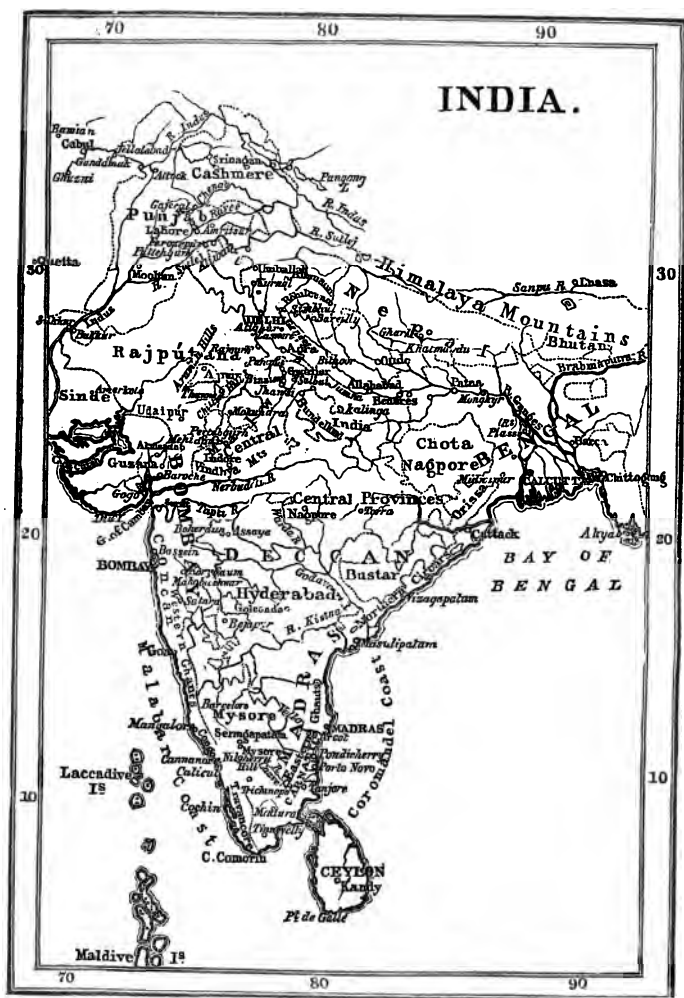


HISTORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF
BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

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HISTORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF
BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

BY THE

REV. SIR GEORGE W. COX, BART., M.A.

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TO

MY SONS

EDMUND C. COX

ASSISTANT POLITICAL AGENT, KOLHAPUR, BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

AND

GEORGE W. STIRLING COX

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, BENGAL

I DEDICATE THIS SKETCH

OF THE HISTORY OF BRITISH RULE

IN A COUNTRY

WHICH IT IS THEIR DUTY TO KNOW WELL



PREFACE.

IN this volume I have sketched the history of India before the earliest voyages of the Portuguese, the English, the Dutch, and the French, only so far as it seemed necessary to do so in order to make the narrative of European settlement and conquest intelligible.

The history of Asiatic countries is in many aspects uninviting. That of India before the rise and after the decay of the so-called Mogul empire is singularly intricate, and for all but professed historical students perplexing. From the time of its early Aryan lords the land has been divided amongst a multitude of dynasties, some more or less permanent, some lasting for little more than the moment ; and these dynasties are established or supplanted by statesmen whose favourite weapons are for the most part intrigue, conspiracy, falsehood, and treachery.

There is, however, a real connexion running through the whole, and bringing before us, if not a

national life, yet a life of the people, which may be traced through the long series of the ages, and which has been, and will in the future still more largely be, influenced by European civilisation, modes of thought, usage, and law.

From this point of view the whole history becomes full of vivid life, and as interesting as it is important; and it is in this light that I have striven to present it in these chapters, which may, I hope, incite many to a more systematic study of a subject calling for the most patient care and attention of Englishmen. The first and the last duty of the historian is to speak the truth. This duty with reference to the course of British rule in India involves the bestowal of much praise and of much blame; and if we are honest, the latter must be as outspoken as the former. But even in those cases in which the strictures are necessarily most severe, there is great encouragement for the future in the fact that the measures which have wrought most mischief have been condemned by such men as the Duke of Wellington, Lord William Bentinck, Mr. Elphinstone, Lord Canning, Lord Mayo, Lord Lawrence, and Lord Northbrook.

On such matters even the youngest reader must have some opinion; and in this volume he may, I hope, find a narrative which will help him towards forming a more matured judgment hereafter.

The spelling of names, geographical and personal, occurring in the history of India has been scarcely yet reduced to a system ; but many have become household English words, and these are given in their familiar forms. We have the same plea for retaining names like Delhi, Benares, Cawnpore, Meerut, as for writing Thebes, Athens, Naples, Corinth.

The map of India given with this history contains only those names which are mentioned in it, and not quite all of these ; but the text will in each case explain the position of the few places which from want of space could not be included in the map.

**PORTUGUESE, DUTCH, AND FRENCH SETTLEMENTS IN THE
EAST INDIES.**

	A.D.
The Portuguese establish a factory at Calicut	1500
" " declare Goa the capital of the Portuguese dominions in India	1510
" " settle in Java	1511
" " gain possession of Bombay	1530
" " settle at Diu, at the entrance to the gulf of Cambay	1535
" " settle at Amboyna	1564
" " cede Bombay to the British Crown	1662
" " expelled from Salsette and Bassein	1739
The Dutch settle in Java	1595
" " seize Amboyna	1607
" " settle at Chinsura	1657
The French purchase Pondicherry	1672
" " settle at Chandernagore	1676
" " take Madras	1746
" " " the fort of Jinji	1750
" " build the column at Dupleix Fatihabad	1751
" " obtain the Northern Circars	1751
" " take Vizagapatam	1757
" " surrender the fort of Jinji	1760

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

THE HINDUS OR ARYAN INVADERS OF INDIA.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1	.	The Aryan race and its branches . . .	1
2	.	Aryans and Turanians	2
3	.	Aryan invasion of Hindustan	3
4	.	Hindus, Teutons and Celts	—
5	.	Aryan languages	4
6	.	Evidence of language with reference to the character and civilisation of a people . .	—
7	.	Early Hindu civilisation	5
8	.	Early literature of the Hindus	6
9	.	The Mahabhārata and the Ramayana . . .	7
10	.	Chronological systems of the Hindus . . .	—

CHAPTER II.

GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA—ABORIGINAL TRIBES—RELIGIONS AND CASTE AMONG THE HINDUS.

1	.	Chief divisions of the Indian Peninsula . .	8
2	.	The Indus and the Ganges	9
3	.	The Western and Eastern Ghauts	10
4	.	Non-Aryan or Pre-Aryan inhabitants of India	—
5	.	Numbers of the aboriginal tribes	11
6	.	Social life of the Hindus	12
7	.	Hindu castes : Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras	—
8	.	Effect of caste on the Hindus as a nation . .	13

CHAPTER III.

MAHOMETAN CONQUESTS IN INDIA—INROADS OF GENGHIZ
AND TIMOUR—LOCAL DYNASTIES—EARLY VOYAGES AND
SETTLEMENTS OF THE PORTUGUESE.

¶	DATE	PAGE
1	.	Multiplication of Hindu dynasties . . . 15
2	B.C. 327.	Invasion of Alexander the Great . . . —
3	325–300.	Reign of Chandragupta; Embassy of Megasthenes . . . 16
4	.	Origin and growth of Buddhism . . . 17
5	286.	Establishment of Buddhism as the state religion of Asoka . . . 18
6	A.D. 710.	Mahometan conquest of Sind . . . —
7	.	Character of Saracenic conquests . . . 19
8	976.	Sebektegin, sovereign of Ghazni . . . —
	997–1030.	Succeeded by his son Mahmúd the Idol- breaker . . . —
9	1180.	Overthrow of the Ghaznevide dynasty by Shahab-u-dín . . . 20
	1194–5.	Battles of Narrain . . . —
		Kootub-u-dín, slave-king of Delhi . . . —
10	1210–35.	Reign of Shemsh-u-dín Altamsh . . . 21
		Mongol inroads . . . —
11	1202–27.	Conquests of Genghiz Khan . . . 22
12	1398.	Conquests of Timour or Tamerlane . . . —
13	.	Bahmani dynasty of the Deccan . . . 23
	1347.	Coronation of the first Bahmani sove- reign . . . —
	1481.	Execution of Mahmúd Gawan . . . —
14	.	First traders from Europe . . . 24
15	.	Ancient overland trade between India and the West . . . 25
16	.	Trade of Genoa and Venice . . . —
17	{ 1418 } { 1501. }	Explorations of the Portuguese . . . 26
	1486.	Expeditions of Diego Cam and Bartholomew Diaz . . . —
18	1498.	Arrival of Vasco de Gama at Calicut . . . —
19	1500.	Expeditions of Pedro Cabral and Juan de Nueva . . . 27
20	.	Popular theories of trade . . . —
21	.	Cruelties of Vasco de Gama . . . 28
22	1510.	Goa declared the capital of Portuguese dominions in India . . . 29
23	1537.	Expedition of Juan de Castro . . . —
24	1597.	Conflicts between the Portuguese and the Dutch . . . 30

CONTENTS.

XV

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST VOYAGES OF THE DUTCH AND THE ENGLISH TO JAVA AND INDIA.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1	1612.	First victory of the English over the Portuguese in Indian waters	31
2	1553.	English trade with China	—
		Expeditions of Willoughby, of Hudson, and of Drake	—
3	1597.	Protests of the Portuguese	32
	1591.	Voyage of Lancaster	—
		Dutch establishments in Java	—
4	1600.	Charter of the East India Company	33
	1604.	Expedition of Middleton to Bantam	—
5	1607.	Arrival of Middleton and Hawkins at Guzerat	34
6	1608.	Presentation of the letters of King James I. to the Mogul Emperor Jehangir	—

CHAPTER V.

REIGNS OF THE FIRST THREE MOGUL EMPERORS OF INDIA.

1	.	.	Birth and parentage of Baber	35
2	.	.	Condition of India under the Mahometan dynasties	36
3	.	.	System of village communities	38
4	.	.	Early life of Baber	—
5	1526.		Defeat of Ibrahim Lodi by Baber at Panipat	39
			Conquest of Hindustan	—
	1530.		Death of Baber	—
6	.	.	Accession of Humayun, son of Baber	—
	1539.		Defeat of Humayun by Shère Khan	—
7	.	.	Wanderings of Humayun in the Sinde desert	40
	1542.		Birth of his son Akbar	—
8	1551.		Recovery of Cabul by Humayun	41
9	1556.		Humayun recovers Delhi; his death	—
			Accession of Akbar	—
10	.	.	Character of Humayun	42
11	.	.	Early campaigns of Akbar	—
	1556.		Defeat of the army of Mahommed Shah Súr Adily	—
12	.	.	Relations of Akbar with Behram Khan	43

¶	DATE		PAGE
13	.	Critical position of Akbar	44
14	1568.	Reduction of the garrison of Chittore	—
15	.	Growth of the empire of Akbar	45
16	.	Character of his government	—
17	.	Prohibition of suttee; abolition of the capitation and pilgrim taxes	46
18	.	Ideas of Akbar on the subject of toleration	47
19	.	Contrast between Akbar and the contempo- rary rulers of Europe	—
20	.	Reputation of Akbar as an apostate from Islam	48
21	.	Intentional discouragement of Mahome- tanism	49
22	.	Religious belief of Akbar	—
23	.	Antagonism between Akbar and Islam	50
24	.	Akbar's work not permanent	51

CHAPTER VI.

THE REIGN OF JEHANGÍR—PROGRESS OF THE ENGLISH
AND THE DUTCH.

1	.	Last days of Akbar	52
2	1605.	Accession of Selim as Jehangír	—
3	1615.	Mission of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of Jehangír	53
4	1612.	Victory of the English over the Portuguese in the harbour of Surat	—
5	.	Treaty between Jehangír and the English	54
6	1623.	Massacre of the English by the Dutch at Amboyna	55
7	.	Charters to East Indian Companies	56
8	.	Quarrel between Jehangír and the English	57
9	1702.	Charter of the United East India Company	—
10	.	Erection of Fort William at Calcutta	58

CHAPTER VII.

THE REIGNS OF SHAH JEHAN AND OF AURENGZEBE AS
ALAMGÍR, 1627-1707.

1	.	Intrigues of Noor Jehan	59
2	1627.	Death of Jehangír	—
	.	Coronation of his son Khúrram as Shah Jehan	—

CONTENTS.

xvii

	DATE		PAGE
3	.	Public works and buildings of Shah Jehan . . .	60
4	1629.	Shah Jehan visits the Deccan . . .	61
5	.	Rise of the Mahratta power . . .	—
6	1627.	Early years of Sivaji . . .	62
7	.	Intrigues of Aurengzebe for the succession . .	63
8	1658.	Captivity and deposition of Shah Jehan . .	64
9	.	Accession of Aurengzebe as Alamgir . . .	—
✓ 10	.	Progress of the Mahratta power under Sivaji . . .	65
11	.	Deaths of the brothers of the Emperor . .	—
12	1666.	Visit of Sivaji to Delhi . . .	66
13	.	Administration of Aurengzebe . . .	—
14	1680.	Last years of Sivaji; his death . . .	67
15	.	Protests of the Peshwa, or minister of Sum- baji, son of Sivaji, against barbarous executions . . .	68
	1689.	Sumbaji tortured to death by Aurengzebe . .	—
16	.	Renewed Mahratta inroads . . .	—
	1707.	Death of Aurengzebe, or Alamgir . . .	—

CHAPTER VIII.

RIVALRY OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH IN INDIA.

1	1739.	Expulsion of the Portuguese from Salsette and Bassein by the Peshwa . . .	69
2	.	Establishment of English factories at Patna and Cossim Bazaar . . .	70
3	.	Career of Murshed Kuli Khan . . .	—
4	.	Crimes of Alavardi Khan . . .	71
5	1740.	Alavardi Khan becomes Nuwab of Mursheda- bad . . .	72
6	1751.	Surrender of Orissa to the Mahrattas by Alavardi Khan . . .	—
7	.	Intrigues in the Carnatic . . .	—
8	.	Usurpation and death of Sudfer Ali . . .	73
9	1743.	The Nizam appoints Anwar-u-din Nuwab of the Carnatic . . .	74
10	1746.	Surrender of Madrasto the French, September. Disregard of the terms of capitulation by Dupleix . . .	75
12	1747.	Robert Clive obtains a commission as ensign in the Company's service . . .	76
13	.	Policy and projects of Dupleix . . .	77

CHAPTER IX.

REIGNS OF THE SUCCESSORS OF AURENGZEBE.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1	.	Relative positions of the French and English in India	78
2	1707.	Coronation of Moazzim, son of Aurengzebe, under the title of Bahádúr Shah	—
3	.	Relations of Bahádúr Shah with the Mah-rattas	—
4	{ 1469 1539. }	Origin of the Sikhs ; Life and teaching of Nanek	79
5	.	Change in the character of the sect	80
6	.	Career of Har Govind, and of his grandson Guru Govind	—
	.	Religious and social constitution of the Sikhs	—
7	{ 1709 1716. }	Sikh incursions in the Punjab	81
	1712.	Death of Bahádúr Shah	—
8	.	Accession of Jehándár Shah	82
	1713.	Jehándár Shah put to death by Farokhsir, who reigns in his stead, under the protection of the Syuds	—
9	1716.	Death of the Sikh chief Bandu	—
10	1720.	Murder of Farokhsir by the Syuds	83
11	.	Career of Chin Kilich Khan, also known as Asaf Jah, Nizam ul Múlk	—
	{ 1720 1748. }	Reign of Mahommed Shah	—
12	.	Administration of Asaf Jah at Delhi	84
13	.	Treaty of Mahommed Shah with the Peshwa Balaji Visvanath	85
14	.	Policy of Baji Rao, son of Balaji Visvanath	—
15	.	Relations of the Peshwa and the Nizam	86
	1737.	Visit of Baji Rao to Delhi	—
16	.	Afghan inroads into Persia	87
	1722.	Surrender of Ispahan	—
17	.	Nadir Culi Khan takes up the cause of the Persian king	88
	1736.	He usurps the sovereignty	—
18	1739.	Invasion of India by Nadir Shah	89
19	.	Massacre at Delhi	—
20	.	Subsequent life of Nadir Shah	90
21	1747.	Death of Nadir	91
22	.	Desolation of Hindustan	—

CHAPTER X.

DUPLEIX AND CLIVE.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1		The French and English leaders	92
2	1748.	Dupleix espouses the cause of Chunder Sahib	—
		Death of Anwar-u-din in the battle of Ambúr	94
3		Murder of Nasir Jung by his troops, who proclaim Mozuffer Jung Nawab of the Carnatic	95
4		Mozuffer Jung appoints Dupleix governor of all the countries to the south of the river Kistna	96
5	1751.	Siege of Trichinopoly	—
6		Seizure of the fort at Arcot by Clive	97
7		Successful resistance of Clive at Arcot	98
8		Destruction of Dupleix's column and of Dupleix Fatihabad	—
9		Resolutions of the English and French Governments to end the war in the East.	99
10	1754.	Recall of Dupleix	100
11		Quarrel between Bussy and Salábat Jung	—

CHAPTER XI.

CLIVE AND SURAJ-U-DAULA—BATTLE OF PLASSY.

1		Demands of Suraj-u-Daula on the governor of Calcutta	101
2	1756.	Advance of Suraj-u-Daula against Calcutta	102
3		Capture of Fort William	—
		Tragedy of the Black Hole	—
4		Indifference and apathy of the Nuwab	104
5	1757.	Capture of Chandernagore by Clive	105
6		Clive joins the conspiracy against Suraj-u-Daula	—
7		Clive's deception of Omichand	106
8	1757.	Battle of Plassy	107
9		Clive instals Mír Jafir as Nuwab of Murshedabad	108
10		Clive's justification of his own policy	109
11		Clive's share in the wealth of Suraj-u-Daula	110

¶	DATE	PAGE
12	.	Discontent and intrigues against Mir Jafir . 110
13	1758.	Arrival of the French fleet under Lally at Pondicherry 111
	1760.	Battle of Wandiwash —
14	1759.	Capture of the Dutch fleet in the Hugli . 112
15	.	Clive's proposal that the British Government should take over the sovereignty of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa is rejected by Pitt 113

CHAPTER XII.

RELATIONS OF THE ENGLISH WITH THE MOGUL EMPIRE.

1	{ 1748 1754. }	Reign of Ahmed Shah 113
2	{ 1754 1759. }	Reign of Alamgir II. 114
3	.	Intrenchment of the Afghans and the Mah-rattas at Panipat 115
	1761.	Annihilation of the Mahratta army —
4	1760.	Siege of Patna by the Emperor Shah Alam . 116
	.	Mir Cossim becomes Nuwab of the Carnatic . —
5	.	Mercenary motives of the servants of the East India Company —
6	.	System of private trade and of exemption from tolls. 117
7	1762.	Abolition of tolls by Mir Cossim 118
8	1763.	Massacre of the English at Patna 119
	1764.	Battle of Buxar —
9	.	Illegal gains of the Company's servants . 120
10	1765.	Return of Clive to India 121
11	.	His indignation at the prevalent corruption. —
12	.	Clive's financial reforms 122
13	.	Scheme of double government —
14	.	Practical working of the scheme 123
15	.	Increased misery of the people 124
	.	The Directors of the Company resolve to in-trust the task of reform to Warren Hastings. —
16	1768.	Arrangement between the Madras Govern-ment and the Nizam 125
17	.	Hyder Ali, founder of the Mahometan dynasty of Mysore 126
18	1769.	Treaty between the Madras Government and Hyder 127

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF WARREN HASTINGS.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1	.	Evils of the double government . . .	128
2	.	Early life of Warren Hastings . . .	129
3	1771.	Hastings appointed Governor of Bengal . . .	130
	.	Civil and judicial changes . . .	—
4	.	Arrest of Muhammed Reza Khan and Shitab Rai . . .	131
5	.	Instructions of the Court of Directors to the Governor-General . . .	132
6	.	Hastings refuses to pay the tribute for Bengal . . .	—
7	.	Quarrel between the Nuwab of Oude and the Rohilla chief, Hafiz Khan . . .	133
8	1773.	Hastings agrees to lend the Nuwab an army to put down the Rohillas . . .	134
9	.	Devastation of Rohilcund . . .	135
10	.	The members of the Calcutta Council . . .	136
11	.	Hastings in a minority in the Council . . .	—
12	1776.	Accusations of Nundkomar . . .	137
13	.	Indian ideas of the crime of forgery . . .	—
14	.	Trial and execution of Nundkomar . . .	138
15	.	Injustice of the proceedings . . .	—
16	.	Contrast between Elijah Impey and Warren Hastings . . .	139
17	.	Secret compact between Impey and Hastings . . .	140
18	.	Pretensions of the Supreme Court . . .	141
	1781.	Second compact between Hastings and Impey . . .	—
19	.	Hastings withdraws his resignation . . .	142
	.	Duel with Philip Francis . . .	—
20	.	Growing power of Hyder Ali . . .	—
21	1780.	Victory of Sir Eyre Coote at Porto Novo . . .	143
22	.	Relations between Hastings and Cheyte Sing, Raja of Benares . . .	144
23	.	Hastings demands money payments from Cheyte Sing in addition to his stipulated tribute . . .	145
24	.	Hastings visits Benares and arrests Cheyte Sing . . .	146
25	1784.	Incorporation of Benares within British dominion . . .	147
26	.	Hastings refuses to withdraw the British force from Oude . . .	148

	DATE	PAGE
27	.	Compact between Hastings and the Nuwab for the plundering of the Begums of Oude 149
28	1785.	Return of Hastings to England 150

CHAPTER XIV.

LORD CORNWALLIS AND THE LAND SETTLEMENT OF
BENGAL.

1	1782.	Effects of the treaty of Salbai 151
2	.	Sindia and the treaty of Mangalore 152
3	{ 1786 1791. }	Reforms of Lord Cornwallis —
4	.	The perpetual settlement 153
5	.	The hire-system; Absentee landlords 154
6	.	Effects of the land laws of Lord Cornwallis . 155
7	.	Land settlement in Madras and Bombay . 156
8	.	Judicial changes; Courts of Appeal 157
9	.	Disruption of the Mogul Empire —
10	.	Alliance with the Nizam and the Mahrattas against Tippu 158
11	1791.	War with Tippu —
12	.	Lord Cornwallis's scheme for a balance of power 159
13	.	War between the Nizam and the Mahrattas . 160
14	.	Decay of the Mahratta power 161
15	1793.	Military regulations of Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth) —

CHAPTER XV.

FALL OF THE MYSORE SULTAN—MAHRATTA WARS—BATTLE
OF ASSAYE—SIEGE OF BHURTPORE.

1	{ 1798 1805. }	General policy and designs of Lord Morning- ton, afterwards Marquis of Wellesley . 162
2	.	Intrigues and schemes of the Sultan Tippu . —
3	1799.	War with Tippu; Storming of Seringapatam; Death of Tippu 163
4	.	Partition of the Mysore territories 164
5	.	Extension of British dominion; Treaty with the Nizam 165
6	.	Lord Wellesley's theory of protected States . 166

CONTENTS.

xxiii

¶	DATE	PAGE
7	.	Career of Jeswunt Rao Holkar 167
8	1802.	Treaty of Bassein with Baji Rao 168
9	.	Fears of French influence and conquest . . . 169
10	1803.	Second Mahratta war; Victory of Colonel Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) at Assaye 170
11	.	Victory of Lord Lake over the Mahrattas at Delhi —
.	.	Arrangements with the Mahratta chiefs . . . 171
12	.	Demands and threats of Jeswunt Rao Holkar 172
13	.	Serious reverses of General Monson —
14	1805.	Siege of Bhurtpore; Recall of Lord Wellesley . 173
15	.	Lord Wellesley's policy based on the theory of a paramount power 174

CHAPTER XVI.

