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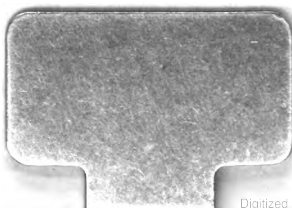
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THE
HISTORY OF INDIA,

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS. .

COMPILED FROM THE WORKS

OF

ELPHINSTONE, WILSON, MACAULAY,
MURRAY, MACFARLANE, CAMPBELL,
KAYE AND OTHERS.

BY THE

REV. J. GARRET.

Third Edition.

LUCKNOW.

PRINTED AT THE NEWUL KISHORE PRESS.
1865.

THE PROTESTANT

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PREFACE.

It was stated in the Preface to the first edition of this work that "the early History, to the extinction of the Mogul empire, is an abridgement of the valuable work of Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone. The eras of Clive and Hastings have been illustrated by extracts from the brilliant sketches of Macaulay. The popular narratives of Murray and Macfarlane, form the basis of the remaining portions of the work; with such corrections and alterations as were suggested by Professor Wilson's History, and his notes to Mill. For example, Macfarlane's depreciatory notice of Lord William Bentinck has been suppressed, and in its place the more impartial testimony of Professor Wilson inserted."

Additions have since been made from the recent works of Campbell and Kaye; from the *Calcutta Review*, and the *Friend of India*. The narrative of events has also been brought down to the present year: and some introductory chapters prefixed, containing an account of the Hindu religion, and a description of the man-

ners and customs of the people; chiefly condensed from the the work of Mr. Elphinstone.

Some statements have been admitted into the work not taken from any of the writers above specified: such as those which relate to the changes made in the government of Mysore (Chap. XXXIX;) but for these the compiler has had unquestionable living authority.

J. G.

BANGALORE :
September, 1854.

 The Third Edition is, with a few corrections, a reprint of the Second.

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THE HISTORY OF INDIA.

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ANCIENT HINDU CIVILIZATION.

*Aborigines—The Hindus—Early Civilization—Its Causes
Origin of Classes—State of the Ancient Hindus—Manu
—Society—Manners and Customs—Subsequent Innovations
—Stagnation and Decline of Hindu Civilization.*

THE original inhabitants of India were no doubt the tribes who are now found only amongst its mountains. These races, in their appearance, language, and manners, differ entirely from the present inhabitants of the plains. But of their history nothing whatever is known.

As to the time when India was first peopled by the Hindus; from whom they descended; and what countries they migrated from; no reliable information exists. Hindu literature is singularly deficient in historical records. It contains genealogies of different lines of kings; but they are mythological, not historical.

Still, notwithstanding the obscurity in which the early history of India is involved, the Hindus are no doubt entitled to claim great antiquity among existing nations. They shared in that ancient Eastern civilization, which, at a very remote period, prevailed in India, Persia, Assyria, and Egypt, long before Western civilization had been commenced by the Greeks.

It does not admit of doubt that before the commencement of the Christian era, India exhibited the appearance of a country whose manners had become fixed by time: where useful, and even luxurious arts had been long known and practised; and where people had leisure and inclination to engage in intellectual occupations.

We may ascribe, if not the origin, at least the continuance, of this civilization, to the rich alluvial lands of the Ganges, the Euphrates, and the Nile. There the earth yielded more than sufficient to support those employed in cultivating it. This surplus produce gave a portion of society leisure for following the arts of civilization, and at the same time rendered necessary certain laws to regulate its disposal.

In the early stages of society the sanctions of religion are always necessary to enforce law. These, the framers of the laws took care to supply, and naturally acquired an influence over the other classes. Whether the Brahmans took their origin in India or came from some other country, they early became a ruling class: and whether originally warlike or not, they took in the end rather a priestly than a military character.

It was in Northern India that the ancient Hindus first settled. They resembled the Egyptian not only in their institutions and manners, but also in physical appearance. There is much evidence to show that the original Hindus were of that glossy, long-eyed, Egyptian cast of countenance, and sleek, supple-jointed bodies, which we see in monuments. They had little physical energy and courage, but much acuteness and cunning.

The earliest authentic account of the ancient Hindus is furnished by Manu, B. C. 800. The Brahmans seem to have been a great priestly tribe settled in large numbers of the Ganges. The class next in importance were the Kshatriyas, or military, who may have been the forerunners of the agricultural classes. The country was divided among them into petty independent kingdoms. These contained corporate villages governed by a head man appointed by the king. The revenue was derived from the surplus produce, or rent of the land. In the Hindu constitution everything was hereditary; and to this may be traced the stationary character of the civilization attained.

More than two hundred years after the time of Manu, India was invaded by the Persians, under Darius Hystaspes; and from authentic accounts we learn that the country was at that time populous, fertile, and well cultivated.

A hundred and sixty years after this, Alexander the Great attempted the conquest of India; and from the accounts left by the accurate Greek writers, we may trace the

changes which had taken place between the time of Manu's code and that of Alexander. These were—the complete emancipation of the servile class ; the more general occurrence, if not the first instances, of the burning of Hindu widows ; the prohibition of intermarriages between castes ; the employment of the Brahmans as soldiers, and their inhabiting separate villages ; and perhaps the commencement of the monastic orders.

Most of these innovations were decidedly for the worse ; and in tracing the progress of subsequent changes, of purely Hindu origin, we shall find an equal deterioration.

The total extinction of the servile condition of the Súd-ras is, doubtless, an improvement ; but in other respects we find the religion of the Hindus debased, their restrictions of caste more rigid (except in the interested relaxation of the Brahmans,) the avowed imposts on the land doubled, the courts of justice disused, the laws less liberal towards woman, the great works of peace no longer undertaken, and the courtesies of war almost forgotten. We find, also, from their extant works, that the Hindus once excelled in departments of taste and science on which they never now attempt to write ; and that they formerly impressed strangers with a high respect for their courage, veracity, simplicity, and integrity,—the qualities in which they now seem to be most deficient.

It is impossible, from all this, not to come to a conclusion that the Hindus were once in a higher condition, both moral and intellectual, than they are now ; and as, even in their present state of depression, they are still on a footing of equality with any people out of Europe, it seems to follow that, at one time, they must have attained a state of civilization only surpassed by a few of the most favoured of the nations, either of antiquity or of modern times.

The causes of their decline are obvious. Their religion encourages inaction, which is the first step towards decay. The rules of caste check improvement at home, and at the same time prevent its entering from abroad. Despotism would doubtless contribute its share to check the progress of society ; but it was less oppressive and degrading than in most Asiatic countries.

The minute subdivision of inheritances is not peculiar to the Hindus ; and yet it is that which most strikes an

inquirer into the causes of the abject condition of the greater part of them. By it the descendants of the greatest landed proprietor must, in time, be broken down to something between a farmer and a labourer, but less independent than either ; and without a chance of accumulation to enable them to recover their position. Bankers and merchants may get rich enough to leave all their sons with fortune ; but, as each possessor knows that he can neither found a family nor dispose of his property by will, he endeavours to gain what pleasure and honour he can from his life-rent, by ostentation in feasts and ceremonies ; and by commencing temples, tanks, and groves, which his successors are too poor to complete or to repair.

The effect of equal division on men's minds is as great as on their fortunes. It was resorted to by some ancient republics to prevent the growth of luxury and the disposition to innovation. In India it effectually answers those ends, and stifles all the restless feelings to which men might be led by the ambition of permanently improving their condition. A man who has amassed a fortune by his own labours is not likely to have a turn for literature or the fine arts ; and if he had, his collections would be dispersed at his death, and his sons would have to begin their toils anew, without time for acquiring that refinement in taste, or elevation of sentiment, which is brought about by the improved education of successive generations.

Hence, although rapid rise and sudden fortunes are more common in India than in Europe, they produce no permanent change in society ; all remains on the same dead level, with no conspicuous objects to guide the course of the community and no barriers to oppose to the arbitrary will of the ruler.

Under such discouragements we cannot be surprised at the stagnation and decline of Hindu civilization. The wonder is, how it could ever struggle against them, and how it attained to such a pitch as exists even at this moment.

At what time it had reached its highest point it is not easy to say. Perhaps in institutions and moral character it was at its best just before Alexander ; but learning was much longer in reaching its achme. The most flourishing period for literature is represented by Hindu tradition to be that of Vikramāditya, a little before the beginning of the Christian era ; but some of the authors who are mentioned

as the ornaments of that prince's court, appear to belong to later times; and the good writers, whose works are extant, extend over a long space of time, from the second century before Christ to the eighth of the Christian era. Mathematical science was in most perfection in the fifth century after Christ; but works of merit, both in literature and science, continued to be composed for some time after the Mahometan invasion.

Probably four hundred years, elapsed between the time of Manu and the invasion of Alexander the Great. In that comparatively brief period we have seen that many important changes occurred. But it is remarkable that from the time of Alexander to the present, the social condition of the people should have been so slightly modified. The descriptions left by Alexander's officers, of the Hindu manners and customs, give a very exact picture of what we now see in the rural districts of India. The vicissitudes of two thousand years seem to have had little effect in altering the habits of the mass of the people.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGION—PAST AND PRESENT.

The Vedas—Manu—Four Castes—Their Character—Brahmans—Kshatriyas—Vaishyas—Sudras—Veda Doctrines—Present Doctrines.

A VIEW of the religion of the Hindus is given by the Vedas, a collection of ancient hymns and prayers, which are supposed to have been reduced to their present form in the fourteenth century before the Christian era ; but the first complete picture of the state of society, is afforded by the Code of Laws which bears the name of Manu, and which was probably drawn up in the ninth century before Christ.

The first feature that strikes us in the society described by Manu, is the division into four classes or castes ; the sacerdotal, the military, the industrious, and the servile. In these the position of the Brahman is one of prodigious elevation and sanctity ; while that of the lowest class is one of studied degradation.

The first three classes, though by no means equal, all partake in certain sacred rites ; and appear to form the whole community for whose good the laws are framed. The fourth class, and the outcastes, are no further consideration than as they contribute to the advantage of the superior castes.

The sacred class, or Brahmans, are considered the chief of all created beings. The military, or Kshatriyas, are treated with respect. The third class, or Vaishyas, do not rank high ; they are to perform all commercial and agricultural duties. The chief duty of the fourth class, or Súdras, is to serve the other classes. A Súdra is not to amass wealth, and is subjected to every possible degradation.

The religion taught in the Institutes of Manu is derived from the Vedas. Their primary doctrine is the unity of God. Among the creatures of the Supreme Being are some superior to man, who should be adored, and from whom protection and favours may be obtained through prayer. It will, however, be more important in this work to

describe the present religious system, which has very considerably departed from that taught in the Vedas.

The principal changes in religion since Manu are :—

The neglect of the principle of monotheism :

The neglect of some gods, and the introduction of others :

The worship of deified mortals :

The introduction (or at least the great increase) of sects ; and the attempt to exalt individual gods at the expense of others :

The doctrine that *faith* in a particular god is more efficacious than contemplation, ceremonial observance, or good works :

The use of a new ritual instead of the Vedas ; and the religious ascendancy acquired by the monastic orders.

The nature of these changes will appear in an account of the Hindu religion as it now stands, which is essential to an understanding of the ordinary transactions of the people.

There is, indeed, no country where religion is so constantly brought before the eye as in India. Every town has temples of all descriptions, from a shrine which barely holds the idol, to a pagoda with lofty towers, and spacious courts, and colonnades. To all these, votaries are constantly repairing, to hang the image with garlands, and to present to it fruits and flowers. The banks of the river, or artificial sheet of water, (for there is no town that is not built on one or other,) has often noble flights of steps leading down to the water, which are covered, in the early part of the day, with persons performing their ablutions, and going through their devotions, as they stand in the stream.

Parties of Brahmans and others pass on similar occasions ; and frequently numerous processions move on, with drums and music, to perform the ceremony of some particular holiday. They carry with them images borne aloft on stages, representations of temples, chariots, and other objects, which, though of cheap and flimsy materials, are made with skill and taste, and present a gay and glittering appearance.

At a distance from towns, temples are always found in inhabited places ; and frequently rise among the trees on the banks of rivers, in the heart of deep groves, or on the summits of hills. Even in the wildest forests, a stone covered with vermillion, with a garland hung on a tree above

it, or a small flag fastened among the branches, apprises the traveller of the sanctity of the spot.

Troops of pilgrims and religious mendicants are often met on the road; the latter distinguished by the dress of their order, and the pilgrims by bearing some symbol of the god to whose shrine they are going, and shouting out in the most melancholy monotonous manner, his name or watchword, whenever they meet with other passengers. The numerous festivals throughout the year are celebrated by the native princes with great pomp and expense; they afford occasions of display to the rich, and lead to some little show and festivity even among the lower orders.

But the frequent meetings, on days sacred to particular gods, are chiefly intended for the latter class, who crowd to them with delight, even from distant quarters.

Though the religion presented in so many striking forms does not enter, in reality, into all the scenes to which it gives rise, yet it still exercises a prodigious influence over the people; and has little, if at all, declined, in that respect since the first period of its institution.

The objects of adoration, however, are no longer the same.

The theism inculcated by the Vedās as the true faith, in which all other forms were included, has been supplanted by a system of gross polytheism and idolatry; and, though nowhere entirely forgotten, is never steadily thought of except by philosophers and divines.

The authors of the Vedas, though they ascended beyond the early worship of the elements and the powers of nature, to a knowledge of the real character of the Divinity, and though anxious to diffuse their own doctrines, did not disturb the popular belief; but, actuated either by their characteristic respect for immemorial usage, or, perhaps, by a regard for the interests of the priesthood (from which the most enlightened Brahman seems never to have been free,) they permitted the worship of the established gods to continue, representing them as so many forms or symbols of the real Divinity. At the same time, they erected no temple, and addressed no worship to the true God. The consequence was such as was to be expected from the weakness of human nature: the obvious and palpable parts of their religion prevailed over the more abstruse and more sublime: the ancient polytheism kept its

ground, and was further corrupted by the introduction of deified heroes, who have, in their turn, superseded the deities from whom they were supposed to derive their divinity.

The scriptures of this new religion are the Puranas, of which there are eighteen, all alleged by their followers to be the works of Vyása, the compiler of the Vedas ; but, in reality composed by different authors between the eighth and sixteenth centuries, although, in many places, from materials of much more ancient date. They contain theogonies ; accounts of the creation ; philosophical speculations ; instructions for religious ceremonies ; genealogies ; fragments of history ; and innumerable legends relating to the actions of gods, heroes, and sages. Most are written to support the doctrines of particular sects, and all are corrupted by sectarian fables ; so that they do not form a consistent whole, and were never intended to be combined into one general system of belief. Yet they are all received as incontrovertible authority ; and, as they are the sources from which the present Hindu religion is drawn, we cannot be surprised to find it full of contradictions and anomalies.

The Hindus, as has been said, are still aware of the existence of a Supreme Being, from whom all others derive their existence, or, rather, of whose substance they are composed ; for, according to the belief of the principal sect, the universe and the Diety are one and the same. But their devotion is directed to a variety of gods and goddesses, of whom it is impossible to fix the number. Some accounts, with the usual Hindu extravagance, make the deities amount to 330,000,000 ; but most of these are ministering angels in the different heavens, or other spirits who have no individual name or character, and who are counted by the million.

The following seventeen, however, are the principal ones ; and, perhaps, the only ones universally recognised as exercising distinct and divine functions, and therefore entitled to worship :—

1. Brahma, the creating principle ;
2. Vishnu, the preserving principle ;
3. Siva, the destroying principle ;

with their corresponding female divinities, namely,—

- 4. Saraswati.
- 5. Lakshmi.
- 6. Párvati, called also Dévi, Bhaváni, or Durga.
- 7. Indra, god of the air and of the heavens.
- 8. Varuna, god of the waters.
- 9. Pávana, god of the wind.
- 10. Agni, god of fire.
- 11. Yama, god of the infernal regions, and judge of the dead.
- 12. Kubéra, god of wealth.
- 13. Kártikéya, god of war.
- 14. Káma, god of love, or lust.
- 15. Súra, the sun.
- 16. Sóma, the moon.

17. Ganésa, who is the remover of difficulties, and, as such, presides over the entrances to all edifices, and is invoked at the commencement of all undertakings. To these may be added the planets, and many sacred rivers, especially the Ganges, which is personified as a female divinity, and honoured with every sort of worship and reverence.

The three first of these gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, form the celebrated Hindu triad, whose separate characters are sufficiently apparent, but whose supposed unity may perhaps be resolved into the general maxim of orthodox Hindus, that *all* the deities are only various forms of one Supreme Being.

Brahma, though he seems once to have had some degree of pre-eminence, and is the only one of the three mentioned by Manu, was never much worshipped, and has now but few temples in India: though invoked in the daily service, his separate worship is almost entirely neglected.

His consort, Saraswati, being goddess of learning and eloquence, has not fallen so completely out of notice.

It is far different with Vishnu and Siva. They and their incarnations now attract almost all the religious veneration of the Hindus; the relative importance of each is eagerly supported by numerous votaries; and there are heterodox sects of great extent which maintain the supreme divinity of each, to the entire exclusion of his rival.

Siva is thus described in the Puránas. "He wanders about, surrounded by ghosts and goblins, inebriated, naked, and with dishevelled hair, covered with the ashes of a funeral pile, ornamented with human skulls and bones,

sometimes laughing, and sometimes crying." The usual pictures of him correspond with these gloomy descriptions, with the addition that he has three eyes, and bears a trident in one of his hands : his hair is coiled up like that of a religious mendicant ; and he is represented seated in an attitude of profound thought.

Bloody sacrifices are performed to Siva, though discouraged by the Brahmans of his sect ; and it is in honour of him, or of his consort, that so many self-inflicted tortures are incurred on certain days in every year. On those occasions, some stab their limbs and pierce their tongues with knives, and walk in procession with swords, arrows, and even living serpents thrust through the wounds ; while, others are raised into the air by a hook fixed in the flesh of their backs, and are whirled round by a moveable lever, at a height which would make their destruction inevitable, if the skin were to give away.

The nature of Siva's occupations does not indicate much attention to the affairs of mankind ; and, according to the present Hindu system, there is no god particularly charged with the government of the world ; the Supreme Being, out of whose substance it is formed, taking no concern in its affairs : but the opinion of the vulgar is more rational than that of their teachers ; they mix up the idea of the Supreme Being with that of the deity who is the particular object of their adoration, and suppose him to watch over the actions of men, and to reward the good and punish the wicked both in this world and in the next.

The heaven of Siva is in the midst of the eternal snows and glaciers of Kailása, one of the highest and steepest groups of the stupendous summits of Himálaya.

His consort, Párvati or Káli, is at least as much an object of adoration as Siva ; and is represented in still more terrible colours. Even in the milder forms in which she is generally seen in the south of India, she is a beautiful woman, riding on a tiger, but in a fierce and menacing attitude, as if advancing to the destruction of one of the giants, against whom her incarnations were assumed. But in another form, occasionally used everywhere, and seemingly the favourite one in Bengal, she is represented with a black skin, and a hideous and terrible countenance, streaming with blood, encircled with snakes, hung round with skulls and human heads, and in all respects resem-

bling a fury rather than a goddess. Her rites in those countries correspond with this character. Human sacrifices were formerly offered to her; and she is still supposed to delight in carnage. At her temple, near Calcutta, 1000 goats are said to be sacrificed monthly.

In other respects the worship of Párvati does not differ much from that of the other gods; but it sometimes assumes a form that has brought suspicion or disgrace on the whole of the Hindu religion. Secret orgies are practised, with which are connected the grossest debauchery. Besides these votaries of Párvati, and entirely unconnected with her worship, there are some few among the varieties of religious mendicants who consider themselves above all law, and at liberty to indulge their passions without incurring sin. These add to the ill repute of the religion of the Hindus; and it is undeniable, that a strain of licentiousness and sensuality mixes occasionally with every part of their mythology; but it is confined to books and songs, and to temples and festivals, which do not fall under every one's observation.

To return to the gods of the Hindus: Vishnu is represented as a comely and placid young man, of a dark azure colour, and dressed like a king of ancient days. He is painted also in the forms of his ten principal incarnations, which illustrate the genius of Hindu fiction.

The first avatar was that of a fish, to recover the Vedas which had been carried away by a demon in a deluge; the second was that of a boar, who raised on his tusks the world, which had sunk to the bottom of the ocean; and the third was a tortoise, that supported a mountain in one of the most famous legends. The fourth was that of a man with the head and paws of a lion. The fifth was as a Brahman dwarf. The sixth incarnation is Parashu Ráma, a Brahman hero, who made war on the Kshatriya, or military class, and extirpated the whole race. The seventh was Ráma. The eighth was Krishna, a hero who delivered the earth from giants. The ninth was Budha, a teacher of a false religion, whose form Vishnu assumed for the purpose of deluding the enemies of the gods: a character which plainly points to the religion of Budha, so well known as the rival of that of the Brahmans. The tenth is still to come.

But all his other forms are thrown into the shade by the incarnations of Ráma and Krishna, who have not only eclips-

ed their parent Vishnu, in Hindoostan at least, but have superseded the worship of the old elementary gods, and indeed of all other gods, except Siva, Sūrya, and Ganésha. Rāma, thus identified with Vishnu by the superstition of his admirers, was a king of Oude, and is almost the only person mentioned in the Hindu traditions whose actions have something of a historical character. He is said to have been at first excluded from his paternal kingdom, and to have passed many years in religious retirement in a forest. His queen, Síta, was carried off by the giant Rávana; for her sake he led an army into the Deckan, penetrated to the island of Ceylon, of which Rávana was king, and recovered Síta. In that expedition his allies were an army of monkeys, under the command of Hanumanta, whose figure is frequently seen in temples, and who, indeed, is at least as much worshipped in the Deckan as Rāma or any of the other gods. Rāma is represented in his natural form, and is an object of general adoration.

But in this respect he falls far short of the popularity of another deified mortal, whose pretensions are by no means so obvious either as a king or a conqueror. He was born of the royal family of Mathará, on the Jumna; but brought up by a herdsman in the neighbourhood, who concealed him from a tyrant who sought his life. This is the period which has made most impression on the Hindus, who are never tired of celebrating Krishna's frolics and exploits as a child—his stealing milk, and his destroying a serpent. There is also amongst them an extensive sect who worship him under his infant form, as the supreme creator and ruler of the universe.

Krishna is the greatest favourite with the Hindus of all their divinities. The greater part of the votaries of Krishna maintain that he is not an incarnation of Vishnu, but Vishnu himself, and likewise the eternal and self-existing creator of the universe.

These are the principal manifestations of Vishnu; but his incarnations or emanations, even as acknowledged in books, are innumerable; and they are still more swelled by others in which he is made to appear under the form of some local saint or hero.

Even villages have their local deities, which are often emanations of Siva or Vishnu, or of the corresponding goddesses. But all these incarnations are insignificant,

when compared to the great ones of Vishnu, and above all to Ráma and Krishna.

The wife of Vishnu is Lakshmi. She has no temples : but, being the goddess of fortune, she continues to be assiduously courted, and is not likely to fall into neglect.

Of the remaining gods, Ganésa and Súra (the sun) are the most generally honoured.

They both have votaries who prefer them to all other gods, and both have temples and regular worship. Ganésa, indeed, has probably more temples in the Deckan than any other god except Siva. Súra is represented in a chariot, with his head surrounded by rays.

Ganésa, or Ganapati, is a figure of a fat boy, with an elephant's head.

None of the remaining nine of the gods enumerated have temples, though most of them seem to have had them in former times. Some have an annual festival, on which their image is made and worshipped, and next day is thrown into a stream : others are only noticed in prayers. Indra, in particular, seems to have formerly occupied a much more distinguished place in popular respect than he now enjoys.

The Asuras are the kindred of the gods, disinherited and cast into darkness, but long struggling against their rivals ; and bearing a strong resemblance to the Titans of the Grecian mythology.

The Daityas are another species of demon, strong enough to have mustered armies and carried on war with the gods.

The Rákshasas are also gigantic and malignant beings ; and the Pisáchas are of the same nature, though perhaps inferior in power. Bhútas are evil spirits of the lowest order, corresponding to our ghosts and other goblins of the nursery ; but in India believed in by all ranks and ages.

A most extensive body of divinities is still to be noticed ; although they are not individually acknowledged except in confined districts, and although the legality of their worship is sometimes denied by the Brahmans. These are the village gods, of which each village adores two or three, as its especial guardians ; but sometimes as its dreaded persecutors and tormentors. They bear some resemblance to the penates or lares of the Romans ; and, like them, they are sometimes the recognised gods of the whole nation ;

but much oftener they are the spirits of deceased persons, who have attracted the notice of the neighbourhood.

They have seldom temples or images, but are worshipped under the form of a heap of earth. It is possible that some of them may be the ancient gods of the Súdras, who have survived the establishment of the Brahman religion.



CHAPTER III.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE HINDU RELIGION.

Mythological Legends—Their Extravagance and Contradictory Character—Religious Austerities—A Future State—Its Influence—Ceremonies—Sects—Religion of the Bâudhas and Jâinas.

THE last chapter gives a brief outline of the religion of the Hindus. To give a conception of its details, it would be necessary to relate some of the innumerable legends of which their mythology is composed,—the churning of the ocean by the gods and asuras, for the purpose of procuring the nectar of immortality, and the subsequent stratagem by which the gods defrauded their coadjutors of the prize obtained ; the descent of the Ganges from heaven on the invocation of a saint ; its falling with violence on the head of Siva, wandering for years amidst his matted locks, and tumbling at last to the earth, with all its train of fishes, snakes, turtles, and crocodiles ; the production of Ganéscha, without a father, by the intense wishes of Dévi ; his temporary slaughter by Siva, who cut off his head, and afterwards replaced it with that of an elephant, the first that came to hand in the emergency ;—such narratives, with the quarrels of the gods, their occasional loves and jealousies ; their wars with men and demons ; their defeats, flights, and captivity ; their penances and austerities for the accomplishment of their wishes ; their speaking weapons ; the numerous forms they have assumed, and the delusions with which they have deceived the senses of those whom they wished to injure ;—all this would be necessary to show fully the religious opinions of India ; but would occupy a space for which the value of the matter would be a very inadequate compensation.

It may be sufficient to observe, that the general character of these legends is extravagance and incongruity. The Greek gods were formed like men, with greatly increased powers and faculties, and acted as men would do if so circumstanced ; but with a dignity and energy suited to their nearer approach to perfection. The Hindu gods, on the

other hand, though endued with human passions, have always something monstrous in their appearance, and wild and capricious in their conduct. They are of various colours,—red, yellow, and blue ; some have twelve heads, and most have four hands. They are often enraged without a cause, and reconciled without a motive. The same deity is sometimes powerful enough to destroy his enemies with a glance, or subdue them with a wish ; and at other times is obliged to assemble numerous armies to accomplish his purpose, and is very near failing after all.

The powers of the three great gods are co-equal and unlimited ; yet are exercised with so little harmony, that in one of their disputes, Siva cuts off one of Brahma's heads. Neither is there regular subordination of the other gods to the three, or to each other. Indra, who is called the King of Heaven, and has been compared to Jupiter, has no authority over any of the rest. These and more incongruities arise, in part, from the desire of different sects to extol their favourite deity ; but, as the Purāṇas are all of authority, it is impossible to separate legends founded on those writings from the general belief of all classes.

The most singular anomaly in the Hindu religion is the power of sacrifice and religious austerities. Through them a religious ascetic can inflict the severest calamities, even on a deity, by his curse ; and the most wicked and most impious of mankind may acquire such an ascendancy over the gods as to render them the passive instruments of his ambition, and even to force them to submit their heavens and themselves to his sovereignty. Indra, on being cursed by a Brahman, was hurled from his own heaven, and compelled to animate the body of a cat. Even Yama, the terrible judge of the dead, is said, in a legend, to have been cursed for an act done in that capacity, and obliged to undergo a transmigration into the person of a slave.

The danger of all the gods from the sacrifices of one king has appeared in the fifth incarnation of Vishnu ; another king actually conquered the three worlds, and forced the gods, except the three chief ones, to fly and to conceal themselves under the shapes of different animals ; while a third went still further, and compelled the gods to worship him.

These are a few out of the numerous instances of a similar nature ; all, doubtless, invented to show the virtue of

ritual observances, and thus increase the consequence and profits of the Brahmans.

It is an uncommon, though not exclusive, feature in the Hindu religion, that the gods enjoy only a limited existence : at the end of a cycle of prodigious duration, the universe ceases to exist ; the triad and all the other gods lose their being ; and the Great First Cause of all remains alone in infinite space. After the lapse of ages, his power is again exerted ; and the whole creation, with all its human and divine inhabitants, rises once more into existence.

