by the State among our citizens, where is the guarantee that the average man would be more reconciled to his lot? But it is no argument to leave the poor to themselves. There must be a strenuous effort to remove simultaneously the material as well as the moral poverty of mankind. During the *interim* period all that the poorer people need is an inspiring ideal to sustain them in their misery. Hence there is need for ideal citizens for creating and ruling an ideal State, namely, God's Kingdom on earth. Those who question the existence of God can have no place in such a State; and those who believe in His Existence cannot look forward for a higher ideal other than what the Prophet of God did teach the mankind by his example, by his conduct a fellow citizen, a neighbour and a ruler.