ADMINISTRATIONS OF LORD MINTO AND LORD HASTINGS— OPERATIONS IN NEPAL AND AGAINST THE PINDHARRIES.

1	.	Absence of national life in India 175
2	.	Effects of reversing the policy of Lord Wellesley 176
3	.	Demands of Mahratta chiefs 177
4	1806.	Mutiny of Sepoy regiments at Vellore . . . —
5	1807.	Suppression of disorders in Bundelcund by Lord Minto 178
6	.	Habits and tactics of the Pindharries . . . 180
7	.	Financial benefits of Lord Minto's administration —
8	.	The Newars of Nepal 181
9	.	Ghórka conquest of Nepal 182
10	1792.	Defeats of the Ghórkas by the Chinese . . . 183
11	.	The Ghórkas ask aid of the English —
12	1813.	The alliance with the Ghórkas dissolved . . . —
13	{ 1814 } { 1815. }	The Ghórkas declare war by murdering some British constables at a police-station . 184
14	1816.	Campaigns of Sir David Ochterlony against the Ghórkas 185
15	.	Submission of the Ghórkas —
16	1817.	Preparations for active measures against the Pindharries 186
17	.	Treacherous intrigues of Sindia 187
18	.	Destruction of the Pindharrie hordes —

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DETHRONEMENT OF THE PESHWA—INTERNAL
ADMINISTRATION OF LORD HASTINGS.

	DATE	PAGE
1	.	False dealing of the Peshwa Baji Rao . . . 188
2	1817.	Defence of the Sitabuldi hill against the army of Nagpore 190
3	1817.	Battle of Mehidpúr 191
4	Jan. 1. } 1818. }	Battle of Korygaum —
5	.	Dethronement of the Peshwa, who is sent to Cawnpore 192
6	.	Effects of this measure —
7	.	Establishment of native schools ; Rise of the native press —
8	.	Affairs of the Nizam 193

CHAPTER XVIII.

BURMESE WARS—SECOND SIEGE, AND CAPTURE
OF BHURTPORE.

1	.	Hopes raised on the outbreak of the Burmese War 195
2	.	The country and people of Burmah —
3	.	Character of the Burmese kings 196
4	1822.	Irruption of the Burmese into Bengal 197
5	1826.	Cession of Tenasserim, Arakan, and Assam 198
6	.	Mutiny of some Sepoy regiments 199
7	.	The order of Sir D. Ochterlony for the attack of Bhurtpore rescinded by Lord Amherst. 200
8	.	Storming of Bhurtpore —
9	.	Affairs of Nagpore 201

CHAPTER XIX.

ADMINISTRATION OF LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK,
1827-1835.

1	.	Character and motives of Lord William Bentinck 201
2	.	Results of his policy of non-interference in the affairs of native States 203

CONTENTS.

xxv

¶	DATE	PAGE
3	.	Condition of Oude and Mysore. 204
4	1834.	Annexations of Cachar and of Coorg 205
5	.	Question of interference with religious customs 207
6	.	The practice of suttee condemned —
7	.	Countenance given to idolatry by the servants of the East India Company 208
8	.	Plundering associations of India 209
9	.	Dacoits and Thugs 210
10	.	Suppression of Thuggee 211
11	.	Efforts to promote steam navigation 212
12	1833.	Conditions imposed on the renewal of the Company's charter —
13	.	Land settlement of the North-West Provinces 213
14	.	Establishment of a medical college in Calcutta 214
15	.	Supervision and control of the aboriginal tribes in India —

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR.

1	1831.	Interview between Lord William Bentinck and Runjeet Singh at Roopur 215
2	.	Treaty of Amritsur, making the Sutlej the boundary of British territory —
3	.	The relations of Runjeet with the Afghans . . 216
4	.	Character of the Afghan people 217
5	.	The Afghan tribes —
6	.	Shah Shuja and Dost Mahommed 218
7	1831.	Alexander Burnes sent as envoy to Cabul . . . —
8	.	Fears of Russian aggression 219
	.	Distinction between the enterprisenow to be entered upon and that of the conquest of India —
9	.	The enterprise condemned by the Duke of Wellington, Lord William Bentinck, Lord Wellesley, and Mr. Elphinstone 220
10	.	Transactions with the Amirs of Sinde 221
11	1839.	Restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of Cabul 222
12	.	Surrender of Dost Mahommed —
	.	Causes of alarm in Cabul 23

¶	DATE		PAGE
13	1842.	Murder of Burnes and Macnaghten . . .	224
14	.	The fatal retreat from Cabul . . .	225
15	.	Defence of Jellalabad by Sir Robert Sale . . .	226
16	{ April, 1842. }	March of General Pollock to Jellalabad . . .	—
17	.	Murder of Shah Shuja . . .	227
18	.	Order for the evacuation of Cabul . . .	—
19	.	Defeat of the army of Akbar Khan at the Khurd Cabul Pass . . .	228
20	.	Destruction of the Cabul Bazaar . . .	—
21	.	Costs and results of the expedition . . .	229

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SIKH WARS.

1	.	Summary dealings with the Amirs of Sinde .	230
2	Feb. 17, 1843. }	Battle of Meeanee	231
3	.	Disaffection of Sepoys in the Bengal and Madras service	232
4	.	Reduction of the Gwalior army	—
5	.	Virtual anarchy in the Punjab	233
6	1845.	The Sikh army crosses the Sutlej and encamps at Ferozepur	234
7	.	Bravery and discipline of the Sikh troops	235
8	.	Battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshahar, and Aliwal	—
9	.	Battle of Sobraon	236
10	.	Submission of the Sikhs; Terms of peace	237
11	1848.	Lord Dalhousie succeeds Lord Hardinge as Governor-General	238
12	1848.	Treachery of Mulraj; Siege of Multan	—
13	.	Renewed disturbances in the Punjab	239
	.	Revolt of Chutter Singh	—
14	{ Nov. 1848. Jan. 1849. }	Battle of Ramnugger	—
	.	Battle of Chillianwalla	—
15	Feb. 27, 1849. }	Battle of Guzerat	240
16	.	Surrender of the Sikh forces	—
17	.	Annexation of the Punjab	241

CONTENTS.

xxvii

CHAPTER XXII.

THE POLICY OF ANNEXATION.

¶	DATE		PAGE
1	.	Questions of succession in the native states .	242
2	.	Case of the Raja of Satara .	—
3	.	Arrangements for the succession to the Mogul throne at Delhi .	243
4	.	Treaties with the Nizam .	244
5	.	Case of the Nuwab of the Carnatic .	245
6	.	Case of the ex-Peshwa, Baji Rao .	—
7	.	Case of the Raja of Jhansi .	246
8	.	Case of the Raja of Nagpore .	—
9	1856.	Condition of Oude; Deposition of the king and annexation of the country .	247
10	.	Lord Dalhousie's reasons for the policy of annexation .	248
11	.	Arguments in favour of this policy .	—
12	.	Failure of Lord Dalhousie and his successor, Lord Canning, to discern the signs of the coming rebellion .	249

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GREAT MUTINY, 1857-8.

1	.	Military character of the rebellion .	250
2	.	General causes of alarm and exasperation .	—
3	.	Causes of disaffection among the sepoys .	252
4	.	Want of adhesion among the mutineers .	253
5	.	The cartridges for the Enfield rifles .	254
6	.	Signs of mutiny at Berhampore .	255
7	May 10, 1857. }	Revolt at Meerut .	256
8	.	Massacre of the English at Meerut .	—
9	.	March of the mutineers to Delhi .	257
10	.	Revolt of Delhi; Heroism of the men in charge of the magazine .	—
11	.	Massacre of English in the Imperial Palace .	258
12	.	Want of concert on the part of the mutineers .	259
13	June 4.	Massacre of the English at Jhansi .	260
14	May 30:	Rising at Lukhnow .	—
15	.	Schemes of Nana Sahib .	261
16	.	Siege of the British cantonments by Nana Sahib .	—

	DATE	PAGE
17	June 27.	Massacre of the English on the river . . . 262
18	July 1.	Coronation of the Nana as Peshwa . . . 263
19	July 15.	Massacre of the prisoners at Cawnpore by the order of the Nana . . . —
20	. . .	Destruction of the Nana's Palace at Bithoor. 264
	. . .	March of Havelock on Lukhnow . . . 265
	. . .	He is compelled to return to Cawnpore . . . —
21	June 9, } 1857. }	Re-occupation of the Ridge at Delhi by the English . . . —
22	. . .	The City of Delhi . . . 266
23	. . .	Condition of the defenders of Delhi . . . —
24	. . .	Assaults on the English position . . . 267
25	. . .	Preparations for the storming of Delhi . . . 268
26	. . .	Capture of Delhi, and flight of the mutineers. —
27	Sept. 21	Arrest of Bahádur Shah in the tomb of Humayun . . . 269
28	1858	Trial and banishment of the king . . . 270
29	Sep. 25, } 1857. }	Relief of Lukhnow by Havelock and Outram . . . 271
30	. . .	Entry of the British troops into the Residency. —
31	Nov. 24.	Second relief of Lukhnow by Sir Colin Campbell; Abandonment of the position; Death of Havelock . . . 272
32	. . .	Tantia Topi gets possession of Cawnpore . . . —
33	. . .	Battle of Cawnpore . . . 273
34	. . .	Gradual suppression of the revolt . . . 274
35	{ Mar. 1858. }	Storming of Lukhnow . . . 275
36	{ Apr. 3, 1858. }	Siege of Jhansi; The city stormed . . . 276
37	. . .	Proclamation of Nana Sahib as Peshwa at Gwalior . . . 277
38	. . .	Fidelity of Salar Jung at Hyderabad . . . —
39	. . .	Death of Nana Sahib . . . 278
	April, } 1859. }	Capture and execution of Tantia Topi . . . —
40	. . .	Improvement in the general condition of India under the direct government of the Crown . . . 279
41	. . .	The royal proclamation to the people of India. 280
42	. . .	Subsequent state of the country to the year 1876 . . . —
43	. . .	Contrast of the English with the Mogul rule 281
44	. . .	Duties of the British Government . . . 283

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

The Hindus, or Aryan Invaders of India.

1. It has been often said that when the English found their way to India they were brought into contact with a kindred people, and that, as they gradually worked their way northwards and westwards, they were drawing nearer and nearer to the common home which both they and the people whom they were conquering had left many thousands of years ago. In substance this is true: but we must see carefully what is meant by it. There was a time when the forefathers of Englishmen, Hindus, and Persians, of Greeks and Romans, of Frenchmen and Germans, of Danes and Norwegians lived together, either as a single people or as a group of clans or tribes, on the high table-lands of Central Asia. To these tribes we give the name of Aryans, not because we can say for certain that they so called themselves, but because, after they had

been scattered, the word was used by their descendants as a title of honour which distinguished them from all who belonged to any other race or stock. Thus in the oldest Hindu books, which were put together many hundreds of years before the Christian era, India is spoken of as the abode of the Aryas, and the Aryas are contrasted with the Dasyu, the conquered inhabitants of the country. So the Persians called their land Iran, while the rest of the world was to them An-Iran, or, as we should say, not-Iran. It is not unlikely that the word originally denoted ploughmen, the tilling of the soil being the most honourable work for the man of free or noble birth.

2. How long the forefathers of the Aryan nations of Europe and Asia dwelt together we do not know ; but we may safely say that, when the time for separation came, some turned their steps to the south-east, and others towards the south-west and the west. To the east and the north the huge mountains which are formed into a vast bow, with the ranges of the Hindu Kush in the centre, rose up as an effectual barrier. Beyond those stupendous walls, which stretch for hundreds of miles to the north-east under the name of the Altai mountains, and to the east as the Himalayas, the abode of everlasting winter and snow, lay the home of other tribes which are classed together under the common name of Turanians, but which really formed a multitude of nations, all of them more or less like each other, but quite unlike the Aryans. In after ages these tribes, known as Mongols, Tartars, Huns,

Turks, and by other names, have burst like floods of devouring fire into the Aryan world: and the forefathers of the Aryan nations, in the home which seems to have been their birthplace, may have known that if they ventured to advance eastwards they would have to contend with human enemies not less savage than the mountains which hemmed them in.

3. There was, indeed, nothing to attract them towards these bleak and dismal regions; and so, when the old home became too small, one portion of the Aryan race moved towards the south and south-east, and having crossed the great river Indus, grew into the people known as the Hindus, whose abode was Hindustan. Another portion found their way into the regions lying to the south of the Caspian Sea, and set up a new Iran as Persians. A third, either by the same path or working round by the north of the Caspian, reached Europe, and grew into the Hellenic or Greek and Latin tribes in the south, and into the Celtic, Teutonic, and Scandinavian tribes in the north.

4. But we must not suppose that the ancestors of all these tribes left their common home at the same time. They went, we cannot doubt, as successive waves, which gained greater volume as they moved along; and ages probably passed between the migrations of clans or tribes the most closely related to each other. Thus the Celtic tribes went before those which we call Teutonic or Dutch. Their word for running water was *avon*, a name familiar to us still. These were followed by a Teutonic people, whose word for the stream or brook

was *beck*, and then again by another Teutonic people, who called it *water*. But sometimes the second comers, from ignorance of its meaning, kept the first name, adding their own to it: the third comers did the same, and thus we have in one instance the name Wansbeckwater, which tells its tale of at least three conquests or immigrations.

5. If we are asked how we know all this, we are forced to confess that we have no written records which tell us any part of this history, and that no records of it ever were or ever could have been written. The evidence for it is found in such words as Wansbeckwater; and the answer to the question is that the ancient history of mankind is embedded in their language. So long as we keep strictly within the limits of this evidence we are walking on sure ground; and it tells us vastly more than we might expect to learn about a time for which we have no record or writings of any sort. A comparison of the dialects spoken by Greek, Roman, Persian, Teutonic, and Scandinavian tribes has taught us that the structure of all is in the first framework the same, and has enabled us to see in great measure what the language of their common forefathers was. It was not the same as the language spoken afterwards by any of the Aryan nations after the separation; but the grammar of it was the foundation on which all the later dialects grew up, and the words which are common to all, or to most of them, are words which were spoken by the Aryans before they were scattered from their early home.

6. It is from these words that we learn the

history of their growth. They show us that these, our distant forefathers, were not savages ; that they built themselves houses ; that they spun wool for cloth and flax for linen ; that they were subject to laws carefully drawn out ; that they could plough, sow, and reap ; that they had a large farming stock of horses, sheep, and cattle ; that they made use of dogs as we do ; that they lived in families, in which the sacredness of marriage was strictly maintained, while the different degrees of kindred were marked out more minutely than they are amongst ourselves ; and that they spoke of God by the name which their descendants have used after them in the most distant parts of the earth.

7. Such as these were the Aryan people, who found their way into India from the north-west, a people which had grown up in habits of the most orderly life, deeply impressed and almost overwhelmed by the mystery of creation, and living already more in the future than in the present. That their families grew into clans, the clans into tribes ; that they had villages, towns, and cities ; that they had armour and weapons of offence and defence ; that they were ruled by kings, who had priests and warriors for their counsellors, we learn clearly from their language. But when we find that the word which for the Greek and the Roman meant a plough (Gr. *arōtron* ; Lat. *arātrum*), meant for the Hindu, as it does for us, a rudder, we learn not merely that the Aryans who used it in this sense had reached the sea, but that they described the action of the rudder in the water by a metaphor

taken from that of the plough on land. We may go into the matter, if we please, still more minutely. The Teutonic or German tribes kept together for a long time, and the words common to them show what progress they had made in what we call civilisation before they parted company. Thus Germans and Englishmen have the same word for shoe; but the Germans have another word (*strumpf*) for stocking; and therefore though they had shoes, Germans and Englishmen had no stockings while they remained together.

8. In this way we know a great deal of the history of the Hindus even before they reached India, as we know that of Englishmen before they forced their way into the country now called England. But it is the history of the people as a whole, and nothing more. Of the lives and acts of individual men and women, whether kings or queens, warriors, priests or traders, we must frankly confess that we know nothing, and that, so far as we can see, it is impossible that we should ever know anything. All nations, or at least all who have risen above the stage of savage life, have expressed their thoughts or their recollections in what we call epic poems, long before they have felt the desire for possessing any records of past events which can be in any sense called historical. In these poems the heroes and heroines love much and suffer much; but the story of their fortunes is told in almost all the epics of the Aryan nations with so striking a likeness, both in the framework and in the details, as to leave little room for doubting that in each case it is the same

story changed to suit the needs of different countries and climates.

9. The great epic poems of the Hindus are the Mahabhārata and the Ramayana; and although these, like the Homeric poems of the Greeks, reflect the habits and conditions of society under which the poet lived, they give us nothing which can fairly be called history. Nor can we look on their pictures of royal magnificence as on scenes which ever passed on earth before their waking eyes. The palaces of the wealthiest kings have never had doors of gold and walls of silver, or been lined with colossal statues of the same precious metals. The imagination of the poet was kindled, not by the sight of any earthly abode, but by the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces seen in the gleaming heavens, as the sun amidst a blaze of living fire plunges into the western sea.

10. We cannot, therefore, say when the Hindu left his primæval home in Central Asia, or how long the work of conquest may have lasted in the country which he invaded. The so-called chronology of the Hindus stretches over myriads and even millions of years; and this fact has been taken as proof of their incapacity for preserving any historical records by those who assert that in this respect they were altogether surpassed by the Egyptians. The truth is that whether in India or in Egypt there is no chronology at all; and it seems only fair to remember that there never was any intention of passing it off as such. In the belief of the Hindu, the history of the world is bounded within the limits

of four vast periods, from the beginning of which nearly four millions of years have passed away. It has been supposed that the Hindus claim this antiquity for themselves, and claim it to the exclusion of other nations. No notion could be more groundless. The Hindu has never made any special boast of the antiquity of his race; and in his chronology of the world he has sought only to express his ideas of the origin and duration of our globe and of the universe to which it belongs. They imagined themselves as living in the last of four *Yugs* or ages into which its existence was divided, and the character of this *yug* stood out in dismal contrast with those of the earlier periods. In short, we have here only another form of the golden, the silvern, the brazen and iron ages, in the last of which the Greek poets supposed that the present race of toilworn men were living.

CHAPTER II

Geography of India—Aboriginal Tribes—Religion and Caste among the Hindus.

1. The land which the Hindu chose for his new home was the vast peninsula which may be described as bounded by the river Indus, the Himalayas, and the Ocean. We may form some notion of its size when we learn that its extreme length from north to south is about 1,900, and its extreme width 1,500

English miles. About half-way down this peninsula the Vindhya mountains, running from west to east between the twenty-second and twenty-fourth parallels of north latitude, separate the valley of the Nerbudda from the table lands of the region commonly known as Central India. The whole country to the north of this range of hills is Hindustan, or the abode of the Hindu. The region to the south of the Nerbudda valley and the Satpúra hills is called the Deccan.

2. Taken roughly, Hindustan may be regarded as consisting of two huge river basins, the one being that of the Indus, the other that of the Ganges. Both these mighty streams issue from the snow-clad chains of the Himalayas. Flowing first to the north west, the Indus sweeps round the mountains which hedge in the beautiful Land of Srinagar or Cashmere; and then turning to the south after receiving the waters of the Cabul river near Attock, it is swollen by the streams of the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravee, and the Sutlej, which with the Indus determined the name of the Punjab, the land of the five rivers, the rich prize first seized by the Aryan invaders, as they found their way into the country from Central Asia. Still pursuing the same course with a slight bend to the west, the Indus finds its way through a delta into the Arabian Sea. The other great river of Hindustan, the Ganges (the ganging or running stream) has its sacred source at Gungootri, about 200 miles to the north of Delhi. Flowing to the south-east, it receives at Allahabad the dark waters of the Yamuna or Jumna, and finally,

like the Brahmapootra, which, flowing from the north-east, has likewise hurried down from the Himalayas, forces its way into the bay of Bengal through a delta which has for its base a line drawn from Calcutta to Chittagong.

3. The lower half of the Indian peninsula, lying to the south of this vast basin of the Ganges, may be described as a region of which the central portions are cut off from the sea by ranges of hills, which leave a strip of open land along the whole length of the coast. Starting from the river Tapti to the south of the Satpúra hills, the Western Ghauts, rising to their greatest height in the peaks of Mahableshtar, look down on the cities of Bombay and Goa. Running on to the south under the name of the Nilgherries, these hills sink into the great gap or valley of Coimbatore, which extends from sea to sea to the north of the hills of Travancore. Separated from the western range by this gap or valley, which is watered by the Cauvery, the eastern Ghauts form with a few breaks a similar rampart, the open country between them and the sea being known in its southern portion as the Carnatic, with the cities of Pondicherry and Madras on the coast.

4. To these vast and varied regions the Hindu was to give his name, and over large portions of it Hindu dynasties were to bear sway. But as each man in his journey through life has his special dangers and temptations springing out of his own dispositions and appetites, so is it with tribes and nations. When he crossed the Indus, the Hindu entered a land already inhabited, nor did he gain

possession of it without severe and perhaps repeated struggles. These earlier inhabitants have been classed among Turanians; but this classification tells us little more than that they were not Aryans. They are also thought by some to be the aborigines or first natives of the country; and they may have been so. But in no case has it been possible to prove that races of which every vestige has disappeared may not have preceded them. It is wiser to content ourselves with saying that in India they are older than the Hindu; that throughout India these non-Aryan tribes belong seemingly to one type; and that this type has been found in almost all parts of the world. Their chief physical features, their habits, and modes of life are everywhere virtually the same. Their weapons are formed and used in the same way, and the boomerang of the Australian may be seen in the wilds of Southern India. Black in colour, they have the woolly hair, the thick lips, and the broad noses and cheek-bones of the negro, although they clearly do not belong to the negro stock. Not a few of these still haunt the wilderness and the jungle, which for all but themselves are laden with death. Here they live without clothing and with scarcely a roof to cover them. Others dwell in villages and make some feeble attempts at cultivating the soil.

5. The number of these savage tribes, of which many, like the Bheels and Khonds, are or would be cannibals, is estimated still at about twelve millions; and we can scarcely suppose that they have increased since the times of the first Aryan conquests. It is

far more likely that they were then vastly more numerous, and much more fierce, than they are now; and in this case the impression which they made on their conquerors is accounted for. For these they were beings like the Trolls and Ogres of Scandinavian legend, and their coarse woolly hair obtained for them the name of Varvara, the *woolly*, the *barbarian* of the Greek and the Roman. The Hindu always spoke of them as Dasyu or enemies, and rejoiced in the victories which made him Dasapati, their *despot* or lord. He put his ban upon them as Rakshasas, spiteful and malignant imps, who have no human feelings about them, but who, like the giants of European stories, are as stupid as they are malicious.

6. This loathing of the native races carried with it a serious danger for the new-comers, whose natural tendency it was to form themselves into exclusive societies, thus weakening, if not destroying, their capabilities for national union. But how far the religious division of the people into castes had been carried before they crossed the Indus, we cannot say. The fact that this system has nothing to do with a man's civil dignity or position seems to show that it was not wholly the result of conquest, although conquest probably made it more rigid and unbending.

7. The original number of the castes is commonly said to have been four. It would be more exact if we gave it as three. The natural divisions of a free or dominant race are those of priests, warriors, and traders or tillers of the soil; and thus among the Hindus we find from an early age the three great

castes of Brahmas, Kshatryas, and Vaisyas. It is true that the most ancient collection of Hindu laws, known as the Code of Menu, speaks of the fourth or Sudra caste as the slaves of the other three ; but it speaks of them in a way which shows that they were not in strictness of speech a caste at all. They were not entitled to the sacred thread which marked the members of the three higher castes as *dwi-ja* or twice born. Into this fourth class the non-Aryan or indigenous tribes of the country might be absorbed to any extent ; but the object of caste was to make it impossible for them to emerge from their servile state to a higher condition. All marriages between them and members of the three great castes were absolutely forbidden. They were, in fact, outside the social pale. But within it a hard fight was kept up to maintain the same distinctions. When the system of caste, or as the Hindus call it, of *varna* or colour, was in its full strength, a member of one caste might not marry a member of another. If such marriages took place, the children were called Varnasankara (a word corrupted into Burrensunker), or strictly a mongrel breed ; and such confusions of caste were ascribed to the laxity or misgovernment of wicked and irreligious kings. But this is enough to show that the system has undergone great changes ; and the fact chiefly to be noted is that in its later form it has no authority in the Rig Veda, the most ancient religious book of the Hindus.