The belief of the Hindus respecting a future state is full of contradictions. Their peculiar doctrine, as is well known, is transmigration ; but they believe that, between their different stages of existence, they will, according to their merits, enjoy thousands of years of happiness in some of the heavens described in their books, or suffer torments of similar duration in some of their still more numerous hells. Hope, however, seems to be denied to none ; the most wicked man, after being purged of his crimes by ages of suffering and by repeated transmigrations, may ascend in the scale of being, until he may enter into heaven, and even attain the highest reward of all the good, which is incorporation in the essence of God.

These rewards and punishments are often well apportioned to the moral merits and demerits of the deceased ; and they no doubt exercise considerable influence over the conduct of the living. But, on the other hand, the efficacy ascribed to the observance of the forms of devotion, and the facility of expiating crimes by penance, are, unfortunately, prevailing characteristics of this religion, and have a strong tendency to weaken its effect in supporting the principles of morality.

Its indirect influence on its votaries is even more injurious than these defects. Its gross superstition debases and debilitates the mind ; and its tendency to regard repose in this world, and absorption hereafter as the highest good, destroys the great stimulants to virtue afforded by love of enterprise and of posthumous fame. Its usurpations over the provinces of law and science tend to keep knowledge fixed at the point to which it had attained at the time of the pretended revelation by the Divinity ; and its interference in the minutiae of private manners extirpates every

habit and feeling of free agency, and reduces life to a mechanical routine.

The Hindu ceremonies are numerous, but far from impressive ; and their liturgy, judging from the specimen afforded by Mr. Colebrooke, though not without a few fine passages, is in general tedious and insipid. Each man goes through his daily devotions alone, in his own house, or at any temple, stream, or pool that suits him ; so that the want of interest in his addresses to the divinity is not compensated by the effect of sympathy in others.

A strict Brahman, performing his full ceremonies, would still be occupied for not less than four hours in the day. But even a Brahman, if engaged in wordly affairs, may perform all his religious duties within half an hour ; and a man of the lower classes contents himself with repeating the name of his patron deity while he bathes.

The increase of sects is both the cause and consequence of the ascendancy of the monastic orders. Each of these is in general devoted to some particular divinity, and its importance is founded on the veneration in which its patron is held.

There are three principal sects, the Sāīvas (followers of Siva), the Vāishnavas (followers of Vishnu), and the Sāktas (followers of some one of the Sāktis ; that is, the female associates or active powers of the members of the triad).

Each of these sects branches into various subordinate ones, depending on the different characters under which its deity is worshipped, or on the peculiar religious and metaphysical opinions which each has grafted on the parent stock. The Sāktas have three additional divisions of a more general character, depending on a particular goddess whom they worship. The followers of Pārvati, however, are out of all comparison more numerous than both the others put together.

Besides the three great sects, there are small ones, which worship Sūrya and Ganésa respectively ; and others which, though preserving the form of Hinduism, approach very near to pure deism.

The Sāīvas, in all places, form a considerable portion of the regular orders ; among the people they are most numerous in the Mysore and Mahratta countries. Further south, the Vāishnavas prevail ; but *there* the object of worship is Vishnu, not in his human form of Rāma or Krishna, but in

his abstract character, as preserver and ruler of the universe. Śāktas, or votaries of the female divinity, are mixed with the rest; but are most numerous in particular places. Three-fourths of the population of Bengal worship goddesses, and most of them the cruel Pārvati.

Religion of the Bāudhas and Jāinas.

There are two other religions, which, although distinct from that of the Hindus, appear to belong to the same stock, and which seem to have shared with it in the veneration of the people of India, before the introduction of an entirely foreign faith by the Mahometans.

These are the religions of the Bāudhas (or worshippers of Budha) and the Jāinas.

They both resemble the Brahman doctrines in their character of quietism, in their tenderness of animal life, and in the belief of repeated transmigration, of various hells for the purification of the wicked, and heavens for the solace of the good. The great object of all three is, the ultimate attainment of a state of perfect apathy, which, in our eyes, seems little different from annihilation; and the means employed in all are, the practice of mortification and of abstraction from the cares and feelings of humanity.

The differences from the Hindu belief are no less striking than the points of resemblance, and are most so in the religion of the Bāudhas.

The most ancient of the Bāudha sects entirely denies the being of God; and some of those which admit the existence of God, refuse to acknowledge him as the creator or ruler of the universe.

According to the ancient atheistical sect, nothing exists but matter, which is eternal. The power of organization is inherent in matter; and although the universe perishes from time to time, this quality restores it after a period, and carries it on towards new decay and regeneration, without the guidance of any external agent.

There have been many human Bāudhas or avatars in this and former worlds; but the seven last are particularly noticed; and above all, the last, whose name was Gautama, or Sakya, who revealed the present religion, and established the rules of worship and morality; and who, although long since passed into a higher state of existence, is considered as the religious head of the world, and will continue

so until he has completed his allotted period of five thousand years.

The Jâinas hold an intermediate place between the followers of Báudha and Brahma.

They agree with the Báudhas in denying the existence, or at least the activity and providence, of God ; in believing the eternity of matter ; in the worship of deified saints ; in their scrupulous care of animal life, and all the precautions which it leads to ; in their having no hereditary priesthood ; in disclaiming the divine authority of the Vêdas ; and in having no sacrifices, and no respect for fire.

They agree with Báudhas also in considering a state of impassive abstraction as supreme felicity, and in all the doctrines which they hold in common with the Hindus.

The Jâina temples are generally very large and handsome ; often flat roofed, and like private houses, with courts and colonnades ; but sometimes resembling Hindu temples, and sometimes circular and surrounded by colossal statues of the Tirtankaras. The walls are painted with their peculiar legends, mixed, perhaps, with those of the Hindus. Besides images, they have marble altars, with the figures of saints in relief, and with impressions of the footsteps of holy men ; a memorial which they have in common with the Báudhas.

By far the finest specimen of Jâina temples of the Hindu form are the noble remains in white marble on the mountain of Abu, to the north of Guzerât. There are Jâina caves also, on a great scale, at Ellóra, Nássik, and other places ; and there is, near Chinraipatam, in the Mysore, a statue of one of the Tirtankaras, cut out of a rock, which is upwards of seventy feet in height.

CHAPTER IV.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE.

Many different Nations in India—Majority of people Agricultural—Villages—No furniture—Daily life—Towns—Government—Food—Amusements—Customs—Entertainments—Religious festivals—Fairs—Pilgrimages—Gardens—Dress—Women—Domestic slavery—Marriages—Children—Education—Funerals.

TEN different civilized nations are found in Hindostan and the Deekan. All these nations differ from each other in manners and language; they have however a general resemblance. The dress differs in many respects, and the people differ in appearance; those of the north being tall and fair, and the others smaller and darker. The northern people live much on wheat, and those of the south on rice and ragi.

Notwithstanding the abundance of large towns in India, the great majority of the population is agricultural. The peasants live assembled in villages; going out to their fields to labor, and returning, with their cattle, to the village at night.

Villages vary much in different parts of the country: in many parts they are walled, and capable of a short defence against the light troops of a hostile army; and in some disturbed tracts, even against their neighbours, and against the government officers: others are open; and others only closed by a fence and gate, to keep in the cattle at night.

Each village has its bazar, composed of shops for the sale of grain, tobacco, sweetmeats, coarse cloth, and other articles of village consumption. Each has its market day, and its annual fairs and festivals; and each, in most parts of India, has, at least, one temple, and one house or shed for lodging strangers. All villages make an allowance for giving food or charity to religious mendicants, and levy a fund for this and other expences, including public festivities on particular holidays. The house for strangers sometimes contains also the shrine of a god, and is generally used as the town house; though there are usually some shady trees in every village, under which the heads of the

village and others meet to transact their business. No benches or tables are required on any occasion.

In houses, also, there is no furniture but a mat for sitting on, and some earthen and brass pots and dishes, a hand-mill, pestle and mortar, an iron plate for baking cakes on, and some such articles. The bed, which has neither bedding nor curtains, is set upright against the wall during the day ; and cooking is carried on often under a shed, or out of doors. The huts, though bare, are clean and neat.

There is scarcely more furniture in the houses of the richer inhabitants of the village. Their distinction is that they are two stories high, and have a court-yard.

The condition of the country people is not, in general, prosperous. They usually borrow money to pay their rent, and consequently get involved in accounts and debts, through which they are so liable to imposition, that they can scarcely get extricated. They are also, in general, so improvident, that if they were clear, they would omit to lay up money for their necessary payments, and soon be in debt again. Some, however, are prudent, and acquire property.

The husbandman rises with the earliest dawn ; washes and says a prayer ; then sets out with his cattle to his distant field. After an hour or two, he eats some remnants of his yesterday's fare for breakfast, and goes on with his labour till noon, when his wife brings out his hot dinner ; he eats it by a brook or under a tree, talks and sleeps till two o'clock, while his cattle also feed and repose. From two till sunset he labours again ; then drives his cattle home, feeds them, bathes, eats some supper, smokes, and spends the rest of the evening in amusement with his wife and children, or his neighbours. The women fetch water, grind the corn, cook, and do the household work, besides spinning and such occupations.

Hindu towns are formed of mud, brick, or stone houses, with a few small and high-placed windows, over very narrow streets, which are paved (if paved at all) with large uneven slabs of stone. They are crowded with people moving to and fro ; processions, palankeens, and carriages drawn by oxen ; running footmen with sword and buckler, religious mendicants, soldiers out of service smoking or lounging ; and sacred bulls, that can scarcely be made to move their un-

wieldy bulk out of the way of the passenger, or to desist from feeding on the grain exposed for sale.

The most conspicuous shops are those of confectioners, fruiterers, grain sellers, braziers, druggists, and tobaccoconists; sellers of cloth, shawls, and other stuffs, keep their goods in bales; and those of more precious articles do not expose them. They are quite open towards the street, and often are merely the verandas in front of the houses; the customers standing and making their purchases in the street.

Towns are often walled, and capable of defence.

They have not hereditary headmen and officers, like villages, but are generally the residence of the government agent in charge of the district, who manages them, with the help of an establishment for police and revenue. They are divided into wards for the purpose of police; and each caste has its own elected head, who communicates between the government and its members. These castes being in general trades also, are attended with all the good and bad consequences of such combinations.

The principal inhabitants are bankers and merchants, and people connected with the government.

The food of the common people, both in the country and in towns, is rice or unleavened bread, with boiled vegetables, clarified butter or oil, and spices. Smoking tobacco is almost the only luxury. Some few smoke intoxicating drugs; and the lowest castes alone, and even they rarely, get drunk with spirits. Drunkenness is confined to damp countries, such as Bengal, the Concoans, and some parts of the south of India. It increases in the British territories, where spirits are taxed; but is so little of a natural propensity, that the absolute prohibition of spirits, which exists in most native states, is sufficient to keep it down. Opium, which is used to great excess in the west of Hindostan, is peculiar to the Rajputs, and does not affect the lower classes. All but the poorest people chew *bîtel* (a pungent aromatic leaf) with the hard nut of the areca, mixed with a sort of lime made from shells, and with various spices, according to the person's means.

The upper classes, at least the Brahman part of them, have very little more variety. It consists in the greater number of kinds of vegetables and spices, and in the cookery. *Assafoetida* is a favourite ingredient, as giving to some of

their richer dishes something of the flavour of flesh. The caution used against eating out of dishes or on carpets defiled by other castes, gives rise to some curious customs. At a great Brahman dinner, where twenty or thirty different dishes and condiments are placed before each individual, all are served in vessels made of leaves sewed together. These are placed on the bare floor, which, as a substitute for a table cloth, is decorated for a certain distance in front of the guests, with patterns of flowers, &c., very prettily laid out in lively-coloured sorts of sand, spread through frames in which the patterns are cut, and swept away after the dinner. The inferior castes of Hindus eat meat, and care less about their vessels; metal, especially, can always be purified by scouring. In all classes, however, the difference of caste leads to a want of sociability. A soldier, or any one away from his family, cooks his solitary meal for himself, and finishes it without a companion, or any of the pleasures of the table, but those derived from taking the necessary supply of food. All eat with their fingers, and scrupulously wash before and after meals.

Though they have chess, a game played with tables and dice as backgammon is, and cards, (which are circular, in many suits, and painted with Hindu gods, &c., instead of kings, queens and knaves,) yet the great in-door amusement is to listen to singing interspersed with slow movements, which can scarcely be called dancing.

In the houses of the rich, the doorways are hung with quilted silk curtains; and the doors, the arches, and other wood-work in the rooms are highly carved. The floor is entirely covered with a thin mattress of cotton, over which is spread a clean white cloth to sit on; but there is no other furniture of any description. Equals sit in opposite rows down the room. A prince or great chief has a seat at the head of the room between the rows, very slightly raised by an additional mattress, and covered with a small carpet of embroidered silk. This, with a high round embroidered bolster behind, forms what is called a masnad or gadi, and serves as a throne for sovereigns under the rank of king.

Great attention is paid to ceremony. A person of distinction is met a mile or two before he enters the city; and a visitor is received (according to his rank) at the outer

gate of the house, at the door of the room, or by merely rising from the seat. Friends embrace if they have not met for some time. Brahmans are saluted by joining the palms, and raising them twice or thrice to the forehead ; with others, the salute with one hand is used, so well known by the Mahometan name of *salâm*. Brahmans have a peculiar phrase of salutation for each other. Other Hindus, on meeting, repeat twice the name of the god *Râma*. Visitors are seated with strict attention to their rank, which, on public occasions, it often takes much previous negotiation to settle. Hindus of rank are remarkable for their politeness to inferiors, generally addressing them by some civil or familiar term, and scarcely ever being provoked to abusive or harsh language.

The lower classes are courteous in their general manners among themselves, but by no means so scrupulous in their language when irritated.

All visits end by the master of the house presenting *bîtel* leaf with *areca* nut, &c., to the guest : it is accompanied by *attar* of roses or some other perfume put on the handkerchief, and rose-water sprinkled over the person ; and this is the signal for taking leave.

Entertainments, besides occasions of rare occurrence, as marriages, &c., are given on particular festivals, and sometimes to show attention to particular friends. Among themselves they commence with a dinner ; but the essential part of the entertainment is dancing and singing, sometimes diversified with jugglers and buffoons ; during which time perfumes are burnt, and the guests are dressed with garlands of sweet-smelling flowers : present, as above described, are no less essential.

At courts there are certain days on which all the great and all public officers wait on the prince to pay their duty ; and, on those occasions, the crowd in attendance is equal to that of a birthday levee in Europe.

The religious festivals are of a less doubtful character. In them a great hall is fitted up in honour of the deity of the day. His image, richly adorned, and surrounded by gilded balustrades, occupies the centre of one end of the apartment, while the prince and his court, in splendid dresses and jewels, are arranged along one side of the room as guests or attendants. The rest of the ceremony is like other entertainments. The songs may, perhaps, be

appropriate ; but the incense, the chaplets of flowers, and other presents are as on ordinary occasions ; the *bítel* leaf and attar, indeed, are brought from before the idol, and distributed as if from him to his visitors.

There is less grandeur, but scarcely less interest, in the fairs and festivals of the common people.

These have a strong resemblance to fairs in England, and exhibit the same whirling machines, and the same amusements and occupations. But no assemblage in England can give a notion of the lively effect produced by the prodigious concourse of people in white dresses and bright coloured scarfs and turbans, so unlike the black head-dresses and dusky habits of the north. Their taste for gaudy shows and processions, and the mixture of arms and flags, give also a different character to the Indian fairs. The Hindus enter into the amusements of these meetings with the utmost relish, and show every sign of peaceful festivity and enjoyment. They may, on all these occasions, have some religious ceremony to go through, but it does not take up a moment, and seldom occupies a thought. At the pilgrimages, indeed, the long anticipation of the worship to be performed, the example of other pilgrims invoking the god aloud, and the sanctity of the place, concur to produce stronger feelings of devotion.

But, even at pilgrimages, the feeling of amusement is much stronger than that of religious zeal ; and many such places are also among the most celebrated marts for the transfer of merchandise, and for all the purposes of a fair.

Among the enjoyments of the upper classes, should be mentioned their gardens, which, though always formal, are nevertheless often pleasing. They are divided by broad alleys, with long and narrow ponds or canals, inclosed with regular stone and stucco work, running up the centre ; and, on each side, straight walks between borders of poppies of all colours, or of other flowers in uniform beds or in patterns. Their summer houses are of white stucco, and though somewhat less heavy and inelegant than their ordinary dwellings, do not much relieve the formality of the garden ; but there is something rich and oriental in the groves of orange and citron trees, the mixture of dark cypresses with trees covered with flowers or blossoms, the tall and graceful palms, the golden fruits and highly scented flowers. In the heat of the summer, too, the trellised

walks, closely covered with vines, afford dark and cool retreats from the intolerable glare of the sun, made still more pleasant by the gushing of the little rills that water the garden, and by the profound silence and repose that reign at the hour of noon.

The dress of the women is nearly the same as that first described for the men; but both the pieces of cloth are much larger and longer, and they are of various bright colours as well as white. Both sexes wear many ornaments. Men even of the lower orders wear earrings, bracelets, and necklaces. They are sometimes worn as a convenient way of keeping all the money the owner has; but the necklaces are sometimes made of a particular berry that hardens into a rough but handsome dark brown bead, and sometimes of particular kinds of wood turned; and these are mixed alternately with beads of gold or coral. The neck and legs are bare; but on going out, embroidered slippers with a long point curling up are put on, and are laid aside again on entering a room or a palankeen. Children are loaded with gold ornaments, which gives frequent temptation to child murder.

Women, however, do not join in the society of men, and are not admitted to an equality with them. In the lower orders, the wife, who cooks and serves the dinner, waits till the husband has finished before she begins. When persons of different sexes walk together, the woman always follows the man, even when there is no obstacle to their walking abreast.

Another reproach to Hindu civilization, falls very short of the idea it at first sight suggests. Domestic slavery in a mild form is almost universal. The slaves are home-born; or children sold by their parents during famine, and sometimes children kidnapped by Banjáras, a tribe of wandering herdsmen, who gain their subsistence by conveying grain and merchandise from one part of the country to another. Domestic slaves are treated exactly like servants, except that they are more regarded as belonging to the family.

Marriages are performed with many ceremonies, few of which are interesting: among them are joining the hands of the bride and bridegroom, and tying them together with a blade of sacred grass; but the essential part of the ceremony is when the bride steps seven steps, a particular

text being repeated for each. When the seventh step is taken, the marriage is indissoluble.

In all cases the procession in which the bride is taken home after the marriage, is as showy as the parties can afford.

In Bengal these processions are particularly sumptuous, and marriages there have been known to cost lacs of rupees. The parties are generally children when betrothed; the bride must always be under the age of puberty, and both are usually under ten. These premature marriages, instead of producing attachment, often cause early and lasting disagreements.

Hindu parents are remarkable for their affection for their children while they are young; but they not unfrequently have disputes with grown up sons, the source of which probably lies in the legal restrictions on the father's control over his property.

Boys of family are brought into company dressed like men, (with little swords, &c.,) and behave with all the propriety, and almost all the formality, of grown up people.

The children of the common people sprawl about the streets, pelt each other with dust, and are less restrained even than children in England. At this age they are generally very handsome.

The education of the common people does not extend beyond writing and the elements of arithmetic. There are schools in all towns, and in some villages, paid by small fees. In Bengal and Behár the fee is often only a small portion of grain or uncooked vegetables.

People in good circumstances seldom send their children to school, but have them taught at home by Brahmans retained for the purpose. The higher branches of learning are taught gratuitously; the teachers maintaining themselves, and often a portion of their scholars, by means of presents received from princes and opulent individuals.

There is now no learning, except among the Brahmans; and with them it is at a low ebb.

The Hindus in general burn their dead, but men of the religious orders are buried in a sitting posture, cross-legged. A dying man is laid out of doors, on a bed of sacred grass; hymns and prayers are recited to him; and leave

of the holy basil scattered over him. If near the Ganges he is, if possible, carried to the side of that river.

The funeral pile for an ordinary person is not above four or five feet high; it is decorated with flowers, and clarified butter and scented oils are poured upon the flames. The pyre is lighted by a relation, after many ceremonies and oblation; and the relations, after other observances, purify themselves in a stream, and sit down on a bank to wait the progress of the fire. They present a melancholy spectacle on such occasions, wrapped up in their wet garments, and looking sorrowfully on the pyre. Neither the wet dress nor the sorrow is required by their religion: on the contrary, they are enjoined to alleviate their grief by repeating certain verses, and to refrain from tears and lamentations.

The Hindus seldom erect tombs, except to men who fall in battle. Before the abolition of suttee, they were also erected to widows who were burned with their husbands.

It is well known that Indian widows sometimes sacrifice themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands, and that such victims are called Satis. The period at which this barbarous custom was introduced is uncertain. It is not alluded to by Manu, who treats of the conduct proper for faithful and devoted widows, as if there were no doubt about their surviving their husbands. Suttee has been abolished by the British Government.

The Hindus have some peculiarities that do not admit of classification. As they have castes for all the trades, they have also castes for thieves, and men are brought up to consider robbing as their hereditary occupation. Most of the hills tribes, bordering on cultivated countries, are of this description; and even throughout the plains there are castes more notorious for theft and robbery, than gipsies used to be for pilfering in Europe.

In their case hereditary professions seem favourable to skill, for there are nowhere such dexterous thieves as in India. Travellers are full of stories of the patience, perseverance, and address with which they will steal, unperceived, through the midst of guards, and carry off their prize in the most dangerous situations. Some dig holes in the earth, and come up within the wall of a well-closed house: others, by whatever way they enter, always open

a door or two to secure a retreat ; and proceed to plunder, naked, smeared with oil, and armed with a dagger ; so that it is as dangerous to seize them as it is difficult to hold.

One great class, called Thugs, continually travel about the country assuming different disguises; an art in which they are perfect masters. Their practice is to insinuate themselves into the society of travellers whom they hear to be possessed of property, and to accompany them till they have an opportunity of administering a stupifying drug, or of throwing a noose over the neck of their unsuspecting companions. They are then murdered without blood being shed, and buried so skilfully that a long time elapses before their fate is suspected. The Thugs invoke Kali, and vow a portion of their spoil to her. This mixture of religion and crime might of itself be mentioned as a peculiarity ; but it is paralleled by the vows of pirates and banditti to the Madonna ; and in the case of Mussulmans, who forms the largest portion of the Thugs, it is like the compacts with the devil, which were known in days of superstition.

The hills and forests in the centre of India are inhabited by a people differing widely from those who occupy the plains. They are small, black, slender, but active, with peculiar features, and a quick and a restless eye. They wear few clothes, are armed with bows and arrows, make open profession of plunder, and, unless the government is strong, are always at war with all their neighbours. When invaded, they conduct their operations with secrecy and celerity, and shower their arrows from rocks and thickets, whence they can escape before they can be attacked, and often before they can be seen.

They live in scattered and sometimes moveable hamlets, are divided into small communities, and allow great power to their chiefs. They subsist on the produce of their own imperfect cultivation, and on what they obtain by exchanges or plunder from the plains. They occasionally kill game, but do not depend on that for their support. In many parts the berries of the mahua tree form an important part of their food.

Besides one or two of Hindu gods, they have many of their own, who dispense particular blessings or calamities.

The one who presides over the small-pox is, in most places, looked on with peculiar awe.

Character. In India, a warm temperature is accompanied by a fertile soil, which renders severe labour unnecessary, and an extent of land that would support an almost indefinite increase of inhabitants. The heat is moderated by rain, and warded off by numerous trees and forests: every thing is calculated to produce that state of listless inactivity which foreigners find it so difficult to resist. The shades of character that are found in different parts of India tend to confirm this supposition. The inhabitants of the dry countries in the north, which in winter are cold, are comparatively manly and active. The Marattas, inhabiting a mountainous and unfertile region, are hardy and laborious; while the Bengalese, with their moist climate and their double crops of rice, where the cocoanut tree and the bamboo furnish all the materials for construction unwrought, are more effeminate than any other people in India. But love of repose, though not sufficient to extinguish industry or repress occasional exertions, may be taken as a characteristic of the whole people.

Akin to their indolence is their timidity, which arises more from the dread of being involved in trouble and difficulties, than from want of physical courage: and from these two radical influences almost all their vices are derived. Indolence and timidity themselves may be thought to be produced by despotism and superstition without any aid from nature; but if those causes were alone sufficient, they would have had the same operation on the indefatigable Chinese and the intrepid Russian: in the present case they are as likely to be effect as cause.

The most prominent vice of the Hindus is want of veracity, in which they outdo most nations even of the East. They do not even resent the imputation of falsehood; the same man would calmly answer to a doubt by saying, "Why should I tell a lie?" who would shed blood for what he regarded as the slightest infringement of his honour.

Perjury, which is only an aggravated species of falsehood, naturally accompanies other offences of the kind (though it is not more frequent than in other Asiatic countries); and those who pay so little regard to statements about the past, cannot be expected to be scrupulous

in promises for the future. Breaches of faith in private life are much more common in India than in England; but even in India, the great majority, of course, are true to their word.

It is in people connected with government that deceit is most common; but in India, this class spreads far; as from the nature of the land revenue, the lowest villager is often obliged to resist force by fraud.

In some cases, the faults of the government produce an opposite effect. Merchants and bankers are generally strict observers of their engagements. If it were otherwise, commerce could not go on where justice is so irregularly administered.

Hindus are not ill fitted by nature for intrigue and cunning, when their situation calls forth those qualities. Patient, supple, and insinuating, they will penetrate the views of a person with whom they had to deal; watch his humours: soothe or irritate his temper; present things in such a form as suits their designs; and contrive, by indirect manœuvres, to make others even unwillingly contribute to the accomplishment of their ends. But their plots are seldom so daring or flagitious as those of other Asiatic nations, or even of Indian Mussulmans, though these last have been softened by their intercourse with the people among whom they are settled.

It is probably owing to the faults of their government that they are corrupt; to take a bribe in a good cause is almost meritorious; and it is a venial offence to take one when the cause is bad. Pecuniary fraud is not thought very disgraceful; and, if against the public, scarcely disgraceful at all.

It is to their government, also, that we must impute their flattery and their importunity. The first is gross even after every allowance has been made for the different degrees of force which nations give to the language of civility. The second arises from the indecision of their own rulers: they never consider an answer final, and are never ashamed to prosecute a suit as long as their varied invention, the possible change of circumstances, or the exhausted patience of the person applied to, gives them a hope of carrying their point.

Like all that are slow to actual conflict, they are very litigious, and much addicted to verbal altercation. They

will persevere in a law-suit till they are ruined ; and will argue, on other occasions, with a violence so unlike their ordinary demeanour, that one unaccustomed to them expects immediate blows or bloodshed.

The public spirit of Hindus is either confined to their caste or village, in which cases it is often very strong ; or if it extends to the general government, it goes no further than zeal for its authority on the part of its agents and dependents. Great national spirit is sometimes shown in war, especially where religion is concerned, but allegiance in general sits very loose : a subject will take service against his natural sovereign as readily as for him ; and always has more regard to the salt he has eaten than to the land in which he was born.

Although the Hindus, as has been seen, break through some of the most important rules of morality, we must not suppose that they are devoid of principle. Except in the cases specified, they have all the usual respect for moral obligations ; and to some rules which, in their estimation, are of peculiar importance, they adhere, in spite of every temptation to depart from them. A Brahman will rather starve to death than eat prohibited food : a headman of a village will suffer torture rather than consent to a contribution laid on the inhabitants by a tyrant, or by banditti : the same servant who cheats his master in his accounts may be trusted with money to any amount in deposit. Even in corrupt transactions, it is seldom that men will not rather undergo a punishment than betray those to whom they have given a bribe.

Their great defect is a want of manliness. There slavish constitution, their blind superstition, their extravagant mythology, the subtleties and verbal distinctions of their philosophy, the languid softness of their poetry, their effeminate manners, their love of artifice and delay, their submissive temper, their dread of change, the delight they take in puerile fables, and their neglect of rational history, are so many proofs of the absence of the more robust qualities of disposition and intellect throughout the mass of the nation.

But this censure, though true of the whole, when compared with other nations, by no means applies to all classes, or to any at all times. The labouring people are industrious and persevering ; and other classes, when stimulated

by any strong motive, and sometimes even by mere sport, will go through great hardships and endure long fatigue.