8. Only one of the hymns in this book mentions the four castes at all ; and this passage, which is probably of later date, speaks of them as proceeding

from the different parts of the body of Brahma, the Brahman from his mouth, the Kshatrya (here called Rajanya) from his arms, the Vaisya from his thigh, the Sudra from his feet. All therefore are Brahma-born, and hence it has been well said that 'there is no authority whatever in the hymns of the Veda for the complicated system of castes; no authority for the offensive privileges claimed by the Brahmans; no authority for the degraded position of the Sudras.' The claims which exalted the Brahmans as gods over all classes were of later growth; and the oppressiveness of the system set up by them provoked a strong reaction which we shall have to notice presently. This reaction, we may fairly say, left the Brahman as the only pure caste in existence. The Kshatryas and Vaisyas practically disappeared, and the mixed castes which remained have been split up into sections, which amount, it is said, to nearly forty, all maintaining the same rigid exclusiveness. The result to the people is an intolerable oppression; but it has had the further effect of leaving them virtually at the mercy of every invader. In a society so constituted national union becomes impossible. The Brahman and the Varnasankar will never combine permanently for any purpose. They were banded together for a time during the great mutiny of 1857; but they would have been severed by victory as certainly as they were sundered by defeat.

CHAPTER III.

Mahometan Conquests in India—Inroads of Genghiz and Timour—Local Dynasties—Early Voyages and Settlements of the Portuguese.

1. For a long series of generations the Aryan conquerors of India remained undisturbed in their possessions. The general course of their later history would seem to show that Hindu kingdoms, independent of each other, sprung up in different parts of the country, and that the fact of their descent from a common stock would no more prevent the outbreak of quarrels and wars among them than it has preserved an unbroken friendship between the several branches of the Teutonic race. Many of these kingdoms were wealthy and powerful, although their cities, built chiefly of clay or wood, were neither magnificent nor durable. But if we compare their condition with that of the German tribes of the same age, we shall see that the Hindu was in the van of the nations, and had so outstripped all others in the race as to make the very idea of rivalry absurd.

2. From the European nations they were separated by a vast distance; but the Aryan sovereigns of Persia were nearer at hand, and the first attempt at invasion is said to have been made by Darius in the sixth century before the Christian era. About two centuries later Alexander the Great set out on the wonderful expedition which was professedly

a requital of the invasion of Europe by Xerxes, the son of Darius. This marvellous leader of men crossed the Indus, defeated Porus near Attock (p. 9), and, reaching the banks of the Sutlej, looked forward to seeing in a few days the waters of the Ganges. But the patience of his men was worn out; and twelve mighty altars remained to mark the spot where they refused to march further on his errand of conquest. The so-called Greek kingdom of Bactria existed for a time after his death; but the Hindus preserved, it is said, no record of his expedition or of its results. This, like their chronology (p. 8), has been taken as a proof of the weakness of their historical faculty; but we have to remember that astonishing as Alexander's enterprise may seem to us, it was to the Hindus a matter of very trifling importance, and unknown probably to those who lived beyond the Sutlej.

3. Two years after his death a man named Chandra-Gupta, who had served in the army of Porus, usurped the throne of Pataliputra, called by the Greeks Palibothra, a city which stood on or near the site of the modern Patna, and was the capital of the kingdom of Magadha. This sovereign, the founder of a dynasty known as the Mauryan, was the Sandrocottus of the Greeks; and the date of his reign, thus definitely fixed, constitutes at least one certain point in the chronology of early Indian history. Having successfully withstood Alexander's general, Seleucus, now king of Babylon, Chandra-Gupta received as his ambassador the philosopher Megasthenes, whose long residence at Pataliputra

enabled him to draw a valuable picture of the Hindu people of that age (B.C. 325–300).

4. The historians of Alexander the Great make no mention of the great religious change which was then being brought about in India. If we follow the common account, two centuries and a half had passed away since Gautama, a prince of the Kshatriya caste, set himself to the task of delivering the people from the thralldom of Brahman tyranny. Renouncing his position, and stripping himself of his wealth, Gautama withdrew into the wilderness, and there attained the sanctity which made him known as Sakya-Muni, the *monk*, and the wisdom which exalted him to the title of Buddha, the *wise*. Gautama raised his voice not against the institution of caste, but against the oppressiveness of the Brahmans as a priestly order. He could allow no interference between each individual man and his Maker. ‘My law,’ he said, ‘is a law of grace for all.’ And again: ‘My doctrine is like the sky. There is room for all without exception—men, women, boys, girls, poor, and rich.’ It was scarcely necessary for him to say that: ‘As the four rivers which fall into the Ganges lose their names as they mingle their waters with the holy river, so all who believe in Buddha cease to be Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras.’ His doctrine that every man is bound to subdue his passions until he is ready to give up everything, even his own self, and that this task of self-renunciation could be achieved by himself alone, was a weapon which could scarcely fail to

strike a deadly blow at the system of caste and the ascendancy which it secured to the Brahmans.

5. For nearly three centuries this teaching worked its way silently. But at length Asoka, the grandson of Chandra-Gupta, became for Buddhism what Constantine was for Christianity. He made it the religion of the state, and Brahmanism seemed to have lost its power for ever. The snake, however, was only scotched, not killed. In the fourth century of our era the Chinese traveller Fa-hian speaks of it as again raising its head in the country ; and in the days of Hiouen-thsang, another Chinese traveller, about two centuries later, many of the Buddhist sacred places were in ruins, and the old system had virtually displaced the more merciful teaching of Sakya-Muni. But although the latter, perhaps, gave more free play to the national instincts of the Hindu mind, it was by no means likely to make the desire for self-conquest a master-passion, and its ascetic side repelled more than it attracted. Thenceforth Hindu dynasties displaced those which had professed the faith of Buddha, and the predominance of modern Hinduism with its grotesque and cumbersome pantheon and its coarse mythology was effectually secured.

6. But a teacher was now in the world who proclaimed himself as the wielder of a sword which God had placed in his hands for the conversion of the nations. To all men the last of the prophets offered the choice of the Koran or death, or of tribute more terrible than death, for the giver forfeited all civil rights and the protection of the

law. The year 622 of our era witnessed the Hejira, or flight of Mahomet from Mecca to Medina. Within thirty years the followers of the prophet were masters of Syria, Persia, and of Egypt. A few years later, A.D. 664, they had reached Cabul, and the Afghans made their submission to Islam; and when the Saracens under Taric were overthrowing the Gothic kingdom of Spain, A.D. 700, the Governor of Bassora despatched an expedition which achieved the conquest of Sind. But if Rajpoot tradition may be trusted, the fortunes of the Mahometan invaders were less happy in the East than in the West, and within a century they were defeated and driven out from India.

7. This unsuccessful enterprise was, however, only one of a series of efforts which were in the end to establish Mahometan ascendancy in India. This ascendancy, it must not be forgotten, was that of a religion rather than of a people. When we speak of Arab or Saracenic conquests, we mean conquests which may have been achieved by genuine Arabs, but which may have been the work also of men who had no Arab blood in them. The disciples of the prophet himself raised his standard in triumph at Jerusalem, Cairo, and Damascus; but when whole nations had been brought to the acknowledgment of Islam, the choice between the Koran or the sword was enforced in many lands by men who might be in no way akin to the conquerors of Egypt, Syria, or Persia.

8. Thus, when Sebektegin became sovereign of Ghazni, A.D. 976, the people were under a chief who

claimed descent from Yezdegerd, the last of the native Persian kings, who had escaped as a miserable fugitive from the field of Nehavend, A.D. 637. Sebektegín, A.D. 976, made himself lord of Candahar, and defeated the combined armies of Jeypal, the Hindu master of the Punjab and Cashmere, and the kings of Delhi, Kalinga, Ajmír, and Kanouj. The smallness of the force which scattered their unwieldy hosts foreshadowed the victories to be gained, many centuries later, by Clive, Coote, and Wellesley. In this instance the aggression came from Jeypal, who could not rest with a Mahometan power growing up so near him as at Ghazni; and the consequence was not merely his own overthrow, but a series of invasions (some say thirteen) in which Mahmoud, the son and successor of Sebektegín, showed his zeal for Islam by destroying the idols and plundering the temples of the Hindus (A.D. 997-1030). This is the Mahmoud of the story in which the owls wish long life to the king who fills the country with ruined villages. The tale comes from one who saw that Mahmoud, whose ambition it was to be known for ever as the idol-breaker, was in truth more intent on robbery and plunder.

9. But although the campaigns of Mahmoud had no permanent results, they prepared the way for the conquests of later kings. A century and a half later, A.D. 1180, his successor, Khosru, fell into the hands of Shaháb-u-dín, brother of the sultan of Ghór, and the Ghaznevide dynasty of Sebektegín came to an end. Shaháb-u-dín continued to fight the battles of the Ghórian sovereigns, not always

with success. Ten years after the conquest of Lahore he was defeated at Narrain, A.D. 1194, near the Sarasvati river, by the Hindu kings of Delhi and Ajmír. But the fatal want of cohesion, which marks the character of the Hindus, deprived of all its fruits a victory which might easily have been made decisive; and in the following year, 1195, on the same battlefield, Shaháb-u-dín recompensed himself amply for his past reverse. The king of Delhi was slain in the fight, and his capital fell into the hands of Kootub-u-dín, whom Shaháb-u-dín, who is known also as Mahomed Ghóri, left as his deputy. Kootub was a Turkish slave, and is therefore said to have been the first of the slave kings of Delhi.

10. It was in the reign of Kootub's son-in-law and successor, Shemsh-u-dín Altamsh (1210-1235), that the vast highlands between China, Siberia, and the Caspian Sea poured forth once more a deluge of merciless marauders for the desolation of the world. The roving tribes of these cheerless wastes have, for the most part, but a slender union; but, if they can be brought together by a leader of commanding genius, they may for the time be irresistible. These savage hordes are commonly known to Europeans as Mongols, much in the same way, perhaps, as all Europeans are known to Asiatics as Feringhis or Franks; and the long line of Indian emperors, which began with Baber and ended with the miserable old man who was transported for life after the Indian mutiny, is spoken of as the dynasty of the Great Mogul, with as much, or as little, reason as

the Danes, on their first coming into this country, could be called English.

11. This time the wild tribes of the desert were welded into a single body by the imperious will and rough justice of Temugin, who called himself Genghiz Khan, or King of Kings. The paltry wall which was supposed to guard the empire of China from invasion was soon passed, and the power of Temugin was acknowledged from the walls of Pekin to the banks of the Volga. India itself was but little affected by the appalling deluge. The troops of Temugin wasted the country as far as Lahore, and then withdrew to Ghazni (A.D. 1202-1227).

12. About 180 years later, Timour, or, as he is also called, Tamerlane, crossed the Indus with a host of Tartars and other hordes, not less terrible than those of Genghiz, whom he claimed as his ancestor. Timour advanced on Delhi by way of Panipat, carrying with him a multitude of captives, who, on seeing the king of Delhi come forth with a reconnoitring force, expressed a natural hope of his success and of their own deliverance. The king was driven back, and Timour ordered all the prisoners to be killed. He also imposed a heavy contribution on the city. Many refused to pay, and the place was handed over to the will of his men, who amused themselves with a general massacre of the inhabitants (1398). But the inroad of Timour left no more permanent effects than that of Genghiz; and after his departure India remained, as it had been before, parcelled out amongst a number of Mahometan and Hindu dynasties. Of these kingdoms some were set up by

rebellious viceroys or deputies ; some were created by sovereigns who bestowed a portion of their dominions on some favourite minister. Some lasted but for a short time and achieved nothing ; others attained to considerable splendour and power. The desolate ruins of Gour, long since abandoned to wild beasts and jungle, attest the wealth and prosperity of the Mahometan kings who ruled over Bengal and Behar, from the middle of the fourteenth century, for nearly 200 years.

13. Still more wealthy and powerful were the sovereigns belonging to the Bahmani Mahometan dynasty of the Deccan. Here, also, a viceroy or deputy had thrown off his allegiance to his master who ruled at Delhi. In 1347 Zuffur Khan, a Mahometan, was crowned under the title of Alla-ud-din Gungoo Bahmani. The title was a strange one for a follower of the prophet of Mecca ; but Zuffur Khan had received great kindness from his former master, a Brahman named Gungoo ; and he showed his gratitude not merely by adopting his name, but by making him his treasurer,—the first recorded instance of a public office bestowed by a Mahometan king on a Hindu. The power of the dynasty thus established was greatly shaken when Mahmud Gawan, a man fairly entitled to be spoken of as both righteous and wise, became the victim of a base conspiracy towards the end of the reign of Mahommed Shah the Second (A.D. 1481). This conscientious minister had brought the finances of the state into thorough order, had promoted the education of the people, and had raised the army to

a high degree of efficiency ; but his uprightness and loyalty only made his enemies the more eager for his downfall, and a letter coming professedly from Gawan and offering to betray the kingdom to the raja of Orissa drew from Mahommed Shah an order for his instant execution. The letter was forged ; and Gawan, on being led away to die, told the king that the death of an old man (he was nearly eighty years of age) was a thing of no moment, but that to him it would be the loss of his character and the ruin of his empire. His warning was realised. Within half a century the great Bahmani dynasty had come to an end.

14. Thus far the several regions of India had been governed by their own kings or chiefs ; and if conquests had been made by foreign invaders, these again were kings, chiefs, or leaders of armies in their own countries, and had crossed its limits for professed purposes of plunder or with the avowed intention of enlarging their dominion. But there were now at work, almost, it might be said, at the other end of the world, influences of a very different kind, which were to produce in India political changes more stupendous than any which had been brought about by those who had entered it with the drawn sword in their hands. The new comers now presented the guise of peaceful traders ; and, although they might not be over scrupulous in pushing or defending their commerce, their motive for coming was, undoubtedly, not the winning of territory, but the acquisition of wealth and, with it, of knowledge. It might perhaps be not unfair to say that in some of them the desire

of knowledge was stronger than even the love of money.

15. The history of trade, and the history of the state to which the traders belong, run often in very different channels; and the trader is generally far in advance of the financier and the statesman. Long before Britain was known to the Romans, the tin of the Cornish mines and the amber from the shores of the Baltic were carried overland to Marseilles and the head of the Adriatic sea. Merchants, it has been well said, travelled before they sailed; and the goods of northern India found their way to Europe by way of Cabul, Candahar, Samarkand, Astrakhan, and the shores of the Caspian and the Euxine Seas. Another road ran through Persia to Damascus and Alexandria. For this southern trade emporiums were found in Alexandria, Smyrna, and other Mediterranean ports; and a virtual monopoly of the carrying trade from these ports was in the hands of the merchants of Genoa and Venice, whose ships depended on the overland transit of goods to the harbours from which they conveyed them to Europe.

16. But where men cannot use the land, they will resort to the sea; and the sea had long furnished a highway for the commerce of central and southern India. During the months of November, December, January, and February safe and rapid voyages might be made to the Persian Gulf, to Aden, or even to the Egyptian coasts, from which the south-west monsoon would bring ships back with equal ease and quickness. The same needs led the Portuguese to look with longing eyes on the ocean which stretched

away to the south, under the conviction that, if they could turn the southern corner of Africa (if it had such a corner), they might sail to the countries which produced the goods now furnished to Europe only by the merchant-ships of Genoa and Venice.

17. The same desire prompted the great enterprise of Columbus. The result of it was the discovery of a new continent, not of a short road to the land of the Indus and the Ganges; and the Portuguese kings naturally turned their attention again to the sea way round Africa. The aid of the sovereigns of England and other European countries was sought in vain; and the Portuguese kings had to content themselves with the blessing of the pope and with such resources as lay at their command. The expedition of Diego Cam, sent out by John II., reached the twenty-second parallel of southern latitude, and one of his men succeeded in making his way from that point to India; but before his return Bartholomew Diaz had rounded the promontory now known as Cape Agulhas, and was made aware of this fact on seeing that the land trended away to the north-east on his left hand while to his right all was open sea. (A.D. 1486.)

18. For Diaz the southern cape of Africa was a Cape of Storms. To Vasco de Gama, who was more favoured by the weather, it seemed a Cape of Good Hope, and so he therefore named it. On Christmas day, 1497, he sighted the country which, from this circumstance, he called Natal. At Melinda, somewhat to the north of Zanzibar, he found the harbour filled with vessels from India, and, securing the

services of a pilot from Guzerat, found himself in May 1498 at Calicut, in sight of the beautiful peaks of the Nilgherries. Here De Gama was allowed to open trade; but his departure from the port was not effected without some difficulty.

19. Soon after his return to Portugal a second expedition was despatched under Pedro Cabral which reached Calicut in September 1500. Cabral obtained leave to establish a factory; but the Mahometans stormed it. In retaliation Cabral seized some ships belonging to Mahometan traders, and having transferred their cargoes to his own vessels, set them on fire. He then bombarded the town, and thus between the Portuguese and the Zamorin, or chief, of Calicut there was virtually a state of war. The latter attacked Juan de Nueva, who reached India soon after Cabral's departure; but his seamen were unable to withstand the gunnery of the Portuguese, and his own overtures to de Nueva were received with suspicion. The experience of both the captains convinced the king of Portugal that any subsequent expeditions to India must be of a military not less than of a mercantile character.

20. The truth is that in those days, and indeed almost down to our own, trade was understood to be a thing from which no nation or band of merchants could reap sufficient benefit unless they excluded all others from it. It is easy for us to condemn the early traders, whether from Portugal or from England; but we have to remember that, in the first instance, they were met on the part of the Mahometans of southern India with the same spirit of exclusiveness

which afterwards marked their own dealings with them. We have seen that, thus far, the produce of India found its way into the countries of Europe almost wholly by the ships of Genoa and Venice, and of this trade the Mahometans of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf had practically a complete monopoly. The idea that freedom of trade instead of impoverishing one or more sets of merchants would be the means of enriching all, had never dawned on their minds, or indeed on the minds even of the most sagacious European statesmen and thinkers. Hence for the trader his ledger was scarcely more necessary than his sword, which he might at any moment be called to draw in defence of his life as well as of his property.

21. Still the temper of the Portuguese was not one which was likely to pour oil on the troubled waters. The expedition of twenty ships despatched in 1502 under Vasco de Gama was sent not merely to trade, but with the avowed purpose of excluding from it the Mahometans of the Indian Ocean. His operations began with a deed of horrible and wanton cruelty. A ship full of pilgrims going to Mecca fell into his hands near Cannanore. Gama reserved the children for slavery. The crew and passengers, numbering about 300, were battened down in the hold and the ship was set on fire. Gama's next task was the chastisement of the Zamorin of Calicut. As he sailed into the bay he captured the crews of the small craft about him, and sent a message to the Zamorin that these should all be hung unless his demands were instantly complied with. Not receiv-

ing an answer, or not receiving it as soon as he wished, he carried out his threat, and sent the hands and feet of his victims to the Zamorin.

22. Four or five years later, Almeida, arriving from Portugal with the title of Viceroy of India, found himself confronted by a formidable combination of enemies whose fears had been thoroughly roused by Portuguese interference with their commerce. In the naval action which followed Almeida underwent a severe defeat; and the position of the Portuguese might have been seriously endangered had it not been for the arrival of two fleets under Tristan d'Acunha and Alfonso Albuquerque. These commanders had attacked the Mahometan strongholds in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, and taken Ormuz and Muscat. In 1510 Goa, for the second time, fell into the hands of the Portuguese, and was declared by the Viceroy to be the capital of their dominions in India. Albuquerque had achieved a great success. The Mahometan trade between the Levant and Western India was effectually intercepted, and Lisbon took the place of Genoa and Venice as an emporium for the produce of the east.

23. The subsequent history of the Portuguese in southern India was not such as to make the opposition of the natives a matter of wonder, or to reflect much credit on themselves. An alliance with the king of Guzerat secured to them the possession of Diu at the entrance to the Gulf of Cambay. Here they were blockaded in 1537 by a large fleet sent from Egypt, and underwent the utmost miseries of a siege, until it was raised by the arrival of another

fleet under Juan de Castro. This officer had burnt and sacked a multitude of towns and villages along the coast, and indiscriminately massacred or sold into slavery the men, the women, and the children.

24. The next fifty years witnessed a long and uncertain struggle between the Portuguese and the Deccan kings, of which the latter at last grew weary; but towards the end of the sixteenth century the Portuguese found themselves in face of dangers far more serious than any which were to be apprehended from Indian Rajas. Two Dutch ships were intercepted on their return to Europe in 1597; but the States of Holland were not prepared to have the highway of the seas closed against them, and early in the sixteenth century the Portuguese were confronted by the English as well as by the Dutch. In the end their maritime supremacy was destroyed, and they had never made any attempt to establish themselves on land except in positions which might be guarded from the sea. Some of their acts already noticed furnish a gloomy picture of cruelty and vindictiveness; but its dark colouring is terribly heightened by the execrable tyranny of the Holy Office set up at Goa. Something more than the chivalry of Albuquerque was needed to redeem the infamy brought on the Portuguese in India by the processes and acts of the Inquisition.

CHAPTER IV.

First Voyages of the Dutch and of the English to Java and India.

1. The first victory of English over Portuguese ships in Indian waters was won in 1612. The nation which was to outstrip all other European peoples in the race for Eastern dominion was late in the field, and slow and uncertain in its early movements. During the ages of land transit for Indian produce, even the name of India was known probably to but few in England. Alfred the Great, it is true, is said to have sent an embassy to that country on behalf of the Christians of Meliapuram ; but the significance of the fact, if it be a fact, is purely religious. The illustrious English king had sent gifts to Rome and to Jerusalem ; and in the same way, in fulfilment of a vow made while London was in the hands of the Danes, he sent gifts, we are told, to the Indian churches of St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew by the hands of Æthelstan, who is called an alderman, and Sighelm, who nearly thirty years later was appointed bishop of Sherborne. To William of Malmesbury, living in the twelfth century, the sight of gems said to have been brought back by these messengers or ambassadors, furnished sufficient evidence for the truth of a story which rests, it must be confessed, on a very frail foundation.

2. The first thoughts of the English on Eastern trade turned rather towards China than to India.

The memorial presented to Henry VIII. by a merchant named Robert Thorne, set forth the advantages of a direct trade with the former country, by means of a north-west passage. In 1553 three ships under Sir Hugh Willoughby set out on this enterprise, but they were separated in the White Sea. Two were frozen in, and the crews died. One only returned to England. Subsequent attempts ended in like disasters, until at last the voyage of Henry Hudson in 1597 convinced all that the idea of a northwest passage to India must be abandoned. The notion next taken up was that of reaching India by way of the Straits of Magellan or Cape Horn, and Sir Francis Drake, taking this route with five small vessels, crossed the Pacific in 1577, and on his return doubled the Cape of Good Hope, without having reached the country to which he had been sent.

3. Drake's enterprise called forth remonstrances from the Portuguese, who nervously dreaded any interference with their fancied monopoly; but Queen Elizabeth contented herself with declaring that the sea, like the air, was common to all men. The formation of a Levant Company, chartered in 1581, came too late; for the Mediterranean trade had been broken up by the Portuguese monopoly, and it was resolved to act on the Queen's declaration that her subjects had a right to sail where they pleased. But an expedition sent out in 1582 to reach India direct got no farther than Brazil, and one only of four ships came back to England. No other efforts were made till after the defeat of the Spanish Armada; but three years after that event three ships were des-

patched from London under Lancaster, 1591, experienced no better fortune than those of Willoughby. One of the ships was sent back from the Cape of Good Hope, which the English had thus reached at last; another, it was supposed, foundered at sea; the third made its way to the Straits of Malacca, and returned by Ceylon. On the Brazilian coast, the carpenter cut the ship's cable, while the crew were on shore, and the vessel drifted out to sea. Lancaster, it seems, was the only one who ever saw England again. The Dutch were more lucky. Houtmann, the commander of an expedition sent out in 1595, was imprisoned by the Portuguese at Bantam, a factory in Java, but made his escape, and returned to Holland in 1598. Another expedition, sent out immediately, brought back rich cargoes in fifteen months, and the trade of Holland with the East was established, all their companies being combined into one under a single charter.