They are not a people habitually to bear up against desperate attacks, and still less against a long course of discouragement and disaster ; yet they often display bravery not surpassed by the most warlike nations ; and will always throw away their lives for any consideration of religion or honour. Hindu Sepoys in English pay have, in two instances, advanced, after troops of the King's service had been beaten off ; and on one of these occasions they were opposed to French soldiers. The sequel of this history will show instances of whole bodies of troops rushing forward to a certain death ; while, in private life, the lowest orders do not hesitate to commit suicide if they once conceive their honour tarnished.

The villagers are generally an inoffensive, simple people, affectionate to their families, kind to their neighbours ; and, towards all but the government, tolerably honest.

The townspeople are of a more mixed character ; but they are quiet and orderly, seldom disturbing the public peace by tumults, or their own by private broils.

The natives of India are often accused of wanting gratitude : but it does not appear that those who make the charge have done much to inspire such a sentiment. When masters are really kind and considerate, they find as warm a return from Indian servants as any in the world ; and there are few who have tried them in sickness, or in difficulties and dangerous, who do not bear witness to their sympathy and attachment. Their devotion to their own chiefs is proverbial, and can arise from no other cause than gratitude, unless where caste supplies the place of clannish feeling. The fidelity of the Sepoys to their foreign masters has been shown in instances which it would be difficult to match, even among national troops, in any other country.

Hindu children are much more quick and intelligent than European ones. The capacity of lads of twelve and fourteen is often surprising ; and not less so is the manner in which their faculties become blunted after the age of puberty.

But at all ages they are very intelligent ; and this strikes us most in the lower orders, who, in propriety of demeanour, and in command of language, are far less different from their superiors than with Europeans.

The cleanliness of respectable Hindus in their persons is well known. They do not change their clothes after each of their frequent ablutions; but even in that respect the lower classes are more cleanly than those of many other nations. The public parts of their houses are kept very neat; but they have none of the English delicacy which requires even places out of sight to partake of the general good order.



CHAPTER V.

EARLY HINDU HISTORY.

Early History—Purāna Account—Rāma—His History—Mahā Bharata—War of the Pandus and Kurus—Magadha—Saka Dēva—Ajata Satru—Nānda—Chandragupta or Sandracoptus—Vikramāditya—Shalivahana—Rāja Bhoja.

THE first information we have on Hindu history is obtained from a passage in the Institutes of Manu, from which we learn that the residence of the Hindus was at one time between the rivers Saraswati (Sersooty) and Drishdawati (Caggar.) This tract of country is about 100 miles to the north-west of Delhi, and in extent about sixty-five miles long and forty broad. Manu says it was called Bramhaverta, because it was frequented by gods. This tract of country was also the scene of the fabulous adventures of the first princes, and the residence of the most famous sages who figure in the early legends. The country between that tract and the Jumna, and all to the north of the Jumna and Ganges, including North Behar, is mentioned in the second place under the name of Bramharshi, and may be considered as the first country acquired after that on Saraswati.

The Puranas pass over these early stages unnoticed, and commence with Ayodhya, (Oude) which is situated about the middle of the last mentioned tract of country. It is there that the solar and lunar races have their origin, and from thence the princes of all other countries are sprung. From fifty to seventy generations of the solar race are distinguished from each other by purely mythological legends.

After these comes Rama, who seems entitled to take his place in real history.

His story, when stripped of its fabulous and romantic decorations, merely relates that Rāma possessed a powerful

kingdom in Hindustan ; and that he invaded the Deccan and penetrated to the island of Ceylon, which he conquered.

The first of those facts there is no reason to question ; and it may be true that Rama led an expedition into the Deccan ; but it is highly improbable that he should have conquered Ceylon. If he did so, he could not have lived, as is generally supposed, before the compilation of the Vedas ; for even in the time of Manu's Institutes, there were no settlements of Hindu conquerors in the Deccan : yet the undoubted antiquity of the Ramayana, is the best testimony to the early date of the vent which it celebrates.

After Rama, sixty princes of his race are said to have ruled in succession over his dominions.

The war celebrated in the Maha Bharata is the next historical event that deserves notice.

This was a contest between the two branches of the reigning family, the Pandus and Kurus, for the territory of Hastinapura, a city to the north-east of Delhi. The exact date of the war cannot be ascertained, but it is calculated to have been probably in the fourteenth century before Christ, and two hundred years before the siege of Troy.

The Pandus were victorious, but paid so dearly for their success, that the survivors, broken hearted for the loss of their friends, and the destruction of their armies, abandoned the world, and perished among the snows of Himalaya. Krishna, their great ally, fell in the midst of civil wars in his own country.

Twenty-nine of the descendants of the Pandus are said to have succeeded them on the throne, but only their names have been preserved. The seat of their government was transferred to Delhi.

Among the allies of the Pandus were the kings of Magadha, who seem always to have possessed extensive authority. The first of them (he who is mentioned in the Maha Bharata) is represented as the head of a number of chiefs and tribes, but most of them were probably within the limits of Bengal and Behar.

Saha Déva was king of Magadha at the end of the war of the Maha Bharata.

The thirty-fifth king in succession from him was Ajatu Satru, in whose reign Sakya or Gautama, the founder of the Budha religion, flourished. We may fix the period of Sakya's death at about 550 B. C.

If was about this time that the Persians, under Darius Hystaspes, conquered a portion of India, but its extent is not known. It must however have been considerable, since the amount of tribute drawn from the Indian Satrapy is stated to have been nearly one-third of the revenue of the Persian monarchy.

The next invader of India of whom we have any record, was Alexander the Great. He crossed the Indus, traversed the Punjab, and designed to advance to the Ganges; but this intention was frustrated; for his soldiers had suffered so much from their march through the Punjab in the rainy season, that they refused to follow him. Foiled in his plan of advancing to the Ganges, Alexander was more successful in another direction. A large fleet was collected, in which he proceeded down the Indus to the Ocean; while a portion of his army, overrunning the country on each side of the river, compelled it to acknowledge the Macedonian conqueror. The progress to the sea was necessarily slow. When completed, the less serviceable ships were laid up in the Delta, while a select number of the best class, manned by about ten thousand Greeks and Phenicians, were placed under the command of Nearchus, for the purpose of exploring the navigation between the Indus and the Euphrates, the king himself leading back the remainder of his army through the parched desert of Beloochistan.

To return to the Hindu History. The sixth in succession from Ajatu Satru, inclusive, was Nanda, on whose date many others depend. The ninth from Nanda was Chandragupta; and the third from him was Ashoka, a prince celebrated among the Baudhas of all countries, as one of the most zealous disciples and promoters of their religion.

It has been determined by Mr. Elphinstone and other learned writers, after great research, that Chandragupta is the Sandracottus of European writers; who concluded a treaty with Seleucus, the founder of a Greek dynasty in Asia, after the death of Alexander the Great.

Chandragupta reigned over Magadha not long after Alexander retired from India. He sprang from a low class, and all the succeeding kings of Magadha were Sudras. Chandragupta was indebted to the arts of his minister for the preservation of his kingdom from foreign invasion.

The Macedonian garrisons on the Indus were ceded to him by Seleucus. His grandson Ashoca was, in his youth, governor of Malwa; which must therefore have been a possession of his father.

Hindu Chronology, however, is insufficient to enable us to determine satisfactorily any other dates from this period till the era of Vikramaditya, who reigned at Ujein, fifty-six years before the time of Christ, and established the era still current throughout all the countries north of the river Nerbudda.

The name of Vikramāditya is of constant occurrence in Hindu tales. He is the hero of as many wonders as Harun al Raschid is in the Arabian legends. Nothing however is known with certainty, but that he was a powerful monarch, who ruled a comparatively civilized and prosperous country, and was distinguished for his encouragement of learning and the arts.

Another era that has been determined with some certainty is that of Shalivahana, (A. D. 77) who ruled over the Mahrattas in the Deekan. He seems also to have been a powerful monarch, but though the subject of many fabulous and wonderful stories, no circumstance of his history has been preserved in an authentic form.

The next epoch is that of Rāja Bhōja, whose name is one of the most renowned in India, but of whose exploits no trustworthy record has been preserved. His long reign terminated about the end of the 11th century.

The grandson of Bhōja was taken prisoner, and his country conquered by the Raja of Guzerat; but Malwa soon recovered its independence under a new dynasty; and was finally subdued by the Mahometans, A. D. 1231.

The residence of Krishna, and other events of those times, impress us with the belief of an early principality in Guzerat; and the whole is spoken of as under one dominion by a Greek writer of the second century.

Few of the ancient Hindu States have attracted more notice than Canakubya, or Canouj. It is one of the most ancient places in India: it gave rise, and gives a name, to one of the greatest divisions of the Brahman class; and its wars with the neighbouring state of Delhi contributed to accelerate the ruin of Hindu independence. This kingdom appears in early times to have been called Panchala: it was a long but narrow territory, extending on the east to

Nepal, (which it included) and on the west as far as Ajmir. But almost nothing authentic is known of its early history.

It would be tedious to go through the names of the various petty Hindu states, that existed at various periods in Hindostan. The native books contain lists of kings extending over many centuries. Among them is one named Chandrapala, who is said to have conquered all Hindostan; but the information is too vague to be of any service.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DECKAN.

Extreme South—Tamul Country and Literature—Pandya and Chola—Malabar and Canara—Carnata—Chalukyas—Telingana—Andra—Orissa—Mahratta Country.

IN the extreme South a degree of civilization prevailed several centuries before the Christian era. The Tamul language seems to have been formed before the introduction of the Sanscrit ; and the Tamul literature, unlike that of the rest of India, is not exclusively the production of Brahmans. Some of its most esteemed authors are of the lowest caste, or Pariahs.

There are five languages spoken in the Deckan, which doubtless mark an equal number of early national divisions. The most ancient kingdoms are those in the extreme south, in all of which the Tamul language prevailed. There are various traditions and records of two kingdoms of Pandya and Chola, founded by persons of the agricultural class. The first derives its name from its founder who is supposed to have flourished in the fifth century before Christ.

In the time of Ptolemy, the seat of government was fixed at Madura, where it remained a century ago.

The wars and rivalries of all the Pandyan princes were with the adjoining kingdom of Chola. At one period a long union existed between them. They, however, resumed their separate sovereignty, and retained it till 1736, when the ruling Prince Nayar was conquered by the Nabob of Arcot.

The kingdom of Chola continued an independent or feudatory State until the end of the seventeenth century, when a brother of the founder of the Mahratta State was sent to aid the last Raja, and supplanted him in his government. He was the first of the present family of Tanjore. Their capital was formerly Conjeveram.

Malabar and Canara were peopled by Brahmans from the south in the first or second century. They divided the country into sixty-four districts, and governed it by means of a general assembly of their caste, renting the lands to the inferior classes. In time they appointed a chief of the military class. Malabar and Canara became separate king-

doms. In the ninth century Malabar broke up into many petty principalities, among the chief of which was that of the Zamorins, whom Vasco de Gama found in possession of Calicut in the end of the fifteenth century.

The dynasty established in Canara lasted till the twelfth century; when it was overturned by the Belall Rajas, and the state made tributary.

The family of Belall were Rajpúts, who in the middle of the eleventh century became the ruling dynasty in Carnataca. At one time their power extended over the Tamul country and part of Telingana. They were subverted by the Mussulmans about A. D. 1310 or 1311.

A Rajpút family of the Chalukya tribe reigned at Calian, on the border of Carnata and Maharashtra. They are traced with certainty by inscriptions from A. D. 1000 to A. D. 1200. They appear at one time to have possessed the whole of Maharashtra to the Nerbudda. The last king of the race was deposed by his minister; who, in his turn, was assassinated by some fanatics of the Lingayet sect, which was then rising into notice.

Another branch of the tribe of Chalukya ruled over the eastern portion of Telingána. Their dynasty lasted through the whole of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and perhaps began two centuries earlier. It was greatly reduced by the kings of Andra; and finally subverted by the Rajas of Cuttack.

The Telugu kings of Andra are said to have been connected with the race in Magadha. The native records mention Vikrama and Shalivahana among the earliest monarchs; after these they place the Chola Rajas; who were succeeded in the sixth century by the Mussulmans (called Yavans.) In 1322, their capital, Varangul, north-east of Hyderabad, was taken. They merged at last in the Mussulman kingdom of Golconda.

The history of Orissa, like all others in the Deckan, begins with princes connected with the Maha Bharata. Here also Vikrama and Shalivahana are made to occupy the throne in succession. But the first glimmering of authentic history commences with the expulsion of the Yavans, in A. D. 473. Thirty-five Rajas of the Kesari family follow in a period of 650 years, until A. D. 1131, when their capital was taken by a Midnapore prince, whose dynasty occupied the throne till near the Mahometan conquest.

The Mahratta country is situated on the frontier of the Deccan, and its language is very extensively spoken. But there are few historical facts known respecting it until the time of the Mussulmans. The most important is the reign of Shalivahana, whose era begins from A. D. 77. He is said to have been the son of a potter; to have headed an insurrection, overturned a dynasty, and established his capital at Paitan on the Godavery. Shalivahana was a powerful monarch; yet, as already noticed, scarcely one circumstance of his history has been preserved in an authentic, or even credible form. His name is still well known, and his era still that in ordinary use.

After this the history of Maharashtra breaks off, and (except by the inscriptions of the petty princes of Calien and Pernála) we hear no more of that country till the beginning of the twelfth century, when a family of Yadus, perhaps a branch of that of Bellál, became Rajas of Devagiri. In A. D. 1294, Maháráshtra was invaded by the Mussulmans from Delhi. A Raja of the race of Yadu still reigned at Dévagiri. He was rendered tributary then or soon after; and his capital was taken, and his kingdom subverted in A. D. 1317.

About this time the Mussulman writers begin to mention the Mahrattas by name. But there is no evidence that they were at any time under one great monarchy, nor do they appear to have had any peculiar literature or civilization of their own.

On the other hand, the cave temples of the Mahrattas show a great and long continued application of skill and power; and those of Ellora attracted the attention of the Mussulmans in their very first invasions.

In recent times the Mahrattas have acquired greater distinction than all other Hindu nations; and made a nearer approach to universal sovereignty in India.

CHAPTER VII.

ARAB CONQUESTS IN INDIA.

Arabia—Its Character—Mahomet—His History—Circumstances of Neighbouring Nations—Musculmans in India.

ONE of the very earliest objects of commerce seems to have been to satisfy the craving of less favoured nations for the valuable productions of India. Even before the time of Moses, a communication with western Asia had been established for this purpose: it was the monopoly of this trade which more than any other cause contributed to the proverbial prosperity of Tyre, and which, after the destruction of that city, rendered Alexandria the commercial capital of the world. The growing demand for Eastern commodities, consequent on the progress of luxury throughout the Roman Empire, occasioned a diligent cultivation of the intercourse with India. This was interrupted by the rise of the Mahomedan power. Their occupation of Egypt and great part of Asia, gave them the command of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, then the two great channels of Indian commerce.

The attacks of either Greeks or barbarians had hitherto made no impression beyond the frontiers of India, and the Hindus might have long remained undisturbed by foreign intrusion, if a new spirit had not been kindled in a nation till now as sequestered as their own.

Arabia has always been celebrated for its precious productions, and distinguished as the home of liberty and independence. The country was composed of some mountain tracts and rich oases, separated or surrounded by a sandy desert, like the coasts and islands of a sea. The desert was scattered with small camps of predatory herdsmen, who pitched their tents where they could quench their thirst at wells of brackish water, and drove their camels over extensive tracts where no other animal could have found a subsistence.

The settled inhabitants, though more civilized, were scarcely less simple in their habits, and were formed into independent tribes, between whom there could be little communication except by rapid journeys on horseback, or tedious marches under the protection of caravans.

Such was the nation that gave birth to the false prophet, whose doctrines have so long and so powerfully influenced a vast portion of the human race.

Mahomet was born in April, in the year 569 of the Christian era ; and, though he belonged to the head family of one of the branches of the illustrious tribe of the Keresh, appears to have been poor in his youth, and used to accompany his uncle's camels in some of those long trading journeys, which the simplicity and equality of Arab manners made laborious even to the wealthy.

He was raised to independence by his marriage to Cadijah, a rich widow, fifteen years his senior ; and had now ample leisure to pursue those occupations which were most congenial to his mind.

At this time the bulk of the Arab nation was sunk in idolatry, and their morals were in as little check of law as of religion.

Mahomet's attention is said to have been drawn to the doctrine of the unity of God by his intercourse with a cousin of his wife's, who was skilled in Jewish learning, and who is said to have translated the Scriptures from Hebrew into Arabic. Through intense study he became almost insane, before he gave way to the impulse which he felt within him, and revealed to his wife, and afterwards to a few of his family, that he was commissioned by the only God to restore his pure belief and worship. Mahomet was at this time forty years of age, and three or four more years elapsed before he publicly announced his mission. During the next ten years he endured every species of insult and persecution ; and he might have died an obscure enthusiast, if the gradual progress of his religion, and the death of his uncle and protector, Abu Taleb, had not induced the rulers of Mecca to determine to take his life. In this extremity he fled to Medina, resolved to repel force by force ; and, throwing off all the mildness which had hitherto characterized his preaching, he developed the full vigour of his character, and became more eminent for his sagacity and boldness.

as a leader, than he had been for his zeal and endurance as a Missionary.

At the commencement of Mahomet's preaching he seems to have been perfectly sincere; and although he was provoked by opposition to support his pretensions by fraud, and in time became habituated to hypocrisy and imposture, yet it is probable that, to the last, his original fanaticism continued to influence his actions.

Mahomet did not profess to set up a new religion; but to restore that derived in the earliest time from God himself. Still, whatever may have been the reality of his zeal and even the merit of his doctrine, the spirit of intolerance in which it was preached, and the bigotry and bloodshed which it engendered and perpetuated, must place its author among the worst enemies of mankind.

Until his flight to Medina, Mahomet had uniformly disclaimed force as an auxiliary to his cause. He now declared that he was authorised to have recourse to arms in his own defence; and soon after, that he was commanded to employ them for the conversion or extermination of unbelievers. His new spirit agreed well with that of his countrymen; and before his death in A. D. 632 (the tenth after his flight,) he had brought all Arabia under his obedience, and had commenced an attack on the dominions of the Roman emperor.

But it was not merely to a warlike spirit that he was indebted for his popularity. He was a reformer as well as a conqueror. His religion was partially founded on the sublime theology of the Old Testament; and, however faulty his morality may appear to modern Christians, it was pure compared to that which then prevailed in Arabia. His law, also, which prohibited retaliation without the previous sanction of a trial and sentence, was a bold attempt to bridle the vindictive passions of his countrymen, so long fostered by the practice of private war.

The conversion of the Arabs, therefore, was probably as sincere, as it was general; and their religious spirit being now thoroughly aroused, every feeling of their enthusiastic nature was turned into that one channel: to conquer in the cause of God, or to die in asserting his unity and greatness, was the longing wish of every Mussulman, the love of power or spoil, the thirst of glory and even the

hopes of Paradise, only contributed to swell the tide of this absorbing passion.

The circumstances, both political and religious, of the neighbouring countries, were such as to encourage the warmest hopes of these fanatical adventurers.

The Roman Empire was broken and dismembered by the barbarians: and Christianity was degraded by the corruptions, and weakened by the controversies of opposing sects. Persia was sinking in the last stage of internal decay and her cold and lifeless superstition required little to bring it to the ground.

Mahomet's attack on the Roman Empire was in the direction of Syria; and within six years after his death that province and Egypt had been subdued by his successors. Roman, Africa and Spain followed in succession; and within a century from the death of their founder, the Mussulmans had pushed their conquests into the heart of France. In the opinion of Sir James Mackintosh, all Europe would probably have been overrun by them, had not a strong and general resistance been awakened by the Crusades. These extensive operations, however, did not retard their enterprizes towards the East. Persia was invaded in A. D. 632, and not long after annexed to the Arab Empire.

In A. D. 664, an Arab force penetrated to Cabul. This was the first appearance of the Mussulmans in India. In the reign of Calif Walid, Sind was conquered by Mohammed Casim, after several well-contested engagements.

The Arabs displayed their usual mixture of ferocity and moderation in their treatment of the conquered countries. On the first invasion, each city was called on, as the army approached, to embrace the Mussulman religion, or to pay tribute. In case of refusal, the city was attacked; and if it did not capitulate, all the fighting men were put to death, and their families sold for slaves. When tribute was once agreed to, the inhabitants were entitled to all their former privileges, including the free exercise of their religion.

The advance of the Mahometan arms in India ceased with the life of Casim A. D. 714. His conquests were made over to his successor Temim, in the hand of whose family they remained till the downfall of the house of Ommeyia, that is, for about thirty-six years; when, by some insur-

rection, of which we do not know the particulars, the Mussulmans were expelled by the Rajput tribe of Sumera, and all their Indian conquests restored to the Hindus, who retained possession for nearly 500 years.

No materials exist for furnishing an authentic account of the state of India during this period. The narratives contained in the native records are too confused and contradictory to be of any historical value.

It is only necessary to follow the course of Arab History, in so far as it is connected with the establishment of a Mahometan government in India.

After the empire of the Califs had been broken up, several dynasties were formed, of longer or shorter duration. The house of Samani subsisted for more than 120 years; and, though not invaders of India, were in various ways connected with it. In the reign of Abdulmelek, (A. D. 960) the fifth prince of this house, a slave named Alptegin rose into importance, and became the founder of the house of Ghizni. His successor, Sebektegin, conquered Jaipal, the Raja of Lahore, levied heavy contributions, and took possession of the country up to the Indus. Sebektegin died on his way back to Ghizni, A. D. 997.

CHAPTER VIII.

SULTAN MAHMUD.

Mahmud's First Expedition to India—Second, Third, and Fourth Expeditions—Decisive Battle—Temple of Nagarcôt—Fifth and Sixth Expeditions—Seventh and Eighth—Other Conquests—Ninth Expedition to India—Tenth and Eleventh—Twelfth—Sômanâth—Great Victory—Return—Khorasan—Death—Character—Anecdote.

SEBEKTIGIN'S son, Mahmud, was thirty years of age when he succeeded his father, (A. D. 997) and had given early indications of a warlike and decided character. India presented a wide field for the display of his abilities. Its great extent and rumoured magnificence were sufficiently alluring. Then the adventures to be expected in such a country derived fresh lustre from their being the means of extending the Mahomedan faith.

Mahmud accordingly left Ghizni with a large force, and was met by his father's old antagonist, Jaipal of Lahore, in the neighbourhood of Peshawar. Mahmud totally defeated him, took him prisoner, and pursued his march beyond the Sutledje. He stormed Batinda, and returned to Ghizni loaded with plunder. He released the Hindu prisoners for a ransom, on the Raja's renewing his promises of tribute; but Jaipal, on returning home from his captivity, worn out by repeated disasters, made over his crown to his son Anangpal, and mounting a pyre which he had ordered to be constructed, perished in the flames. Anangpal acknowledged his kingdom tributary to Ghizni.

The two next expeditions of Mahmud were made with the view of collecting imposts, and suppressing partial rebellions. The fourth was in 1008, when Anangpal was found prepared for the attack. He had sent ambassadors to all the great Hindu princes, pointing out to them the danger with which they were threatened by the progress of the Mussulman, and the necessity of an immediate combination to prevent the

total destruction of their religion and independence. The Rajas of Delhi, Canouj, Onjein, Gwalior, and others, entered into a confederacy: and, uniting their forces, advanced into the Punjab with the largest army that had yet taken the field. Mahmud, alarmed at this unexpected display of force, halted in the presence of the enemy, and took up a position near Peshawur, in which he remained on the defensive. During his inaction, the hostile army daily increased; the Hindu women sold their jewels, melted down their golden ornaments, and sent their contributions from a distance to furnish resources for the war: and the Gakkars and other warlike tribes joining their army, they surrounded the Mussulmans, who were obliged to intrench their camp. But Mahmud had not lost his courage: he sent out a strong body of archers, who, however, were at once repulsed by the Gakkars; and a numerous body of these mountaineers, bareheaded and barefooted, passed the intrenchments, and falling in with astonishing fury among the cavalry, proceeded with their swords and knives to cut down and maim both horse and rider, until above 3000 fell victims to their savage impetuosity.

Mahmud at length discovered that the elephant of his antagonist, the prince of Lahore, having taken flight either at the showers of arrows, or at a fire ball, was running off and carrying his master from the field. This incident struck a terror into the enemy: the Hindus thinking themselves deserted by their general, soon gave way, and then fled in complete and irretrievable confusion. Mahmud took immediate advantage of this, and destroyed a great number of the routed army. Not content with this, he followed them into the Punjab, and soon found them so effectually dispersed, that he had time to execute one of those schemes of plunder in which he took so much delight. The rich temple of Nageroot was defenceless, and its accumulated treasures fell into the conqueror's hands. With this vast booty Mahmud returned to Ghizni, where much of it was spent in triumphant feasts, in alms to the poor, and presents to persons distinguished for merit or sanctity.

Mahmud's fifth expedition to India was in 1010, when Multan was taken. The following year saw him at Tanesar near the Jumna, where he plundered the temple, sacked the town, and returned with a great number of captives to Ghizni.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the next three years, except two predatory expeditions to Cashmir. In 1016, he extended his dominions to the Caspian Sea; and the great scale of his operations in that direction seems to have enlarged his views in his designs on India. Up to this period, the Punjab had been his ordinary field of action; in his next campaign he resolved to move direct to the Ganges. His preparations were commensurate with his design. He assembled an immense army drawn from all parts of his dominions, more especially from those recently conquered; by which prudent policy a dangerous soldiery were removed, and attached to his service by the prospect of plunder.

Mahmud set out from Peshawur, and passing near Cashmir, kept close to the mountains, where the rivers are most easily crossed, until he had passed the Jumna, when he turned towards the south, and unexpectedly presented himself before the great city of Canouj. The Raja was taken entirely unprepared; and so conscious of his helpless situation, that he at once gave himself up. Canouj was left uninjured. No such clemency was shown to Muttra, one of the most celebrated seats of the Hindu religion. During a half of twenty days the city was given up to plunder.

Having now learned the way into the interior, Mahmud made two subsequent marches into India, in 1022 and 1023. The first of these was to the relief of the Rajah of Canouj, (against whom a confederacy had been formed to punish his alliance with Mahmud,) but he was cut off by the Raja of Calinger before the Sultan arrived. Jaipal II, who had succeeded to the government of Lahore, being led to oppose this march to Canouj, the results were, the annexation of Lahore and its territory to Ghizni; the first instance of a permanent garrison on the east of the Indus; and the foundation of the future Mahometan empire in India.

In the year 1024, the conqueror undertook his twelfth and greatest expedition to India. In the province of Guzerat, on the shore of the Indian ocean, stood Somanath, a temple of great sanctity and wealth—and at that time the most frequented and famous place of worship in the country.

To reach this place, Mahmud besides a long march through inhabited countries, had to cross a desert 350

miles broad. To do this with an army would be an exceedingly difficult undertaking at the present day ; but to do so then, with the chance of meeting a hostile army on the edge, required extraordinary skill and enterprise.

The army moved from Ghizni in September A. D. 1024, and reached Multan in October. The Sultan had collected 20,000 camels for carrying supplies : and as soon as he had completed his arrangements for the march, crossed the desert without any disaster. On reaching Ajmir, the Raja fled. Mahmud next arrived at Anhalwara, the capital of Guzerat, which was also abandoned by the Raja with precipitation.

Without being diverted by this valuable conquest, Mahmud pursued his march to Somanath, and at length reached that great object of his exertions. He found the temple situated on a peninsula, connected with the main land by a fortified isthmus, the battlements of which were manned in every point, and from whence issued a herald, who brought him defiance and threats of destruction in the name of the god. Little moved by these menaces, Mahmud brought forward his archers, and soon cleared the walls of their defenders, who now crowded to the temple, and prostrating themselves before the idol, called on him with tears for help. But Rajputs are as easily excited as dispirited ; and hearing the shouts of "Allaho Akbar" from the Mussulmans, who had already begun to mount the walls, they hurried back to their defence, and made so gallant a resistance, that the Mussulmans were unable to retain their footing, and were driven from the place with loss.

The next day a general assault was ordered ; but as fast as the Mussulmans scaled the walls, they were hurled down headlong by the besieged, who seemed resolved to defend the place to the last.

On the third day the princes of the neighbourhood, who had assembled to rescue the temple, presented themselves in order of battle, and obliged Mahmud to relinquish the attack, and move in person against his new enemy. The battle raged with great fury, and victory was already doubtful, when the Raja of Anhalwara arrived with a strong reinforcement to the Hindus. This unexpected addition to their enemies so dispirited the Mussulmans that they began to waver, when Mahmud, who had prostrated

himself to implore the divine assistance, leaped upon his horse, and cheered his troops with such energy, that, ashamed to abandon a king under whom they had so often fought and bled, they with one accord gave a loud shout, and rushed forwards with an impetuosity that could no longer be withstood. Five thousand Hindus lay dead after the charge ; and so complete was the rout of their army that the garrison gave up all hopes of further defence, and breaking out to the number of 4000 men, made their way to their boats ; and though not without considerable loss, succeeded in escaping by sea.

Mahmud entered the temple, and was struck with the grandeur of the edifice, the lofty roof of which was supported by fifty six pillars curiously carved, and ornamented with precious stones. The external light was excluded, but the temple was illuminated by a lamp which hung down in the centre from a golden chain. Ferishta says that opposite the entrance stood Somanath, an idol five yards high, of which two were buried in the ground. Mahmud instantly ordered the image to be destroyed ; when the brahmans of the temple threw themselves before him, and offered an enormous ransom if he would spare their deity. Mahmud, after a moment's pause, exclaimed that he would rather be remembered as the breaker than the seller of idols, and struck the image with his mace. His example was instantaneously followed ; and the image, which was hollow, burst with the blows, and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels which had been concealed in it, that amply repaid Mahmud for the sacrifice of the ransom. Such is Ferishta's account, and may be true of some idol in the temple, but the real object of worship at Somanath was not an image but a simple cylinder of stone.

[Professor Wilson says "The whole story of Mahmud's destruction of Somanath is a curious specimen of the manner in which a story is embellished by repetition. According to earlier Mohammedan writers, the idol Somanath, was a straight solid block of stone, three cubits long ; which upon the temple being pillaged, was broken to pieces : they say nothing of the mutilation of its features, for, in fact, it had none ; nothing of the treasures it contained ; which, as it was solid, could not have been within it ; nor do they speak of the sums offered for its ransom.

Even Ferishta says nothing of any definite sum of money being offered for it. His words are. The brahmans went to the attendants of Mahmud, and said, if the king will let the image alone, we will give as much gold, meaning, probably, an equal weight, to the public treasury. The crores and millions are due to Dow and Gibbon. Ferishta however, invents the hidden treasure of rubies and pearls with quite as little warrant. Somanath was, in fact, a Linga, Nath, or a deity ascribed to Soma, the moon, as having been erected by him in honour of Siva. It was one of the twelve principal types of that deity, which were celebrated in India at the time of the first Mohamedan invasion."

Two pieces of the idol were sent to Mecca and Medina, and two to Ghizni; the large sandal wood gates of the temple were also carried to Ghizni, and used in the construction of the magnificent tomb which still exists, bearing the name of Sultan Mahmud. When Ghizni was taken by the English in 1842, the celebrated gates were restored to India by order of Lord Ellenborough, the Governor General. They have since been sent to England.]

Mahmud was so much pleased with Guzerat, that he deliberated whether he should not make it the principal seat of his government, or at least annex it permanently to his dominions; but he became satisfied, that the distance from Ghizni was too great, and the communications too difficult. He attempted, however, to retain a control over this fine country, by raising to the sovereignty a brahman of humble birth; but he had not long departed when the people again transferred their allegiance to their ancient race of kings.

The victor, while on his return to Ghizni, suffered considerably in passing through the vast deserts; and was greatly annoyed also by the Jats, a tribe inhabiting Multan; who, by their strong force of war boats, commanded the navigation of the Indus. The indignant monarch undertook next year an expedition against this people; and having prepared a vast number of small vessels fortified with iron spikes, encountered, and, after an obstinate conflict, defeated them so completely, that almost the whole nation were slain or taken prisoners.

The following season he was employed in an expedition into Khorasan, which is said to have left a great stain on

his memory ; and on his return from it, in 1030, he was taken ill, and died in Ghizni at the age of 63.

Shortly before his death he commanded all the most costly of his treasures to be displayed before him ; and, after long contemplating them, he is said to have shed tears at the thought that he was soon to lose them. It is remarked that, after this fond parting with his treasures, he distributed no portion of them among those around him, to whom also he was about to bid farewell.

Thus died Mahmud, certainly the greatest sovereign of his own time, and considered by the Mohamedans among the greatest of any age. Though some of his qualities have been overrated, he appears on the whole to have deserved his reputation. Prudence, activity, and enterprise, he possessed in the highest degree ; and the good order which he preserved in his extensive dominions during his frequent absences, is a proof of his talents for government.

He seems to have made no innovation in internal government : no laws or institutions are referred, by tradition, to him.

The real source of his glory lay in his combining the qualities of a warrior and a conqueror, with a zeal for the encouragement of literature and the arts, which was rare in his time, and has not yet been surpassed. His liberality in those respects is enhanced by his habitual economy. He founded a university in Ghizni, with a vast collection of curious books in various languages, and a museum of natural curiosities. He appropriated a large sum of money for the maintenance of this establishment, besides a permanent fund for allowance to professors and to students. He also set aside a sum, nearly equal to 1,00,000 rupees a-year, for pensions to learned men ; and showed so much munificence to individuals of eminence, that his capital exhibited a greater assemblage of literary genius than any other monarch in Asia has ever been able to produce.

Notwithstanding the bloodshed and misery of which he was the occasion, he does not seem to have been cruel.

We hear of none of the tragedies and atrocities in his court and family which are so common in those of other despots. No inhuman punishments are recorded ; and rebels, even when they are persons who had been pardoned and trusted, never suffer anything worse than imprisonment.

Mahmud was about the middle size; athletic, and well proportioned in his limbs, but disfigured with the small-pox to a degree that was a constant source of mortification to him in his youth, until it stimulated him to exertion, from a desire that the bad impression made by his appearance might be effaced by the lustre of his actions.

He seems to have been of a cheerful disposition, and to have lived on easy terms with those around him.

An example is given of his sense of his duty to his people. Soon after the conquest of Irak, a caravan was cut off in the desert to the east of that country, and the mother of one of the merchants who was killed, went to Ghizni to complain. Mahmud urged the impossibility of keeping order in so remote a part of his territories; when the woman boldly answered, "Why, then, do you take countries which you cannot govern, and for the protection of which you must answer in the day of judgment?" Mahmud was struck with the reproach; and, after satisfying the woman by a liberal present, he took effectual measures for the protection of the caravans.

CHAPTER IX.

MAHMUD'S SUCCESSORS.

Sultan Mahommed—Masaud—Downfall of the House of Ghizni—Mohammed Ghor—His Invasion of India—Repulse—Second Invasion—Success—Third and Succeeding Expeditions—Victories—Return—Assassination.

SULTAN MAHMUD left two sons, one of whom, Mohammed, had so ingratiated himself with his father, that he fixed on him as his successor, and he was accordingly crowned. But his brother, Musaud, was more popular with the army, and Mohammed was seized, blinded, and sent into confinement. Musaud, ascended the throne within five months of his father's death. All the new monarch's energy was required to suppress the rising power of the Seljuks, whose inroads into Khorasan then became troublesome. In a decisive encounter with them he was deserted by some of his Turki followers, and compelled to fly to Meru. Misfortunes increased; he was soon after deposed; and his brother Mohammed restored to the throne. This latter prince being incapable from blindness of conducting the government, appointed his son Ahmed to reign.

The events which follow have little interest in Indian history. The revolutions in the government, being like those common to all Asiatic monarchies, fatigue without instructing; the struggles with the Seljuks only affected the Western dominions of Ghizni, and those with the Hindus had no permanent effect at all. For the history of *the people*, Asiatic writers afford no materials.

This dynasty of the house of Ghizni continued during two centuries; and its downfall at last arose from an internal cause. Ghor or Ghor forms a rude district, situated on the loftiest branch of the Caucasus, or Hindu Coosh, where it borders on Tibet and Turkistan. Its princes, commanding a race of hardy mountaineers, gradually made themselves nearly independent of the Ghisnian government, and even obtained possessions in Tartary and Khorasan. This excited so strongly the jealousy of Behram, who, in 1115, had ascended the throne of Ghizni, that he put to death, by stratagem, a prince of Ghor. The attempt to revenge this tragic occurrence led to fierce contests, with various success

on both sides. At length Behram yielded, and fled with his scattered army towards Hindoostan, where he soon after died of grief. The victor, in 1152, marched upon Ghizni, when that splendid city was given up to a general pillage and to the sword of the enraged Ghorians.

Mohammed Ghor obtained the government of Ghizni in 1174, and, commencing his career with the occupation of Lahore, he made it his principal object to extend his dominion over India. Collecting all his forces, he advanced against Ajmir, which at first submitted; but the king of Delhi, having formed an alliance with the several neighbouring princes, hastened to its relief with two hundred thousand infantry, and three thousand elephants. Mohammed, trusting to the courage of his mountain tribes, rushed fearlessly to the attack; but the view of this immense host wheeling round to enclose them, and the mighty array of its elephants seems to have struck with panic these undisciplined warriors. Many of the chiefs, with their followers, fled, leaving the king surrounded by the enemy, whose superiority in numbers was now greatly increased. The Moslem on horseback encountered hand to hand the King of Delhi, seated on his war-elephant. The Gorian prince, after a desperate struggle, was pierced in the arm, fell to the ground, and was with difficulty carried off by a trusty band of his adherents. The rout was complete, and pursuit was continued forty miles.

The emperor spent a year in repairing the effects of this dreadful disaster, and organizing the means of a new invasion. He at first degraded the omrahs who had fled, subjecting them to the humiliation of marching round the city with bags of barley suspended from their necks, and of feeding out of them; but when proceeding on his next expedition, it was represented to him that he thereby deprived himself of the services of many of his choicest warriors: upon which he allowed them to resume their stations, and obtain an opportunity of redeeming their fame.

Mohammed, having mustered all his forces, marched into India, where he met troops still more numerous than those who had vanquished him in the preceding year; all of whom had now bound themselves by the water of the Ganges to conquer or die. The Indian princes advanced with boundless confidence; sending at the same time a friendly remonstrance, that if Mohammed was weary of his own life, he should at least pity the men whom he was leading to so cruel

a destiny. Retreat was still open to him; but if urged on by his evil genius, "we have sworn," said they, "by our gods, to advance upon you with our rank-breaking elephants, war-treading horses, and blood-thirsty soldiers, early in the morning, to crush your unfortunate army." The wary commander returned an answer seemingly inspired by alarm; stating, that he carried on the war only in obedience to his brother, without whose orders he could not retreat, but would gladly arrange the terms of a truce till he should receive further instructions. The Indians lulled by this submissive tone, gave themselves up to security, and spent the following night in merriment. Mohammed, watching the moment when they were completely off their guard, made an attack during the darkness, defeating and putting to flight several large bodies; yet so immense was the circuit of their camp, that there were rallied next morning numbers which seemed more than enough to crush the whole host of the invaders. The Mussulman then adopted the old Scythian warfare; with his squadrons of cavalry he alternately attacked and retreated, till towards evening, seeing the enemy completely exhausted, he charged them at the head of his chosen band of mailed horsemen, who bore down all opposition, and drove the whole of their army into a tumultuary flight. The King of Delhi fell, and immense spoil came into the hands of the conqueror. Having advanced to the capital, the victor was prevailed upon by a high ransom to spare it, but left a strong force under his lieutenant, Kutb, to maintain his authority in that quarter. This Officer soon after assembled a large body of followers, subverted the throne of Delhi, and reigned there as viceroy. Thus a Moslem dominion was for the first time established in the heart of India, and in one of its greatest cities.

After the lapse of a short period, Mohammed made another expedition into Hindoostan. Being joined by Kutb, he totally defeated the Prince of Canouj, then marched against Benares, broke the idols of its thousand shrines, and loaded four thousand camels with the wealth of that sacred city. Following a career similar to that of the Ghiznvide, he made nine expeditions into India, and accumulated treasures which almost rivalled those of his great predecessor. But this splendid light of conquest was in one moment extinguished; for on his way from

Lahore to Ghizni, he pitched his tent for the night on the banks of the Indus, or one of its tributaries ; where a band of the mountain-tribe of Gakkars, many of whose relations had perished in war with Mohammed, had vowed, at whatever cost, to purchase revenge. The season being extremely hot, the *canats* or screens enclosing the imperial tents had been thrown open for the admission of air. Twenty conspirators, availing themselves of this circumstance, stole in unperceived, stabbed the sentry on guard, and, having drawn off the attention of the others, penetrated to the chamber of the king, who was lying asleep, with two slaves fanning him. All their daggers were instantly plunged in his breast, and he sunk under their hands, pierced by twenty-two wounds.

Thus perished this great conqueror, whose dominion was almost as extensive as that of Mahmud of Ghizni. Like him, according to Ferishta, he was not devoid of virtues, yet has left behind a darker reputation, redeemed by fewer traits of refinement and humanity. With him the dynasty of Ghor rose and fell, for he left no descendants possessed of energy sufficient to support the weight of his ill-balanced empire. His lieutenants, Eldoz in the mountain-territory, and Kutb in India, soon erected for themselves independent sovereignties.



CHAPTER X.

THE SLAVE KINGS—PATAN DYNASTY.

Independence of India—Kutb u din—Progress of a Turki slave—Aram—Altmash—Irruptions of the Moguls under Genghis Khan—Sultana Rezia—Rebellion—Behram—Masaud—Bulbun—His Character—Victory and death of the Heir Apparent—Death of Bulbun—Kei Kobad—Influence of his vizier—King's Interview with his Father Bakarrah Khan—Murder of the vizier—King dethroned and put to death.

FROM the death of Mohammed Ghor, India became an independent kingdom ; and after the disturbance occasioned by the dissolution of his empire had subsided, it ceased to have any connexion with the countries beyond the Indus.

The life of Kutb u din, the founder of this new monarchy, affords a specimen of the history of the Turki slaves, who rose to sovereignty throughout Asia, and who furnished a succession of rulers to India.

He was brought to Nishapur in his infancy, and purchased by a wealthy person, who had him instructed in Persian and Arabic. His patron dying, he was sold to a merchant who presented him to Mohammed Ghor. Kutb soon acquired his master's favour, and was in command of a body of horse, when he distinguished himself in some border warfare, and his subsequent good conduct stood so high in his sovereign's estimation, that, after the defeat of the Raja of Ajmir, he was left in charge of all the new conquests. On Mohammed's death he became independent and was acknowledged as king. He reigned only four years, but his administration extended over the twenty years that he officiated as the representative of Mohammed Ghor. He died in 1210.

Aram his son succeeded him, but showed no capacity, and was soon dethroned by his brother-in-law, Altmash, who, though a Tartar of noble birth, had, like Kutb, been

sold as a slave, and purchased by that prince. Altmash showed considerable vigour, distinguished himself by several conquests, and enjoyed a good reputation.

About this time, A. D. 1217, an event occurred which changed the whole face of Asia. Genghis Khan, originally a petty chief among the Moguls, having subdued the three nations of Tartary, and swelled his bands with their united hordes, burst on the Mohammedan kingdoms with an army said to be the most numerous ever assembled.

This irruption of the Moguls, was the greatest calamity that has fallen on mankind since the deluge. They had no religion to teach, and no seeds of improvement to sow, nor did they offer an alternative of conversion or tribute; their only object was to slaughter and destroy: and the only trace they left was in the devastation of every country which they visited.

Genghis, after ravaging great part of Asia, attacked the Prince of the Afghans, whom he compelled to take refuge beyond the Indus. Altmash refused to shelter him, and hence the arms of Genghis were turned aside at that time from India.

After the death of Altmash, which took place in 1236, there was a succession of plots, mutinies, and revolutions, equally destitute of present interest and permanent effects. Altmash's elder son who succeeded him, was soon deposed, and Altmash's sister Rezia raised to the throne. She is said to have been endowed with every princely virtue; and in early youth had displayed such talents for administration, that Altmash, when absent on a campaign, left her in charge of his Government in preference to his sons. But her talents and virtues were insufficient to protect her from the effects of a single weakness. Her Master of the Horse, formerly an Abyssinian slave, received extraordinary marks of favor, and though nothing criminal was alleged, the nobility were disgusted, and furnished with a plausible ground for exciting a clamour against her. Their discontent was soon matured into insurrection; and the fair ruler of India was finally defeated, imprisoned, and put to death. Her reign lasted three years and six months.

Behram, her brother, succeeded, but before he was well established on the throne, his dominions were invaded by a body of Moguls, who penetrated to Lahore; and the assemblage of troops which followed, led to new plots which ended in his death after a reign of two and half years.

The next reign, that of Sultan Masaud, was a repetition of the same scenes, increased by the cruelty and licentiousness of the king, until in little more than two years he was deposed and put to death, A.D. 1243.

Mahmud II., grandson of Altmash, who had been imprisoned after that prince's death, was now raised to the throne by the chiefs who had deposed his predecessor. His accession was hailed with general satisfaction. And though his reign was full of disturbances foreign and domestic, he defended his territories with vigour against numerous and formidable enemies. His private life was that of a dervise. He defrayed all his expenses, as he had done during his imprisonment, by copying books : his fare was of the humblest description, and was cooked by the queen, to whom he allowed no female servant. He was an eminent patron of Persian literature, a protector of the people, and friend to the poor. Mahmud had died deeply regretted after a reign of 20 years. A.D. 1226.

His vizier, Bulbun (often called Balin) being already in possession of the powers of King, found no difficulty in assuming the title. Mahmud had died without issue.

Bulbun has been set forth as a model emperor by most English historians of India: but Mr. Elphinstone, whose views deservedly possess the highest authority, furnishes a very different picture. "This narrow-minded and selfish tyrant," says he, "was raised by circumstances to the appearance of a liberal and enlightened monarch. The horrors of the Mogul invasion drove men of eminence from the countries to which it extended: and Bulbun's being the only Mahometan government which was not subverted, his court was filled with illustrious exiles of that religion. The number of literary fugitives was little more considerable; and as the king's eldest son, prince Mahomed, was a young man of the greatest accomplishments, his palace was the resort of all the famous authors of that age."

Several insurrections were created by banditti for the sake of plunder; but Bulbun succeeded in effectually crushing them. In Mewal he is said to have put 100,000 persons to the sword; but he also cut down the forest over a great extent of country, and thus made it yield support to the husbandman, instead of its being an asylum to the robber.

A serious rebellion took place in Bengal which was with difficulty suppressed, and afterwards punished with more than the king's usual severity.

Not long after this he had the misfortune to lose his eldest son: a calamity to his people no less than to himself. The prince's death was worthy of the high character he had acquired. He was killed at the close of a complete victory he had gained over an army of Moguls.

This loss drew tears from all, and touched the heart even of Bulbun. That monarch had now reached his eightieth year, and was fast sinking when he summoned his second son Bakarra Khan to attend him on his death bed. His son, not thinking him in immediate danger, returned without leave to his province of Bengal, and Bulbun was so much offended that he declared Kei Khusru, prince Mohammed's son, his heir; and soon after died. The ministers, desirous of averting civil war, proclaimed Kei Kobad, the son of Bakarra Khan, and restored Khusru to the government of Multan.

Kei Kobad was eighteen years old at his accession, and was encouraged in a career of licentiousness and vice by his vizier, Nizam din, who entertained hopes of securing the crown to himself. In order to this, he procured the assassination of Kei Khusru, and brought about the death or disgrace of all the ministers who were not his own creatures.

Bakarra Khan, the king's father, hearing the state of affairs, marched with an army to look after the interests of his family. The vizier easily prevailed on the king to move out to oppose him; but, when the armies drew near; Bakarra Khan appealed so strongly to his son's affections, that the minister could no longer prevent an interview. He endeavoured to frustrate the effects of it by imposing many humiliating ceremonies on Bakarra Khan, to all which that prince submitted; until, after repeated obeisances, he found the king remaining unmoved on his throne; when, shocked by this unnatural behaviour, he burst into tears. This sight overpowered all the king's resolutions: he leaped from his throne, and ran to throw himself at his father's feet; and the father hastening to prevent him, he fell on his neck, and they remained for some minutes weeping in each other's arms. When the first transport was over, Kei Kobad seated his father on the throne, and showed him every mark of love and rever-

ence. All thoughts of war were now at an end ; but after repeated interviews, Bakarra Khan found that the vizier's vigilance, and his power over the enfeebled mind of the king, rendered it impossible to subvert his authority by peaceful means ; and, being unwilling, or unable, to resort to force, he returned to Bengal, and left his son to his fate.

Kei Kobad plunged anew into all sorts of debauchery ; and to such excess, that, at that early age, he entirely broke his constitution, and brought on an attack of palsy. Being now driven to reflection, he perceived all the dangers of his situation ; and, unable to rid himself of his minister by honourable means, he had recourse to the lessons with which he had been made familiar, and succeeded, before long, in taking him off by poison.

The removal of this predominating influence served only to let loose a number of other enemies, all eager to seize on the power which the king was unable himself to retain.

The ascendancy of the slaves about the court had been destroyed by the policy of Bulbun, and the contest was now between the principal military leaders. The only competitors were the Tartar chiefs and those of the old kingdom of Ghizni or Ghor. The Khiljis seem, from the ability of their chief, or some advantage of their own, to have been at the head of the latter class : they prevailed over the Tartars and Jelal u din Khilji was raised to the throne, after the way had been opened for him by the assassination of Kei Kobad. A.D. 1288.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND PATAN DYNASTY.

Jelal u din—His mild government—His nephew Ala's Invasion of the Deckan—Return—Assassination of Jelal—Ala u din—Expedition to Guzerat—Invasions by the Moguls—Their Defeat—Conquests and Government of Ala—His Character—Death—Cafur—Mobarik—Khusru—Toghla—Juna Khan—Feroze III.—Tamerlane—Lodi—Khizr—Seiad Mobarik—Belal Khan Lodi—Secander I.—Ibrahim—Baber.

THE Khiljis were Turks by descent, but had been so long settled among the Afghans, that they had almost become identified with that people. Jelal (or Feroze,) was seventy years of age when he came to the government. He was a man of intelligence ; and though guilty of cruelty and injustice in acquiring and establishing his throne, yet sought to distinguish himself by the justice and popularity of his administration. His lenity to his enemies was carried to a fault, he also retained the simplicity of his manners, and associated with his old friends on the same footing of familiarity that he did when a private man.

A rebellion took place which was soon quelled, and the chiefs who were taken prisoners were treated with extraordinary clemency. An insurrection in Malwa was but partially suppressed ; but when the Punjab was invaded by the Moguls, Jelal showed more vigour, and totally defeated them, but allowed the wreck of their army to retire unmolested.

The first invasion of the Deckan by Mohammedan arms took place in this reign. It was made by Ala, the nephew of Feroze, then Governor of Karrah, (a country lying between the Ganges and Jumna.) Without his uncle's leave, he set out with 8000 horse to Deogiri, (now Dowlatabad,) and by causing it to be believed that the force which accompanied him was only the vanguard of the main army, he intimi-

dated the city into a surrender ; put to flight a vast body of troops assembled for its defence, and returned with immense treasure.

Jelal had remained in suspense and anxiety both as to the fate and designs of his nephew ; but when he heard that he was on his return, loaded with riches and glory, he felt nothing but delight at the intelligence : and instead of following the advice of his councillors, and adopting measures for the security of his own power, he resolved to repose on the fidelity of Ala. He was even induced to go to Karrah, and while in the act of embracing his treacherous nephew, was barbarously assassinated, after a reign of seven years ; A. D. 1295. There was something peculiarly revolting in the way in which this murder was perpetrated ; the head of the late monarch being ordered by the perfidious Ala to be stuck on a spear, and carried aloft through camp and city.

When the accounts of the late king's death reached Delhi, his widow made a feeble attempt to set up her infant son in his place : on the approach of Ala she fled to Multan, where the only other surviving son of Jelal was governor : but the whole family were inveigled from this asylum by means of a fallacious promise, when the two princes were put to death and the queen imprisoned.

Ala tried to recover the good will of his people by the just exercise of the power he had obtained by so many atrocities : but as in the midst of his course of conciliation he could not refrain from acts of rapacity, and never repressed his arbitrary temper, he was only partially successful in his attempts to gain popularity : and although his reign was long, and in a military sense glorious, he was always disturbed by conspiracies and rebellions, and disquieted by suspicions even of his own family, and of those most trusted by him.

Ala's first great undertaking was an expedition against Guzerat, which was entirely successful. A formidable invasion of the Moguls, who penetrated to Delhi itself, was ably repelled by the distinguished general Zafar Khan, whose abilities however had excited so much jealousy that he was purposely left unsupported, and fell in the midst of the pursuit after the victory.

Other expeditions were made, and conquests gained in Telingana, Carnata, and Malabar. Though Ala was ignorant and capricious as well as cruel and tyrannical, yet

his foreign conquests were among the greatest ever made in India : and his internal administration, in spite of many oppressive measures, was on the whole successful. The provinces were quiet and secure ; wealth increased, and showed itself in public and private buildings, and other forms of improvement and luxury. Ala was so illiterate that he began to learn to read after he attained the throne ; yet so arrogant that his most experienced ministers never dared to contradict him, and the best informed men in his court had to keep down their knowledge to the level of his acquirements. At one time he entertained thoughts of setting up for a prophet, and founding a new religion ; and when that was dropped, he assumed the title of The Second Alexander, and publicly discussed a project of universal conquest.

When his constitution was broken down by intemperance his ill health made him more suspicious and irritable than ever ; and like most people who distrust the bulk of mankind he was the dupe of one artful individual. This was Cafur, the extent of whose abilities was equalled by the depravity of his principles. The use he made of his influence was to destroy any who might rival him in favour, and afterwards to irritate the king against his sons, and the queen their mother. Ala died in A. D. 1316—after a reign of twenty years : his end is said to have been accelerated by poison administered by Cafur.

On the death of Ala, Cafur produced a pretended will of that prince, appointing his infant son his successor, under the guardianship of Cafur. Having thus gained possession of the government Cafur put out the eyes of the king's two eldest sons, and not long after sent assassins to murder the third son Mobarik. The assassins however were induced to spare him, and before Cafur had time to take further measures, he was himself killed by the royal guard.

Mobarik was immediately raised to the government. He deprived his infant brother of sight and put to death the officers who had raised him to the throne. After liberating all prisoners, restoring confiscated lands, and making a vigorous military demonstration, Mobarik gave himself up to a course of the most degrading and odious debauchery. At length Khusru Khan, a converted Hindu, who had been made vizier, and had the entire control of

the administration, perpetrated the murder of his infatuated master, and at once assumed the vacant throne.

Khusru put to death all the survivors of the family of Ala, but soon perished in an insurrection excited against him by Ghazi Khān Toghlāh, governor of the Punjab. The death of the usurper produced general joy, and as no member of the Khilji family was found to have survived, Toghlāh was himself proclaimed under the title of Gheiasu din.

Gheiasu din Toghlāh was the son of a Turki slave by an Indian mother. His whole reign was as commendable as his accession was blameless. It was felt that a misfortune had happened to the empire, when, at the end of four years, he was killed by the fall of a pavilion erected for his reception by his son, Juna Khan—on whom some suspicion rested that the accident might have been contrived.

Juna Khan, who assumed the name of Sultan Mohammed took possession of his dignity with extraordinary magnificence. He distributed gifts and pensions; established hospitals and alms-houses; and throughout his reign, was munificent to the learned. His private life was irreproachable and it is admitted that he was eloquent and accomplished. Yet all these talents were accompanied by a perversion of judgment which leaves us in doubt whether he was not affected by some degree of insanity.—His whole life was spent in pursuing visionary schemes by means equally irrational, and with such a total disregard of the sufferings which they occasioned to his subjects, that many of his atrocities exceeded those recorded of the worst of the Cæsars. His reign lasted twenty-seven years, and its results were more calamitous than those of any that preceded it. It was in this reign the rajas of Carnata and Telingana recovered their independence. He died in 1351.

Feroze III., nephew of Mohammed, succeeded him, and was happily a prince of a very different temper. Under him the arts of peace flourished, and the rights of humanity were respected. India, during his reign of thirty-eight years, enjoyed a respite from her many calamities; the condition of the people was improved; industry revived; vexatious taxes and fees were abolished; the roads were kept in good repair, and new ones made where required; one hundred and fifty bridges were built, and fifty dams thrown across rivers to promote irrigation; forty mosques and thirty colleges were erected in different parts of

the empire ; one hundred caravanseries for travellers, and as many hospitals for the sick, with the same number of public baths were among the edifices, many of which still remain, that afford sufficient evidence of the enlightened spirit that pervaded the reign of Feroze III. This amiable prince died in A. D. 1388 at the advanced age of ninety.