4. The same course was taken in England. The Governor and Company of the Merchants of London trading to the East Indies received their charter from the Queen in 1600, and in the following year Lancaster was again sent to India, which he was fated never to reach. He established a factory at Bantam, and having swelled his valuable cargo with the still more valuable plunder of a large Portuguese ship, returned to England. The next fleet, under Middleton, sailed in March 1604, and reached Bantam at the end of the year. The friendly greetings of the Dutch were followed by signs which showed that they were resolved on having a monopoly of the spice trade;

but the English, by confining their operations to places where the Dutch had no excuse for interference, avoided a collision and returned home in 1606. In his next expedition Middleton was more fortunate. In a small vessel of only 150 tons burden he found his way safely to Bantam, where he took in a cargo of pepper; but some cloves purchased from a Java junk for 3,000*l.* realised in England nearly 37,000*l.* The two other ships under his command sailed three weeks after his departure; and of these the 'Hector' under Captain Hawkins sailed to Surat, and was thus the first English ship that reached India. Hawkins remained on shore and sent his ship to Bantam.

5. The profits of the London Company of Merchants far exceeded already their most sanguine expectations. They therefore lost no time in obtaining from James I. a charter which confirmed them in all their privileges, and despatched another expedition of three ships under Sir Henry Middleton A.D. 1607. On reaching Surat, Middleton found that the Portuguese were prepared to resist him, if need be, by force, and that the terror which they inspired rendered the notion of trading there impracticable. Following the advice given to him, Middleton sailed for Gogo on the peninsula of Guzerat, carrying with him Hawkins, the captain of the 'Hector,' who had just returned from Agra.

6. This journey of Hawkins marks a new stage in the history of English settlement in India. After sending away the 'Hector' to Bantam, he found that he had no chance of establishing a factory with any safety at Surat, unless he could first obtain the per-

mission of the Emperor. Carrying with him the letter addressed by King James I. to the Great Mogul, he resolved to present it in person. At Agra he had an audience of the sovereign who was now lord paramount of Hindustan. Jehangír received him with friendly courtesy, and assigned him a large stipend. But the interference of the Portuguese missionaries frustrated all his hopes. The imperial firman or decree was not given ; his income was not paid ; and his life was at the mercy of men who had shown how little they scrupled to remove by any means the obstacles which might stand in their way. He had no choice therefore but to make his way to Surat, where the timely arrival of Middleton brought his anxieties to an end.

CHAPTER V.

Reign of the first three Mogul Emperors of India.

1. Jehangír was the fourth so-called Mogul sovereign of India. His great grandfather Baber claimed to be sixth in direct descent from Timour or Tamerlane, who in like manner claimed descent from Genghiz Khan. He was therefore, in the technical phraseology of lawyers, a Mongol ; but ten or twelve generations may do much towards modifying hereditary characteristics, and even towards bringing about a complete change of natural disposition. How much blood alien to that of the Moguls had been blended with that of his Mogul ancestors between the days of

Genghiz and his own it is impossible to say; but it is certain, that although his mother was said to be a Mongol woman, Baber always professed the greatest horror of the tribe. For all practical purposes Baber, we are told, was a Turk, and his memoirs were written in Turkish, while his army also was Turkish. Whether between Mongols and Turks there was the same amount of difference as we see or seem to see between Teutons and Celts, it might be hard to determine; but certain it is that Baber and some of his successors exhibited a power of growth in all that tends to civilise a people, for which we look in vain in Tamerlane or Genghiz. It matters little, therefore in comparison, whether he were Tartar, Turk or Mongol. He was not Aryan: yet he was a man who exhibited in himself some of the best qualities of Aryans, and who was to have as his grandson and second successor the most illustrious and the most righteous of Eastern monarchs, of any age or country.

2. It might be said, not without some reason, that the establishment of a new dynasty would be a pure benefit to the people of India, if its sovereigns were just and energetic men. Five hundred years had passed since the first Mahometan inroads; and if it be urged that the Mahometan invasions preceding the one which made Kootub-u-dín master of Delhi were mere inroads which led to nothing more than the setting up of some military posts in the country, still Mahometan kings had ruled successively in the land during the three centuries which intervened between the battle of Narrain (p. 21) and the victory of Baber at Panipat in 1526.

During this long period the condition of the country, if it had changed at all, was changed for the worse rather than the better. The faith of the Hindu had been fiercely assailed; but the people would not be attracted to the doctrine of the Unity of God when it was preached at the point of the sword. Whole districts had been desolated by ruthless massacres; myriads had been sold into slavery; Hindu temples had been sacked and the idols and their shrines shivered and crushed; but the people still clung to their ancient worship in spite of the vengeance threatened in royal edicts. In the sight of their Mahometan conquerors they stood beyond the pale of the law, and had no right even to the air which they breathed. The trade of the country had declined, and with foreign countries, except on the western coast, there was none. The old Hindu literature had died out, and that of the Mahometans was an exotic brought by poets and others who came from countries as distant even as Mahometan Spain. If old roads were sometimes cleared from jungle overgrowth, no new ones were made; and even the buildings by which the kings might have been expected to exhibit their wealth and power could make no claim either to magnificence or to beauty. The Mahometans had established themselves in the land as a dominant order; but on the body of the people they had made no permanent or deep impression. Hindu dynasties were swept away; and except as collectors of revenue, Hindus could hope for no public employment, and were wholly debarred from all influence as statesmen.

3. But for all practical purposes the country remained independent of its conquerors. The Aryan invaders of India had brought away with them from their ancient home the system of self-governing village communities. In these societies trades and occupations are hereditary; and the village council arranges the distribution of land, settles disputes, and fixes with the officers of the state the amount of revenue to be levied on the village. With the individual inhabitants of the village the state has no concern, and no purpose can be answered by interfering with them. Against such a system as this the extremest tyranny will in all likelihood spend its force in vain. The people may be hunted from their homes; but if ever they return they go back quietly to the old course of things, and, although politically outcasts, retain some substantial freedom.

4. The father of Baber, the fifth in descent from Timour, had been transferred from the sovereignty of Cabul to that of Ferghana, a beautiful country on the upper course of the Jaxartes; and here Baber was born. His mother claimed descent from Chagatai Khan, one of three sons among whom the empire of Genghiz was divided; but, as we have seen, this fact in no way lessened the contempt and hatred with which Baber always spoke of Mongols. His life was passed in alternations of conquest and defeat which sent him from one country only to win and to lose a throne in another. Again and again he became master of Samarcand, and again and again he left it as a lonely fugitive. At last he turned his eyes towards the richer and more inviting countries of India. The

tyranny of Ibrahim Lodi at Delhi was making all his subjects his enemies. In Behar and elsewhere his governors revolted and proclaimed their independence; but the Viceroy of the Punjab, instead of following their example, invited Baber to seize a throne which, as he asserted, belonged to him by right of the conquests of his ancestor Timour.

5. In no way loth to put forth his claim, Baber advanced on Delhi. The army of Ibrahim faced him on the field of Panipat, and underwent a crushing defeat. Ibrahim was slain, and Baber became the first of the so-called Mogul sovereigns of Delhi, 1526. But his main work was still before him. In the north-west there was no opposition; to the south and the east he had to deal with the revolted chiefs who had risen up against the tyranny of Ibrahim. His army was dispirited, but Baber roused their failing energies. His son Humayun soon reduced the greater part of Bengal and Behar; the power of the Rajpûts was broken on the field of Sikri; and the defeat of Mahmoud Lodi near Benares secured for him the Delhi territory to the south of the Ganges. Baber was now barely fifty years of age; but the hardships of his life and perhaps his love of wine had impaired his constitution, and he died at Agra in 1530, having given orders that his body should be laid in the beautiful tomb which is still the holiday resort of the people of Cabul. On his last journey he had ridden from Calpi to Agra, 160 miles, in two days; and in the same journey had twice swum across the Ganges.

6. His son Humayun had the changeful fortunes,

but lacked the genius of his father. Against Bahadúr Shah, the king of Guzerat, who denied that he owed any allegiance to the House of Timour, he achieved some success. Bahadúr's guns were served by the Portuguese, who had aided him in defeating the Rajpút chief of Chittore; but the skill and science of the strangers were of no use to him now. Leaving Guzerat in the charge of his brother Mirza Askari, Humayun turned to put down the revolt of Shere Khan in Bengal; but in Shere Khan he had to encounter an enemy whose military capacities far exceeded his own. He allowed himself to be decoyed into ground where the rising of the Ganges kept him a prisoner; and when his movements were free, he attacked Shere Khan in his entrenched camp before he had finished the bridge of boats which might have secured his retreat (1539). His army was virtually destroyed, and Humayun escaped with a scanty force to Agra. He had expected that Shere Khan would advance to attack him; but the revolted chief remained quiet in Bengal, and Humayun took the field against him with the same ill-luck as before. He had just conveyed his army by a bridge of boats over the Ganges when Shere Khan fell upon him and drove the greater part of his host into the river.

7. Once more Humayun escaped as a fugitive to Agra, whence he hurried to Lahore, where he supposed that his brother Kamran would hold his ground. But Kamran ceded the Punjab to Shere Khan, and withdrew to Cabul, leaving Humayun to find his way, as best he could, to Sinde. Here his hopes of succour were again disappointed; and he

was compelled to cross the desert to Jodhpore, a city lying to the north of the Aravulli hills. Here, too, the rajah repulsed him, and the emperor, with his helpless followers, was driven into the howling wilderness. The few wells in the desert were in the hands of pitiless marauders, who refused to give him water; and the cavalry of Jodhpore, without attacking him, pressed him further into the treeless waste, where clearly they meant that he should die. At length they relented. The son of the Raja approached with a flag of truce, reproached Humayun with the wantonness of his invasion, gave him water and some food, and let him go. At length, with only seven followers, he brought his wife to Amerkote, where their son Akbar was born, 1542.

8. Humayun now made another attempt to recover Sinde, but failing in it made his way to Candahar, having given up all hope of recovering his power in India. Here the reports which reached him of his brother Kamran's unpopularity at Cabul led him to think that he might get possession of that city. His army was so swelled on its march that Kamran made no resistance, and Humayun entered the town in triumph, 1551. In no long time he was joined by his wife with her son Akbar, now a child of four years. Taking the boy in his arms, he said, 'Joseph was cast by his brothers into a well, but he was raised, as thou shalt be, to great glory.'

9. At Cabul Humayun received from his friends at Delhi and Agra letters begging him to strike a blow for the recovery of his lost empire. After much hesitation he consented. A decisive victory at

Sirhind led to the capture of those two great cities, and Humayun was again seated on his father's throne. But he had regained as yet only a fragment of his old dominion, and in what remained to be done he was to have no share. The staircases to Eastern houses are often narrow steps on the outside with a parapet perhaps not more than a foot in height. Humayun was descending such a flight of steps when, hearing the muezzin's call to prayer, he sat down to repeat his creed. As he rose, the staff which he used to support himself slipped on the smooth marble, and the emperor fell over the parapet into the court below. He was mortally injured, and in a few days Akbar was emperor of Hindustan, 1556.

10. To that much-loved son Humayun left, on the whole, a good example. No act of wanton aggression, of injustice, or of bigoted intolerance, no massacres or torturings are laid to his charge; and if he had not the natural powers of his father, he had his cheerful and genial temper, his kindliness, and his courtesy. In his memory Akbar built afterwards the simple and stately marble mausoleum, from which the last titular sovereign of his house was dragged forth as a prisoner during the mutiny of 1857.

11. That the boy to whom the sceptre of Baber had descended would make himself in reality as well as in name emperor of Hindustan, none probably ventured either to think or to hope. He had shown his bravery in the battle of Sirhind, but he had fought under the guidance of his general and tutor, Behram Khan. His own cavalry numbered not more than 30,000; his enemies could bring 100,000

horsemen into the field. With sound judgment he appointed Behram Khan his chief minister. From the first the campaigns which he projected or in which he took part were successful. In Behram he had an experienced and able military leader; and if his tutor was apt to be imperious and exacting, Akbar was wise enough to submit. He had his reward in another victory, won on the field of Panipat, where his army encountered that of Mahommed Shah Súr Adily under his Hindu minister, Hemú, 1556. Hemú was brought as a captive into his presence, and Behram bade him slay the infidel. Akbar burst into tears, and lightly touched the prisoner with his sword. But Behram was not the man to content himself with a mere form or symbol of conquest, and he smote off the captive's head. So died the first Hindu who had risen to high office under a Mahometan chief, and who had shown himself singularly worthy of the trust reposed in him.

12. Had Akbar obeyed the bidding of Behram, the very act of slaying in cold blood might have marred his character through his whole life. As it was, the boy grew up with a sense of duty which seemed to embrace all mankind in its far-reaching beneficence. His justice and his tact were to be conspicuously shown with reference to Behram himself, who was guilty of some acts of gross heartlessness. Akbar sent him a message, telling him that thus far his mind had been taken up with his education, but that as he must now govern his people by his own judgment, he advised his well-wisher to withdraw from all worldly concerns, and spend the

rest of his days in prayer at Mecca. Behram started on his pilgrimage, but abandoned it for rebellion, in which he was unsuccessful. His entreaty for forgiveness obtained from Akbar not merely that boon, but his restoration to all his former honours. A few months later Behram was murdered by a man whose father he had slain in battle. His pupil always spoke gratefully of his teaching and his great services.

13. Akbar's position was still most critical; and his dynasty might well be considered as resting on weaker foundations than those of any which had preceded it. His generals gained victories, and having gained them, behaved as if they were not his officers, but independent chiefs. Instead of summoning them into his presence, Akbar went to them in person, and his courteous reproof generally secured their loyal submission. He had already marked out a definite policy for himself, and this was a policy designed to fuse Hindus and Mahometans into a single nation. Far from imitating the example of Mahmoud the idol-breaker, he married a daughter of the Rajpút chief of Sumbhul, whom he enrolled among the nobles of his court. To the Hindu or Aryan rajas this attitude was at first unintelligible, and may have even awakened in their minds suspicions of treachery; but it soon won the attachment of most of them.

14. With open and determined rebels Akbar could deal promptly and even severely; and for the repression of such revolts he moved with astonishing rapidity. His bravery in the field was equal to that of Bayard or of Tancred, and he had further the

advantage of immense bodily strength, and a constitution which, unlike Baber, he never weakened by excess of indulgence in wine. In Rajpútana only, it would seem, was Hindu opposition followed by a woful catastrophe. The garrison of Chittore, the stronghold of Hindu independence, rendered desperate by the loss of their leader, slew their women and children, and burnt them along with his body, and refusing all quarter when the fort was stormed, were cut down to a man (1568). It was a hard necessity; but it removed what might have been an insurmountable hindrance to the political union of the Hindu with the Mahometan princes and people.

15. Dealing thus with his enemies Akbar soon became master of Bengal and Behar, of Orissa and Cuttack. But his career of success was broken by some reverses. His friend and companion, Raja Bírbul Singh, fell with 8,000 men under the swords of the Usufzye Afghans, who had drawn them within their mountain defiles; but this disaster was compensated by the annexation of Cashmere.

16. A long list of conquests excites in some minds a natural feeling of repulsion against the conqueror, and is apt to leave the impression that his only business must be that of deluging the earth with blood. But in the case of Akbar we have to remember that every one of his campaigns was forced upon him, and that in every instance his victory implied relief from oppression not unfrequently almost intolerable in its weight. Wherever Akbar was master, the evil of a dominant order, which deprived the subject population of all benefit of law,

was at once done away ; and when towards the close of his reign his empire embraced Afghanistan, Cashmere, and the Punjab, Oude and Bengal, Cuttack and Orissa, Malwah, Sinde, and Guzerat, throughout this whole region no man could say that his religion or his race placed him in a better or a worse position in reference to his fellow-subjects. Conquered chiefs had no cause to fear tortures or death at his hands. Instead of being trampled under the feet of elephants, or blinded and thrust for life into a dungeon, they were invariably raised to high honours, and often confirmed in all their possessions.

17. In times past Hindus taken prisoners in war had been slain by thousands, and their women and children sold as slaves. By Akbar's edict this was absolutely forbidden, and their transportation beyond the sea rendered impossible. Another edict permitted the re-marriage of widows, and laid a ban upon the rite of suttee in all cases in which the widow had not deliberately resolved on it herself. The rajah of Jodhpore, he heard, was going to force his daughter-in-law to ascend his son's funeral pile. Akbar mounted his horse, and rode off to prevent the murder. He was still scarcely more than a youth when he abolished the jezia, or capitation tax, that most hateful of all imposts, in return for which Mahometanism allows to conquered populations not the right but the sufferance to live. Together with this horrible badge of subjection, he swept away all taxes on pilgrims. They fell, he granted, on a vain superstition ; yet as all modes of worship were designed for one great Being, it was wrong, he urged, to

throw an obstacle in the way of the devout, and to cut them off from their mode of intercourse with their Maker.

18. Carrying out these righteous reforms, he declared that rational persuasion (all thought of force being abandoned) should be the only weapon employed in inducing men to change their opinions or their faith. Persecution, he urged, after all defeats its own ends; it obliges men to conceal their opinion, but produces no change in them. In truth, throughout his whole system there is not a trace of bigotry or exclusiveness. The Hindu temples were not only not thrown down, they were carefully protected, and their priests and their wealth were sedulously guarded. Far from enforcing the alternative of the Koran or death, he formed for himself and encouraged for others unions by marriage with Hindu families which remained Hindu. Rajpút princes, Hindus of the Hindus, were amongst his generals and his statesmen; his great finance minister, whose settlement of the land has been maintained, in some parts of the country at least, from that day to this, was Todar Mul, a Hindu. More than all, the Hindus had the free administration of their own laws, which were recognised in the courts of the Mahometan judges.

19. This is indeed a wonderful picture, a picture the truth of which seems almost to pass the bounds of belief, when we call to mind the condition of the whole world in the age of Akbar and in the ages which had gone before it. It has been well said that both in his theory and in his practice Akbar stood

absolutely alone, and that Catholic and Protestant Christendom might both have gone and sat at his feet. An Eastern despot was insisting on universal toleration at a time when the Holy Office of the Inquisition was torturing and slaying its thousands, when Calvin was entrapping Servetus to his doom, and when men and women in England and Scotland were being hurried to the gallows and the stake for the absurd and impossible crime of witchcraft.

20. The lesson may well be taken to heart, as having for us a political as well as a religious force. In Akbar we have an instance, we are told, of a Mahometan ruler who could be just to all his subjects and tolerant to all mankind. If it were so, the idea that Mahometanism and equal justice for believers and unbelievers cannot go together must be given up. But the answer is short. Akbar was not a Mahometan. That from his boyhood onwards he was working towards conclusions which deny absolutely the infallible truth and authority of any faith propounded by any man, there can be no question; but it was no heat of youthful zeal, it was no rashness which betrays lack of experience, that moved Akbar to make the confessions which revealed his virtual apostasy from Islam. His reforms preceded these expressions; and Akbar had passed the threshold of middle life, he had indeed held the sceptre of Baber for a quarter of a century, before he declared that we should not adopt a creed or practise a ritual on the authority of any man, as all men were liable to vice and error. There was no God but God, he said, in his confession of faith, and Akbar was his Caliph;

in other words, his vicar for the administration of justice.

21. That he was not only not an orthodox Mussulman, but that he intended deliberately to discourage Mahometanism, so far as this could be done by exposing its absurdities and iniquities without passing the bounds of thorough toleration, has been admitted by almost all historians. Mahometans, like all the rest of his subjects, were left free to eat pork, to drink wine, to play at dice, if it pleased them to do so; the making of pilgrimages, fasting, and worship of any kind were left wholly to their option. More significant, perhaps, as an intentional slight on the Mahometan system, was the substitution of the solar year for the Arabian lunar months, the discouragement of the Arabic language, and the abandonment of the usual daily salutation for one which, although it could offend neither Mahometan, Christian, nor Hindu, was not the one in vogue among orthodox Mussulmans.

22. That such a man should be accused of systematically persecuting the followers of the prophet of Mecca, is not wonderful. The only remark to be made is that the charge is not true. It is the fact that when a courtier asked him what orthodox princes in other lands would think or say of him, the emperor ordered him to leave the room. It is the fact that he told another who had stigmatised his advisers as 'hellish,' that such language deserved a blow. But the blow, though deserved, was not inflicted, and it would perhaps be not easy to find any one who would venture to speak of this as persecution. His

own creed was indeed simple enough. It was that God should be revered, worshipped, and loved by all, and that all were bound to serve Him by living righteously, by subduing their passions, and doing the good which would add to the happiness of their fellow creatures and bring the peace of a quiet conscience to themselves.

23. This, we must remember, was the avowed conviction of a man brought up in a faith which looked upon and treated all who did not belong to Islam as unfit to live, and which suffered them to live only on condition of their paying tribute and giving up all that preserves to a man his self-respect and renders his life bearable. It may well be said that a mightier genius and a nobler heart can scarcely be conceived than that of a man who, being a Mahometan and a despot, could reach such convictions and act upon them; but the lesson which the history teaches is that he could not reach them without abandoning Islam, without denying the special mission of Mahomet, without forbidding absolutely the enforcement of his law in all its essential features. His tolerance only proves after all that Mahometanism cannot be tolerant; his impartial and unswerving justice only shows that Islam can reform itself only by ceasing to be Islam. The moment that the Mahometan begins to move on the track which Akbar marked out for himself, he ceases to be faithful to the religion which he professes; and before he can reach the conclusion that justice is a thing to which all men have an equal and an indefeasible right, he must have ceased to be a Mahometan at all. The lesson is one of the ut-

most importance, for it teaches us how the professors of Islam should be dealt with when they proceed to carry their theories into practice at the expense of those who are not Mahometans.

24. After all, beautiful though it be, the system of Akbar, if so it may be called, began and ended with himself. No other result could well be looked for. Akbar's temper of mind and modes of thought, his premises and conclusions, were to all intents and purposes, unintelligible both to Mahometans and to Hindus. His reforms came from himself, and may be said to have been forced on the people without reference to their will in the matter. But the history of the world shows that those reforms only are permanent which a nation slowly and with much effort wins for itself. The downward growth is almost always a fruitless one. Akbar worked alone, and he did his work by running counter to the system in which he had been trained. His successors reverted to the old orthodox paths, and by so doing they pulled down the empire which Baber had founded and Akbar had striven to organize in all its parts. They were thus preparing the way again for foreign ascendancy; they were in fact doing the work of the English almost before any Englishman had set foot on the soil of India. But it is well, nay, it is absolutely necessary, to know what were the conditions of the country at the time of their landing, and what they had been in times past, if we would form a judgment on the policy and principles which Englishmen have professed to follow and the motives which have

determined their action in relation to the people once righteously ruled by the brave and magnificent Akbar.

CHAPTER VI.

The Reign of Jehangír.—Progress of the English and the Dutch.

1. The death of Akbar was probably hastened by the conduct of his sons. A love of wine was a strong feature in the character of the family. Baber, it can scarcely be doubted, shortened his life by his drinking bouts. His son Humayun might with advantage have been somewhat more temperate. It is still more to the credit of Akbar that he should have set himself to conquer this tendency in his early manhood, and that he should have seen the wisdom of urging on others the duty of moderation rather than total abstinence. But in his children it became a violent malady. His favourite son Daniel died of its effects. The same cause made his son Selim a gloomy and cruel tyrant, and Akbar could scarcely have failed to see that there would be no one to carry on his great and beneficent work.

2. But when Selim, on his father's death in 1605, ascended the throne under the title of Jehangír, or conqueror of the world, the expectations which his temper and habits might have led others to form were for the moment agreeably disappointed. He ordered many useful reforms, some of which showed a political dis-

cernment keener perhaps than that of his father ; but the spirit which had prompted his father's acts was gone. He adopted the orthodox formulæ of Islam, and issued edicts about wine which he had no intention of obeying himself. But he was capable of deeds of unspeakable cruelty, and one such deed on a stupendous scale roused horror at Lahore at the outset of his reign.

3. At Agra the emperor admitted to his presence Captain Hawkins of the 'Hector,' and beheld before him one of the people who in after days were to rule his vast dominions. Jehangír saw the duty of a politic ruler to the strangers who asked his aid. He not only gave leave for the establishment of English factories at Surat, Cambay, Gogo, and Ahmedabad, but he expressed a wish to welcome an ambassador from the English court. King James I. accordingly, in 1615, accredited to the sovereign of Hindustan Sir Thomas Roe, who had already at Constantinople acquired a large experience of Eastern life. But all that Roe had thus far beheld had not enabled him to form any adequate idea of the magnificence of the Mogul court at Delhi or at Agra. He had never seen, he tells us in his journal, such inestimable wealth ; and if he could have witnessed it in the days of Akbar, he would have seen in the sovereign one whose personal life, he was told, was as simple as his regal pomp was splendid.

4. During the years immediately preceding Roe's embassy, English trade had gone on with a strange and irregular growth. After the return of Captain Hawkins from Agra (p. 35), Sir Henry Middleton

betook himself to the straits of Bab el Mandeb, where he intercepted ships laden with Indian produce, in exchange for which he compelled the masters to receive part of his own cargoes. Such acts were little better than piracy; but the progress of trade and of the British factories in India was so slow as to make it evident that the difficulties to be encountered could be overcome only by enterprises on a larger scale. A fleet of four ships fully armed, sent from England in 1612, engaged and defeated a Portuguese squadron in the harbour of Surat (p. 31). The victory added greatly to the reputation of the English, who had thus far been looked upon as mere traders, wholly unable to cope with the Portuguese, and obtained for them from the emperor Jehangir a treaty which granted them permission to trade on condition of paying import dues amounting to no more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

5. This treaty may be regarded as establishing the English in India. Roe on his arrival not only obtained from the emperor the dismissal of his governor at Surat, but sent to the Portuguese viceroy at Goa a plain warning of the consequences if he should persist in courses which 'can only bring forth war, revenge and bloodshed.' 'The English,' he added, 'intend nothing but free trade open by the law of nations to all men. It is not the purpose of the English to root out or hinder your trade, or to impeach the receipt of your revenues, and it is strange you should dare to infringe upon the free commerce between their masters and subjects.' In case of his refusal or silence, letters of reprisal, the viceroy was

warned, would be granted to make war upon him in all parts of the Indies. No answer was given, and war was declared accordingly against 'the Portugals in the East Indies.'

6. Before his sojourn in India had come to an end Roe drew up twenty-one articles regulating the English trade, most of which were confirmed by the emperor. But the animosity of the Dutch against the English was not a whit less virulent than that of the Portuguese. A treaty had been made between the two nations in 1619, but it remained a dead letter; and a second treaty was in course of negotiation when news reached England of a crime of singular foulness and cruelty on the part of the Dutch at Amboyna. Under the pretence that they were conspirators in a plot for seizing the castle, the English residents at the place, ten in all, were arrested, put to the most fiendish tortures, and then beheaded on evidence obtained by agonies beyond human powers of endurance (A.D. 1623). Before the execution, the condemned men, we are told, 'went one to another, begging forgiveness for their false accusation, being wrung from them by the pains of torture; and they all freely forgave one another, for none had been so falsely accused but he himself had accused another as falsely.' The indignation excited in England by these horrible murders was intense; and King James I. professed to share, perhaps he really shared, the feelings of his subjects. But the United Provinces were then struggling to shake off Spanish domination in the Netherlands, and as during this struggle a rupture between the court of St. James's

and the Hague was to be avoided if possible, the Amboyna massacre was suffered to pass unavenged.

7. The English continued slowly to make way. A small factory established at Armegore to the north of Madras was the first place fortified by them in India; but the position proved to be less desirable than that of Masulipatam. In 1632 they obtained some privileges of trading in the Persian Gulf; in 1634 a factory was set up at Piply near the mouth of the Hugli or Hooghly. But the idea of freedom of trade was still a theory, not a reality; and the existence of one company suggested naturally the formation of another. Charles the First charged the first company with violation of their privileges. Their servants, he said, were underpaid, and a vast amount of illicit traffic went on with their connivance. He was therefore ready to listen to those who contended that the existing company had established no permanent forts, and done nothing towards extending the greatness and wealth of the kingdom. The real truth was that the king wanted money, and that the promoters of the new company were ready to supply it. A charter was therefore granted to Sir Thomas Courten and his fellow-merchants; but the old company had, after all, the start of the new, and the latter could scarcely be regarded as a success. In 1650 a resolution of the House of Commons decided that one company only should carry on the trade. Some years later a charter, which has never been forthcoming, was, it is said, issued by Cromwell, which combined the old company and the merchant adventurers into a single joint-stock society. Surat was declared a presidency for

the western side of India, and Fort St. George, or Madras, for the eastern. In 1661 Charles II. granted a new charter which authorised the company to make war upon any power not Christian, as well as to suppress the trade of all unauthorised persons, and to administer British law within their jurisdiction.

8. In the same year Bombay was ceded to the English crown on the marriage of the king with the Infanta of Portugal; in 1688 it was handed over to the East India Company with full powers of local government. The presidency of Surat was transferred to Bombay; and the arrival of a fleet of ten ships, well armed, and bringing about 1,000 Europeans, was supposed to mark the beginning of a more enterprising and successful policy. But the seizure of some vessels conveying pilgrims to Mecca proved that the English could not yet venture to match themselves with the Mogul emperor. Jehangír, indignant at the presumption which dared to lay hands on his sacred ships, ordered their expulsion from India. Their factories were attacked, Surat was taken, and the goods in the factory seized and sold. Bengal was abandoned, and the company remained possessed of only Madras and Bombay. It was clear that the English had reckoned without their host. The governor of Bombay humbly besought peace from Jehangír, and recovered the former privileges of trading on payment of a sum of 15,000*l.* and a promise of good behaviour for the future.

9. There were still many real and some supposed difficulties to contend with. The French were settled at Chandernagore on the Hooghly, the Dutch

and Danes at the neighbouring station of Chinsura, the French at Pondicherry, and their trade was regarded as an interference with that of the English merchants. The intrusion of private English traders was held to be an annoyance still more serious, and complaints were made that the English markets were thus glutted with Indian produce. Manufacturers in England, declaring themselves to be undersold, clamoured for higher import duties, and the general body of traders to India agreed to the formation of one United East India Company which, in 1702, received a charter from Queen Anne. All that remained now to be done was that the two companies should arrange their financial affairs together. Six years were granted for making this adjustment, and the task was brought to an end under the award of Lord Godolphin.

10. The English now seemed on the high road to success. In Bombay they had an impregnable stronghold. On the Eastern coast they had an important fortified post in Madras. A new factory had been set up at Chutanuttee on the left bank of the Hooghly; and the rebellion of the last of the old Afghan chiefs of Bengal compelled the Mogul viceroy to issue an order that the English must defend themselves. The result was the erection of Fort William for the protection of the settlement now called Calcutta. But the most important fact of all, although for the present it might seem to portend difficulties and reverses, was the decline of the empire of the great Mogul.

CHAPTER VII.

The Reigns of Shah Jehán and Aurengzebe, 1627-1707.

1. Jehangír had embittered the last days of his father; the conduct of his son Khurrám was to darken his own. Under the title of Shah Jehán, or king of the world, Khurrám was declared heir and successor to the emperor. But he had an enemy in the beautiful and imperious Noor Jehán, wife of Jehangír, whose object it was to secure the throne for her own son Shahriar. Being ordered to recover Kandahar from the Persians, Khurrám regarded the command simply as a pretext for getting him out of the way, and instead of obeying he advanced upon Agra. For a time he held his ground; but at length, defeated by an army under the command of his brother Purvíz and the general Mohobut Khan, he submitted himself to his father, who made the surrender of Dara and Aurengzebe, the sons of Khurrám, a condition of his forgiveness.

2. Mohobut Khan had thus far abetted Noor Jehán in her schemes against Khurrám; but now she set herself to bring about his disgrace, for which on other grounds there may have been ample reason. Mohobut saw through her intentions, seized the bridge of boats by which the emperor was about to cross the Jhelum, and took him prisoner while he slept. Noor Jehán made a vain but gallant attempt to rescue him. Mohobut now marched with his prisoner to Cabul, where his wife succeeded at last

in setting him free. But the climate was too severe for the emperor, and he died on his way to Lahore in the sixtieth year of his age and the twenty-second of his reign, 1627. An effort to secure the succession for Shahriar failed, and Shah Jehán was crowned in January, 1628. Noor Jehán, withdrawing into private life with a pension of 250,000*l.* a year, gave herself up, it is said, to works of charity, and clothed herself in white garments for the rest of her days.

3. For twenty-eight years Shah Jehán ruled as the master of an empire which stretched from Bengal to Persia; and although it cannot be said that the wheels of government always ran smoothly for him, his sound judgment and prudence surmounted frequently the gravest difficulties, and his civil administration probably surpassed that of Akbar. He found his treasury fairly filled; he left it overflowing with wealth. Nor is his title to our respect weakened by the fact that, while he is free from charges of oppressive exaction, he raised some of the most magnificent and beautiful buildings on which the eye of man has ever rested. The peacock throne, so-called from the outspread tail in which the feathers with their natural colours consisted of the costliest diamonds, sapphires, rubies, and other gems, may be dismissed with something like contempt as a costly toy or bauble; but a very different feeling is excited by the majestic forms and beautiful work of his mosques and palaces. The splendour of his new city at Delhi, the exquisite gracefulness and touching simplicity of the Taj Mahal (so-called as being the sepulchre of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal), keep alive

the memory of the great sovereign who, with Akbar's faith, might have been greater even than Akbar.

4. The clouds which threatened future storms were already in the heavens. From the heaven which rests over despotic monarchies even of the best type they never can be long absent. There is a perpetual temptation for viceroys and deputies to act in their own interest while they profess to promote that of their master ; and if a chance of rapid and easy aggrandisement presents itself, the temptation becomes irresistible. The Mogul viceroy of the Deccan was an Afghan adventurer, Khan Jehan Lodi, who had long aimed at securing his own independence. The emperor, suspecting his designs, could look only to the vassal kings of the Deccan, whose alliance with the viceroy might render him irresistible, and he resolved to go in person into the Deccan, 1629.

5. The result was that he detached from Khan Jehan Lodi his Mahratta ally, Shahji Bhosla, the father of the renowned Sivaji. Later on, the name of Mahratta was to become a sound of terror from one end of India to another ; but at this time none knew the mighty force which lay hid in the wilds of the hills which line the western coast of the great peninsula (p. 10). Speaking a dialect closely allied to that of the earliest Aryan invaders of India, they clung to the Hindu creed which they probably supposed that those invaders had cherished ; and even now some among them were thinking of the day when the children of Bhowaní and Indra should smite down and drive out of the land the disciples of the prophet !

of Mecca. But for the present Shahji Bhosla declared himself the faithful servant of the emperor, and on entering his service with a large body of retainers, he received a patent of nobility and was confirmed in the possession of his estates. Within three years circumstances had arisen which cooled his loyalty; but again he saw the prudence of submission, and was again pardoned.

6. Some years had passed away when the name of Sivaji, the younger son of Shahji Bhosla, began to be more formidable than that of his father had ever been. His childhood and boyhood had been spent in the wild valleys of the Western Ghauts, whence he had issued, with such supporters as he could find among the sons of the smaller landowners, on plundering raids into the lowlands. He would not learn either to read or to write; but he was profoundly impressed by the revelations which his mother averred that she had received from the goddess Bhowani,—revelations which foreshadowed his future greatness as the destroyer of the Mahometan creed and the restorer of the Hindu faith. His mind was set on the great work; but he saw the need of moving warily. The acquisition of the hill fort of Poona might have aroused suspicion, had he not undertaken to hold on lease the district in which the fort was situated. A hoard of gold found within its walls enabled him to put them into thorough repair and to fortify the summit of another hill to which he gave the name Rajgurh. His faith in himself kindled a like faith in others, and Sivaji ventured to intercept imperial treasures. Shah

Jehán retaliated by arresting his father and placing him in a dungeon in which he was all but walled up, with the threat that the few remaining bricks should be fixed in their places if he failed in securing the submission of his son. Sivaji, thus sorely pushed, threw himself on the emperor's grace, and was not only forgiven but received into favour, while his father was brought out of his dungeon and after a time set free. When both were thus safe, Sivaji took to his old courses, seizing on the hill forts and making himself an impregnable stronghold, which he called Pertabgurrh, on a hill some miles to the south of Poona.

7. To the troubles raised up for the Emperor by revolted viceroys or Hindu zealots were added anxieties arising from the likelihood of struggles between his sons after his death. As viceroy of the Deccan, Aurengzebe had shown equal ability and unscrupulousness, and he had thrown in his lot with the dominant fanatics of Islam. His brother Shuja had inherited in its full force the failing of the family and was a confirmed drunkard. As a professor of the Shiah faith, which looked on the caliphs after Ali as intruders and impostors, he was also violently disliked by the orthodox Mussulmans of the Sonnite sect. Another brother, Murad, shared his vice, but lacked his powers of mind. There remained yet one other, Dara, a man more able than the rest, conscientious and just, but afflicted with the opinions and prone to adopt the belief and imitate the practice of Akbar. It was clear that the next in succession must be Dara or Aurengzebe; but Dara was heavily weighted in the

race. Mahometans had borne with Akbar because he had been their sovereign for years before he avowed himself a heretic; they were not likely to submit to one who had made the same confession before he ascended the throne.

8. But the royal titles were assumed not by Dara or Aurengzebe, but by the drunkards, Shuja and Murad, and Aurengzebe befooled the latter by promising that he would see the sceptre placed in his hand and then depart on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Dara took the field against them, but was utterly defeated. Hastening to Agra, Aurengzebe strove first to conciliate his father, and failing in this, he deposed him, 1658, and kept him a prisoner within the walls of his palace. So ended virtually the reign of Shah Jehán, though he lived on for rather more than eight years longer. Aurengzebe found in the treasury 24,000,000*l.*, besides a large quantity of jewels and bullion; nor were these the savings of a tyrant who had thought of nothing but his own enrichment. Every department in the state was admirably organised, and all payments had been full and punctual; and oppressive taxation was not the besetting sin of the early Mogul sovereigns.

9. Aurengzebe was about forty years of age when he dethroned his father; and he was now to reign, as Alamgír, for half a century, like Akbar whose wonderful life was closed in his sixty-third year. Between the two reigns there are points of likeness as marked as the points of difference. In both we see the same unwearied energy of body and mind, the same rapidity of movement, the same readiness in discerning the

causes of danger and to a certain extent the same sagacity and skill in dealing with them. For any of those qualities which have won for Akbar a place among the best as well as the most illustrious of mankind, we shall look in vain. The career of Sivaji awakened in him feelings of well-grounded anxiety; but although he may have gained his immediate object for the moment, he made a fatal mistake when he suffered him to increase and consolidate his power in order the more effectually to weaken his vassal kingdoms of Bejapur and Golconda.

10. Sivaji was thus left to carry out his designs unhindered, and the wily Mahratta chief laid a deadly trap for the general of the raja of Bejapur and his army. By pretended professions of submission he enticed him within the defiles of the mountains, and prevailed on him to visit him with a small escort at Pertabgurh. Here Sivaji, having received the special blessing of his mother on his righteous deed, welcomed his guest and thrust him through with a dagger. The army, left in the defile, was mown down like grass by men who started up from ambush round about, and the camp with all its contents, its horses and elephants, fell into the hands of the conqueror. To a certain extent the king of Bejapur retrieved this disaster; but at the close of the struggle in 1662, Sivaji was in possession of 300 miles of coast territory 100 miles in width, and an army of nearly 60,000 men.

11. Aurengzebe had put down all opposition to himself on the part of his brothers three years earlier. There could be no renewal of it, for

all were dead. Dara was accused of apostasy from his religion, and murdered in prison. The same fate befel Murad, and the sons of Dara were poisoned. Shuja alone had escaped, but he was supposed to have died in Arracan.

12. To Sivaji the passing years seemed only to bring fresh accessions of power. He had plundered Surat and levied exactions on the Dutch and English factories. He had laid the seaports under contribution as far south of Goa as Barcelore, and plundered the inland districts as far as Dowlutabad. The emperor now sent against him a force under Raja Jey Singh, a Hindu; and against Hindus Sivaji, we are told, shrank from fighting. He therefore submitted himself to the emperor, and accepted his invitation to Delhi, where he looked for a reception according with his ideas of his own importance, 1666. But he found himself slighted, if not insulted; and, as there were reasons for fearing harsher usage, Sivaji made his escape, and, after an absence of nine months, reached Rajgurh. In no way cast down, he applied himself steadily to the regulation of his civil government and of his army; and this work was carried out, we are told, in its minutest details, with wonderful ability.

13. But his best ally after all was Aurengzebe himself. The reforms or changes of Akbar, which had for their object the fusing of Hindus and Mahometans into a single body, were all swept away. Insurrections, if any took place, were punished with the savage cruelty of old times; the capitation tax was reimposed on all infidels; and the affections of

the Hindu population were most effectually alienated. In the genuine spirit of Mahometan bigotry, half the customs duties were remitted to Mahometans; the full duties were exacted summarily from the Hindus, who were further excluded from all public offices. Marriages between Mahometans and Rajpúts or other Hindus were strictly forbidden. Poets and authors of every kind, musicians, singers and dancers were driven from the court, and were prohibited by edict from plying their craft elsewhere.

14. Aurengzebe was, in fact, establishing his title to being regarded as a Mahometan saint, if not as a benefactor to mankind. Of a truth, he had his reward; and it took the form of a weakening and disruption of his empire. The Rajpúts, instead of being loyal servants as they had been to Akbar, became his bitter enemies. Their hatred manifested itself in rebellion which was put down with the natural ferocity of Islam. Their country was laid utterly waste, their men were slain, and their families sold into slavery. The Rajpút catastrophe may have strengthened, it could not have weakened, the aims and policy of Sivaji, who now declared himself independent, and was, for the second time, enthroned. Sanscrit titles for his officers displaced the Persian names thus far in use, and the Mahrattas were exhibited to the world as a nation. He lived about six years longer. He had scarcely realised the dreams or revelations vouchsafed to his mother; but he had left his followers in no doubt as to the means which must be employed if they wished to destroy the Mogul power. They had their mountains from

which they could issue with the force of the hurricane, and to which they might return, leaving their baffled enemies in despair of finding them.

15. Sivaji was unscrupulous and wise; his son Sumbaji (1680-1689) was unscrupulous and indiscreet. His barbarous executions called forth the protests of his Peshwa, or chief minister, and the imprisonment of the Brahman Kuloosha roused a bitter feeling against him in the public at large. Aurengzebe thought that he now saw his opportunity for putting down the dynasties of Bejapur and Golconda; but when he had succeeded in this task, he found himself no nearer than he was before to the affections of the people, who looked back with regret to the rule of their former masters. Rebellions followed one after another in quick succession, and the attempts to collect the capitation tax added fuel to the flame. But he received some compensation in the capture of Sumbaji, who, on refusing to become a Mahometan, was put to death with savage tortures.

16. For the time the Mahratta power seemed broken. But the loss of a chief could have no permanent effect on an organization like that of the Mahrattas, who could disappear in their fastnesses when the odds against them were too heavy, and swoop down again on the low country when the enemy was withdrawn. In these inroads they found that they had a weapon which even the power of the house of Timour would not, in the issue, be able to withstand. After sixteen years of strife Aurengzebe found them as resolute in their antagonism as ever;

and a series of reverses, all tending to their aggrandisement and his own weakness, darkened the closing months of his life. At ninety years of age this gloomy despot may be said to have died in harness, 1707. His energy had never faltered, his resolution had never been shaken. He had sometimes misjudged the means needed to reach his ends ; but he had never hesitated to make use of any which seemed to him likely to secure them. In sweeping away the kingdoms of Golconda and Bejapur he had demolished the bulwarks which might have defied the assaults of Mahratta chiefs. By reimposing the capitation tax he had made three-fourths of his subjects his enemies. But he did his duty as a disciple of Mahomet, and the blame of his failure must rest on Islam.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rivalry of the French and English in India.

1. While the empire of the great Mogul was thus hastening to decay, the strangers from Europe were gaining strength, and were deciding among themselves by negotiation, intrigue, or open war, the question of supremacy in India. It was settled first against the Portuguese, who were expelled from Salsette and Bassein by the Peshwa of the Mahratta sovereign in 1739. A long controversy remained between the English and the French, and even to the most sagacious of politicians the issue might well have seemed for a long time doubtful. Its history

brings before us a terrible state of confusion and violence, of oppression and cruelty, of utter uncertainty of law, and of a general helplessness of the people, which would have overtaxed the powers even of an Akbar, but which was directly aggravated by the folly or the tyranny of his successors.

2. The foreigners were rising to power nominally under the protection or as the allies of the Nizams or viceroys of the sovereign of Delhi, or of Nuwabs, who were deputies of the Nizams; but Nuwabs and Nizams alike were sometimes at the mercy of the vassal kings of the Mogul Empire, or of savage invaders like the Mahrattas of Sivaji. In Madras the lack of great rivers practically confined the English to the coast: in Bengal they ascended the Ganges and established a factory at Patna, distant four hundred miles from Calcutta, and another at Cossim Bazaar, near the great city which takes its name from the Nuwab Murshed Kuli Khan.

3. This man had risen from insignificance to be governor of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. He was neither the best nor the worst of Mahometan rulers. In other words, he acquired their usual reputation for oppressiveness and bigotry, and showed their usual fondness for badges marking the inferiority of infidels. The wealthiest Hindus were forbidden to make use of palankeens, and Hindu defaulters in rent were hung up by the feet, bastinadoed, and left exposed to the burning sun. Murshed had no son; and his son-in-law, Shuja Khan, looked forward to being his successor. For him Murshed had no liking, and he used all his influence at Delhi to secure the

post for Shuja's son, his own grandson Sarfaraz Khan. But in the contest of bribery Shuja was victorious. His own rule was lighter than that of Murshed, and the release of the Zemindars and Rajas—in other words, of the landowners and chiefs—whom Murshed had imprisoned, made him popular.

4. But at Patna, his deputy or Nuwab, Alavardi Khan, won a darker reputation. The Hindu Rajas under his government may have been, and probably were, disorderly oppressors ; but the way in which he beguiled them by false promises, and then put them to death, covered him with infamy. By a long standing agreement, thirty men were sent yearly to a certain spot to receive the tribute of the Raja of Monghyr, who was in like manner pledged to bring only the same number of followers. In 1735, Alavardi sent his thirty, and with them another force which was to lie in ambush. The Raja came with his men and paid his tribute. All were murdered. Two Englishmen, Mr. Holwell and Captain Holcombe, passing by with a convoy containing treasure from Patna to Calcutta, saw a boat going by with baskets which they supposed to contain fish. In the baskets were found thirty heads. One man had escaped the massacre and carried the tidings to the Raja's wife. She set the palace on fire and died with her son in the flames. That night the city was sacked and burnt by the troops of Alavardi Khan. The two Englishmen saw the smoke and blaze from the river where they lay at anchor. Such was a specimen of administration in Behar by a deputy of the viceroy of the Great Mogul.