The short reigns of Toghlak II., Abubkr, and Mahomed IV., exemplified the precarious nature of oriental power. Mahmud III., was yet a minor, and the rulers of the provinces were scheming how they might best throw off the imperial yoke, when the invasion of Tamerlane burst upon their heads and overwhelmed the contending parties in one common ruin.

Tamerlane (Teimur) had united the hordes of Tartary in the same manner, though not to the same extent, as Genghis Khan ; and like him, had carried his destructive inroads into all the surrounding countries. Though a Turk and a Mussulman, he was as barbarous in his mode of war as the Mogul. Tamerlane set out from his capital in 1397, and after having encountered many difficulties on his march, and desolated most of the towns which lay in his way, arrived before Delhi, which at once surrendered under a solemn promise of protection ; but when the Mogul army gained admittance, a scene of horror ensued easier to be imagined than described. Tamerlane was proclaimed emperor of India, but soon after quitted it, with the immense booty carried off from Delhi, and left anarchy, famine, and pestilence behind him.

There is a resemblance between the histories of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane ; but of these two enemies of mankind, the first was perhaps the more violent, and the second the more perfidious.

For two months after Tamerlane's departure Delhi remained without a government, and almost without inhabitants. Mahmud was at length restored to the possession of it, and died there after a nominal reign of twenty years.

He was succeeded by Doulat Khan Lodi ; who at the end of fifteen months was expelled by Khizr Khan, the governor of the Punjab. This new ruler was a Seiad, or descendant of the prophet, though a native of India. He had been governor of one portion of the Punjab, which he lost during the confusion of Mahmud's reign ; but appealed to Tamerlane who gave him the whole. He now affected to recognise that

conqueror as emperor, and to govern as his deputy. Khizr died in A.D. 1421.

Seiad Mobarik his son, succeeded to the throne ; and after a reign of thirteen years, in which no remarkable events occurred, was assassinated by a party of Hindus, at the instigation of the vizier.

The vizier placed Seiad Mohammed, son of the late prince, in his father's station, and made two of the Hindu assassins governors of provinces ; but was soon after cut off himself. The weak reign of this prince, and his son and his successor, Ala II., had nearly dissolved the empire, when it was seized and held by Behlul Khan Lodi, a noble who had some time before obtained possession of the Punjab. Behlul's reign was long and vigorous, and at his death in 1488, he left a territory extending from the Jumna to the Himalaya mountains as far east as Benares, besides a tract on the west of the Jumna extending to Bundulcund.

His son, Secander I., supported his reputation ; Secander's accession was deputed, but though his opponents were unsuccessful they were treated with clemency. Secander was in many respects a mild and excellent prince ; but bigoted in his opposition to Hinduism. He died at Agra after a reign of twenty-eight years.

Ibrahim, who succeeded, had none of his father's virtues, and his reign was continually disturbed by rebellions. Various chiefs revolted. Doulat Khan Lodi, the governor of the Punjab, called in the aid of Baber, who had for some time reigned in Cabul. At length, in 1526, a severe battle took place in which Ibrahim was killed and the Indian army suffered prodigious loss ; Baber seated himself on the throne of Delhi, and was the founder of a line of kings under whom India rose to the highest pitch of prosperity, and out of the ruins of whose empire all the existing states in that country are composed.

CHAPTER XII.

B A B E R .

Descent and Early Life of Baber—His Wars and Adventures in his Youth—Defeated by the Uzbeks—His cheerfulness under reverses—His love of flowers—Acquires the Kingdom of Cabul—Baber's Proceedings after his Victory over Ibrahim—War with Sanga, Rana of Mewar—Battle of Sikri—Victory of Baber—Settlement of the country—Siege of Chanderi—Afghan Insurrection—Defeat of the King of Bengal—Sickness of Baber—His Death—Character.

THE early life of Baber was a tissue of surprising vicissitudes and romantic adventures. He was the sixth in descent from Tamerlane. The extensive dominions of his grandfather Abusaid were shared by the numerous sons of that monarch. Omar Sheikh Mirza the fourth son, and father of Baber, ruled in Ferghana, a small but beautiful country on the upper course of the Jaxartes, of which Baber in his Memoirs always speaks with fondness. The mother of Baber was a Mogul—but the circumstance inspired no attachment on the part of Baber towards the Mogul nation, whom he always regarded with aversion.

Baber was only twelve years old at the death of his father and his own accession (A. D. 1494). He was immediately involved in war with his uncles, and maintained himself against them, and other enemies, with varying fortune, sometimes reduced to the lowest ebb, at other times borne on a flowing tide. In 1500 he suffered total defeat from the Uzbeks, and spent nearly two years in the utmost poverty and distress. But he bore his numerous reverses with the elasticity of youth. He himself tells us that he often shed many tears, and composed many melancholy verses; but his cheerful temper buoyed him up, and enable him to enjoy the present, and to entertain favourable prospects for the future. He says he never had more perfect pleasure than for a few days after he evacu-

ated Samarcand, when he first got a full meal, a quiet night's rest, and a temporary freedom from anxiety. It was owing to his sociable habits, and his relish for simple pleasures, that he so often had similar moments of enjoyment. In every interval of rest he was occupied with plants and gardening; and during all his marches, in peace or war, flowers and trees and cheerful landscapes were never thrown away on him.

In 1504 he obtained possession of Cabul with less difficulty than might have been expected. In this country he reigned for twenty-two years, before engaging in the enterprises already related, and which led to this conquest of India.

After the taking of Delhi and Agra, Baber's first act was to distribute the captured treasures to his adherents. But great efforts were still demanded for the reduction of the provinces, the governors of which formed themselves into an extensive and formidable confederacy, setting a son of the late Secander, as sovereign, at their head. Baber's principal officers, alarmed by the resistance which it seemed necessary to overcome, combined in offering him advice to return. Baber, declaring that he would relinquish such a conquest only with his life, displayed so formidable a spirit of resolution and perseverance, that in a short time the confederacy began to dissolve. Many of the omrahs who had hitherto expected to Baber to withdraw as Tamerlane had done, now made their submission; detachments were sent to reduce others; and in about four months all had been brought into subjection.

After he had thus been acknowledged by all the Mussulmans, Baber had to commence a war with the Hindus, who, contrary to their usual practice, were on this occasion the aggressors.

Sanga, the Rajput prince, who had consolidated and extended his hereditary empire, and at first opened a friendly communication with Baber, no sooner saw him seated on the throne of Delhi, than he began to form combinations against him. Several chiefs of the house of Lodi joined Raja Sanga and his allies; who all soon arrived at Biana, within 50 miles of Agra. The garrison of that place was soon driven with loss into the fort. Baber on hearing this, sent forward a detachment to observe the enemy, and soon after moved out with all his forces. As he neared

the Hindu army his advanced guard was attacked and defeated with heavy loss. Had the Raja pressed on during the first panic, it is probable he would have obtained an easy victory. But by withdrawing his encampment he allowed Baber ample time to take up a position and fortify it. Baber's troops, however, were dispirited, and this feeling was increased by the adverse prognostications of an astrologer who arrived from Cabul at the time. Some of the Indian troops deserted, and others went over to the enemy, and all were alarmed. Baber was not insensible to the dangers of his situation: he tells us that he repented of his sins, forswore wine, and gave away his gold and silver drinking vessels to the poor. But he was too much used to danger to be depressed; and that he might infuse some of his own spirit into his troops, he assembled his officers of all ranks, and made a direct appeal to their sense of honour, and set the chance of glory against the risk of death. The whole assembly answered him with one voice, and swore on the Koran to conquer or die. The result of the battle was that Baber gained a complete victory. Raja Sanga escaped with difficulty, and many chiefs were slain.—Baber expelled the astrologer from his dominions but gave him a liberal present.

Having promised before the battle, that he would allow any one who wished it, leave of absence to Cabul, Baber formed all who desired to avail themselves of that permission, into a detachment, and sent them back under the command of his eldest son Humayun.

Baber spent the next six months in internal arrangements, and restoring order throughout the provinces that had been disturbed during the doubtful period of his contest with Raja Sanga: and by the end of the year his authority was everywhere established except in Oudh beyond the Ganges.

About the beginning of the next year, (1528), Baber marched against the Rajput state of Chanderi, near Malwa, the chief of which had made good his retreat after the late battle, and now offered a desperate resistance. On the second day of the siege the Rajputs gave up all for lost, and Baber witnessed one of those extraordinary instances of self-devotion which are so common in Rajput history. The garrison put their woman to death, and rushed forth naked, not to conquer, but to die. They

drove the Mussulmans before them, leaped from the ramparts, and continued their charge with unabated fury until they were overpowered and destroyed.

During the siege of Chanderi, Baber received intelligence of the defeat of his detachment in Oudh by an Afghan chief and immediately marched, himself, in that direction. He compelled the rebels to take refuge in Bengal; and it was probably on this occasion that reduced South Behar. After some months of ill health he was engaged in a serious contest, which resulted in his requisition of all Behar. But from this time Baber's health failed, and his end was probably hastened by a superstitious ceremony in which he took part, with the hope of relieving his son Humayun from a disease, by devoting his own life in his stead.

Baber died at Agra in the fiftieth year of his age, and the thirty-eighth of his reign—only five years of which, however, had been in India. His body was buried by his own desire at Cabul. He is regarded as in many respects the most admirable prince that ever reigned in Asia. His Memoirs contain a most minute account of his life in a plain and manly style. His descriptions of the countries he visited, their scenery, climate, and productions, are full and accurate. Through life he retained the same kind and affectionate heart, and the same easy and sociable temper, with which he set out on his career. The possession of power and grandeur neither blunted the delicacy of his taste, nor diminished his sensibility to the enjoyments of nature and imagination. "It is a relief," says Mr. Erskine, "in the midst of the pompous coldness of Asiatic history, to find a king who can weep for days, and tell us that he wept for the playmate of his boyhood." His mother and female relations are mentioned with as much interest as if he had never left their fireside; and his friends are as prominent in the personal part of his narrative as he is himself. These excellencies are not without a set off. Baber was too much disposed to convivility; and his indulgence in wine is believed to have shortened his life.

CHAPTER XIII.

HUMAYUN.

Arrangements with the King's brothers—Conquests of Guzerat—Rebellion of the King's brothers—War with Shir Khan—Defeat of Humayun—Retreat through the Desert—Birth of Akber—Flight to Persia—Reception—Help obtained—Advance to Cabul and Candahar—Victory—Shir Shah's Reign in India—His Son's—Restoration of Humayun—His Death.

BABER bequeathed his troubled empire to his son Humayun, an amiable and accomplished prince, possessed of refined though somewhat fantastic tastes. He was particularly devoted to the study of the heavenly bodies, which in that age and country was much tinged with judicial astrology. From these recreations he was roused by the urgent cares of empire, to which he showed himself fully equal.

He yielded the Punjab and the country on the Indus, to his brother Camran, than Governor of Cabul. At the same time he gave to his other brothers Hindal and Mirza respectively, the government of Sambal and Mewat. As he still possessed Baber's veteran army, and profited by the impression of his power, the effects of the dismemberment did not at first appear.

Humayun was soon involved in war with Bahadur Shah, who had obtained the sovereignty of Guzerat. A mistaken religious zeal induced him to leave that prince unmolested, while engaged in hostilities against the Pagan prince of Chitor ; but he now advanced with so great a force, and conducted operations so ably, that the other was obliged to retreat into Guzerat, unable to meet his antagonist in the field. He next fled to Ahmedabad, having deposited his treasures in Chupanni, which was then considered an almost impregnable fortress. The young emperor, however, at the head of a chosen band, mounted the face of the perpendicular rock by fixing in it iron spikes, and carried the place by surprise,—an exploit still celebrated as equal to any achieved either by Tamerlane or Baber.

After this glorious termination of his first war, he might have expected a peaceful and prosperous reign ; but it was speedily disturbed by his brothers, Camran and Hindal, who were emboldened in their criminal designs by his excessive mildness and lenity. Having divisions of the army placed under their command, they successively laid claim to the supreme power.

These dissensions encouraged Shir Khan, a Patan chief, still in possession of Bengal, to advance with a powerful host against Humayun ; who, unable from the distracted state of his affairs to muster a sufficient force, was worsted, and returned in a discomfited condition to Agra. The brothers, seeing that their disunion was about to produce the ruin of their house, rallied round the emperor, though not with the requisite cordiality. This last, having recruited his ranks, marched against Shir, but was again completely defeated, obliged to abandon his capital, and to seek refuge among the minor princes on the border. Few, however, remained faithful to the fallen monarch. After being obliged to flee from several courts, he sought protection in that of Maldeon, who had been the most urgent in his proffers of amity and alliance ; but finding this base chief had resolved to seize and deliver him to the enemy, he felt himself compelled to remove instantly with his few remaining adherents across the Western Desert to the banks of the Indus.

In this march he experienced a pressure of calamity such as scarcely ever befell even the most unfortunate princes of the east. After suffering dreadful agonies from want of water, the party came to a well in which there was abundance ; but they had only one bucket, and when it was drawn up, such crowds rushed forward, that, the rope breaking, it fell to the bottom, and several were precipitated after it. Meantime the rear-guard was repeatedly obliged to turn and repulse the enemy, who pursued close behind. Many of them perished before they reached Amercot, on the opposite boundary of the desert.

It was this period of depression and affliction that gave birth to Akbar, a prince destined to raise the Indian Empire to the greatest lustre that it ever enjoyed, (Oct. 14, 1542.) Humayun had marched for Sindh the previous day. The young prince had fell into the hands of his uncle Camran.

Humayun sought refuge in Persia, and was received with the most magnificent hospitality by Shah Tahmasp, who enabled him to maintain the outward forms of imperial rank. Humayun, after agreeing to embrace the Shia side of Mahometanism, was also furnished with ten thousand men, to be employed in the recovery of his lost empire. He marched first into Cabul, where he was again encountered by fraternal rivalry, that province having been usurped by Camrian. He next advanced and laid siege to Candahar, which soon surrendered to him, when he proceeded with a superior force against Cabul. There his brother awaited his approach; and, on his rival, exhibited on the walls his boy Akbar, bound to a funeral pile, intimating that he would forthwith put the child to death if the father should proceed to an attack upon the city. The latter, unmoved by this painful spectacle, expressed his determination to persevere, only adding the most dreadful threats if the horrid deed were perpetrated. The barbarian renounced his meditated crime, and, with his adherents, commenced a retreat. Humayun entered the gates embraced the young prince, and found himself again a king. He reigned nine years in that city, though constantly harassed by his relative, who, after reducing him repeatedly to great distress, was at last completely vanquished.

Meantime Shir had become undisputed master of the empire, and extended its limits on every side. He swayed the sceptre wisely and well; at which the Mogul historians are astonished, considering the reason by which he gained it; but, as a Patan, he owed only a very slight allegiance to the house of Baber, and ought not to be regarded as an usurper. His arrangements for the accommodation of travellers, which in the East, devolve generally upon the sovereign, were on a scale of which no former reign afforded an example. Across the entire breadth of Hindostan, from the Ganges to the Indus, there was formed a highroad bordered with fruit-trees, with a well every two miles, and caravanserais at every stage where the traveller was accommodated at the public expense; justice was maintained inviolate: general security reigned; and his death at the end of five years, was considered a national calamity. His son Selim, supplied his place nine years, though neither with equal wisdom nor ability; but when he died, leaving his heir a minor, the empire, during the short reigns of Mohammed and Ibrahim, was distracted by dissen-

sions among the royal family, and by the revolt of numerous omrahs and viceroys. The friends of Humayun then assured him, that his appearance with an army in any degree formidable would at once lay in the dust this ill-cemented dominion. Not being yet firmly seated on the throne of Cabul, he felt considerable hesitation in answering this call ; but at length he mustered 15,000 horse, and marched to the Indus, where Behram, his best general, joined him with a body of veterans from Candahar.

The army having crossed the river, first encountered Tartan Khan, governor of Lahore, whom Behram surprised and defeated. Meantime the Patan omrahs had placed on the throne Secunder, nephew to Shir, a prince qualified to lead them with vigour and talent. Having assembled 80,000 men, he proceeded to meet the invader ; and the battle was fought with an obstinacy suitable to the great prize for which the parties contended. On the side of the Moguls, it was conducted with energy and prudence by Humayun and Behram ; but it was chiefly distinguished for the splendid heroism exhibited by the young Akbar, then scarcely thirteen, whose example inspired the troops with almost supernatural ardour. The Patan host was at length completely routed and dispersed, and Secunder fled into the mountains of the north, leaving all the fine plain of Hindostan open to the conqueror.

Humayun advanced to Delhi, and seated himself on his father's throne, from which he had been thirteen years excluded. He mounted it, however, only that he might die in possession ; for in less than a year after, descending the marble stairs of the palace, he fell, and was so severely bruised that he expired in a few days. He was a prince, brave, amiable, and learned, and his life was diversified with greater vicissitudes than that perhaps of any other eastern monarch. These are imputed in a great measure to his excessive lenity, especially towards brothers who ill deserved it ; Ferishta even decides, that had he been a worse man he would have been a greater ruler. No example, indeed, can afford a stronger apology for that cruelty which deforms the history of oriental kings. The principle of primogeniture, so firmly established in Europe, has there scarcely any hold on the feelings of the people, and any prince of the blood royal, who can form a party or become popular, may cherish the hope of expelling the reigning sovereign.

CHAPTER XIV.

AKBAR.

Accession of Akbar—Behram Khan—Loses his influence—Akbar assumes the Government—His plan of restoring and consolidating the Empire—Conquest of Cashmir—Recovers Candahar—Intemperance of Akbar's eldest Son—Akbar's illness and death—His Character—His Internal Policy—Treatment of Hindus—Collection of Revenue—Administration of Justice—Reform of the Army—Akbar an Administrator and Warrior.

AKBAR was only thirteen years and four months old at his father's death, and though unusually manly and intelligent for his age, was obviously incapable of administering the government. Behram Khan, who was therefore intrusted with the exercise of all the powers of sovereignty, had been a distinguished officer under Humayun before his expulsion from India. In the final defeat of that monarch by Shir Shah, Behram was separated from his master, but made his way through many dangers to Sind, where he joined Humayun in the third year after his expulsion. He became thenceforward the most confidential of Humayun's officers, and to his exertions may be chiefly attributed the restoration of the house of Tamerlane.

Behram's military talents had enabled him to surmount many external difficulties ; and even his arbitrary and inflexible disposition was essential to the maintenance of subordination in an army which Humayun had not been able to keep in strict order, and which must soon have overturned the government after it fell into the hands of a minor. Behram's domination was therefore submitted to for a time ; but the king, now advancing towards manhood, soon became impatient of the insignificance to which he was reduced by the dictatorial proceedings of his minister. His indignation was increased by the injustice of some of Behram's acts of power.

At length Akbar was induced to make an effort to deliver himself from the thralldom in which he lived. Behram exerted himself, when too late, to recover the king's confidence. All ranks soon forsook the falling minister, to court the sovereign from whose youthful virtues, and even weakness, they expected a happy contrast to the strict controul of Behram. The minister meditated various schemes for retrieving his power, but at length set off for Nagor with the avowed intention of embarking, in Guzerat, for Mecca. On his way, irritated at some further proceedings of Akbar, he changed his mind, assembled a body of troops, and going openly into insurrection, attempted an invasion of the Punjab. He was disappointed in his reception in that province, and obliged to throw himself on the king's mercy. Akbar did not forget the great services of his former minister; and after investing him with a dress of honour, gave him his choice of one of the principal governments under the crown, a high station at court, or an honourable dismissal on his pilgrimage to Mecca. Behram's pride and prudence equally counselled the latter course. He was assigned a liberal pension; but while preparing for embarkation at Guzerat, he was assassinated by an Afghan, whose father he had formerly killed in battle in Humayun's reign.

The charge which Akbar had taken on himself, seemed beyond the strength of a youth of eighteen; but the young king was possessed of more than usual advantages both from nature and education. He was born in the midst of hardships and captivity. His courage was exercised in his father's wars, and his prudence called forth by the delicacy of his situation during the ascendancy of Behram.

It was Akbar who formed the noble design of putting himself at the head of the whole Indian nation, and forming the inhabitants of that vast territory, without distinction of race or religion, into one community. This policy was steadily pursued throughout his reign. He admitted Hindus to every degree of power, and Mussulmans of every party to the highest stations in the service, according to their rank and merit; until as far as his dominions extended, they were filled with a loyal and united people.

But these were the fruits of time: and the first calls on Akbar's attention were of an urgent nature;—

1. To establish his authority over his chiefs.
2. To recover the dominions of the crown.

3. To restore, in the internal administration of them; that order which had been lost amidst so many revolutions.

These important objects were all gradually and judiciously attained: and his territories also enlarged by the acquisition of Guzerat and Bengal. In these, and indeed in all the contests in which Akbar was engaged, he displayed an activity and energy that secured him lasting fame. On the death of his brother (1585) who had been governor of Cabul, Akbar went in person to that province, and was induced to attempt the conquest of the celebrated kingdom of Cashmir. This "terrestrial paradise" can only be approached by difficult and dangerous passes, which are often rendered impassable by snow. Part of Akbar's army succeeded in penetrating, but it was not till the year following that a complete victory was obtained, and Cashmir lay at the disposal of Akbar. The king was enrolled among the nobles of Delhi, and had a jagir assigned in Behar. Akbar afterwards made a journey to Cashmir to enjoy the pleasures of his new conquest, but only repeated his visit twice during his reign. It however became the favourite retreat of his successors, and still maintains its celebrity as one of the fairest spots on earth.

Akbar's next operations were against the north-eastern Afghans, and met with stouter resistance and less success than any in which he had previously been engaged. In 1594 Akbar recovered possession of Candahar, an acquisition which placed him in complete possession of his hereditary kingdom beyond the Indus, and nearly at the same time he had completed the conquest of Hindostan Proper. Sind had fallen in 1592; the last attempt at rebellion in Cashmir was quashed about the same time; the reduction of Bengal was completed by the submission of Orissa; and all disturbance in Guzerat terminated in 1593; so that the whole of Hindostan to the Nerbudda was more under Akbar's authority than it had been under any former king. The next object for Akbar was to extend his dominions over the Dekan. The military operations necessary to effect this occupied Akbar for nearly a year when his return to Hindostan was rendered necessary by the refractory conduct of his eldest son Selim.

This prince had impaired his understanding and temper by the excessive use of wine and opium. Drinking seem to have been the vice of the age among the Mahometan

kings. When Akbar left for the Dekan he had declared Selim his successor, and appointed him viceroy of Ajmir; but in his father's absence Selim had attempted to seize on the provinces of Hindostan for himself.

However much Akbar may have been afflicted by this conduct he determined not to drive his son to extremities. He wrote a temperate letter warning him of the consequences of his conduct, and assuring him of his own undiminished affection, if he would return to the path of duty. Selim replied in the most submissive terms, but still continued to levy troops. After a pretended reconciliation with his father, in which Akbar manifested the utmost kindness, Selim had leave to return to his residence in Allahabad, where he gave himself up more than ever to debauchery.

The emperor was much perplexed as to the course to pursue, and determined to try the effects of a personal interview with his son. He therefore set off for Allahabad, and had advanced one or two marches when he heard of the alarming illness of his own mother, and returned just in time to receive her last breath.

On hearing of this journey, and the cause of its suspension, Selim determined on going to Agra and submitting in good earnest to his father. He was kindly received, but placed for a short time under restraint, and confided to the care of a physician. Before long he was restored to freedom and to favour.

Akbar had, some years before, lost his eldest son Morad; he now received accounts of the death of his third son, Danial, who fell a victim to intemperance in the thirtieth year of his age. This calamity was felt by Akbar in the degree that was to be expected from the strength of his attachments: and it is probable that his domestic afflictions, and the loss of his intimate friends, began to prey upon his spirits and undermine his health. In the middle of September, 1605, he became seriously ill, and though he retained his faculties to the last, he was no longer capable of taking part in business. He pronounced Selim the lawful successor to the kingdom, and, repeating the Mahomedan confession on faith, died after a reign of fifty-one years.

Akbar is described as a strong and handsome man. In his youth he indulged in wine, but early became abstemi-

ous. Although so constantly engaged in wars, and occupied with improvements in the civil government, yet, by the judicious distribution of his time, and by his talents for the dispatch of business, he always had leisure for study and amusement. He was fond of witnessing all exercises of strength and skill. He took great pleasure in hunting, especially when attended with danger, and often underwent great fatigue for the mere pleasure of exercise.

But it is to his internal policy that Akbar owes his place in that highest order of princes whose reigns have been a blessing to mankind. Akbar's tolerant spirit was displayed early in his reign, and appears to have been entirely independent of any doubts about the Mahometan faith. It led him, however, to listen, without prejudice, to the doctrines of other religions, and involved him in enmity with the bigoted members of his own.

Akbar did not interfere much with the Hindu usages, but forbade trial by ordeal, and marriages before the age of puberty ; and the slaughter of animals for sacrifice. He also permitted widows to marry a second time ; and positively prohibited the burning of Hindu widows against their will, and took effectual precautions to ascertain that their resolution was free and uninfluenced. On one occasion, hearing that the Raja of Jodpur was about to force his son's widow to the pile, he mounted his horse and rode post to the spot to prevent the intended sacrifice.

The employment of Hindus equally with Mahometans began with Akbar's assumption of the government. In the seventh year of his reign he abolished an odious impost called the capitation tax on infidels. At the same time all taxes on pilgrims were abolished. Still earlier (in 1561) he issued an edict most beneficial in its consequences : it was a prohibition against making slaves of persons taken in war.

In the collection of revenue Akbar spared no pains to give precision and correctness to the excellent system established by Shir Shah in his short reign. To do this he obtained a careful and correct measurement of the land ; then ascertained the amount of the produce of every acre, so as to fix the proportion of the amount that each had to pay to the government : and settled an equivalent in money for the proportion so fixed.

In the administration of justice every case was fully stated and investigated; and, where the judges followed their instructions, always decided according to law. The spirit of all the rules was liberal and humane, and the governors of provinces were enjoined to inflict no capital punishment, except in cases of dangerous sedition, until the proceedings were sent to court for the emperor's confirmation.

Amidst the reforms of other departments Akbar did not forget his army. It was taught to obey orders; and, as a means of introducing economy and efficiency into it, to troops were paid in cash, and with as much regularity as practicable. A license to plunder had too frequently constituted the pay of the soldiery in former reigns.

"Thus Akbar was at once a conqueror and an administrator. He had no delight in conquest. He fought when it was necessary to fight—and he fought with courage and vigour seldom surpassed. But he was happiest when engaged in the work of civil administration; and history delights to contemplate him rather as a philanthropic statesman, whose internal policy has placed him in the first rank of the great kings of all ages and all countries, than as a warrior whose victories have secured him the applause of more vulgar and unreflecting minds."*

*Kayee.

CHAPTER XV.

JEHANGIR.

State of India—Rebellion of Jehangir's eldest son—How crushed—Story of Nur Jehan—Her marriage to the Emperor—Sir T. Roe—His accounts of the Kingdom—Decline of the administration—Magnificence of the Court—Emperor's habits—Illness—Schemes of Nur Jehan—Mohabat Khan—His arrest of the Emperor—Jehangir rescued—Death.

SELIM took possession of the government immediately on his father's death, and assumed the title of Jehangir, (Conqueror of the world.)

He found the whole of his dominions on the north of the Nurbudda in as tranquil a state as could be expected in so extensive an empire; though in the Deckan, affairs were a troublesome aspect, and rebellion continued in part of Bengal.

Jehangir confirmed most of his father's old officers in their stations, and remitted some vexatious duties that had survived Akbar's reforms: notwithstanding his own notorious habits he strictly forbade the use of wine and regulated that of opium. He restored the Mahometan confession of faith on his coin, but though more superstitious, he was less devout than Akbar.

Khusru, the eldest son of the new emperor, had long been estranged from his father; and it is by no means probable that Jehangir's treatment of him was such as would be likely to sooth his feelings. His behaviour does not appear to have given rise to any suspicion until about four months after the accession, when Jehangir was awakened at midnight, with the intelligence that his son had fled, with a few attendants, and taken the road to Delhi. He immediately dispatched a light force in pursuit, and followed himself next morning with all the troops he could collect.