5. At length on the death of Shuja in 1739 the hopes of Sarfaraz Khan were realised. The richest Hindu banker in the empire lived at Murshedabad. His grandson was married, and Sarfaraz Khan insisted on seeing the bride without a veil. The aid of Alavardi Khan was invoked to avenge the deadly insult. He was at the gates of the city before Sarfaraz was aware of his danger. The officers and men were bribed, and loaded their muskets with powder only. Sarfaraz Khan was killed and Alavardi Khan took his place. He exhibited the imperial letters which appointed him Nuwab, 1740. The letters may have been forged, but it mattered little whether they were forged or not. Rival claimants were sometimes visited by imperial messengers, who brought to each the insignia of office; the messengers being men bribed to play the part on either side.

6. Alavardi Khan, in this his more exalted state, lay on no bed of roses. Year by year the Mahratta hordes spread like locusts over the land, devouring all that came in their way. They left the European strangers unmolested; but the alarm of the English induced them to throw up round their settlement at Calcutta the trench and rampart still known as the Mahratta ditch, and Alavardi Khan was at last compelled to surrender to them the province of Orissa, with a sum of 130,000*l.*, or thirteen lakhs of rupees, as the chouth or tribute of Bengal, 1751.

7. In 1732, the Nuwab Saâdut Oolla had died at Arcot, a town about seventy miles to the west of Madras. His nephew, Dost Ali Khan, took his

place, without reference either to his own master the Nizam, or the Nizam's master, the emperor or Great Mogul. He also withheld the tribute which the Nuwabs had hitherto paid to their superiors. The Nizam was deeply offended; but his own anxieties, arising out of Mahratta invasions and Delhi intrigues, made it for the time impossible for him to interfere. From the former cause Dost Ali was soon to be a sufferer. The Mahratta bands again overran the Carnatic, and Dost Ali fell in battle. His son, Sufder Ali, agreed to pay 1,000,000*l.* to the Mahratta chief on condition of being recognised as Nuwab of the Carnatic in his father's room. But Dost Ali had also two daughters, who were married the one to Mortiz Ali, the other to Chunder Sahib. It was the object of Sufder Ali to get rid of his brothers-in-law, who might seek to deprive him of his dignity; and he made a secret agreement with the Mahratta chief, allowing him to seize Trichinopoly, where Chunder Sahib had taken refuge, on condition of their carrying him away. The Mahratta leader fulfilled his compact; but before Chunder Sahib had retreated to Trichinopoly, he had sent his wife and children to Pondicherry, and placed them under the protection of the French governor, Dupleix.

8. Sufder Ali now thought that he had gained his ends; but he continued to walk in the ways of his father. He made himself Nuwab, and in accordance with this theory he paid no tribute. He had also allowed the Mahrattas to gain an important military post in Trichinopoly. The patience of the Nizam was overtaxed, and he demanded from Sufder

Ali all arrears of unpaid tribute. Unable to pay, he fled to the strong fort of Vellore, which was commanded by Mortiz Ali ; but if he could thus escape the importunities of the Nizam, it was impossible to evade the demand of the Mahrattas. The million which he had promised to them must be paid, and must be raised by exactions on the towns throughout the province. Mortiz refused to pay his share. Sufder Ali insisted that he must, and in the festival of the Moharram, when the Shiahhs weep and mourn for the death of the sons of Ali, he was murdered.

9. Mortiz was now proclaimed Nuwab, and entered Arcot in state ; but the soldiers were unpaid, and demanded payment of arrears in instalments. Mortiz refused, and they declared that they must be paid in full at once. The Nuwab saw the storm coming, quailed before it, and fled back to Vellore. Sufder's young son was set up in his place ; but the Nizam now resolved to visit the Carnatic himself, and appointed Anwar-u-din Nuwab, giving out that he was only to hold the post during the minority of Sufder's son (1743). A few months later the boy was murdered. The outcry was great against Anwar-u-din as the murderer ; but there was no one else who could succeed except Chunder Sahib and Mortiz Ali. The latter was more hated than ever ; the former was in a Mahratta prison. Anwar-u-din was confirmed in his appointment by the Nizam, and soon found himself playing a part in the struggle between the hat-wearing strangers from Europe.

10. In 1744 war was declared between England and France in the quarrel of the Austrian succession.

In the following year an English fleet appeared off the Coromandel coast with the avowed purpose of destroying the French settlements. In great alarm, Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, besought the aid of Anwar-u-dín, and the latter, satisfied with the presents of Dupleix, forbade the English to commit any act of war in any part of his dominions, assuring them at the same time that the same injunction should be laid upon the French. In 1746, a fleet was again to be seen on the same coast; but this time it was French, and it threatened the English settlement of Madras. The English reminded Anwar-u-dín of his promise; but they sent no present, and Anwar-u-dín held his peace. The walls of Fort St. George were in no condition to stand against a bombardment by a European fleet, and the French commander, Labourdonnais, received the town into a capitulation which made all the stores within it the prize of the victor, left the English inhabitants prisoners of war on parole, the town itself remaining in the hands of the French until it should be ransomed. The ransom Labourdonnais pledged himself should be a moderate one.

11. These terms caused more than vexation to Dupleix. He asserted that all French conquests in the East must be disposed of by the governor of Pondicherry alone, and he ordered that Madras should be rased to the ground, and that the English should be brought as prisoners to Pondicherry. Dupleix had long seen that a handful of Europeans were more than a match for a multitude of Asiatics, and the capitulation of Madras seemed to lay open before

him a long vista of magnificent conquests. If the English could be borne down and driven away, Frenchmen would be in possession of the field. By a strange irony of fortune, the very step which he took for the aggrandisement of France set free the man who was to lay the foundations of British empire in India. The monstrous order of Dupleix was justly regarded as absolving the inhabitants from their parole. To Robert Clive, the future victor of Arcot and of Plassy, it came as a deliverance, not merely from captivity, but from a drudgery which he hated.

12. The son of a country gentleman in Shropshire, Clive had perplexed his friends and his instructors by his dislike of books, and the singular daring and impetuosity of his disposition. At the age of eighteen he was sent to India as a writer to the Company, then purely a trading association; and with the utmost horror he faced the prospect of a life to be spent in the inspection of stores and the balancing of ledgers. The pay scarcely sufficed for subsistence, and the license for private trading was of little use except to the richer among the clerks. Clive now escaped from Madras in the dress of a Mussulman, and taking refuge at Fort St. David, begged for a commission as an ensign in the Company's service. Having received it, 1747, he showed at once the great military genius with which he was endowed. But his hopes were dashed when the tidings of peace between England and France sent him a few months later back to his writing desk; and he might have sunk into lifelong insignificance if the ambition of Dupleix had not provoked a struggle between the

English and the French in India, which could end only in the downfall of either the one or the other.

13. Dupleix was well aware that although the Hindus and Mussulmans of India might be worth little against Europeans as soldiers so long as they were under native leaders, they would furnish materials for splendid armies in the hands of Europeans. He also saw that for the purposes of conquest no more convenient machinery could possibly be devised than that which was supplied by the imperfect organization of the Mogul empire. It was easy to make an alliance with a genuine viceroy or with a pretender, and in either case to use him simply as an instrument. A nuwab might be treated as an independent prince, for he often was so in fact, or as a vassal of the emperor, for he always was so in theory. It was with such ideas that Dupleix had first sought the help of Anwar-u-dín; but their friendly relations were brought to an end by the capture of Madras. Dupleix in vain promised to give up the town to him. Anwar-u-dín saw that he was speaking falsely only in order to keep him from helping the English. He resolved, therefore, to seize the place for himself, and approached it with an army of 10,000 men and a large force of artillery. To his profound amazement he saw his troops utterly routed by 400 Frenchmen with two guns, and to his bitter humiliation he discovered the reason for the deference which the foreigners paid to the representatives of the lord of Delhi.

CHAPTER IX.

Reigns of the Successors of Aurengzebe.

1. The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle interrupted in India a contest in which the French had thus far the advantage. They had taken Madras, and the English in spite of all their efforts had failed to take Pondicherry. This year, 1748, witnessed the death of the Nizam, who had reached the wonderful age of 104 years, and that of his master, Mohammed Shah, the last of the Mogul kings on whose behalf any pretensions even to ordinary respect could possibly be urged.

2. There is little indeed to attract us in the tale which relates the fortunes of Baber's dynasty after the death of Aurengzebe. Under the pillow of Alamgír a paper was found in which he expressed a wish that the imperial title should be borne by Moazzim, who should share the empire with his brother Azim, the kingdoms of Golconda and Bejapur being reserved for Cambaksh. Azim was nearer at hand and had himself proclaimed sovereign of all India; but he was slain in the battle fought with the army of Moazzim, who had been crowned at Cabul with the title of Bahádur Shah, having reached the mature age of sixty, 1707.

3. Azim was dead, but Cambaksh refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of Moazzim, and their armies joined battle near Hyderabad. Cambaksh was mortally wounded, and Bahádur Shah was now able

to turn his thoughts to pressing questions in other quarters. With the Mahrattas he had little difficulty. The infant grandson of Sivaji had grown up in the court of Aurengzebe, who gave him the familiar name of Saho. On his last march Azim had set him free, thinking that at least some of the Mahratta chiefs would take up his cause, and that the controversy thus aroused would deprive them of the power of active interference elsewhere. He had judged rightly; but it was Bahádur Shah who reaped the benefit of his wisdom. The breaking-up of the Rajpút confederacy was a task not less pressing. He had partly carried it through (chiefly by conceding to some of the chiefs a real independence while retaining a nominal sovereignty), when he was called away by the news of a rising of the Sikhs.

4. Few chapters in the history of religion are more strange than that which relates the origin and fortunes of this singular people. We are apt to think of them as a nation, and if regard be had only to present circumstances, we are right in thinking so. But they were originally a sect, and a sect founded for the purpose of cherishing a form of piety absolutely alien to their present character. Nanek, the founder, a Hindu, claiming to be of the Kshatrya caste (p. 13), underwent at an age far earlier than Gautama Buddha (p. 17) the change which makes a man wholly indifferent to all earthly interests. Like Gautama, he married and took part in the active business of life; but his longing was for a vision of truth and careful study of the Vedas, and the Koran convinced him that the worship of

Hindus and Mahometans was alike and equally acceptable in the sight of God, and indeed that all forms were a matter of complete indifference. There must, therefore, be for all and amongst all a thorough toleration, and all must be always united in the service of the one God, who requires that all men shall live for the good of their fellows.

5. The disciples of such a teacher would scarcely fail, we might suppose, to live in undisturbed tranquillity; but the teaching of Buddha, not unlike it in some respects, could not keep a permanent hold on Hindus, and that of Nanek roused the vehement opposition of Mussulmans. Toleration, impartial, absolute, and universal, is a lesson which, as Akbar saw, Islam could never learn without ceasing to be Islam; and Akbar had not been long dead before the spiritual chief of the Sikhs fell a victim to Moslem bigotry. A century had passed away since Nanek began to preach peace and goodwill for all; but with this deed of cruelty the scene was changed as with the waving of a magic wand.

6. They had thus far been passive quietists: they now became warriors as stern and self-sacrificing as Cromwell's Ironsides. They took up arms under Har Govind, the son of their martyred chief, and were driven as rebels from Lahore to the northern mountains. Quarrels broke out amongst themselves, but these only intensified their hatred of Islam, until Guru Govind, the grandson of Har Govind, formed them into a religious and military commonwealth. All caste distinctions were wholly done away with and forbidden to its members, who were

to be marked by a peculiar dress and by peculiar manners. They were to slaughter no cattle ; but otherwise they were left to their own choice and tastes in meat and drink. They were to reverence the Hindu gods and respect the Brahmans ; but the old worship was laid aside, and new modes of salutation were provided, with new ceremonies on the chief events of life. The tradition ran that he formed a Khalsa, or brotherhood of faith, of five disciples, a Brahman, a Kshatrya (p. 13), and three Sudras, giving them the name of Singhs, or lion-warriors, and telling them that whenever five were gathered in his name, his presence would be always with them. As soldiers of this holy-fellowship, they were divided into twelve communities known as Misl, a word having the same meaning with the Spartan Homoioi, peers or equals. The leader of each Misl was called a Sirdar ; and the Sirdars were both warriors and judges, presiding over and disciplining a society in which every man was a soldier. Distinct from these in some respects are the fanatics known as Akalis, who ascribe their confederacy to Guru Govind, and who exhibit certain points of likeness to the military orders of the crusades. In the issue, the Sikhs acquired a distinct national character ; but for the most part they have long since left their fanaticism behind them, and they are credited with a great love for pleasure of every kind.

7. But this change has taken place since the days of Guru Govind, who vainly strove with his followers to make head against enemies merciless in

their creed and in their acts. Fire and sword, plunder, torture, and massacre, pursued them all their days; but the result was to make them savagely stern and vindictive. Under a religious ascetic, named Bandu, they overran the east of the Punjab, and it must be confessed that they used a scourge of scorpions, 1709-1716. If they were driven back, it was only to advance again with greater fury, and their raids against Lahore and Delhi itself brought the emperor into the field in person. Bandu was compelled to take refuge in a fort; but in a desperate sally he made his escape. Beaten down, the Sikhs were not dismayed, and their power was again becoming formidable, when Bahádur Shah died, 1712.

8. We come now to the time when a crafty minister sets up a *roi-fainéant*, a do-nothing king, because he wishes to be master himself. Jehándár Shah was thus placed by Zulfikar Khan on the throne of Baber; and the first step of the miserable tyrant was to slay all his near kinsfolk. One, however, Farokhsir, escaped; and by the aid of two brothers, Hosein Ali and Abdullah, the former governor of Behar, and the latter of Allahabad, returned to win a victory which made him master of Jehándár Shah and his treacherous counsellor. Both were put to death, and Farokhsir was emperor, 1713.

9. The two brothers who had won him his throne, and who, as belonging to the family of the prophet of Mecca, were known as Syuds, expected to find in him a tool such as Zulfikar had thought to secure

in Jehándár. Like Zulfikar they were disappointed; and a wretched state of suspicion and intrigue on both sides was the consequence. But the Sikhs were again in motion under Bandu; and their ravages were such as might well rouse the deepest wrath and indignation. At last Bandu was taken with many of his followers, and, as we may suppose, the reprisals were savage. Clothed in a robe of cloth of gold, with a scarlet turban on his head, Bandu was shown to the crowd in an iron cage; and then, torn to pieces with hot pincers, he died, thanking God that he had been raised up by Him to be a scourge for the injustice and oppression of the age (1716).

10. In the end, 1720, Farokhsir was put to death by the orders of the Syuds, who set up in succession two princes, each of whom died, within a few weeks, of consumption. Their third choice was more lucky, and Roushem Akhter was crowned as the emperor Mohammed Shah (1720-1748). But the murder of Farokhsir and the early death of his two successors roused against the Syuds a general feeling of suspicion, which it was not easy to lull. The fabric of the empire was seriously shaken. A revolted Afghan chief defeated the royal troops in the Punjab, and a struggle between Hindus and Mahometans was causing the death of thousands in Cashmere.

11. But a sign still more ominous of future evil was furnished by the attitude of Chin Kilich Khan, known also as Asof Jah, or Nizam-ul-Múlk, from whom springs the line of the Nizams or viceroys of the Deccan. The government of the single province

of Malwá seemed to him but a poor return for his services to the Syuds; but the disturbed state of that province gave him an excuse for raising troops, and the Syuds in alarm offered him the choice of four governments. Asof Jah saw at once the path which he ought to follow. Marching to the Nerbudda, he gained possession of the fort of Asírgurh, and in two great battles defeated the imperial commanders sent against him. The terror of the Syuds was increased by a severe shock of earthquake, and they acted with hesitation when promptitude was sorely needed. The knowledge of their fears led the emperor to think that he might now deliver himself from his masters. By the aid of Mohammed Amin and of Sadat Khan, the viceroy of Oude and the ancestor of its later kings, he brought about the assassination of Hoseyn. His brother, Abdallah, set up an infant prince as king, and continued to act in his name. But the fortune of war went against him. He was taken prisoner, and Mohammed Shah entered Delhi in triumph. Mohammed Amin became vizir, but died almost immediately.

12. Generally, such a death would be set down to poison. It was now accounted for by the story that a saint, whose arrest the new vizir had ordered, had smitten him with sickness, and that the saint, when taxed with the fact, admitted it, but said that his shaft, once shot, could not be recalled. The vacant office was reserved for Asof Jah, who returned to Delhi with the determination of bringing about large reforms. The changes which he wished to introduce had no attractions for an emperor whose one

desire was that of enjoyment, and who found not a little pleasure in burlesquing the old-fashioned dress and grave manners of his minister. Disgusted with the state of things in the capital, Asof Jah resigned his office and returned to his vice-royalty. This act was a virtual declaration of independence, and the emperor sent orders to the governor of Hyderabad to drive out Asof Jah and to take his place. This order only brought about war between Asof Jah and the governor, who fell in battle; but as the emperor had not avowed the order, the Nizam sent him the governor's head with his own congratulations at the happy failure of his rebellion. Henceforth he remained at Hyderabad, sending gifts from time to time to his nominal master, but acting otherwise as an independent sovereign.

13. The Nizam was now compelled to consider his relations with the Mahrattas. His purpose had been to further the case of Samba, if the ascendancy of Saho had not been secured by the genius of Balaji Visvanath. This man was a Brahman who had been the hereditary accountant of a village in the Concan, but at length he obtained the office of Peshwa, which answered to that of Nuwab in the imperial system. Thus far the exactions of the Mahrattas had been mere robberies; a treaty made with Mohammed Shah gave them at least an appearance of legality. But even now Balaji shrunk from any definition of the rights of collection thus conferred.

14. For this he had two motives. The subdivisions and partitions of revenue in the same province gave to each chief an interest in its increase,

while they prevented him from acquiring resources which might make him independent; and, further, the greater the complication of the system, the more power would be thrown into the hands of the Brahman caste to which the Peshwa belonged, and so into his own. Balaji was succeeded by his abler son, Baji Rao. There were some who counselled him to bring the internal government of the Mahratta possessions into better order before undertaking any more extended enterprises. Baji Rao saw that with the masses of Mahratta horsemen running wild over the country such an attempt would be very ill-advised, and he proposed the invasion of the imperial domain itself. 'If we strike the withered trunk,' he said, 'the branches will fall of themselves.' His master shared his enthusiasm. When Baji Rao asked his permission to carry the standard beyond the Nerbudda, the Raja's reply was that he should plant it on Himalaya. Thus was established what may fairly be called the Brahman dynasty of the Peshwas; and with it rose to power the great Mahratta families of Holcar and Sindia. The former was a shepherd; the latter a menial servant of Baji Rao, whose recognition converted them from random adventurers into officers acting in his name and with his authority.

15. The Peshwa now had the Nizam almost in his grasp; but he saw that his enmity might involve serious danger in the future. The Nizam, on his side, could not feel sure that the emperor might not transfer the vice-royalty to the Peshwa. The two potentates agreed, therefore, to join forces for the

pulling down the dominion of their common lord; and they worked together, until the Nizam saw reason for suspecting that the Peshwa was reaping solid advantages at the Nizam's expense, and that nothing could prevent this result except his own reconciliation with the emperor. This step determined the action of Baji Rao, who suddenly appeared with his hosts before the gates of Delhi itself, 1737. His purpose was to strike terror, not to destroy; and he retreated before Asof Jah could face him in the field. No pitched battle was fought; but the Nizam was so pressed and harassed by the enemy that he agreed to a convention which ceded to the Peshwa the whole country from the Nerbudda to the Chambal, and guaranteed the payment of half a million of pounds sterling. Before this convention could be confirmed, a catastrophe occurred which laid Delhi in ashes and filled the world with horror.

16. The dynasty of the Sufavy or Sufi kings of Persia was crumbling away like that of Baber in India. But their yoke had been a galling one for the tribes inhabiting the high table lands of Afghanistan, and at length Mir Weis, the chief of the Ghilzai tribe, resolved on invading Persia and avenging himself on the immediate authors of the wrongs complained of. After his death, the details of the scheme were drawn out by his son Mahmud, who marched from Candahar with 25,000 men, and laid siege to Ispahan. The gallantry with which the people bore up for more than six months against the horrors of famine and thirst shows that the old Persian spirit had not altogether died out. But

their endurance was of no avail; and at last the king issued from its gate, and placed his crown on the head of the invader, A.D. 1722. His success, it is said, tempted Mahmud into strange acts of cruelty; but the number of his victims is in all likelihood vastly exaggerated. Within two years he died, or was murdered, in a state of raving madness.

17. His nephew and successor, Ashref, was attacked by Russians and Turks together. The latter he defeated; from the former he was delivered by the death of the Czar, Peter the Great, after they reached the southern shores of the Caspian. But a more formidable enemy was nearer to him than either Turk or Russian. The son of the last Sufi king had made his escape and was living as a fugitive with the tribe of Kajar, when he was joined by Nadir Kuli, who brought about another of those strange revivals which have marked the history of Persia. With an energy even more wonderful than that of the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, Nadir roused the people to fiery action, reconquered Meshed, recovered Khorasan, and scattered the armies of the Ghilzais to the winds. But while he was advancing on his career of victory, the king whom he had restored to titular sovereignty took on himself to act as if he were an independent ruler. This Nadir could not brook. He deposed Tahmasp and put his infant son in his place. But when his task was over, when he had wrested from Russian and Turk every inch of Persian soil, he assumed the royal title, 1736, stipulating that the Persians should abandon their Shiite heresy, and conform to

the orthodox Sonnite doctrine. In this Nadir was committing a blunder. The convictions of the Persians were not touched by his demand; but their suspicions were roused and their affections estranged.

18. Although he was, perhaps, unaware of this fact, he saw that a power established by force must be maintained by new enterprises and victories, and he set out with a vast army to besiege Candahar. The city fell, and his conquest of the Ghilzai country brought him close to the frontiers of the Mogul empire. Across this border some Afghan fugitives had made their way. Nadir demanded their seizure or expulsion. Receiving no answer he advanced towards Delhi, 1739, and a battle near Karnál ended in the signal defeat of the Indian army. With a few attendants, the representative of Baber and Akbar entered the Persian camp, and was courteously received by the conqueror. The two kings entered the capital together, and took up their abode in the palace.

19. By the orders of Nadir, some Persian troops were distributed over the town, with a strict charge to keep good order and to protect the people. But the terror and disgust of the inhabitants had reached a height which is but little removed from madness; and a report of Nadir's death spread abroad on the following day kindled the slumbering fires. The multitude fell on the Persian guards. The nobles, it is said, gave up to slaughter the soldiers who were protecting their houses and property, and when Nadir came out in the hope of appeasing the

tumult he saw around him the dead bodies of his soldiers, and was assailed with volleys of stones as well as with arrows and musket-balls. At last one of his officers fell at his side, and Nadir gave the order for a general massacre. For six hours 20,000 men were employed in the work of slaughter, and it is probably far below the mark if we set down the number of the slain at less than 30,000. The blood streamed along the streets, the flames of burning houses shot up into the sky, and every form of brutal cruelty was exhibited in all its ghastly nakedness. The work of vengeance, however, did not cause Nadir to forget that he had come chiefly on an errand of plunder. The imperial jewels were swept into the coffers which were to bear them away; the peacock throne was borne from the magnificent hall which it had filled with the glory of its radiant jewels. The nobles were compelled to yield up the whole or the greater part of their vast wealth, and even the poorest were robbed of their scanty resources. Cruel scourgings extorted confessions of buried hoards. Many died under the torture, and many slew themselves to escape from the scene of their agony.

20. When the work was done and nothing more was to be gained by staying, Nadir made ready to return home. But he went back a changed man. For some time the business of war concealed the extent of the change; but when Turks, Lezgi, and other enemies had all been subdued, the horrible fact was made manifest. The discovery that in spite of his wishes and injunctions his subjects were

still Shiahs made him look on every Persian as his personal enemy. Exasperated by his suspicions, he put out the eyes of his son, and then reviled those who had failed to save him. His daily murders were accompanied by daily robberies, and his words breathed nothing but hatred and loathing for his subjects.