Khusru had collected 10,000 men by the time he reached the Punjab : and he was attempting to reduce the citadel of Lahore when he was disturbed by the approach of his father's advanced guard. He was soon totally defeated and brought in chains before his father. Khusru's principal advisers fell into the hands of the emperor, by whom they were most cruelly tortured : 700 prisoners were impaled in a line leading from the gate of Lahore, and Khusru carried along the line on an elephant to witness their frightful agonies. The unhappy prince passed three days in bitter anguish, and remained for long after a prey to the deepest melancholy.

It was in the sixth year of his reign that Jehangir contracted a marriage with the celebrated Nur Jehan, an event which influenced all the succeeding transactions of his life.

The grandfather of this lady was a native of Teheran in Persia, of high birth. His son however, was reduced to poverty, and emigrated to India. On his arrival in Candahar in great distress, his wife was delivered of Nur Jehan ; and into so abject a condition had they fallen that the parents were unable to provide for the conveyance of their infant, or to maintain the mother so as to admit of her giving it support. The future empress was therefore exposed on the way by which the caravan was next morning to proceed. She was observed by a principal merchant of the party; who took her up and resolved to educate her as his own.

As a woman in a situation to act as nurse was not easy to be found in a caravan, it is a matter of no surprise that her own mother should have been the person employed in that capacity : and the merchant's attention being thus drawn to the distresses of the family, he perceived them to be persons much above their present condition, and after relieving their immediate wants, employed the father and his eldest son in matters connected with his business. Through his means they were subsequently introduced to Akbar, and after filling some subordinate offices soon rose by their own abilities.

In the mean time Nur Jehan grew up and began to excite admiration by her beauty and elegance. She attracted the notice of Jehangir, then prince Selim. Akbar remonstrated with his son, and recommended that Nur Jehan

should be married and removed from the prince's sight. She was bestowed on Shir Afghan Khan, a young Persian lately come into the service, and to him Akbar gave a Jagir in Bengal.

But these means were not sufficient to efface the impression made on Jehangir, and after he became emperor he charged his foster brother Kutb u din, the viceroy of Bengal, to procure for him the object of his passion. Shir Afghan no sooner suspected the design than he resigned his command and left the emperor's service. The viceroy in attempting to fulfil Jehangir's wishes was killed by Shir Afghan who immediately afterward fell himself. Nur Jehan was seized and sent as a prisoner to Delhi. Jehangir tried in vain to soothe and conciliate her. She regarded him as the murderer of her husband, and rejected all his overtures. After the lapse of a considerable time she was induced to think more favourably of his offers, and their marriage was celebrated with great pomp. Nur Jehan was raised to honors such as had never before been enjoyed by the consort of any king in India. Her name was put on the coin along with the Emperor's. Her father was made prime minister. Her brother was placed in a high station: the Emperor took no step without consulting her. Though her sway produced bad consequences it was on the whole beneficial. Her father was a wise and upright minister, and from the time of his accession to office a great improvement took place in the government.

It was during this reign, in the year 1615, that Sir T. Roe arrived at the court, as ambassador from king James I. His accounts enable us to judge of the state of India under Jehangir.

The sea-ports and the customs were full of gross abuses, the governors seizing on goods at arbitrary prices. Even Roe, though otherwise treated with hospitality and respect, had his baggage searched and some articles taken by the governor. His journey from Surat, by Burhanpur and Chitor, to Ajmir, lay through the Deckan, where war was raging, and the Rana's country, where it had just ceased; yet he met with no obstruction or alarm, except from mountaineers, who then, as now, rendered the roads unsafe in times of trouble.

The Deckan bore strong marks of devastation and neglect. Burhanpur, which had before, as it has since, been a fine city, contained only four or five good houses amidst a

collection of mud huts ; and the court of Parviz, held in that town, had no pretensions to splendour.

In other places he was struck with the decay and desertion of some towns, contrasted with the prosperity of others. The former were, in some instances at least, deserted capitals ; and their decline affords no argument against the general prosperity.

The administration of the country had rapidly declined since Akbar's time. The governments were formed, and the governors exacting and tyrannical.

Though a judicious and sober writer, Roe is profuse in his praise of the magnificence of the court ; and he speaks in high terms of the courtesy of the nobility, and of the order and elegance of the entertainments they gave to him. His reception, indeed, was in all respects most hospitable, though the very moderate scale of his presents and retinue was not likely to conciliate a welcome where state was so generally maintained. He was excused all humiliating ceremonies, was allowed to take the highest place in the court on public occasions, and was continually admitted into familiar intercourse with the emperor himself.

The scenes he witnessed at his private interviews form a curious contrast to the grandeur with which the Mogul was surrounded. He sat on a low throne all covered with diamonds, pearls, and rubies ; and had a great display of gold plate, vases, and goblets, set with jewels. The party was free from all restraint, scarcely one of them remaining sober, except Sir Thomas and a few other grave personages, who were cautious in their indulgence. Jehangir himself never left off till he dropped asleep, when the lights were extinguished and the company withdrew.

Though Roe speaks highly in some respects of particular great men, he represents the class as unprincipled, and all open to corruption. The treaty he had to negotiate hung on for upwards of two years, until he bribed Asof Khan with a valuable pearl ; after which all went on well and smoothly. Both Roe and other contemporary travellers represent the military spirit as already much declined, and speak of the Rajputs and patans as the only brave soldiers to be found.

The manual arts were in a high state, and were not confined to those peculiar to the country. One of Sir T. Roe's presents was a coach, and within a very short period

several others were constructed, very superior in materials and fully equal in workmanship. Sir Thomas also gave a picture to the Mogul, and was soon after presented with several copies, among which he had great difficulty in distinguishing the original. There was a great influx of Europeans, and considerable encouragement to their religion. Jehangir had figures of Christ and the Virgin at the head of his rosary ; and two of his nephews embraced Christianity, with his full approbation.

In 1621 disturbances occurred in the Deckan which were quelled by Shah Jehan, the Emperor's second son.

Not long after this success Jehangir was seized with a violent attack of asthma, and was for some time in such imminent danger as to lead to expectation of an immediate vacancy of the throne.

Prince Parviz, the Emperor's third son, hastened to court but was sent back with a reprimand. Prince Khusrû died suddenly ; and this event, which seemed to complete the security of Shah Jehan's succession, was the cause of a series of dangers and disasters that nearly ended in his ruin.

Nur Jehan had affianced her daughter by Shir Afghan to prince Sheriar the youngest son of Jehangir ; and now determined by all means to oppose the succession of Shah Jehan. To aid her in this object she called to court the most rising general of the time, Mohabat Khan.

The distrust between the Emperor and Shah Jehan was soon increased until it led to the open rebellion of the latter. Shah Jehan was defeated and fled to the Deckan where he united with his old opponent Malik Amber. Prince Parviz and Mohabat Khan, at the head of a large force, soon pressed him here so severely that his army deserted, and he offered his submission to the Emperor ; who directed him to send his two sons, Dara and Aurangzib to court, as hostages for his future good behaviour.

No sooner was Shah Jehan reduced to submission than the domineering spirit of Nur Jehan raised up new enemies. She now distressed and persecuted Mohabat Khan, who was summoned to answer charges of oppression and embezzlement during the time of his occupation of Bengal. Finding his appearance insisted on, he set out,

accompanied by 5000 Rajputs, whom he had contrived to attach to his service.

Jehangir was at this time encamped on the Hydaspes; and was preparing to cross it by a bridge of boats on his way to Cabul. He sent the army across the river intending to follow when the crowd and confusion should be over. The whole of the troops had passed, and the emperor remained with his personal guards, when Mohabat, before day break, sent a detachment of 2000 men to seize the bridge, while he himself, at the head of a chosen body pushed strait for the emperor's tent. The guards and attendants, were soon dispersed when Jehangir awakened by the noise started up and exclaimed, Ah Mohabat Khan, traitor ! what is this ? Mohabat prostrating, lamented that he had been obliged to have recourse to force to obtain access to his Master. Jehangir at first could scarcely restrain his indignation, but observing that, amidst all Mohabat's humility, he was not to be trifled with, he endeavoured to conciliate his captor.

Mohabat now suggested to him that as it was near his usual time of mounting, it was desirable he should show himself in public to remove alarm and check mis-representation. Jehangir submitted to be placed on an elephant with armed Rajputs by his side.

Nur Jehan, when she found all access to the emperor prevented, put on a disguise and set out for the bridge, in a litter of the most ordinary description. As the guards were ordered to let every one pass, but permit none to return, she crossed without obstruction. Immediate preparations were soon made for rescuing the Emperors, and the whole army moved to the attack, headed by Nur-Jehan herself who appeared in the howdah of a high elephant with a bow and two quivers of arrows. The bridge had been burned by the Rajputs and the army began to cross by a ford : this was a narrow shoal between deep water, and full of dangerous pools.

The Rajputs had the advantage of the ground and succeeded in keeping the troops from landing. A scene of universal tumult ensued and numbers perished. Nur-Jehan escaped unhurt after being exposed to great perils. Seeing there was no hope of rescuing her husband by force, she determined to join him in his captivity, and trust to her own arts to effect his deliverance.

Mohabat soon felt his power insecure. The Emperor used various artifices to blind him, and in September 1626, Jehangir was rescued, and Mohabat Khan's power irretrievably lost. He soon after joined Shah Jehan, and as the death of the Emperor occurred the following year, that prince took formal possession of the throne. Nur-Jehan survived for many years but received a liberal pension, and her name is never again mentioned in history.

Sheriar, the youngest and only other surviving son of Jehangir, to whom the crown had been bequeathed, was defeated, and deprived of sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHAH JEHAN.

Local Disturbances—War in the Deckan—Conquest of Lodi—Subjugation of the Deckan—Attempt to recover Candahar—Death of Saad Ulla Khan—Shah Jegan's Four Sons—Their Conspiracies—Treachery and Success of Aurangzib—He deposes his Father—Imprisons his Brother—Character of Shah Jehan's Reign—His Magnificence—Taj Mahal—Death.

WHEN firmly established in his government Shah Jehan indemnified himself for his late fatigues and privations, by giving a loose to his passion for magnificent buildings and expensive entertainments.

He was disturbed in these enjoyments by an irruption of the Uzbeks into Cabul. They were soon put down by an army under Mohabat Khan; who had immediately afterwards to march into the Deckan against a more formidable enemy. This was Lodi, an Afghan who had held high office under the late emperor, and now suspected the good faith of Shah Jehan towards him. A severe contest followed, in which great bravery was shown on both sides, but Lodi ultimately fell, in the midst of a small band of faithful adherents who had accompanied him to Bundelcund, in the year 1630.

After the conquest of Lodi, the war in the Deckan was little else than a series of ravages. The princes were able to make little resistance. A dreadful famine, from several years of excessive drought, which prevailed throughout India and a great part of Asia, added its horrid evils to the calamities which overwhelmed the inhabitants of the Deckan. The princes sued for peace, and the Emperor agreed to withdraw his army, which he now found it difficult to subsist, retaining, as a security for good behaviour, the forts which had fallen into his hands.

The Emperor, thus secured in the possession of the sceptre, added another to the list of princes who, after seizing it by violence, wielded it with firmness and justice. The sternness of his temper was now employed in overawing the haughty viceroys, and guarding the people against oppression. He derived, doubtless, much aid from the wise counsels of Asof Khan and Mohabat, whom, notwithstanding some fits of jealousy, he continued to employ. Sometimes their intercession softened the extreme rigour of his justice, particularly in the case of the Raja of Bundelcund, whom he had ordered for execution. When Mohabat pleaded for the life of the guilty chief, the monarch not only granted it, but restored him to his full dignity. At one time, though wholly indifferent to the Mohometan religion, he was so provoked by the manifold absurdities of the Hindu worship, that he began to make it an object of persecution; but, seeing the eagerness with which the people clung to their proscribed ritual, he became sensible of his error, and resumed the system of toleration which his family had been accustomed to extend to both creeds.

Several insurrections occurred in the Deckan, and in 1635 Shah Jehan went in person to that country to make another effort to subdue it. After various engagements he returned to his capital in 1637, after entirely suppressing his most formidable enemies.

Having enjoyed several years of repose he was induced to assert the dormant rights of his family to Candahar. In this enterprise he was assisted by a large body of Rajputs, whose energy and valour were most conspicuously displayed. They stormed mountain passes, made forced marches over snow, and bore up against the tempests of that frozen region as firmly as against the fierce attacks of the Uzbeks. Year after year all the resources of the empire were employed to no purpose on this object, and the attempt of the Moguls to recover Candahar terminated in 1643.

Then followed two years of undisturbed tranquillity. During that time Shah Jehan completed a revenue survey of his possessions in the Deckan on which he had been engaged nearly twenty years. An improved system of assessment and collection was the consequence.

This period was also marked by the death of the vizier Saad Ulla Khan, the most able and upright minister that ever appeared in India. He had been of the greatest value to Shah Jehan and the empire, and for many years after his death, was referred to as a model of every excellence.

In the following year the war in the Deckan was renewed under the generalship of the emperor's third son Aurangzib, who succeeded by treachery in taking Hyderabad, and afterwards in effecting the submission of the king of Golconda, from whom a large annual tribute was exacted.

In 1657 the emperor was seized with an illness of so serious a nature that it not only threatened an immediate transfer of the crown to Dara, the eldest son, but invested him at the moment with the administration of his father's government.

Shah Jehan had four sons, all of an age to render them impatient of a subordinate station. Dara was in his forty-second year; Shuja was forty; and Aurangzib thirty-eight. Even Morad the youngest had long been employed in great commands. Dara was a frank and high spirited prince, dignified and liberal; but impetuous and impatient of opposition. Shuja was not destitute of abilities, but given up to wine and pleasure. Aurangzib was a perfect contrast to Dara. He was cautious, artful designing; a perfect master of dissimulation; and even on the watch to gain friends and to propitiate enemies. To these qualities were joined great courage and military skill; with a bigoted adherence to the Mussulman creed. The youngest son, Morad, was brave and generous but dull, and vulgar in his pursuits.

Notwithstanding every precaution on the part of Dara the brothers soon obtained information of the king's dangerous illness. The first to act was Prince Shuja the viceroy of Bengal, who immediately put his troops in motion.

Prince Morad viceroy of Guzerat, soon followed his example, and seized on all the money in the district treasuries.

Aurangzib conducted himself with more caution. He did not assume the royal title as Shuja and Morad had done. While he urged on the preparation of his troops

he made no open declaration. He left Dara and Shuja to weaken each other for his profit, and applied all his arts to gain Morad, whom he might hope to render an instrument in his own hands. He wrote to Morad declaring it to be his own intention to renounce the world and to retire to Mecca; but yet offered his services against the irreligious Dara. This coarse artifice was perfectly successful. Morad suspected nothing, and was dazzled by the prospect of assistance so necessary to the support of his feeble cause.

Dara took various defensive measures to resist the threatened attacks of his rivals. He sent an army under Jeswant Sing, to watch Morad and Aurangzib. He himself went to Agra, and sent a force under his son Soliman to oppose the approach of Shuja. By this time Shah Jehan was sufficiently recovered to resume the general control of the government; but his confidence in Dara was only increased by the misconduct of the other princes. He wrote to Shuja commanding him in positive terms, to return to his government. Shuja, however, continued to move on with his army until he met the force under Soliman, by whom he was defeated, near Benares, and compelled to return to Bengal.

Meanwhile Aurangzib formed a junction with Morad, and their combined force attacked that under Jeswant Sing. The imperial army was defeated, though the Rajputs, fought bravely, and Jeswant Sing retired in disorder. Aurangzib ordered all the chiefs, after this battle to return their thanks to Morad, as if he alone were the fountain of all honor. The two victorious princes then moved on to Chambal, near Gwalior.

Dara advanced against them with a force greatly superior in point of numbers, and without waiting for the addition that the arrival of Soliman, then on his way from Benares, would have given to him, he commenced an action at Samaghar, near Agra. The bravery of the Rajputs who fought under Dara seemed to promise victory to the imperial army; but at the most critical juncture Aurangzib was unshaken; he presented his elephant wherever there was the greatest danger, and called aloud to his troops that "God was with them and that they had no other refuge or retreat." The fate of the battle was decided by a circumstance that had so often produced a similar

effect in oriental contests. Dara was pressing forward on his elephant, conspicuous to all his troops, when a rocket from the enemy struck the elephant, and rendered it so ungovernable that he had no choice but to throw himself from its back and mount a horse. His disappearance struck a sudden alarm among the distant troops; the panic soon spread through the whole army. The death of an Asiatic leader is often the loss of the battle; in a civil war it is the annihilation of the cause.

The victory was no sooner decided than Aurangzib threw himself on his knees and returned thanks to divine Providence. His next care was to salute his brother, Morad, and congratulate him on the acquisition of a kingdom.

Dara fled to Agra with a mere wreck of the great army he had so lately led forth from it. He was ashamed to present himself before his father, to the disregard of whose opinion he partly owed his ruin; and after securing some valuables at his own palace, he continued his flight towards Delhi, accompanied by his wife and two of his children.

Aurangzib marched to Agra three days after the battle, and took immediate possession of the city. He protested his inviolable respect and duty to his father; but found it impossible to reverse his decision in favour of Dara. He at length sent his own son Mohammed Sultan to take complete possession of the citadel. Shah Jehan, was treated with the greatest respect, but, though he lived for seven years longer, his reign ends at this period. It seems unaccountable that so able a prince should have been thus dethroned without any of his old servants attempting to stir in his favour; but he had long ceased to head his armies and the troops looked to the princes who had the immediate distribution of their honors and rewards. To this consideration must be added the peculiar ability of Aurangzib for defeating conspiracies and managing factions.

Having soon no further use for Morad, Aurangzib dismissed him from his pretended sovereignty, without even the ceremony of a quarrel or a complaint. He kept up the delusion of that simple prince, by submissive behaviour, till they had marched from Agra in pursuit of Dara, when he one day invited Morad to supper, and circulated the wine so freely that Morad was soon in a state of helpless intoxication. On this he was stripped of his arms without resistance, was put into chains, and sent off on an elephant to

Delhi, and afterwards to the state prison in Gwalior ; while other three elephants were dispatched under similar escorts, in different directions, to mislead people as to his place of confinement. Aurangzib then continued his march to Delhi where he caused himself to be proclaimed emperor.

The reign of Shah Jehan, thus harshly closed, was perhaps the most prosperous ever known in India. Though sometimes engaged in foreign wars, his own dominions enjoyed almost uninterrupted tranquillity, together with a larger share of good government than often falls to the lot of Asiatic nations.

Notwithstanding Shah Jehan's love of ease and pleasure, and the time spent in his visits to Cashmir, and the erection of those celebrated structures in which he took so much delight, he never remitted his vigilance over his internal government ; and by this, and the judicious choice of his ministers, he prevented any relaxation in the system, and even introduced important improvements,—such as his survey of the Deccan.

Khañ Khan, the best historian of those times, gives his opinion, that, although Akbar was pre-eminent as a conqueror and a lawgiver, yet, for the order and arrangement of his territory and finances, no prince ever reigned in Indian that could be compared to Shah Jehan.

Whatever might be the relative excellence of his government, we must not suppose that it was exempt from the evils inherent in a despotism : we may assume some degree of fraudulent exaction in the officers of revenue, and of corruption in those of justice ; and we have the testimony of European travellers to acts of extortion by custom house officers, and of arbitrary power by governors of provinces.

Shah Jehan was the most magnificent prince that ever appeared in India. His retinue, and his state establishments, his largesses, and all the pomp of his court, were much increased beyond the excess they had attained to under his predecessors. His expenses in these departments can only be palliated by the fact that they neither occasioned any increase to his exactions nor any embarrassment to his finances. The most striking instance of his pomp and prodigality was his construction of the famous peacock throne. It took its name from a peacock with its tail spread (represented in its natural colours in sapphires, emeralds, rubies, and other appropriate jewels,) which

formed the chief ornament of a mass of diamonds and precious stones that dazzled every beholder. Tavernier, a jeweller by profession, reports, without apparent distrust, the common belief, that it cost 160,500,000 livres, nearly six millions and a half sterling.

But his greatest splendour was shown in his buildings. He founded a new city at Delhi, built on a regular plan, and far surpassing the old one in magnificence; three wide streets (one of great length ornamented by a canal and rows of trees, and composed of houses rising over a line of shops under arcades,) led to a spacious esplanade, in the centre, of which, and on the Jumna, stood the fortified palace; the spacious courts, marble halls, and golden domes of which have so often been the subject of enthusiastic description. In the opinion of Bishop Heber it is far superior to the Kremlin at Moscow. The great mosque of the same city is a work of extraordinary elegance and grandeur.

But of all the structures erected by Shah Jehan, there is none that bears any comparison with the Taj Mahal at Agra, a mausoleum of white marble decorated with mosaics, which, for the richness of the material, the chasteness of the design, and the effect at once brilliant and solemn, is not surpassed by any other edifice, either in Europe or Asia.

All these vast undertakings were managed with so much economy that, after defraying the expenses of his great expeditions to Candahar, his wars in Balkh, and other heavy charges, and maintaining a regular army of 200,000 horse, Shah Jehan left a treasure, which some reckon at near six, and some at twenty-four millions sterling, in coin, besides his vast accumulations in wrought gold and silver, and in jewels.

Notwithstanding the unamiable character given of him in his youth, the personal conduct of Shah Jehan seems to have been blameless when on the throne. His treatment of his people was beneficent and paternal, and his liberal sentiments towards those around him cannot be better shown than by the confidence which (unlike most Eastern princes) he so generously reposed in his sons.

Shah Jehan had reigned thirty years; he was sixty-seven years old when he was deposed, and seventy-four when he died.

CHAPTER XVII.

AURANGZIB.

Aurangzib marches after his brothers—Defeats Shuja—Attacks and defeats Dara, who is captured and murdered—Treatment of Shah Jehan—Aurangzib's administration—His illness—Rise of the Maratta power—Its founder Sevaji—Death of Shah Jehan—Bernier's account of the country—War with Sevaji—His death—Latter years of Aurangzib—His character.

AURANGZIB was seated on the throne of India ; but he did not consider his position secure while his brothers Dara and Shuja lived, and were at the head of powerful armies. The former, from his brilliant qualities, and his designation to the empire by Shah Jehan, inspired the greatest apprehension ; and against him the first efforts of the new sovereign were directed. Having withdrawn into Lahore, Dara had collected a numerous army, composed, however, chiefly of new levies, whom he was afraid to bring into the field against his brother's veteran forces. He therefore retired beyond the Indus ; but retreat in these circumstances, and with such troops, was not less disastrous than actual defeat. His ranks gradually melted away, and he arrived at Tatta with only a small body of faithful adherents.

It would now have been the policy of Aurangzib to pursue Dara without intermission ; but he was necessarily checked by the intelligence that his brother Shuja, with a large force, was advancing from Bengal. He found this rival very strongly posted near Allahabad ; but, trusting to the valour and hardihood of his own troops, he resolved to attack him. On the third or fourth day, Aurangzib was forming his line before day break, when he was surprised by a prodigious uproar that suddenly arose in his rear. This was occasioned by Raja Jeswant Sing, who though now serving in his camp in command of the Rajputs, had treacherously attacked his baggage. The raja had not been received with the distinction he expected, and had entered on a correspondence with Shuja, promising to fall upon the baggage at a particular hour, when the prince's army was also to attack in front.

Had the co-operation been complete it must have been successful ; for although Shuja was not at his post in time it had nearly occasioned the dispersion of his rival's army.

By this time the sun had risen, and Shuja was seen advancing to the attack. The battle began by a cannonade, soon followed by a close action : Aurangzib's right was forced back, and his centre, where he was himself, was hard pressed. He was often in imminent danger ; and his elephant was charged by another of greater strength, and would have been borne to the ground, if the opposite driver had not been shot by one of the king's guards. But he still continued to press upon the enemy's centre, until they at length gave way and fled from the field, leaving 114 pieces of cannon and many elephants to the victor.

Aurangzib was again obliged to allow some respite to a vanquished adversary ; for Dara, after reaching Tatta, recrossed the Indus, and proceeded through the great desert into the province of Guzerat. There he prevailed upon the governor, whose daughter had been married to Morad, to espouse his cause ; and having raised a considerable army, he advanced into Rajputana, and in the neighbourhood of Ajmir, its capital, intrenched himself in a position of extraordinary strength.

Aurangzib, who marched from Agra as soon as he heard of the proceedings in Guzerat, was now at Jeipur and soon arrived in front of Dara's position. Cannonading for three days with loss to his own army, he ordered a general assault. It was obstinately resisted for many hours till the death of Shah Nawaz, who fell just as a party for Aurangzib's troops had mounted the rampart, so disheartened Dara, that he fled with precipitation, and his troops dispersed in all directions. Even the body of horse that adhered to his person gradually straggled and fell off, and some even plundered the treasure which he was endeavouring to save from the wreck of his resources.

He reached Ahmedabad after eight days and nights of almost incessant marching : exposed to intolerable heat and merciless attacks from the hill tribes. He was not permitted to enter Ahmedabad, and, deserted by nearly all his followers, proceeded with his family to Cach, in the greatest distress. While continuing his march to Candahar, Dara and his son were treacherously seized by a chief of Jun and delivered to Aurangzib.

He was led through Delhi miserably mounted and almost in rags. But Aurangzib had miscalculated the effect of this exhibition ; for the multitude, when they beheld their once noble and gallant ruler led to death under circumstances so fearfully changed, and beside him his son, a spirited and graceful boy, over whom so dark a destiny impended, were seized with the deepest sympathy, and melted into tears, mingled with curses against the tyrant. The capital seemed on the eve of insurrection. The emperor felt that he must hasten to close the tragedy. Assassins were accordingly introduced in the night, beneath whose blows his unfortunate brother fell after a desperate resistance ; and, though the address of the monarch, the commotion in the city quickly subsided.

Aurangzib had now only to dispose of Shuja, who, under favour of this diversion, had rallied his broken forces. But as little apprehension was felt in that quarter, it was thought enough to detach against him Prince Mohammed and Jumla the vizir.

Shuja, on retiring towards Bengal, had taken up a position at Mongir, and had thrown up a strong intrenchment between the hills and the Ganges. Prince Mohommed entered into a correspondence with Shuja, and finally deserted to his camp. Shuja received him with honor, and gave him his daughter in marriage ; but from some unknown cause, the Prince, after taking part in hostilities, again deserted his party, and returned to Mir Jumla's camp. By Aurangzib's order the prince was immediately arrested and sent to the strong fortress of Gwalior, where he pined away the remainder of his life, which terminated in seven years.

Shuja was defeated by Mir Jumla, and having fled into Arracan, was betrayed by the raja, and he with all his family perished. Soliman, the son of Dara, was taken prisoner among the Himmaleh mountains, whither he had fled for refuge ; and thus Aurangzib was left without a rival. The atrocious murder of Morad, which took place a few months after Soliman's imprisonment, justifies the worst suspicions in regard to the fate of all the others.

When the quiet of Bengal had been restored by the successes of Mir Jumla, it seems to have been an object with Aurangzib to find employment for that powerful minister. To this end he was sent in March 1662, on

an expedition to Assam, of which he took possession. When the rainy season set in he and his troops suffered much, and he died on the journey home, from the fatigue endured. This was in 1663.

A few months before this Aurangzib received a severe warning of the precarious terms on which he still held his life and empire. Soon after the fifth anniversary of his accession he was seized with a violent illness, which at first threatened his immediate death, and afterwards left him in a state of extreme bodily weakness. This unexpected event almost overturned his newly-established government. But all the plots and intrigues for this purpose were frustrated by the constancy and presence of mind of Aurangzib himself: and as soon as he was able to travel he set off to Cashmir where he soon regained his strength. (Dec. 1662).

While Aurangzib was seeking repose in the north, a scene was opening in the Deccan which soon demanded his attention. Though the Marattas had never appeared in history as a nation, they had as strongly marked a character as if they had always formed a united common-wealth.

The north western part of peninsula India composes the territory of Maharashtra, and includes a surface of about 100,000 square miles. It is traversed by branches of the ghauts and Vindya mountains, diversified with bleak table lands, and broken by numerous streams and torrents. All the hills and fastnesses were occupied by petty chieftains, who paid a mere outward homage to the imperial throne, or the kingdom of Bijapur; and during Aurangzib's contest with his brothers, opportunities were offered to a leader of daring and ability, to erect them into an independent community. Such a person was Sevaji, the founder of the Maratta dynasty.

Sevaji was well descended, and his early training was such as to prepare him for the events of his subsequent history. The hill forts belonging to Bijapur were generally much neglected; being remote and unhealthy. Of many of these Sevaji contrived to get possession, and in time obtained the northern Concan. In 1662 he came to an open rupture with the Mogul Emperor, surprised Puna, and plundered Surat. The imperial government then sent Raja Jei Sing against him. Sevaji despaired of successful resistance, and agreed to hold his possessions as a jagir from the Mogul emperor. He then went to

Delhi, but was so disgusted by the haughty reception he met with from Aurangzib, he soon contrived to make his escape from that court, and after nine months wanderings made good his retreat to his own dominions, arriving at Raigarh in December 1666.

It was at this period that Shah Jehan died. Though always confined to the citadel of Agra, he had been treated with great respect, and allowed an ample establishment and complete authority within the palace. He carried this control so far as to prevent the removal of Dara's daughter, whom Aurangzib wished to marry to a son of his own; and also to withhold some valuable crowns and jewels which the emperor was anxious to possess; on these subjects several letters of remonstrance and expostulation passed between him and his son.

Aurangzib continued for many years to occupy the throne of the Mogul dominions, which, under him, attained to great extent and glory. After he had added to it the kingdoms of the Deccan, it included nearly the whole peninsula of India, with the neighbouring regions of Cabul and Assam,—territories, the population and wealth of which probably exceeded those of the Roman empire during its most flourishing period. The revenues amounted to 32 millions sterling, which, though inferior to the immense income of one or two modern European states, was then probably unexampled. His internal administration was conducted with great ability. Amid the somewhat ostentatious display and splendour of his court, his personal conduct remained pure and even austere; he neither allowed to himself, nor permitted in his palace, any species of disorder or licentiousness.

It was during the reign of Aurangzib that Bernier, an intelligent and reflecting traveller, spent some years in India and applied himself with diligence to investigate the state of the Mogul government and empire. The description he gives is that of a country going to ruin rather than of one flourishing under a just and impartial government. He observes, that supposing the sovereign inclined to enforce justice, he might perhaps have succeeded within his own immediate circle, in Delhi, Agra, and the close vicinity of these capitals; but in the provinces and remote districts the people had no adequate protection from the rapacity of the governors, who ruled with arbi-

trary power, and whom he characterizes as "men fit for ruining a world." This was confirmed by the mean garb, and the anxiety to assume the semblance of poverty, which prevailed even among those whom other circumstances proved to be possessed of exorbitant wealth. The people could appeal to no court or justice, no administrators of the law, no independent tribunals. The only object of those intrusted with any power was to amass wealth, during the short and precarious tenure of their possession, regardless if afterwards the whole state should fall into ruin.

Aurangzib devised various schemes to entrap Sevaji without the expense and damage of a protracted war. But Sevaji turned all the Emperor's plans against himself; and in 1670 again plundered Surat; the following year he defeated the Mogul army in a field action at Aurangabad. Active operations were now suspended in the Deccan, as Aurangzib was occupied by a war with the north-eastern Afghans. In 1673 the Emperor determined to conduct the war in person. This war lasted two years.

In 1676 Sevaji's success in Southern India again called the Emperor's attention to the Deccan. The open desertion of his son Akbar, and the attempt made by him to secure the government, at one time placed Aurangzib in great peril, from which his presence of mind, and abilities for scheming, saved him.

In 1680 Sevaji died at the age of fifty-three. Though the son of a powerful chief he had begun life as a daring and artful captain of banditi, had ripened into a skilful general and an able statesman and left a character which has never been equalled by any of his countrymen. His son Shambaji proved a weak, cruel, and despotic prince. In 1683 Aurangzib arrived in the Deccan in command of a large force, and after a desolating war that extended over five years, made Sambaji prisoner, and put him to death.

In reviewing the events of these years, it is impossible not to admire the persevering spirit with which Aurangzib bore up against the difficulties and misfortunes that overshadowed his declining years. He was sixty-five years when he crossed the Nerbudda to take the field in the person against the Marattas; and had attained his eighty-first year before he quitted his cantonments for the seat of empire. The violent heats, in tents, and during marches, were

often rendered overpowering by failure of water; general famines and pestilences came more than once, in addition to the scarcity and sickness to which his own camp was liable; and all was aggravated by accounts of the havoc and destruction committed by the enemy in distant places. But in all these discouragements Aurangzib retained his vigour. He alone conducted every branch of his government in the most minute detail. He planned campaigns and issued instructions during their progress; drawings of forts were sent for him to fix on the points of attack; his letters embrace measures for keeping open the roads in the Afghan country; for quelling disturbances in Multan, and recovering Caudahar, while every detachment in the Deccan had some orders from Aurangzib's own hand.

The latter years of Aurangzib, though they were not marked by any serious reverse, and though his power continued on the whole unbroken, were it rendered gloomy by the disappointment of several important enterprises, and by the many omens of decline which thickened around his empire. His bigotry, always increasing, impelled him at length to the most violent measures for extirpating the Hindu religion. The superb temples of Muttra and Benares were razed to the ground, and mosques erected on their site. The pagoda of Ahmedabad, one of the most splendid of the national structures, was desecrated by killing a cow within its walls. These outrages, viewed by the superstitious people with the deepest horror, did not indeed excite them to direct rebellion; but still they spread throughout the empire a universal detestation of the Mogul yoke, and an eager disposition to rally round any standard whether erected by a chief or a government. To them may be ascribed in a great measure the rapid progress of the Maratta state, and the successful resistance of the petty Rajput principalities.

The latter days of Aurangzib were also more and more imbittered by the disposition which his children showed to follow his example. Mohammed, his eldest son, had already died in prison,—the punishment of rebellion. During a dangerous illness, under which he suffered at an early period of his reign, Shah Allum, the second, had too clearly shown how intently his mind was fixed on the succession; and though he had done nothing absolutely undutiful, or which would have justified his disgrace, the intercourse between

him and his father was ever after marked by suspicion and distrust. Akbar, another son, distinguished by the high rank of his mother, was guilty of open insurrection, and joined successively the hostile standards of the Marattas and the Rajputs. Two others, Azim and Kaum Buksh, were near him in his last illness; and he foresaw too clearly that his death would be the signal for dreadful conflicts, to be terminated only by the blood of all his male descendants except one. Amid these troubles and gloomy presentiments the fatal terms at length arrived; he expired in his camp on the 21st February 1707, in the eighty-ninth year of his life, and fiftieth of his reign.

Historians have found much difficulty in forming a correct estimate of the character of this extraordinary monarch. Of all the kings of India he is the most venerated among the Mussulmans. But notwithstanding his talents, his success, and his splendour, it is impossible to admire the character of Aurangzeb, or to regard him in any other light than that of a swindler, a murderer, and a plunderer,—one of the heaviest scourges that ever was laid upon a country, and the source of most of the trouble that for a century afterwards desolated India.* And yet, as a mere spectacle—a phenomenon in human nature,—there are few equal to him. He promoted the arts; he encouraged learning; he established schools, and erected public works; he was most active and impartial in the administration of justice; and he was liberal and ostentatious in his gifts. He rose at dawn every morning, and was in the hall of justice at seven. There he was accessible to all his subjects, heard their complaints, and, if they were poor, he had a heap of molley beside him, out of which he paid them for the loss of time that they had sustained in coming for justice. The trappings of his state were costly beyond example and almost beyond credibility. But the government was a system of continual mistrust; every man's character was secretly investigated, and colleagues so selected that each might be a check on his neighbour; yet there never was a prince so much cheated, or so ill served.

* Mudie.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SUCCESSORS OF AURANGZIB.

Shah Allum—Concedes to the Rajputs and Mahrattas—The Sikhs—Their origin and progress—Battle with them—Character of Shah Allum—His death—Succeeded by Moiz u din—Farokhir—Death of the Sikh chief—Mohammed Shah—Nizam ul Mulk—Sadat Khan—Progress of the Mahrattas.

ON the death of Aurangzib, the struggle for empire immediately commenced ; yet it was neither so obstinate nor so bloody as had been anticipated. Shah Allum, the eldest son, whose cause was embraced by the more powerful party, was of a temper peculiarly mild and amiable ; he made the most liberal offers to his brothers, proposing to grant them the government of some of the finest provinces ; but ambition and evil advisers urged them on to try the fortune of battle. They were vanquished ; one of them was killed in the field, the other died from wounds received in battle ; and Shah Allum, by painful steps, but without guilt, ascended the throne.

The chief aim of this monarch seems to have been to restore peace to the empire, even at the cost of resigning some of the pretensions advanced by its rulers during the long period of progressive prosperity. He effected an accommodation with the Rajputs, on terms which required from those haughty chiefs little more than the shadow of submission. The Mahrattas, during the latter part of the reign of Aurangzib, had offered to cease their depredations on condition of receiving the *chout*, or fourth part of the revenue of the districts which were exposed to their inroads ; but that proud sovereign, though unable to repel them, indignantly rejected the idea of listening to proposals made by the leaders of a predatory horde. Shah Allum, however, finding that the empire did not afford the means of subduing these plunderers, determined wisely perhaps, to accede to their terms, and thereby to deliver several of his finest provinces from so dreadful a scourge.

On other occasions, when circumstances were more favourable, he showed himself not destitute either of enterprise or military skill. These qualities he had occasion to display against a new enemy, who about this time rose into political importance.

The Sikhs made their first appearance during the reign of Baber simply as a religious sect. Nannuk, the founder, is said to have been an amiable and intelligent man, of a mild and philosophic temper, who, seeing with pain the violent dissensions between the votaries of the Hindu and Mahometan creeds, formed a scheme by means of which he hoped to effect a reconciliation. Borrowing some of the leading ceremonies of each, he endeavoured to inculcate the grand principles of a superintending providence and a future retribution acknowledged by both. The numbers of the Sikhs rapidly multiplied, being swelled by accessions from other sects; but they still conducted themselves as peaceable citizens, and, under the philosophic reigns of Akbar and his immediate successors, suffered not the slightest molestation. It was the persecuting bigotry of Aurangzib which converted them into mortal enemies. He caused their chief or patriarch, Tig Bahadoor, to be seized, brought to the fort of Gwalior, and there put to death. This furious proceeding changed entirely the character of the people; and Guru Govind, son to the murdered prelate, devoted his whole life to the task of vengeance. He succeeded in inspiring all his followers with the same sentiments; and, having armed and mounted them, he changed peaceful fakirs into daring troopers and fierce marauders. Being obliged, however, with these newly-levied bands, to encounter Aurangzib in the plenitude of his zeal and power, he was unable to make an effectual resistance. His troops were scattered; his two sons were taken and put to death; he himself became a hopeless exile; and overpowered by so many calamities, died bereft of reason.

But the spirits of the association did not sink; on the contrary, under the pressure of wrong and suffering, it became more savage and resolute than ever. After lurking for many years, amid the hills and fastnesses on the rude border of the Himalaya, they were encouraged by the death of Aurangzib again to approach the northerly

provinces. They were now led by Bandu, a follower of the late chief, who assumed also the name of Guru Govind; and their devastations are represented to have been truly dreadful, inspired by an imbibed feeling of revenge, and an entire disregard of humanity. Bandu had occupied Sirhind, when he learned that the emperor with his whole force was advancing against him; he then fell back upon Dabar, a hill-fort situated among the steps of Himalaya, on an elevated summit which could be approached only by craggy rocks and ravines.

The emperor regarded the position as so strong that he wished to decline the attack, and proposed rather to remain inactive, and, by appearing afraid of the enemy to allure them into the open field. The Khan Khannan or general, however, was animated with a more daring spirit; and having obtained permission to advance with a party to reconnoitre, he immediately began to attack and drive the enemy from the heights surrounding the fortress.

This success roused the military ardour of the whole army, who instantly rushed forward in great numbers to join in the assault; and their imperial leader, with mingled anger and satisfaction, saw his troops, in defiance of his injunction, carrying all before them. They had driven the enemy into the central fort, which, relying chiefly on the strength of its approaches, was not calculated for any serious resistance; but darkness now fell, and the commander contented himself with closing all the avenues, and keeping strict watch through the night. In the morning, however, he was disappointed to find that, by a narrow path which had eluded his notice, the Sikh chieftain had effected his escape, and was retreating into the wildest recesses of the Himalaya. His progress, notwithstanding, was checked for the present, though the sect retained their power unbroken, and were destined at a later period to act a conspicuous part on the theatre of India.

Though Shah Allum did not possess the full energy suited to the trying circumstances of his government, his moderation and the general respect in which he was held, might probably have averted the calamities which impended over this great empire; but, after a reign of five years, he was seized with a violent illness, and died in his camp at Lahore in the year 1712.

He left four sons, who, notwithstanding their peaceful conduct during his life, immediately began to contend with one another for the empire. The cause of Moiz u din, the eldest, was espoused by Zulfikar Khan, one of the most powerful of the omrahs, who succeeded in defeating and putting to death the three others, and placing the crown on the head of this prince, who assumed the name of Jehandar Shah. The new monarch, however, was found wholly incapable of supporting, even with an appearance of decency, the exalted rank to which he had been elevated. Neglecting altogether the business of the state, he abandoned himself to dissoluteness. In a government of so little vigour, there were not wanting bold spirits to avail themselves of the opportunity which the weak character and bad administration of the emperor had created. Two brothers, Abdulla and Hosen, who boasted the high rank of Seiads, or descendants of the Prophet, undertook to recommend a successor, in whose name they might rule Hindustan. They nominated Farokhsir, the offspring of Azim u Shan, who was the favourite son of Shah Allum. An army was soon raised, and though Zulfikar bravely defended the unworthy object whom he had placed on the throne, he was, after a short struggle, entirely overthrown, and both he and his master put to death.

The Seiads having thus elevated their candidate to power considered him as their vassal, and proceeded to administer the empire at their pleasure. They discovered no want of vigour in the conduct of affairs. Bandu, the Sikh prince, having descended to the plains bordering on the Indus, was defeated, taken, and put to death with the most cruel tortures. The great omrahs, however, soon began to marmur at the supremacy of these chiefs. Even the emperor himself felt their yoke burdensome ; and favourites were also found who exhorted him to submit no longer to this thralldom, but to assume real power in his own person. Thus his reign of seven years was spent in a continued series of intrigues, the issue of which was that the Seiads completely prevailed, put Farokhsir to death, (Feb. 1719,) and looked around for another high-born pageant on whom to confer the semblance of sovereignty. They chose first a great grand-son of Aurangzib by his rebellious son Akbar ; but in three months he died of consumption. Next his brother Afi-u-Dirjat was named to succeed, but he survived his

elvation only a few weeks. The Seiads then placed on the throne Roushen Akhter a grand-son of Shah Allum, under the name of Mohammed Shah.

This Prince, like Farokhsir, paid at first implicit deference to the two individuals who had raised him to the empire ; but he also soon listened to other counsellors, who exhorted him to emancipate himself from their tyrannical sway. He was at length induced to join in a regular conspiracy formed for that purpose. A misunderstanding had arisen between the two brothers and Nizâm-ul-Mulk a powerful chieftain who held the government of Malwa, and refused to resign it at their mandate. It was arranged that the emperor and Hosen should set out together, and subdue this refractory commander. A plot for the assassination of the Seiad was however matured ; the three conspirators cast lots which of them should do the deed, and it fell upon one whose name was Hyder. Approaching the palaukeen in which Hosen was seated, as if to present a petition, the murderer stabbed him so dexterously that he died in a few moments. He had only time to show his suspicion of the motive by calling out, " Kill the emperor !" and his nephew, at the head of a few resolute soldiers, made a desperate effort to fulfil this dying injunction ; but precautions had been taken against the attempt. Mohammed then marched upon Delhi, where the remaining Seiad, determining to make a stand, set up a new monarch and collected an army ; but he was defeated and taken prisoner. The victor made his triumphal entry into the capital, as if he had just begun to reign.

But he was no sooner in full possession of sovereign power than he displayed that incapacity which seemed to be now inherent in the Mogul race. He had two able and not unfaithful ministers, Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sadat Khan ; but, disgusted with their grave and severe manners, he resigned himself to youthful advisers, who were easily found within the precincts of a court. Those two chiefs, irritated at finding themselves thus overlooked, withdrew, and endeavoured to establish a separate authority in other quarters ; Nizam in the Deckan, where he has transmitted his name and title to a race of princes still nominally independent ; and Sadat in Oude, where a branch of his family continued to reign till 1856.

In this crisis the Mahrattas, who had been continually extending the range of their incursions, began openly to contend for the empire. After overrunning the greater part of Malwa and Guzerat, they pushed forward to the very gates of Agra, and struck terror into the imperial capital. Sadat Khan, who alone seemed to retain any regard for the honour and safety of the state, marched down from Oude, and gave them so great an overthrow as would have completely broken their power, had he been permitted to follow it up; but the weak emperor desired operations to be suspended till his favourite minister should have collected troops, and marched forth to take the chief command. Sadat then retired in disgust; after which the enemy rallied, made a fresh incursion as far as Delhi, plundered the environs of that capital, and returned laden with booty to Malwa. But, as if this combination of imbecility with intestine war were not enough, an assault from abroad, of the most formidable character, burst upon the sinking fabric of the Mogul empire.

CHAPTER XIX.

DECLINE OF THE MOGUL EMPIRE.

Condition of Persia—Nadir Shah—His invasion of India—Plunder of Delhi—Leaves India—Rohilcund—Ahmed Abdulla invades India—Ahmed Shah—Holkar—Distracted state of the Empire—Afghans and Mahrattas—Conquest of the Afghans.

Persia had been recently exposed to the most violent revolutions. The Afghans, a warlike race inhabiting the mountainous region which separates that country from India, took advantage of the weakness into which this once powerful kingdom had fallen. They marched into its territory, defeated its troops, and laid close siege to Ispahan. Having reduced that capital, they put to death Hosen, the reigning sovereign, with all his family except one son, named Tahmasp. This young prince sought refuge among the pastoral tribes that occupy those elevated plains which extend over a great part of the Persian empire. These hardy and warlike shepherds, animated with loyal and patriotic feelings, warmly espoused the cause of this last branch of their royal house, and assembled round him in numbers, which became every day more formidable.

Among these volunteers a young chief, named Nadir, soon distinguished himself by such zeal and ability as raised him to be their leader. After having gained successive victories, he at length re-took Ispahan, and drove the invader completely out of the empire. In the course of so many successes, the troops contracted a stronger attachment to Nadir than to him for whom they had taken up arms; and this bold chief, finding himself within reach of the supreme power, placed the prince under restraint, allowing him the mere epithet and shadow of royalty. He afterwards put out his eyes, and seized the kingdom in his own person, under his original name of *Nadir Shah*.

The new monarch was not content to be master of Persia; but confident in the bravery and affection of his followers, he resolved to carry his conquests into the neigh-

bouring countries. He invaded the territory of the Afghans themselves, and having reduced Cabul and Candahar, at length approached the frontier of India. He professed to have no intention or wish to penetrate into that region ; but a reason for doing so soon arose. A number of his countrymen who had fled from him found an asylum in Hindostan. An ambassador and his escort, whom he sent to demand that these fugitives should be delivered up, were murdered by the inhabitants of Jellalabad ; and Mohammed refused to grant satisfaction for this outrage. The Persian prince advanced, burning for revenge, and probably not without some secret anticipation of ulterior objects, marched with such rapidity, by way of Peshawur and Lahore, that he was within four days' march of Delhi before the supine emperor was aware of his approach. The latter then hastily mustered his troops, and obtained the able assistance of Sadat Khan ; but that officer, not duly aware of the high talent and valour opposed to him, committed the fatal error of quitting his intrenchments, and hazarding an engagement in the field with the veteran forces of Nadir. The effeminate pomp of an Indian host was quite unfit to contend with the rude valour of these pastoral bands ; hence the imperial army was totally routed, and their commander taken.

Nadir then proceeded to Delhi, which he seems to have entered amicably, intending to protect the inhabitants from outrage. For two days the strictest discipline was observed ; but unfortunately, in the course of the second night, a rumour was spread of his death, when the Hindus, emboldened to a vain resistance, killed a number of his troops. Their commander, whose fierce spirit had been with difficulty restrained, roused to the utmost fury by this outrage, issued orders for a general massacre in every house or lane where the body of a murdered Persian could be found. Till mid-day the streets of Delhi streamed with blood ; after which the conqueror suffered himself to be appeased, —and so complete a control did he exercise over his rude followers, that at his mandate the sword was immediately sheathed.

The imperial repositories were now ransacked, and found to contain specie, rich robes, and, above all, jewels to an almost incredible value. The Mogul emperors, since the first accession of their dynasty, had been indefatigable in

the collection of these objects from every quarter, by presents, purchase, or forfeiture ; and the store had been continually augmented without suffering any alienation, or being exposed to foreign plunder. The invaders continued during thirty-five days to extract, by threats, torture, and every severity, the hidden treasures of that splendid capital. Historians hesitate not to estimate the spoil carried off by the Iranian monarch and his officers at thirty-two millions sterling, of which at least one-half was in diamonds and other jewels.

Nadir made no attempt to retain India, though it lay prostrate at his feet. He had probably the sagacity to perceive that so vast a country and Persia were incapable of being united into one kingdom. He contented himself with exacting the cession of Cabul, Candahar, and all the provinces west of the Indus ; then, seating Mohammed anew on the Mogul throne, he gave him some salutary advices, and departed without leaving a soldier or retaining a fortified post in Hindostan. Yet the empire, already greatly sunk, lost by this discomfiture the little remnant of respect which it had hitherto commanded.

In Rohilcund, a hilly district closely contiguous to the capital, some refugee chiefs of the Afghan race, with the brave inhabitants of the country itself, formed an independent state, which defied the imperial power. They were, it is true, obliged to give way before the united force of the vizir and the Nabob of Oude ; but they held themselves in readiness to take advantage of those convulsions to which the successors of Akbar were constantly becoming more and more exposed.

In 1747, the emperor Mohammed died, and was succeeded by his son, Ahmed Shah, during whose short reign, as if foreign enemies had not been sufficient, the court was perpetually distracted by intestine dissension. The sovereign and his vizir were now almost in regular opposition. Ahmed being oppressed by one of these officers, Suffder Jung, employed against him Ghazi-u-din, grandson to Nizam-ul-mulk, who had died at the age of 104. This young man made considerable efforts to retrieve the affairs of the empire. He compelled the vizir, who had even set up another monarch, to relinquish his station. He undertook an expedition against the Jats, a wild tribe inhabiting the hilly tracts in the most western provinces, and who, amid the general

anarchy, had shaken off the yoke. But, while thus employed, he excited the jealousy of his master the emperor, who adopting the views of a new favourite, concerted with the enemy a plan for his destruction. Aided, however, by the Mahratta chief Holkar Mulhar, he completely baffled these designs, obtained possession of his master's person, put out his eyes, and raised to the throne a son of Jehander Shah, under the empty but imposing title of Aulumgir the second.

The empire was now in a most distracted condition ; there was scarcely a power so insignificant as not to think itself sufficiently strong to trample on it. The Afghans had completely conquered the provinces of Multan and Lahore ; the Sikhs, in the same quarter, daily augmented their numbers and strength ; the Jats and Rohillas continued their predatory in-roads ; while the Mahrattas extended their incursions, in the course of which they had even passed the Jumna, and obtained an important settlement in Rohilcund. Ghazi u din precipitated the disaster by a rash attempt at conquest, to which his power was wholly inadequate.

An Afghan lady having been intrusted by Ahmed Abdulla with the government of Lahore, the vizir, under pretence of negotiating a marriage with her daughter, seized her person, and brought her a prisoner to Delhi. At this outrage the indignation of the barbarian king knew no bounds. He hastened at the head of a vast army, and made an unresisted entrance into the capital, which was given up to a sack almost as dreadful as it had suffered from Nadir. A most extraordinary scene then ensued. The emperor besought the invader not to leave him without protection against his own vizir, who had raised him indeed to nominal power, but treated him as a mere pageant, while he himself exercised all the real authority. Ahmed accordingly made some arrangements for this purpose placing Aulumgir under the guardianship of a Rohilla chief : but these measures after his departure, proved wholly insufficient. Ghazi u din, having formed an alliance with the Maharattas, easily obtained possession both of the capital and the sovereign. That unfortunate prince at first pretended a reconciliation, but, being soon after detected in a correspondence with the adverse party, was assassinated and his body thrown into the Jumna. Yet Ghazi u din himself, unable to withstand the numerous enemies who surrounded him, was at no distant period obliged to seek refuge in a castle belonging to the Jats,

Without attempting to tread further this labyrinth of treason, it may be observed generally, that the Mogul throne had now almost ceased to retain any degree of weight or importance. The contest for the empire of India lay entirely between the Afghans and the Mahrattas; and the latter, taking advantage of the absence of their rivals determined upon a grand attempt to secure complete possession of Hindostan. Bringing up from the Deckan an immense body of cavalry, and being aided by the Sikhs, they overran not only the metropolitan provinces of Agra and Delhi, but also those of Multan and Lahore, and drove Afghans beyond the Indus.

Ahmed Abdulla, however, was not of a character tamely to allow these fine countries to be wrested from his kingdom. He soon crossed the river with a formidable army, and was joined by many chiefs who were exasperated at the incursion of the Mahrattas. These plunderers at first retreated, and allowed him to occupy Delhi; but immediately intrenched themselves in a strong camp, which he did not venture to attack. Pressed, however, by want of provisions, they imprudently came out and gave battle, when they experienced a total defeat; their army of 80,000 men being almost entirely destroyed, and Dutta Sindia, their general, killed. Another body under Holkar was surprised near Secundra, and so completely worsted, that he himself fled naked with a handful of followers.

The Mahrattas, though humbled by this disaster, were not discouraged; and they resolved to make the most extraordinary exertions for retrieving their fortunes. Before the close of the year, they had assembled a force of 1,40,000 men, commanded by Sevadasheo Raos called the Bhao, nephew to their peshwa or supreme prince; and that chief, being joined by the vizir and the Jat leaders, advanced upon Delhi. The Afghan army was on the other side of the Jumna, whose deep stream had been greatly increased by the rains; but, though it could not be forded, the daring spirit of Abdulla impelled him to plunge into its waters, and swim across with his whole army. This achievement, which was almost without example, struck dismay into the host of the Mahrattas. Though triple the number of their antagonists, they did not venture to face them in the open field, but shut themselves up in an intrenched camp at Panniput, on a spot where the fate of the empire

has been repeatedly decided. Ahmed for some time merely hovered round them and cut off their supplies ; at length he ventured on an attempt to carry their position, but was obliged to retire without any important success.

Encouraged by this result, and distressed as formerly by the want of provisions, his active foe determined again to risk a battle in the open plain. Placing their artillery in front, they advanced with that impetuosity by which they were accustomed to carry all before them. The Afghan commander caused his troops to hold themselves in reserve till the enemy had nearly come up ;—then gave the signal for a general charge. The light horse of the mountains were never able to resist, even for a short interval, the heavy cavalry of the more northern nations. On the first onset a complete rout took place ; their host was so scattered in every direction that only a remnant reached the Deekan : while 22,000 prisoners, and 50,000 horses, with an immense booty, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

It was now easy for the victorious Abdulla to seat himself on the vacant throne of the Mogul ; but he seems not to have felt any ambition for this high dignity. Perhaps he was sensible that, amid such a general agitation throughout Hindostan, and with so many nations in arms, such an acquisition was too distant from the centre of his dominions to be retained with advantage. Contenting himself with the provinces west of the Indus, he quitted in a few months the seat of government, leaving there Ali Ghor, eldest son of Aulumgir II., in possession of the empty but still venerated title of Great Mogul, to be the tool or the captive of the first daring warrior who should seize the capital. Having traced the decline of mighty empire to so low an ebb, we shall now pause till we have marked the progress of that new power from a distant continent, which has seated herself on its ruins, and obtained a complete supremacy over all the states of India.

CHAPTER XX.

BRITISH CONNEXION WITH INDIA.

Origin of the East India Company—Its commercial character—Disputes with the French—Labourdonnais—His capture of Madras—Duplex—His schemes—Attacks of Fort St. David—Arrival of an English squadron—Lawrence—Clive.

THE first appearance of the English in India gave no promise of their future grandeur. In the year 1600, when Queen Elizabeth reigned in England, and Akbar was on the throne of India, a number of merchants and others, under the title of the London East India Company, united themselves for trading purposes. This Company first obtained ground in Masulipatam on the Coromandel Coast, and afterwards in Madras, where they obtained permission to erect a fortification which received the name of Fort St. George. Tegnapatam on the same coast, which was purchased from another native prince, was in like manner, fortified, and became a station of some importance under the name of Fort St. David. The island of Bombay, on the opposite coast, had been ceded to the British crown as part of the marriage portion of Catherine of Portugal, Queen of Charles the Second, and was by him granted to the Company. In Bengal their progress was slow and subject to frequent checks. They, however, succeeded in establishing various factories, of which that of Hooghly was the chief, but for the most part they were dependent on Fort St. George. In the year 1700, the villages of Chuttanuttee, Govindpur, and Calcutta, having been obtained by means of a large present to Azim, grandson of Aurangzeb, the new acquisitions were declared a presidency. They were forthwith fortified, and in compliment to the reigning sovereign of England, the settlement received the name of Fort William. Thus was the foundation laid of the future capital of British India.