21. Such a career could not last long. The tyrant was heard to appeal to Afghans to cut down his Persian guards, and seize on his chief nobles. That night he was slain (1747). The annals of the world contain few more appalling narratives than the story of his life; but its awfulness must not make us forget the provocation which let loose the tiger nature in Nadir Kuli. The horror which the thought of the man and his deeds must awaken in us cannot wholly lack a feeling of pity.

22. The city and empire which he had left behind him seemed smitten with palsy, or sunk in a stupor which left no room for thought. The people had been decimated, the treasury was empty, the army broken up, and the regions not wasted by Mahrattas were now left desolate by the Persian hosts. The Mogul dynasty might have been brought to an end at once if the very completeness of the catastrophe had not struck terror into the hearts of the Mahrattas themselves. 'Our domestic quarrels are now nothing,' wrote Baji Rao; 'there is but one enemy in Hindustan. Hindus and Mussulmans, the whole power of the Deccan, must assemble.' The words point to an awakening of something like the European feeling of patriotism; but we have

seen why the continued growth of such a feeling is in the circumstances of Eastern society altogether impossible. The old dissensions were soon renewed, and Baji Rao was in his turn made to feel that greed of land and wealth is not a condition fruitful of happiness. His anxieties seem to have hastened his death, and his office descended to his son Balaji Rao, a man not less sagacious and vigorous than his father. Eight years later Mohammed Shah also passed away.

CHAPTER X.

Dupleix and Clive.

1. The battle for English or French supremacy was now to be fought out in Southern India. On the one side was Dupleix, a man of great political genius, lacking perhaps in physical courage, but quick to see opportunities for action, speedy in availing himself of them, and aided by military leaders not less able and more conscientious than himself. On the other there was a council which saw but dimly the significance of the struggle, and had a still more vague idea of the right mode of carrying it through; slow in forming resolutions, and uncertain in their execution. But these disadvantages were more than compensated by the energy and judgment of Clive.

2. The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and the restoration of Madras to the English would, it might have

been thought, carry with them heavy discouragement for Dupleix. But he was not cast down. Englishmen and Frenchmen could no longer face each other in battle as such, but they were free to take part in the politics of the native kingdoms. The death of Chin Kilich Khan (Asof Jah, and Nizam-ul-Mûlk), had removed the protector of the Nuwab Anwar-u-dîn. Chunder Sahib, who laid claim to his office as the son-in-law of Dost Ali, was in a Mahratta prison; but his wife and children were guests of Dupleix. From the wife of the captive Madame Dupleix, familiarly known in Indian history as Jan Begum, learnt that lack of money was the only hindrance to his liberation; her husband saw that in the name of Chunder Sahib as Nuwab of the Carnatic he might make himself the real master of Southern India. Seven lakhs (70,000*l.*) were sent to Chunder Sahib, and a French force was despatched to aid him in bringing matters to an issue with Anwar-u-dîn in 1748. But a more splendid prospect still was opened to him by the death of the Nizam. His son, Nasir Jung, in the absence of his elder brother, seized his treasury, and his largesses to the army secured his recognition as viceroy of the Deccan. But the succession to an office, which in theory was not hereditary, was claimed by Mozuffer Jung, a favourite grandson of the old Nizam, who exhibited a will, probably forged, naming him the heir; and delegates, real or pretended, from the Great Mogul brought to both the rivals the insignia of their dignity. Freed from his prison, Chunder Sahib now proposed an alliance with Mozuffer Jung,

the plan being that their united forces should recover first the Carnatic and then the Deccan. Mozuffer Jung heartily accepted the proposal, which was approved not less cordially by Dupleix. At Ambúr a battle was fought in which Anwar-u-dín fell, and his son Mohammed Ali, the last of his house, fled to Trichinopoly. The capture or death of the latter would settle the controversy in the Carnatic, and the whole powers of the two claimants, backed by that of the French, might be applied to the establishment of Mozuffer Jung as viceroy of the Deccan, where, under cover of his name, Dupleix would be virtually the king. With feverish anxiety he proposed and urged the reduction of Trichinopoly; and his allies professed to set about the task. But they wanted money, and shrank from confessing the fact. The 70,000*l.* of Dupleix may have been all paid as Chunder's ransom to the greedy Mahrattas; and their only course was to halt at Tanjore and demand the arrears of tribute alleged to be due from the raja to the Nuwab. But before this business could be ended, Nasir Jung entered the Carnatic with a force which to the two claimants seemed irresistible. Mozuffer Jung surrendered himself; Chunder Sahib fled to Pondicherry; and the grand schemes of Dupleix seemed to have fallen to the ground like a house of cards.

3. But Dupleix was scarcely dispirited, far less in despair. He knew that he had the support of excellent officers: and in addition to other successes the fort of Jinji, which was supposed to command the whole country, was taken by Bussy. This event

brought Nasir Jung, who was fooling away his time at Arcot, to a sense of his danger ; but the proposals which he now made to Dupleix were met by demands so exorbitant that he resolved to trust his cause to the decision of the sword. The decision was to be brought about in another way. The army of Nasir Jung was disaffected, and not a few were ready to betray him for money. The fact soon became known to the busy Jan Begum ; and a small French force advanced professedly to encounter the vast army of Nasir Jung, but really to aid the traitors. The disaffected troops refused to charge. Nasir Jung rode up to them and called them cowards for shrinking from a few drunken Europeans. They were his last words. In another instant a bullet laid him dead at their feet, and the soldiers proclaimed Mozuffer Jung as Nizam of the Deccan.

4. To Dupleix it seemed that the fates were indeed propitious. The Nuwab and the Nizam were both his creatures, and must remain his servants. At Pondicherry, in the midst of gorgeous ceremonies, Mozuffer Jung appeared as the representative of the Great Mogul, and in his name appointed Dupleix governor of all the countries to the south of the Kistna. Among the French officers and troops he distributed 50,000*l.* : a sum four times larger was the portion of Dupleix himself. But if he satisfied his French allies, he was less successful with his own soldiers. A mutiny among them was suppressed by the fire of the French ; but a sabre stroke dealt to Mozuffer Jung a mortal wound. In this crisis, when the vice-regal army seemed likely to melt away, Bussy speedily

restored order. He took Salábut Jung, the eldest of the three surviving brothers of Nasir Jung, proclaimed him Nizam, and obtained from him a confirmation of all the promises made by his predecessor. Dupleix had now reached the height of his glory, and he resolved to raise a memorial of it to be seen by the coming ages. On the spot where, by the fall of Nasir Jung, fortune had decisively turned in his favour he built a stately column, on which four inscriptions in four languages set forth the story of his greatness. Round it rose a town bearing the name of Dupleix Fatihabad—‘the city of the victory of Dupleix.’

5. The only remaining hindrance in the path of Dupleix was Mohammed Ali, and he, it was clear, could not long hold out in Trichinopoly (1751). He had even begun to make terms with his besiegers, before the English realised the full danger of their position. If Chunder Sahib should win the day, then in Chunder Sahib's name a rescript, coming really from Dupleix, might, and would, order the destruction of the English forts of St. David and St. George, and settle the question of French ascendancy in the whole peninsula. It was therefore of the last importance that Mohammed Ali should be enabled to hold out. But how was this object to be attained? At Trichinopoly the English were hopelessly outnumbered; and the Hindu rajas, especially those of Tanjore and Mysore, were awaiting the issue of the conflict, prepared to join the winning side when there should be no longer doubt of the winner.

6. The problem was solved by Clive. He had just returned from Trichinopoly by the road which runs northward for 100 miles to Arcot, and from Arcot turns eastward to Madras, a distance of 70 miles. He had seen that the garrisons in the Carnatic had been drawn off for the siege of Trichinopoly, and that Arcot especially was inadequately guarded. With all earnestness, therefore, he urged an expedition to Arcot. The occupation of that city would strengthen the hands of Mohammed Ali, would determine the action of the wavering rajas, and would compel Chunder Sahib to detach a large portion of his forces for the relief of his capital. Clive's advice was taken. With 200 Europeans and 300 Sepoys he set out on the enterprise which was to decide the fate of the English in India. Of the eight officers under his command four only had received any military training, and of these only two had been in action; the other four were commercial clerks. On the road he learnt that the Arcot garrison outnumbered his own men by more than two to one: but the Arcot garrison learnt from spies that the English had marched without concern through a terrible storm of lightning and rain, and were so dismayed by this proof of their daring that they retreated to a camp at some distance from the fort, which the British force entered unopposed. In it Clive found eight guns, with a store of powder and lead. He made preparations at once to stand a siege; but the garrison which had deserted its post, now largely reinforced, threatened to storm the citadel. At the dead of night Clive sallied out,

attacked the camp, slew many, dispersed the rest, and returned to the fort without any loss on his own side.

7. Dismayed at the tidings which came from Arcot, the besiegers at Trichinopoly detached an immense force for the recovery of the capital. For fifty days Clive withstood all their efforts. Having vainly tried to bribe him, and fearing that he might receive other reinforcements in addition to the Mahrattas who had joined him from Mysore, the enemy resolved upon a last onset during the great festival of the Mohurram. It was the time when the fervour of the Shiites is roused to burning pitch by the tragedy of the sons of Ali; and this fervour was heightened by large doses of bhang (Indian hemp leaves), and by the thought of the special delights promised in heaven to those who may fall in battle on this sacred day. Elephants with their foreheads armed with iron plates were driven against the gates to burst them open; but the musket balls of the besieged drove the huge beasts back in pain and terror on the masses of men whom they trampled down with their mighty feet. In an hour the enemy drew off. On the following morning they were no longer to be seen. They had raised the siege during the night, and the issue of the long conflict was virtually decided.

8. Clive's success at Arcot was followed by other successes in the field. A few months later, Chunder Sahib gave himself up to the Raja of Tanjore, who put him to death. Trichinopoly was surrendered, the French officers were put under their parole not

to serve against the English or their allies, and the French soldiers were sent as prisoners to Fort St. David. But the act which made the greatest impression on Hindus and Mahometans alike was one of destruction, which, we might be apt to think, could not easily be excused. Between Madras and Fort St. David lay the city of Dupleix Fatihabad. Clive gave orders that the column of victory and the town should be both rased to the ground. The act was not merely necessary; it was one of the soundest policy. Dupleix's monument had placed a spell on the land which could be broken only by its overthrow. Its ruins proved that the doctrine of French supremacy was not admitted by Englishmen, and that Englishmen were fully capable of contesting it.

9. Even now Dupleix was not cast down. To him and to the French Salábat Jung owed his throne, and from Salábat he received the splendid and wealthy territory afterwards known as the Northern Circars. It stretched along six hundred miles of coast until at its northern extremity it reached the shrine of Jaganath (Juggernaut) at Poree. Its revenue exceeded half a million of pounds sterling, and it had the advantage of an excellent harbour at Masulipatam. The French were thus still by far the richest of Europeans in India; but the French Company was not on this account the more satisfied with Dupleix. They charged him with wasting their resources on wars and intrigues which, if they added to his reputation and brought France some glory, brought with them no solid advantage. The English were weary of the war, wearied with incurring costs which should

be borne by the nation, if they were to be incurred at all, and wearied still more with the complications of native politics in which they found themselves entangled. The Directors of the Company in England urged that if the war was to go on, it should, as being for the interests of the nation, be at the expense of the nation, or else that it should be brought to an end.

10. In the latter conclusion both the French and English governments agreed. A treaty made by a plenipotentiary sent to Pondicherry pledged both sides to renounce all native dignities, and all governments conferred by native grandees. The conditions were never carried out, but Dupleix was recalled, 1754; and to be recalled was for him to be ruined. In the cause of his country he had spent his private funds, which amounted to 300,000*l.*, and he had also borrowed largely. The French government gave him protection against his creditors; but they repudiated his debt. Labourdonnais, after the conquest of Madras, was thrust into the Bastille, and remained there for nearly two years without a trial, and being then acquitted, died of what has been called a broken heart. The end of Dupleix was like his.

11. The contest in which he could no longer take part still went on. In the Deccan Bussy maintained his footing; but Mahometan intrigue brought about in 1756 a rupture between him and the man who owed to him his position as Nizam. Bussy marched towards Hyderabad, and Salábat Jung appealed to the English for help. The opportunity for inter-

ference was eagerly welcomed at Madras, and a force was about to set off for his relief, when tidings came from Bengal which put all such enterprises for the present out of the question. The capture of Calcutta by Suraj-u-Daula seemed to threaten the very existence of the English in Bengal.

CHAPTER XI.

Clive and Suraj-u-Daula.—Battle of Plassy.

1. The Nuwab Alavardi Khan had reached his dignity in the way which custom had well-nigh sanctified in the Mogul empire,—the path of intrigue, bribery, murder, and forgery (p. 72). But in his high place he had acted for the interests of the country and had at least done something towards lessening the horrors of the Mahratta inroads; and when, in 1756, he lay, at the age of eighty, on his death-bed, he may have thought that in his favourite grandson, Suraj-u-Daula, his people would have a ruler as kindly and well-intentioned to them as himself. He was fatally mistaken. The boy had been brought up as an eastern despot, and he grew up an eastern despot of the worst type, with no other notion of life than that which makes it an alternation of sensual pleasure and wanton cruelty. Possessed by an insane hatred of the English and by the most extravagant ideas of their wealth, he lived in the hope of driving them into the sea and seizing all

their treasures. A cause of quarrel was easily found. Kishen Das, the son of a governor of Dacca, was one of the many men on whose hoards Suraj-u-Daula looked with a longing eye. He was furious when he heard that Kishen Das had taken himself and his money to Calcutta and sought the protection of Drake, the governor. The Nuwab insisted on the surrender of the fugitive and the demolition of the new fortifications of the settlement. Drake refused the former request, and denied the existence of any new fortifications; but his plea that the old fortifications had been repaired to make them serviceable in the event of an attack by the French made the Nuwab still more wroth that these foreigners should dare to make war on one another in his dominions.

2. With 50,000 men he marched, 1756, straight upon Calcutta, which was in no way prepared for resistance. The town had practically no defences, and the fort was overlooked and commanded by mercantile buildings. Had Clive been there, we should have heard of a defence as memorable as that of Arcot; but although Clives cannot be looked for everywhere, the paralysis of courage shown by some of the English in Calcutta is little to their credit. When the guns of the enemy opened fire, the governor and some others escaped with the women and children to the ships, and then, to the amazement and disgust of those who remained behind, the ships, which might have carried off the whole garrison when resistance became hopeless, dropped down the river.

3. The story is a wretched one throughout.

While some of the English fought on without flinching, some of them broke into the arrack stores and got drunk; others were spent and worn out from the natural causes of heat and fatigue. But in truth the whole European population in Calcutta had been under 600, and they had adopted a mode of defence which would have made even Clive helpless. The Nuwab sent a flag of truce, and when Mr. Holwell, who acted as governor in the absence of Drake, admitted it, the enemy rushed in at the gates and the defenders were overpowered and disarmed. The first and perhaps the only thought of Suraj-u-Daula was for the treasury, and his disappointment was bitter when he found that it contained only 50,000*l*. When the prisoners appeared before him, he assured Mr. Holwell that no harm should befall them, and having so said he betook himself to his repose without giving any orders about them. To disturb the tyrant in his hours of rest would be death, and his officers could find no other place for the detention of the prisoners, 146 in number, than a room about twenty feet square, with one window only, which had been set apart for the confinement of refractory soldiers. Into this horrible chamber all were driven at the point of the bayonet and the door was locked upon them. Words cannot describe the horrors of the ensuing hours. In a climate like that of England such a heaping together of human beings would involve death to some and fearful suffering for all; but here they were pent up in the fiery furnace of an Indian summer solstice. In their agony the victims shrieked to their guards to fire upon them;

but they were left to struggle with the poisoned air, while their guards shouted with laughter. In the morning sixteen haggard forms came forth still living. The rest were all dead. The tragedy of the Black Hole was played out.

4. For Suraj-u-Daula this only can be said, that he did not order these horrors. It is even possible that he may not have wished or intended them to take place ; but to what does this plea amount ? To leave his prisoners without uttering a word to insure them the safety which he had solemnly promised was infamous enough ; but if any human feeling had remained with him, he must have recoiled from the results of his fatal negligence when he became aware of them. In fact, he took no notice of them whatever ; and his only inquiries were for the places where the wealth of his victims might be hidden. In truth, the catastrophe excited no notice in India except among the Europeans. It was regarded as a matter of course, and native historians who relate the capture of Calcutta say nothing of the awful episode of the Black Hole. We have in this wonderful fact the explanation of the history of the East, and more particularly of the history of India. The people have no political union ; and this is the cause of their depression and of the invasions and conquests which have led to that depression. It has been well said that individually the people of India are the kindest and most compassionate in the world, but that beyond the circle of their family or caste they know nothing and heed nothing. They have paid a terrible penalty for their self-imposed isolation.

5. The triumph of the despot did not last long. Six months later the English flag was flying over Fort William, and he sent an intreaty for peace, which Clive, in expectation of a war between England and France, was willing to grant. But for Suraj-udaula treaties went for nothing. He promised to compensate the English for their losses on the capture of Calcutta; but he wrote at the same time to Bussy, beseeching him to come and drive the English out of Bengal. He heard of the desolation of Delhi by Nadir Shah, and he sent to beg the aid of Clive against the Persian king and his followers. Rendered frantic by his terror, he gave Clive leave to attack Chandernagore, and withdrew his permission when it was too late. The French settlement, after a most gallant defence, fell into the hands of the English, 1757, and the significant comment of Clive was, 'We cannot stay here.' The British standards have advanced further north than Chandernagore: it is possible that they may have now and then advanced too far.

6. All this hateful tyranny and, still more perhaps, all this wretched weakness produced its natural harvest of hatred and conspiracy. The chief plotters in this case were the Nuwab's general, Mir Jafir, and Jagat Seth, of Murshedabad, the wealthiest banker in India. These men invited Clive to take part in their scheme, and Clive consented. The truth is that Clive, who in his dealings with his countrymen and with other Europeans would have scorned even to equivocate, had by some strange process convinced himself that in dealing with Orientals any-

thing was fair, and anything that was politic was justifiable. Habitual lying could be met only by well-considered falsehoods; and the traitor must be foiled by his own weapons. So we find Clive, who abhorred the deceitfulness of Suraj-u-Daula, writing to him affectionately, while he assured the men who were bent on murdering him that he would stand by them as long as he had a man left.

7. It is not easy to touch pitch without being defiled. We need not, therefore, wonder that Clive was led on from one dissimulation to another. The agent employed between Mir Jafir and the English commander was a Calcutta merchant named Omichand, whose great wealth had been materially diminished by the recent capture of Calcutta. Conspirators are seldom disinterested; and Clive must surely have supposed that Omichand would expect something for his pains and trouble. Indeed, if there is to be any honour among thieves, it was but fair that he should have something: but Clive was, or pretended to be, amazed when he learnt that Omichand's demand was for 300,000*l.* with a commission of 5*l.* per cent. on all payments between the two parties, and that, unless these demands were granted, he should bring the whole matter before the intended victim. This stipulation, he insisted, should be inserted in the treaty between Mir Jafir and the English; and Clive met the needs of the case by having two copies of the treaty drawn up, the one on white paper, the other on red, the latter being fictitious. How the real treaty was to be distinguished from the fictitious one, it might be

hard to say, for it was intended that both should have the genuine signatures of Clive and his colleague, Admiral Watson. There was, in truth, no distinction except in the guilty consent of the two, who were both determined that the sharp practice of Omichand should be defeated, and that the treaty guaranteeing Omichand's compensation should be null and void. This consent Watson could not prevail on himself to give. He refused to sign the false treaty. Clive forged his signature, and, having done so, wrote in altered tone to the Nuwab, setting forth the wrongs of the British, offering to submit the matter to the arbitration of Mir Jafir, and telling him that he and his men would in person come for the Nuwab's answer.

8. Suraj-u-Daula perfectly knew the meaning of the last phrase, and joined his army at Plassy, while Clive remained at Cossim Bazaar, expecting that Mir Jafir would, according to his promise, meet him with the division under his command. But Mir Jafir did not know yet how the day would go, and he prudently shrank from any act which might compromise him with the Nuwab, if the Nuwab should after all be the victor. Clive was therefore left to face an army twenty times as large as his own, with the possibility that Mir Jafir might take an active part against him. In his anxiety he called a council, and the council decided against fighting. It was dangerous to cross a river which would cut off their retreat if the day went against them. This was the only council ever summoned by Clive; and he used to say afterwards that if he had taken its

advice, the English would never have been masters of Bengal. After a few moments' thought he resolved to reverse their decision, and gave the order for crossing the river. A long day's march brought his little army of 3,000 men to a mango-grove, within a mile of the encampment of the enemy, where 40,000 infantry were supported by 15,000 cavalry and 50 pieces of ordnance of the largest size, as well as some smaller but probably more formidable field pieces served by French engineers. The result of the next day's fight was precisely that which had astounded Anwar-u-din nine years before (p. 77). In one hour the headlong flight of the Nuwab's troops swept away the little band of Frenchmen who alone struggled to maintain their ground (1757).

9. A few days later Clive installed Mir Jafir as Nuwab at Murshedabad; and nothing remained except to carry out the terms of their treaty. To the conference called for this purpose Omichand came with the confidence which the sustained kindness of Clive's manner towards him fully justified. The treaty on white paper was read: and then at Clive's bidding Mr. Sraffton, turning to Omichand, informed him that the red treaty was a trick, and that he was to have nothing. It is unfortunate for Mr. Sraffton that his name should appear in history only in a matter in which he ought to have been most thoroughly ashamed of himself. The story goes that Omichand, on hearing this announcement, fell back in his chair insensible, and that when he awoke to consciousness, he was little better than a drivelling idiot. This has been denied, and it may be denied

on good grounds ; but Omichand, if his mind had not failed him, might have contended that both treaties were valid, being both signed by both the English leaders, and that the red treaty, as supplementary, was the more binding of the two. Clive could scarcely have confessed his forgery, and Watson certainly would have refused to confess himself an accomplice in a scheme which he would not sanction by his signature.

10. But we turn with loathing from this tangled web of falsehood and deceit. It has been said that the whole history of British India enforces one great lesson. This lesson is that 'it is not prudent to oppose perfidy by perfidy, and that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth.' The path pointed out by prudence is the one towards which righteousness beyond all doubt leads us. Intrigue, shuffling, lying, and perjury might have gained us something in our dealings with those who use such weapons ; but these gains are as nothing in comparison with the benefits secured to us by the impression left on the native mind that the British is the one power in India whose word may be implicitly relied on. It will be an evil day for Great Britain, it may be an evil day for the world, if this impression is removed by a return to the infatuated theory of Clive. We have been told, and rightly told, that English truth has done more to extend and preserve our empire in the East than English valour and English intelligence ; and that Clive should even in that early stage in its growth have failed to see this, nay, that he should

have gloried in the lies by which he cheated Omi-chand, is indeed astounding.

11. The victory of Plassy was followed by immediate results of a most substantial kind. The miserable wretch Suraj-u-Daula was caught a few days after the battle, brought back to Murshedabad, and there put to death by Mir Jafir; but as Clive knew nothing of this, he could not interfere to prevent it. A hundred boats conveyed to Calcutta silver amounting in value to 800,000*l.* sterling. A vast sum was further paid to Clive, and a large tract on the river Hugli was ceded to the Company, which was to pay a quit rent of 30,000*l.* yearly, nominally to the great Mogul, really to the Nuwab, in return for a revenue of 100,000*l.* Clive found that the forms of the Mogul organization were by no means inconvenient to himself; he therefore insisted on their punctilious observance. A patent of nobility described him as commander of 6,000 foot and 5,000 horse. These existed only on paper; but Clive demanded the jaghir, or revenue-furnishing district, needed for their maintenance. In his perplexity Mir Jafir could think of no other device than that of making over to Clive the quit-rent which the Company was pledged to pay to the Mogul or his representative the Nuwab; and thus Clive became a landowner to whom, as his tenants, the Company which he served was bound to pay a rent of 30,000*l.* a year.

12. But on the whole, the result of Clive's plottings and manœuvrings was not altogether happy. Mir Jafir was found to be absolutely unfit for his office. He wasted his time in chewing bhang and

watching the movements of dancing girls; but he had no abilities, the cultivation of which might have been worth the trouble bestowed upon them. His follies and his fears, and more especially his abject terror of Clive, got for him the nickname of Colonel Clive's jackass. His wish to remove Hindus from all high offices excited discontent and intrigue everywhere. Clive could protect their persons, but he could not maintain them in their posts. He was therefore hated by the nobles, while the natives generally complained that the English took no thought of the wants and sufferings of the main body of the people.

13. The contest between the French and the English for supremacy was not yet ended. Bussy was about to march to the aid of Suraj-u-Daula when he heard of the fall of Chandernagore. By way of retaliation he drove the English out of Vizagapatam, and took three of their factories on the coast of the delta of the Godavari. In 1758, a French fleet reached Pondicherry, with a large force under the command of the Count Lally. This officer had a strong dislike of the English, and a distrust, not less strong, of the rectitude of his countrymen in India. Recalling Bussy from the Deccan, he placed the Marquis of Conflans in charge of the Northern Circars (p. 99). The latter was confronted by an English force under Colonel Forde, who recovered the factories along the coast which had been seized by Bussy. Lally's attempt to besiege Madras was not successful, and the news of its failure was received with expressions of hearty satisfaction by the French merchants at Pondicherry. Nor were his efforts happier else-

where. In 1760, he was defeated by Colonel Coote at Wandiwash, a town near the coast between Madras and Pondicherry; and before the year was ended, Pondicherry itself had been starved into a capitulation, and its fortifications rased to the ground. The surrender of the fort of Jinji (p. 94) put an end to French military power in the Carnatic. Lally, unlike Dupleix, had acted with complete unselfishness; but he had been foiled by the indifference of merchants who cared only for their own interests. Like Dupleix, he was thrown into the Bastille; but he was brought out of it only to be condemned to instant execution. He died the third martyr of the French East India Company.

14. Towards the close of the year 1759, a Dutch fleet of seven ships appeared in the Hugli, and some vessels of the English company were seized; the Dutch colours were hoisted upon them, and the store-houses of Fulta were burnt. England and Holland were at peace; but Clive rightly held that these acts left him free to take his own course. The Dutch fleet was attacked, and every ship was taken. But 700 Europeans who had landed from them with 800 Malays made their way to the Dutch settlement at Chinsura. Colonel Forde, who had followed them thither, was in perplexity, and asked directions from Clive. The answer was that he should fight them at once, and that the authority for so doing should be sent the next day. The engagement ended in the severe defeat of the Dutch; and the sudden appearance of Meerun, the son of Mir Jafir, with 7,000 cavalry immediately after the action, seems to show that the

whole enterprise was the result of intrigues at Murshedabad, and not of any deliberate purpose on the part of the Dutch government of Batavia to set up a counterpoise to English influence in Bengal.

15. With the downfall of the French military power Clive's work in India was, in substance, done. Yet he was anxious for an administration which should permanently secure the results thus far attained. The whole country was full of marauding bands of Mahrattas and Afghans, and it was out of the Company's power to maintain a force adequate to withstand or repress them. He proposed, therefore, to Pitt, that the nation should take over the sovereignty of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and pointed out that the surplus of revenue and expenditure would be not less than two millions sterling annually. The proposal was rejected on the ground that such an acquisition might render the British Crown too powerful, and endanger the liberties of Englishmen. The decision can scarcely be regarded as a fortunate one, whether for England or for India. To say the least, acquisitions on a far larger scale have been added to our Indian empire without any ominous effects on the constitutional freedom of the British nation.

CHAPTER XII.

Relations of the English with the Mogul Empire.

1. The empire of Baber and Akbar had but a shadowy existence in the days of Mohammed Shah. The story of its decline and disruption after his

death is soon told. It is a tale of intrigue, and of shifting alliances and combinations in the vain effort to prop a falling house, or for the more practicable purpose of sharing in the plunder of its wealth. It was thus that Sufder Jung, viceroy of Oude, who had been appointed vizier by Ahmed Shah, the successor of Mohammed Shah, 1748–1754, called in the Mah-rattas to aid him against the Rohillas, a warlike tribe whose country lay to the north-east of Delhi, stretching onwards to the heights of Kumaon. The Rohillas were for the time repressed; but the Afghan chief Ahmed Shah, the Durani, had again left his mountains, and was insisting on the cession of the Punjab. The disgust of Sufder Jung, when on his return he found that the cession had been actually made, irritated the emperor, who called in the aid of Ghazi-u-dín, a grandson of Asof Jah, against his vizir.

2. But Ghazi-u-dín was not more tolerable than the man whom he had displaced, and after a short time he deposed and blinded the emperor, and raised one of the royal princes to the throne under the title of Alamgir II., 1754–1759. The tyranny of Ghazi-u-dín drove the army into mutiny. The mutiny was suppressed by massacre; but Ghazi-u-dín made the blunder of seizing the governor whom Ahmed Shah Durani had left in the Punjab. The Afghan chief presented himself at the gates of Delhi to avenge the insult. Before he went back to his own land, the emperor prayed that he might not be left at the mercy of his vizir, and the Durani prince accordingly left the Rohilla Najib-u-Daula as his commander-in-chief at Delhi, 1757.

3. But Alamgir could not thus escape the toils. Ghazi-u-din called on the Mahrattas. A Mahratta army took possession of the Punjab, and the Afghan Ahmed once more came down to recover it. But Ahmed might act as the emperor's friend. Alamgir was therefore murdered; but the prince set up by Ghazi-u-din was never acknowledged, and the sequel exhibits a struggle directly between Mahrattas and Afghans. The former seized on Delhi, but on the approach of Ahmed they withdrew, and entrenched themselves at Panipat, the field of so many memorable fights. The inferiority of his forces compelled Ahmed also to throw up lines round his army; and so the two hosts faced each other, while each day told against the Mahrattas. Cut off from their usual method of foraging, they soon exhausted the country round, and ate out the town of Panipat. Their sufferings at length became intolerable, and the Mahratta leader made ready for the fatal conflict which ended in the annihilation of his host. Two hundred thousand men which he had led into action were left, it is said, dead upon the field; and those who were not slain were fugitives who made their way across the Nerbudda, 1761. For the time at least, Hindustan was rid of these indomitable and insatiable plunderers. The Afghan chief was once more master of the empire. He would have placed the son of Alamgir on the throne; but that prince, who, after his father's murder, had assumed the title of Shah Alam, was absent in Bengal which he hoped to reconquer, and his son Jewun Bakht was placed

as his deputy on the throne of Baber under the guardianship of the Rohilla chief Najib-u-Daula.

4. Shah Alam, meanwhile, had learnt that the methods of Mogul government had brought into the field an enemy destined to supplant all the contending factions, and to set up a government under which subordinate officers should have something better to do than to make war upon each other or upon their sovereign. Shah Alam had laid siege to Patna, 1760; but it suited the English to fight in the name of Mir Jafir, and a force of 200 Europeans, with a small body of Sepoys, crossed the river and defeated him. Shah Alam fled; but his baggage and artillery were captured by Colonel Calliaud and Meerun, son of Mir Jafir. The tent of the latter was struck by lightning, and Meerun himself was killed. This man was a cruel and licentious tyrant, but he had shown ability as an administrator of Bengal. His father was in his dotage, and Mr. Vansittart, now governor of Calcutta, with the consent of his council, called on Mir Jafir to abdicate in favour of his son-in-law, Mir Cossim. The new Nuwab assigned to the Company the large districts of Burdwan, Midnapur, and Chittagong; and 200,000*l.* were set aside for the members of the council.

5. Thus, while the lawful sovereign of Bengal was seeking to assert his own right to it, the English resisted him in the field, and sold the country to one who had not even the shadow of a title; and this was done by men who, under cover of the Company's interests, gave little heed to any but their own. If it was needful to have a puppet ruler

at all, it would have been better to choose the representative of Akbar, from whom they would, it has been well said, have obtained more favourable terms and more extensive grants than those which they exacted from Mir Cossim. They short-sightedly chose the less, when they might have had the more; and the most unseemly squabbles arose between those who had received a share in the plunder, and those who found themselves as poor as they were before. Their conduct was neither straightforward nor honourable: in the sequel it was seen to be blundering. Mir Cossim was willing to be placed in power by the English; but his one desire was to exercise it without their interference. To get beyond their reach, he left Murshedabad and took up his abode at Monghyr, where he began to cast cannon and make muskets for his troops. His protests against the system of passes issued by the Company's officers, exempting merchants from the payment of customs duties, led to an open breach.

6. The system, there is no doubt, had been extravagantly abused. Before the battle of Plassy the privilege of exemption had been confined to foreign goods belonging to the Company. It was now extended to goods of all kinds conveyed under the Company's passports; and any servant of the Company now claimed the right of issuing them, as well as of trading with the products of the country, in which his own exemption from duty enabled him to undersell the native dealers. The result was not merely a serious loss to the Nuwab's revenue in a country where the transit of goods was carried on

chiefly by water, toll-houses being set up at the important turns of the rivers; but Bengalis, many of them men of indifferent or bad character, went about as agents of the English, compelling the people to sell at half, and to buy at double the value of goods, and insulting the Nuwab's officers. Among the few who saw the evils of the system were Vansittart the governor, and Warren Hastings, now a man of thirty and the youngest member of the Calcutta council. Both these men insisted that this trade in the goods of the country was not within the province of the Company's servants; but they spoke to deaf ears. Many of the council were vehemently opposed to Vansittart, who had been brought from Madras, in breach of the custom which had thus far secured promotion by seniority.

7. To settle the matter, Mir Cossim, in 1763, abolished all duties; and the Company's passes became useless. The one question was whether the Nuwab had the right to remit duties to his own subjects; by a singular process of reasoning the majority of the council decided that he had not. The arrangements made with Mir Cossim, as with Mir Jafir, were intended to bestow exclusive privileges on the servants of the Company; and these privileges Mir Cossim had now taken away. The answer of Warren Hastings was clear and conclusive. 'The Nuwab,' he said, 'has granted a boon to his subjects; and there are no grounds for demanding that a sovereign prince should withdraw such a boon, or threatening him with war in the event of refusal.' But his opponents might retort that this sovereign

prince was a creature whom they might set down as they had set him up.

8. The tidings now came that a boat, laden with fire-arms for the factory at Patna, had been seized by the officers of the Nuwab. As a condition for surrendering them, Mir Cossim demanded the removal of Mr. Ellis, the chief of the factory at Patna; and when this was refused, ordered that all the English should be apprehended. The English, as though nothing could be done in India except in the name of phantom princes, retaliated by restoring Mir Jafir, in spite of his age, his leprosy, and his imbecility, to the office of Nuwab. Enraged by a double defeat, at Cutwah and at Gheriah, Mir Cossim, 1763, ordered the slaughter of all the English prisoners at Patna. The native commanders refused to act as the executioners of unarmed men. The horrible task was undertaken by Walter Reinhardt, who had spent most of his time in deserting from the French to the English and back to the French again. He had enlisted in an English regiment under the name of Somers; his forbidding face led his comrades to call him Sombre. When he deserted to the service of Mir Cossim the natives called him Sumroo. A few weeks later the army of Mir Cossim was again defeated, and the fort of Monghyr taken. Mir Cossim now formed a league with the vizir of Oude. Having been joined by the emperor Shah Alam, they made an unsuccessful attempt on Patna, and withdrew to Buxar, where they remained during the rains, 1764. Major Hector Munro, appointed to command the English army, found the Sepoy portion

of it mutinous. Some firmness and severity were needed to suppress the rebellion, which was grounded on a demand for large donations and higher pay. When at length, with an army of seven thousand, of whom not one thousand were Europeans, he reached Buxar, he completely defeated the enemy, and but for the breaking down of a bridge must have become master of all their treasure, which was supposed to amount to 3,000,000*l.* sterling in value.

9. The whole of Bengal was now at the disposal of the Company, and they were virtual masters of Oude; but the negotiations with the emperor for the partition of that territory were for the time without result, and active operations were hindered by want of money. It would in fact seem that the English had introduced no better system than that which had disgraced the Mogul government. The Company were defrauded of their profits by the private trade of their officers; and these, receiving only a nominal stipend for their services, held themselves justified as well as constrained to increase their means by presents and claims of compensation for losses, real or supposed, from native governors. To such private claimants Mir Jafir had paid a sum of more than half a million sterling; and when his death made a new appointment necessary, these claims and demands for gifts, which were taken as of right, were renewed. In this way the senior officers of the Calcutta council received nearly 140,000*l.*; and when to such payments are added those for 'restitution,' the disbursements from the

Murshedabad treasury approach closely a sum of six millions.

10. It was not likely that the Court of Directors could feel much satisfaction in a system which impoverished them for the benefit of their servants, and Clive, who had returned to England, and been made an Irish peer, was requested to resume the government of Bengal. On the very day of his landing, May 3, 1765, the vizir of Oude was again defeated by General Carnac, and besought the indulgence and favour of the English. The tide of fortune had indeed changed. Ten years ago they had been simply merchants, summarily expelled from Bengal; now they were possessed of a power more solid in its foundations than that of the Mogul empire in its palmiest days.

11. Clive expressed great indignation at the state of things which he found on his return. 'The whites and the blacks,' he declared, 'had conspired together to empty the public treasury.' His words were just and true; but in spite of all that may be urged in palliation for himself, he was living in a house of glass and throwing stones at others. He said, indeed, that when he looked back upon the vast wealth which lay ready for his acceptance at Murshedabad after the fight of Plassy, he was beyond measure astonished at his own moderation. It was also true that if he had reaped a golden harvest, he had also done great service to the State; but the vice and corruption which he now saw everywhere was that of men who had done no service at all; and lastly, it was true that, while the practice of

receiving presents was permitted before the battle of Plassy, it had since been strictly prohibited.

12. He addressed himself sedulously to the task of reformation. The license for private trade was the result of the merely nominal salaries of the civil officers. Until other arrangements should be made, he ordered that the proceeds of the monopoly of salt, which had been treated as a perquisite of the Nuwab, should furnish a joint-stock sum, to be divided amongst all in proportion to their rank. For military officers, also, the extraordinary and irregular allowances and additions to pay must cease, and all must be reduced to one system, which must involve for them a considerable reduction of income. The officers pledged themselves to each other to resign in a body rather than submit to the change. Clive ordered that those who resigned should be sent to Calcutta. At the same time he summoned from Madras every officer that could be spared. The English soldiers at Monghyr appeared in arms to support their officers: they were overawed by Sepoy regiments. Some officers were tried and dismissed from the service; others expressed regret and were restored to their rank, and a serious danger thus passed away.

13. But Clive was bent on carrying out his great scheme for double government in India. By this he meant that the English should rule in the name of the Great Mogul; in other words, that their real sovereignty should be concealed from the British parliament and from the world. In this plan there

would be, he held, the further advantage that, while the English administered and regulated the finances, they would be free of all responsibility for the civil government of the people. In the Mogul empire the finance was in the hands of the minister, known as the Dewan; the military authority, and with it the administration of justice and police in that of the Nizam. The Company, for the payment of a certain tribute, was to be nominally Dewan; by the very necessity of the case they became Dewan and Nizam combined. The external or foreign policy of the Company was to follow the same course. They were vassals of the Emperor, and allies of his Nizam; but they were to have no relations with any other princes or chiefs in the peninsula. They would thus be clear of the complications of Eastern intrigues, while the dominions of the Nizam would be interposed between themselves and the tribes who might be especially troublesome—the Mahrattas and the Afghans.

14. The scheme was dazzling and full of promise. To the mercantile minds of the Directors there was something very attractive in an arrangement which made the people of India pay for all that they bought, and left to themselves as profit the gross receipts of sales in England. The revenues of Bengal, amounting to at least four millions sterling, would suffice, it was thought, not only for all military and civil salaries, and all the expenses of the settlements, but also for all investments in Indian and Chinese goods. But there were some drawbacks which made themselves unpleasantly pro-

minent as time went on. In the better days of the Mogul empire there was a real, and in the worst there was a nominal, check on oppression and extortion. The revenue was collected by Zemindars, who had to pay a block sum to the Nuwab ; and the profit of the Zemindar lay in the excess of the amounts paid to him by the ryots or farmers, and cultivators, and the lump sum due from himself. The Zemindars were, therefore, always under temptation to exact more than what was fair ; and, as they were mostly Mahometans, religious animosity might lead them on into exactions altogether illegal. Against such tyranny there was at least the right of appeal to the Nuwab ; but the conditions of Clive's double government swept this and every other safeguard away. So long as the revenue was punctually sent in, Nuwabs and Zemindars were left to deal with the people after their will. The one care of the English was for their money ; and they chose to forget that the power which takes the people's money is responsible for their welfare.

15. Whatever it may have been in its working, there can be no doubt that for the people of India this method of government was in theory far worse than the worst forms of Mogul despotism. So far, therefore, they were worse off under their new lords than they had been before. They were also poorer. The main revenues now went to men who were in haste to be rich in order that they might go as soon as possible and spend their gains elsewhere. Their own princes and nobles may have squandered vast sums on idle pageants and selfish luxuries ; but the

money which supported their extravagance was spent in the country, and multitudes who had subsisted on it were now left in beggary. There was, further, a not unnatural wish on the part of the native officials to cheat the white men; and the successors of Clive became fully aware of their roguery and of the ingrained dishonesty of all employed by them. The lessening of their resources was a matter of pain and grief to the Directors in England. They were still more indignant when they found that the expenditure rose as the receipts fell, and that in spite of this ominous change, their servants still returned to Europe with vast, and even princely fortunes. Four years after Clive's final departure from India a fearful famine brought matters to a crisis. Some of the English, like some of the native gentlemen, kept thousands alive by feeding them at their own expense; it was reported that others had combined to buy up large stocks of grain and sell them at exorbitantly increased rates. The Directors became convinced that a radical reform was vitally necessary, and they resolved to entrust the task to Warren Hastings.

16. Nor was adherence to Clive's policy of non-intervention a task as easy as he had supposed that it would be. A Mahratta army had been destroyed at Panipat; but the Mahratta people had not been annihilated. They were fast regaining strength, and Clive himself had suggested that it might be well to have an alliance with the Nizam, which should serve as a check on these indomitable horsemen. Nor was this the only difficulty. Clive had obtained from

the puppet emperor, Shah Alam, a firman or rescript assigning the Northern Circars in full sovereignty to the English. The act was an utter violation of the hereditary rights of the Nizam; but Clive would, probably, have cared nothing for the Nizam's resentment had he remained in India. The Madras government was of a very different temper; and, on hearing that the Nizam was raising an immense army for the invasion of the Carnatic, they sent General Calliaud to arrange a peace with him on the best terms which he might be able to obtain. From the Nizam the English received possession of the Circars, on condition of paying a yearly tribute of 70,000*l.*; and it was agreed between the two parties that they should assist each other against any enemy. The first potentate against whom they turned their arms was Hyder Ali, the founder of the Mahometan dynasty of Mysore.

17. Hyder Naik is said to have been originally a sepoy in the service of the French, and beyond doubt he was a man whose education was on a par with that of Sivaji. He could neither write nor read. After leaving the French service, he gathered around himself a body of soldiers, much resembling the Greek Klephts, or bandits, who pledge themselves to obey a certain leader, who, in his turn, promises that all shall share alike the produce of their robberies. Hyder's men would indifferently sack a town, or plunder a village, or strip men of their clothes. With such a troop Hyder followed the Hindu Raja of Mysore to the siege of Trichinopoly. For each soldier he was to receive a

certain amount in money and an extra gift for each man wounded. Hyder turned the agreement to good account by false musters and by bandaging sound limbs. But the Hindu Rajas of Mysore were no better than the later sovereigns of the house of Baber, and in due time Hyder put aside a symbol which for him had no value, and assumed the title, as he already had the power, of king. But although he had many enemies he made no alliances, unless we are to regard as such his alleged relations with the French of Pondicherry.

18. The history now brings before us a series of rapidly shifting scenes in the career of Hyder. He became the ally of the Nizam, and then found that the step which he had taken was a blunder. He fought against the English with varied but on the whole with marked success, and then invited them to become his allies under the threat of bringing up the Poona Mahrattas against them in case of their refusal. At length he approached Madras itself with an army of 6,000 horsemen. Madras was in no state for undergoing a siege; and no one within it had the genius or the wish for playing there the part which Clive had played at Arcot. A treaty was accordingly entered into, by which each agreed to restore all conquests and to help each other against the Mahrattas, 1769; but the English had to bear the whole cost of the war, while the presence of Hyder's horsemen in a suburb of Madras lessened the authority of the English not less than it added to his own.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Administration of Warren Hastings.

1. When Mir Cossim abolished the customs duties throughout his jurisdiction, the foremost of those who insisted that he had a sovereign right to do so was, as we have seen (p. 118), Warren Hastings, the most remarkable and in some respects the most illustrious of British governors in India. We have now to see how far his subsequent conduct was in accordance with the principles which he laid down with clearness and force. As we read the wonderful story of his public life, it is sometimes hard to repress a feeling of indignation amounting almost to loathing; but the very strength of the feelings thus stirred should make us the more careful that we do him justice. His great task was to carry on the work of Clive; he achieved success by seeming to undo it. The double government, which to Clive appeared so marvellously convenient, proved in its working to be the greatest curse that could befall a land. It produced anarchy in many places and misery everywhere. It deprived the people of all hope of getting justice; it impoverished the revenue and emptied the treasury. There was no paramount authority to repress the evil doing of men in the highest places, and to convince the people that their true interests lay in the maintenance of good order and honest dealing. Throughout the country there was an imposing hierarchy of political

ranks; but the title in no case corresponded with the power. The representative of Baber and Akbar was nominally the supreme lord of all, the master of all kings, viceroys (Nizams), deputies of viceroys (Nuwabs), and deputies of these deputies (Naibs). In reality he was their servant, and often their prisoner and their victim. These, again, in some instances maintained their power; in others they became phantom princes like Mir Jafir. The monarchy of Sivaji (p. 62) had followed the same course. His successor was a puppet in whose name his Peshwa, or minister, reigned as king; and the Peshwa in his turn was fast becoming a mere instrument in the hands of others. Hastings, it may fairly be said, had to begin from the beginning, and he left behind him an organized system which, with large changes of outward shape, has lasted in substance to the present day.

2. This great work he accomplished without any greater advantages of political training than had fallen to the lot of Clive. He was, indeed, very unlike Clive in the character of his mind and in his habits. He had been taught first in the village school at Daylesford, and his companions remembered in after years how kindly he had taken to his books. At Westminster School he gave high promise of future distinction in the world of letters; and when his guardian resolved on accepting for him the offer of a writership in the service of the East India Company, the head-master expressed his deep regret at the loss of a pupil who must have taken a very high place in the ranks of English scholars. He

was not yet eighteen years of age when he landed in Calcutta. After two years spent there at a clerk's desk, he was sent to the factory at Cossim Bazaar, where he remained with occupations similar to those of young Clive at Madras, until, on his declaration of war with the English, Suraj-u-Daula sent him as a prisoner to Murshedabad. Hastings made his escape, and when Clive came from Madras on his avenging mission, offered himself as a volunteer in the ranks; but Clive saw that the young soldier would be more useful in other ways, and when Mir Jafir was set up as Nuwab, Hastings was sent to reside at his court as the agent of the Company.

3. Four years later he became Member of Council at Calcutta; and, to his credit, he remained poor while all around him were winning wealth at the cost of their honour and fair fame. So keen is the scrutiny which has been applied to every part of his career that any attempt on his part to obtain money or gifts of any kind from the natives or their rulers must have been laid to his charge. It was, in truth, the most discreditable period of English rule. Every Englishman was living for himself, and the thought that they owed duties to those who were subjected to them seems not to have dawned upon their minds. Against the strength of European civilisation the inhabitants of Bengal were helpless, and the newcomers abused their strength to the uttermost. In 1771, Hastings, who in the interval had spent some years in England and had then served as Member of Council at Madras, was appointed to the government of Bengal. In later years the governor became,