Among the projects resorted to for supporting the government of William the Third, was that of establishing a new East India Company, the capital of which was to be

lent to the Crown. This, though a violation of the rights of the old Company, was carried into effect. The new corporation commenced trade under the title of the English East India Company, and a struggle between the two bodies was carried on for several years. A compromise at length took place. The old Company surrendered its charter to the crown, and its members were received into the new corporation, which thenceforth, until the year 1833, bore the title of the United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies.

For nearly forty years after this union of the Companies, the history of British connection with India presents nothing but a detail of the operations of trade, varied only by the efforts of the United Company to obtain protection from native princes, to exclude those who sought to invade their privileges, and to regulate the conduct of their servants.

About the same time that the English directed their attention to India, the French also sent several expeditions, and in 1644, succeeded in establishing a French East India Company. This Company, after various reverses and repeated collisions with the Dutch, at length gained a footing in Pondicherry, which they fortified. They also had smaller factories at Mahe and Carical, as well as at Chandernagore in Bengal. In 1744 hostilities broke out between the two nations, which were carried on in Europe with great animosity. The French Company appear to have been rather desirous that the war should not extend to the Indian Seas ; but the naval officers, on the contrary, were fired by hopes of glory from an attack on the English settlements in that quarter, before they could be placed in a posture of defence.

Labourdonnais, a person of great talent and most indefatigable activity, who had raised himself through all the ranks of the navy, was now governor of Mauritius and Bourbon ; and these islands, by his exertions, almost without assistance from home, had become very flourishing. Happening to be in France when the war was in preparation, he made proposals both to the Company and the ministry, for an attack upon the English establishments. The former were altogether averse to his scheme ; but the government, unknown to them, sanctioned it, and even engaged to furnish two ships, which however were after-

wards withheld. The adventurer returned to his command with the most resolute determination to prosecute his design, though possessed of very slender resources. With this view he detained the vessels which happened to touch there, and employed them in the expedition; he brought the sailors, many of whom had never fired a gun, into regular training; and he supplied by various inventions the defective means of equipment. In June 1746, he arrived at Pondicherry, after a slight action with an English naval force on the coast. Here, too, he had to overcome certain obstacles raised by Dupleix, before he was permitted to sail with his squadron to attack Madras.

This city was not only the capital of the English possessions, but one of the chief settlements at that time formed by the Europeans in India. It comprised within its district a population of not less than 250,000, of whom however, only 300 were English, including 200 soldiers. These lived in Fort St. George, surrounded merely by a slender wall, with four ill-constructed bastions and batteries; and hence, it is obvious, that had very small means of defence, and did not, in the use of them, display any heroism. After sustaining a bombardment of five days, in which two or three houses were demolished, and four or five men killed, they capitulated on the 10th September 1746. They obtained, indeed, the singular condition, that Labourdonnais, after having regularly occupied the place and taken possession of the Company's magazines and warehouses, should, within a stipulated period, and on payment of a fixed ransom, restore Madras to the English. That officer, having made this important acquisition without the loss of a single man, returned to Pondicherry.

But there he did not meet with such a reception as he merited. Dupleix, an aspiring and ambitious man, who could not brook any rival in power, thwarted all his schemes, and exposed him to repeated mortifications, till at length he gave up the contest, and sailed for France. There, too, on the representations of his superior officer, he was treated in a manner almost unworthy his long and faithful services, being thrown into the Bastile, whence he was not liberated till the end of three years, soon after which he died.

Dupleix, who was thus left in the supreme command of French affairs in India, was a very extraordinary cha-

racter. From his father, who had been a farmer-general and a director of the East India Company, he inherited an immense fortune, which he was taught to employ in the pursuits of commerce. Being sent out originally as first member of the council at Pondicherry, and afterwards as superintendent at Chandernagore, he at once, by his public measures, rendered this last settlement extremely prosperous, and by an extensive trade largely augmented his private wealth. His talents and success recommended him to the important station of Governor of Pondicherry. Although, from feelings of jealousy, he had quarrelled with Labourdonnais, and succeeded in removing him, yet his mind was enthusiastically and intensely devoted to the same system of policy.

Neither Cæsar nor Alexander ever formed more magnificent schemes of conquest than this mercantile ruler of French India. His first object was to follow up the advantage gained over the English, and thoroughly to root out that rival nation from the coast of Coromandel. Labourdonnais had, as already mentioned, stipulated, on certain conditions to restore Madras, after a temporary occupation of it; and, as a man of honour, he was resolved to make good his engagement,—a design wholly foreign to the grasping ambition of Dupleix. Unable otherwise to accomplish his object, he made such arrangements as to delay the period of surrender till the departure of that officer, and then contrived to draw forth from the citizens of Pondicherry, a remonstrance against giving up a place, the possession of which was so important to their security. In pretended compliance with the request, Madras was not only retained, but exposed to a species of plunder, while the governor and principal inhabitants were carried prisoners to the French settlement.

This step was forthwith followed by an expedition on his part for the reduction of Fort St. David, while his confidence was greatly heightened by an event which forms a memorable era in the annals of Indian warfare. The Nabob of Arcot, having espoused the English cause, had sent his son with 10,000 men, to endeavour to re-take Madras on their behalf. The French had only 1,200 soldiers to defend the city, with which force they hesitated not to attack the numerous army of the Nabob: when, by their superior discipline and expert management of their artillery, they gained a

complete and decisive victory. The superiority of even handful of Europeans over the tumultuary bands which compose an Asiatic host, had long ago been proved by the Portugues ; but the example of their success was nearly forgotten ; and both French and British had been accustomed to view the Mogul as a powerful monarch, whom it was vain, with their slender means, to think of resisting. The spell was again broken ; and the settlers of both nations learned a lesson which they failed not soon to reduce to practise with great effect.

The present object of Dupleix was simply the reduction of Fort St. David, against which he led a force of 1700 men, mostly European ; while the English had only 200 of their own troops, with a body of undisciplined natives. As the French, however, were advancing in full confidence, the Nabob's army surprised them by a sudden attack, and obliged them to retreat with some loss. A detachment was afterwards sent by sea to attempt the surprise of Cuddalore, a town immediately contiguous to Fort St. David, but a heavy gale springing up obliged them to return. Dupleix then employed all his address to gain over the Nabob ; being particularly careful to impress on that prince a lofty idea of his own power, trusting to the maxim regularly acted upon by indian grandees, of studying only immediate advantage, and espousing always the side which they believe to be the strongest. His Highness being informed of the arrival of a great additional force was led to credit the pretensions of the French, and deserting the English, of whom he had been the sworn ally, concluded a treaty with their enemies.

Dupleix next took up a strong position in front of Fort St. David, but three attempts against that place failed completely ; and in March, 1747, the arrival of an English squadron, under Admiral Griffin, made Dupleix tremble for Pondicherry. In the month of January, 1748, Major Lawrence, an officer of great merit, arrived at Fort St. David, with a commission to command the whole of the Company's forces in India ; and in the month of August following, Admiral Boscawen reached the same port with nine ships of war, and joined Admiral Griffin. Counting some ships of the Company, the English had now the largest European naval force that any one power had as yet possessed in India. The land troops brought from

England amounted to 1,400 men. Pondicherry was now besieged, but after thirty-one days of open trenches, the siege was given up.

The anarchy prevailing among the native rulers soon opened a way to easier conquests. Sahuji, a Hindu, who in the rapid revolution of the times had gained and lost the throne of Tanjore, repaired to Fort St. David, and bargained for the assistance of the English in a war against his brother, Pratapa Sing, who had dethroned him. The price, as fixed, was the fort and country of Devi Cottah. In April, 1749, an English and sepoy force marched from Fort St. David into Tanjore, and made an unsuccessful attack on the fortress of Devi Cottah. A new expedition was soon fitted out, and after some hard fighting in the breach, a truce was concluded, the reigning king of Tanjore, Pratapa Sing, agreeing to yield to the English the town, fort, and harbour, together with territory adjoining; and the English on their part agreeing not merely to renounce the alliance and support of Sahuji, for whom, and with whom, they entered on this war, but also to secure his person, in order to prevent his giving any further molestation to his brother.

At the siege of Devi Cottah, Robert Clive, the real founder of the British Indian empire, greatly distinguished himself. He had attracted some attention at the siege of Pondicherry in the preceding year. He had entered the Company's service in a civil capacity, but at the first sound of war, he had thrown down the writer's pen to take up an ensign's sword. By this time he was a lieutenant, and esteemed by the whole army as the most enterprising and daring of their officers. He was in the twenty-fourth year of his age, poor, and comparatively friendless, and illiterate; his chances of patronage, advancement, fame, and fortune, all lay in his sword.

However questionable the means by which it was obtained, the possession of Devi Cottah was of vast importance to the Company: it was advantageously situated by the bank of the Coleroon, on the Coromandel coast; the channel of the Coleroon, under the town, was capable of receiving ships of the largest burthen, and this was more important, as all a long that coast from Masulipatam to Cape Comorin there was no port that could receive a vessel of 300 tons: more-

over, the neighbouring country was pleasant, rich and fertile.

But M. Dupleix did not give up the race for territory or dominion. He was engaging in transactions of the highest moment in the Carnatic, while other rival princes were contending with each other. Taking part (for good consideration) with Chunda Sahib, and sending 400 French and 2,000 sepoys to the field, he gained a great victory. Chunda Sahib's rival was killed by a Kaffir soldier in the service of France. Mohamfmed Ali, son of the fallen nabob fled to Trichinapoly, and the French conquerors marched to the capital city of Arcot, which surrendered on the first summons.

Mohammed Ali threw himself on the protection of the English, and offered high prices for their military aid. But peace between France and England had been concluded, and the English were occupied at the time in taking re-possession of Madras, which had been given up by France in the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which was signed in 1748.

Dupleix continued as active as ever in seeking to extend French influence. He sent some of his people with Chunda Sahib to plunder the rajah of Tanjore, who had given up Devi Cottah to the English, and that prince was compelled to give to the French two lacs of rupees and eighty-one villages.

CHAPTER XXI.

PROGRESS OF BRITISH POWER.

War in the Deckan—Nasir Jang—French influence—Success of Bussy—Revolutions in the native states—Clive takes Arcot—Attacked by Chunda Sahib with a large army—Clive's brave defence—Noble conduct of the sepoys—Clive's garrison victorious—The besiegers retreat.

IN the Deckan, the succession, on the death of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, was disputed between his son Nasir Jang and his grandson Muzaffer Jang ; but the senior prince prevailed over the junior, took Muzaffer Jang prisoner, and now kept him in irons, carrying him in his train wherever he went. Nasir Jang and Anwar-u-din, who claimed the sovereignty of the Carnatic, having united their forces, and drawn into their service nearly all the troops the Great Mogul had on foot, advanced to the Carnatic frontier with an immense army, including 30,000 Mahrattas engaged to act as light cavalry. At the approach of this host, Chunda Sahib and his French allies retreated hastily to Pondicherry. Dupleix, by extraordinary exertions, increased the French contingent to 2,000 men, and added a large body of well disciplined sepoys, together with a well served train of artillery.

In the mean time, the English had managed to send some very small detachments to Trichinopoly to sustain Mohammed Ali, and had thrown a few companies into the army of the Raja of Tanjore. Major Lawrence advanced from Fort St. David with re-inforcements, and collecting the companies in Tanjore, he was enabled to join the army of Nasir Jang with about 600 Englishmen. But Lawrence had with difficulty obtained the consent of his civil superiors to this active co-operation, and he was for some time disturbed by a doubt whether he should be justified in fighting the French without orders from the British government. He, however, determined to imitate the French in representing the English as mere auxiliaries, and not principals in the war. As Lawrence advanced with Nasir,

Jang's host, the French and their allies strongly intrenched themselves, and waited the attack with full confidence of success. Their position was so excellent, that Lawrence advised Nasir Jang against an attack; but the Indian said it did not become the son of the Nizam-ul-Mulk to retreat before such an enemy. A cannonade was therefore begun, and the troops were put in motion for a closer attack.

At this crisis, the French corps was completely disorganized by the sudden resignation of thirteen commissioned officers, who were enraged at not having shared in the booty and spoils made in Tanjore. As the defection seemed growing general, M. D'Auteuil, who commanded for Dupleix, deemed it expedient to quit the field and hasten back to Pondicherry. Chunda Sahib, whose own troops began to desert, saw nothing better to do than to march after D' Auteuil. The whole excellent position was soon abandoned without a blow, or a shot fired from it; and for a moment the triumph of the allies of the English seemed to be fully secured.

Nasir Jang, the real head of this confederacy, had little ability, and still less energy, and, by refusing to grant to his English allies a territory near Madras, which had been promised as the reward of their co-operation, he provoked Major Lawrence to return to Fort St. David with his 600 men. Nor had Dupleix lost heart by his most unexpected misfortunes: by various arts he pacified the mutinous French officers, and put a new spirit into their little army; he also opened a secret correspondence with some disaffected chiefs, the leaders of the Patan troops, in the army of his enemy, Nasir Jang. These Patans were unprincipled and ferocious mercenaries. Responding to the overtures of Dupleix, the Patan chiefs engaged to perform various important services, and, if necessary, to murder their present employer, Nasir Jang.

D'Auteuil again took the field, and one of his officers, with only 300 men, was allowed to penetrate by night into the very heart of the enemies' camp, and to kill upwards of 1,000 without losing more than two or three of his own people. Moreover, another small body of French troops sailed for Masulipatam, attacked it by surprise in the night, and carried it with a trifling loss; and another detachment seized the Pagoda of Travidi, only fifteen miles to the west of Fort St. David. Continuing this career, M. Bussy, the

Clive of the French, captured by storm the hill fort of Gingi, which had been deemed impregnable and inaccessible. The event struck awe into the natives of India, and was viewed with astonishment even by Europeans.

Soon after the storming of Gingi, Nasir Jang opened a secret correspondence with Dupleix. The Frenchman replied to his letters in a friendly manner, and drew up a treaty of pacification; but at the same time he fully arranged a revolt in Nasir Jang's camp, and collected 4,000 men under the hill of Gingi, to wait for the summons of the Patan traitors. That summons was soon received; the French broke into the subahdar's camp, and when Nasir Jang mounted his war elephant, and was hastening to the lines, two carbine balls were fired at his heart, and he fell dead at the feet of the traitors; who forthwith cut off his head, stuck it upon a spear, and exhibited it to the army. This was quite enough to effect an instantaneous revolution; Muzuffer Jang was released from his chains, and installed as subahdar of the Deckan; and to reward the French, he gave them a great portion of Nasir Jang's treasures, and nominated Dupleix governor of all the Mogul dominions on the Coromandel coast from the river Krishna to Cape Comorin. At the same time he appointed Dupleix ally, Chunda Sahib, his deputy in the government of Arcot.

Early in 1751, the brave and adroit Bussy was sent to escort the new subahdar, Muzuffer Jang, to Hyderabad, his capital. Numerous insurrections had broken out, and in a mountain pass, Bussy found himself opposed by the fierce Patans, who considered that they had not been sufficiently rewarded for their treachery. The French fought their way through with artillery and grape shot, but Muzuffer Jang was killed by a Patan Arab. Bussy instantly made a new subahdar in the person of one Salabat Jang, who happened to be in the camp, and continued his march upon Hydrabad.

Mohammed Ali was now so alarmed, that he contemplated joining the French, and giving up Trichinopoly. To keep him in heart, the presidency of Fort St. David twice sent him considerable succours; but these contingents were miserable commanded, and one of them sustained a disgraceful defeat at Volconda. Chunda Sahib, assisted by some French, pressed the siege of Trichinopoly. At this time the English council wisely promoted Clive to the rank

of captain, adopted a plan which his daring genius had formed, and intrusted him with the execution of his own project. This was nothing less than to relieve Trichinopoly by making a sudden attack upon Arcot, Chunda Sahib's capital. All the force that could be spared amounted to 200 Englishmen and 300 sepoys ; his whole staff of officers counted no more than eight, six of whom had never been in action, and four of these six being very young men, who had just quitted the mercantile service of the Company. The artillery attached to this force consisted of three light field-pieces.

On the 26th of August, 1751, Clive started from Madras with a confidence of success. On the 31st, he halted within ten miles of Arcot. The country people, or the scouts employed by the enemy, reported with consternation that they had seen the English marching without concern through a terrible storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. This was considered as a fearful omen by the native garrison, who instantly abandoned the fort, although they nearly trebled the number that Clive was bringing against them. A few hours after their flight, the English quietly entered, and took possession of the fort, where they found eight pieces of light artillery, a great heap of lead for shot, and abundance of gunpowder. The merchants of Arcot had for security deposited their goods in the fort: Clive scrupulously respected this property, and allowed some three or four thousand persons to remain in their houses or dwellings, which were situated within the precincts of the fortifications. This conduct procured him many friends among the natives, who cared little for Chunda Sahib, or for either of the parties contending for dominion over them : and it enabled him to obtain provisions and such materials as might be wanted for the defence of the place.

On the 4th of September he marched out with the greater part of his men to scatter the ex-garrison of the fort who lingered in the neighbourhood. They fled for the hills in their rear as soon the English got within musket shot, and Clive, who had no cavalry to pursue them, returned leisurely to the fort of Arcot. On the 6th, he made another promenade into the country, found the enemy in greater force and strongly posted, defeated them with great loss, and returned to Arcot, where he employed his people in repairing the crazy fortress. In about a month, 3,000

fighting men, collected from various parts of the Carnatic, encamped within three miles of the city. On the night of the 4th of September, when they were buried in sleep, Clive burst into their camps, committed a great slaughter, put the rest to flight, and then returned to Arcot without losing a single man.

At this time, two eighteen-pounders, which he had demanded, were on their way from Madras, escorted by a few sepoys. Anxious for these guns, Clive sent out, at first, thirty of the Englishmen, and fifty of his sepoys, with a field-piece; and then, on learning that the enemy were in great force, and strongly posted on the road to cut off the eighteen pounders, he sent out all his people except thirty English and fifty sepoys with whom he remained in the Fortress. The enemy hereupon changed their design, and quitting all their possessions on the road, they returned hastily to Arcot, not doubting that they should carry the fort by assault. Two fruitless attempts convinced them of their mistake; and when Clive's main force, with the two battering cannons from Madras, appeared on the skirts of the town, they quickly retreated.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp, and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore; and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers, whom Dupleix despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of this army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Raja Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Raja Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Only four officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five and twenty, who had been bred a book-keeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence with a firmness, vigilance, and ability, which would have done honour to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to shew signs of insubordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, colour, language, manners and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed any thing that is related of the tenth legion of Cæsar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive—not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers, half robbers, under the command of a chief named Morari Rao, had been hired to assist Mohamed Ali: but thinking the French power irresistible, and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Rao declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves.

Raja Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that, if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him, in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was an usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Raja Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mahomedan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than that mournful legend. After the lapse of nearly twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslems of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation, that some, it is said, have died from the mere effect of mental excitement. It was at this time that Raja Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal, and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude that had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at that post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. Where the moat was dry, the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well-directed, that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English

several guns and a large quantity of ammunition. (November 14, 1751.)

The news was received at Fort St. George with transports of joy and pride. Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command. Two hundred English soldiers, and seven hundred sepoys, were sent to him, and with this force he instantly commenced offensive operations. He took the fort of Timery, effected a junction with a division to Morari Rao's army, and hastened by forced marches, to attack Raja Sahib who was at the head of about five thousand men, of whom three hundred were French. The action was sharp; but Clive gained a complete victory. The military chest of Raja Sahib fell into the hands of the conquerors. Six hundred sepoys, who had served in the enemy's army came over to Clive's quarters, and were taken into the British service. Conjeveram surrendered without a blow. The Governor of Arnee deserted Chunda Sahib, and recognized the title of Mohammed Ali.

Had the entire direction of the war been entrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appear in all the movements of the English, except where he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they found elsewhere. The effect of this languor was, that in no long time Raja Sahib, at the head of a considerable army, in which were four hundred French troops, appeared almost under the guns of Fort St. George, and laid waste the villas and gardens of the gentlemen of the English settlement. But he was again encountered and defeated by Clive. More than a hundred of the French were killed or taken—a loss more than that of thousands of natives.

The victorious army marched from the field of battle to Fort St. David. On the road lay the City of the Victory of Dupleix, and the stately monument which was designed to commemorate the triumphs of France in the East. Clive ordered both the city and the monument to be razed to the ground. He was induced to take this step, not by personal or national malevolence, but by a just and profound policy. The town and its pompous name, the pillar and its vaunting inscriptions, were among the devices be

which Dupleix had laid the public mind of India under a spell. The spell it was Clive's business to break. The natives had been taught that France was confessedly the first power in Europe, and that the English did not presume to dispute her supremacy. No measure could be more effectual for the removing of this delusion than the public and solemn demolition of the French trophies.

The government of Madras, encouraged by these events, determined to send a strong detachment, under Clive, to re-inforce the garrison of Trichinopoly. But just at this conjuncture, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and assumed the chief command. From the waywardness and impatience of control which had characterised Clive, both at school and in the counting-house, it might have been expected that he would not, after such achievements, act with zeal and good humour in a subordinate capacity. But Lawrence had early treated him with kindness; and kindness was never thrown away upon Clive. He cheerfully placed himself under the orders of his old friend, and exerted himself as strenuously in the second post as he could have done in the first. Lawrence well knew the value of such assistance. Though he had made a methodical study of military tactics, and, like all men regularly bred to a profession, was disposed to look with disdain on interlopers, he had yet liberality enough to acknowledge that Clive was an exception to common rules.

The English triumphed everywhere. The besiegers of Trichinopoly were themselves besieged and compelled to capitulate. Chunda Sahib fell into the hands of the Marhattas, and was put to death, at the instigation probably of his competitor, Mahomed Ali. The spirit of Dupleix, however, was unconquerable, and his resources inexhaustible. From his employers in Europe he no longer received help or countenance. They condemned his policy. They allowed him no pecuniary assistance. They sent him for troops only the sweepings of the galleys. Yet still he persisted, intrigued, bribed, promised;—lavished his private fortune, strained his credit, procured new diplomas from Delhi, raised up new enemies to the government of Madras on every side, and even among the allies of the English Company. But all was in vain. Slowly, but

steadily, the power of Britain continued to increase, and that of France to decline.

The health of Clive had never been good during his residence in India, and his constitution was now so much impaired that he determined to return to England. Before his departure he undertook a service of considerable difficulty, and performed it with his usual vigour and dexterity. The forts of Covelong and Chingleput were occupied by French garrisons. It was determined to send a force against them. But the only force available for this purpose was of such a description, that no officer but Clive would risk his reputation by commanding it. It consisted of five hundred newly levied sepoys, and two hundred recruits who had just landed from England, and who were the worst and lowest wretches that the Company's crimps could pick up in the flash-houses of London.

Clive, ill and exhausted as he was, undertook to make an army of this undisciplined rabble, and marched with them to Covelong. A shot from the fort killed one of these extraordinary soldiers ; on which all the rest faced about and ran away, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Clive rallied them. On another occasion, the noise of a gun terrified the sentinels so much, that one of them was found, some hours later, at the bottom of a well. Clive gradually accustomed them to danger, and by exposing himself constantly in the most perilous situations, shamed them into courage. He at length succeeded in forming a respectable force out of his unpromising materials. Covelong fell. Clive learned that a strong detachment was marching to relieve it from Chingleput. He took measures to prevent the enemy from learning that they were too late, laid an ambuscade for them on the road, killed a hundred of them with one fire, took three hundred prisoners, pursued the fugitives to the gates of Chingleput, laid siege instantly to that fastness, reputed one of the strongest in India, made a breach, and was on the point of storming when the French commandant capitulated and retired with his men. (1752.)

Clive now returned to Madras, but in a state of health which rendered it impossible for him to remain there long. He married at this time a young lady of the name of Maskelyne, and proceeded to England shortly afterwards. His

departure was deplored by the army, and his absence was soon felt in every part of the Coromandel coast.

The reader will have observed, how important a part the disciplined native troops performed in these campaigns. The French had raised corps of sepoy some time before the English began the practice. It appears that the latter first trained sepoy in 1746, during Labourdonnais' siege of Madras. Some English officers were then attached to some irregular native infantry, which they began to drill and discipline. The system was first introduced into the Madras service by Mr. Haliburton, who, like Clive, had quitted the civil for the military service. In the ensuing year, this gentleman was employed in training another small corps of natives in the European manner. In 1748, Lieutenant Haliburton was shot by a sulky or frantic recruit, who was instantly cut to pieces by his comrades. The name of Haliburton was long cherished by the Madras sepoy. One of the first services on which these sepoy were employed was with Clive at the defence of Arcot. At first they appear to have been either Mahomedans, or Hindus of very high caste—chiefly Rajputs. They soon became remarkable for attachment to their leaders, their entire devotion to the English flag, their good orderly conduct on marches, and their steadiness in action.

In 1748, a little before the death of Haliburton, sepoy were first disciplined at Fort St. George. At that period, they were chiefly under the command of native officers. One of these subahdars—Mahomed Esuf—was a hero whose name constantly occurs in the animated pages of Orme. The Bengal Native Infantry was not properly formed until the year 1757.

CHAPTER XXII.

BRITISH CONQUEST OF BENGAL.

Destruction of Gheria—State of Bengal—Character of the People—Its Governor Suraja Dowlah—His attack on Calcutta—The Black Hole—Its Horrors—Determination of the Madras Government to avenge it.

A treaty favourable to England had been concluded in the Carnatic. Dupleix had been superseded, and had returned with the wreck of his immense fortune to Europe where calumny and chicanery soon hunted him to his grave. But many signs indicated that a war between France and Great Britain was at hand, and it was therefore thought desirable to send an able commander to the Company's settlements in India. The directors appointed Clive Governor of Fort St. David. The king gave him the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and in 1755, he again sailed for Asia.

The first service in which he was employed after his return to the East, was the reduction of the stronghold of Gheria. This fortress, built on a craggy promontory, and almost surrounded by the ocean, was the den of a pirate named Angria, whose barks had long been the terror of the Arabian Gulf. Admiral Watson, who commanded the English squadron in the Eastern seas, burned Angria's fleet, while Clive attacked the fastness by land. The place soon fell, and a booty of a hundred and fifty thousand pound sterling was divided among the conquerors.

After this exploit, Clive proceeded to his government of Fort St. David. Before he had been there two months, he received intelligence which called forth all the energy of his bold and active mind.

Of the provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such national advantages, both for agriculture and commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred chan-

nels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould, which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure of an English April. The rice fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with similar exuberance. The great stream which fertilizes the soil, is, at the same time, the chief highway of Eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot, and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the Garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Other provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries; and the ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms.

The race by whom this rich tract, was peopled, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful avocations, bore the same relation to other Asiatics, which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe. Whatever the Bengali does, he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bodily exertion; and, though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. There never perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke.

The great commercial companies of Europe had long possessed factories in Bengal. The French were settled, as they still are, at Chandernagore on the Hoogly. Lower down the stream, the English had built Fort William. A Church and ample warehouses rose in the vicinity. A row of spacious houses, belonging to the chief factors of the East India Company, lined the banks of the river; and in the neighbourhood had sprung up a large and busy native town, where some Hindu merchants of great opulence had fixed their abode. But the tract now covered by the palaces of Chowringhee, contained only a few miserable huts thatched with straw. For the ground on which the settlement stood, the English, like other great landholders, paid rent to the government; and they were, like other great landholders, permitted to exercise a certain jurisdiction within their domain.

The great province of Bengal, together with Orissa and Bahar, had long been governed by a viceroy, whom the English called Aliverdy Khan, and who, like the other viceroys of Mogul, had become virtually independent. He died in 1756, and the sovereignty descended to his grand son, a youth under twenty, who bore the name of Suraja Dowlah. Oriental despots are perhaps the worst class of human beings ; and this unhappy boy was one of the worst specimens of his class. His understanding was naturally feeble, and his temper naturally unamiable. His education had been such as would have enervated even a vigorous intellect, and perverted even a generous disposition. He was unreasonable, because nobody ever dared to reason with him ; and selfish, because he had never been made to feel himself dependent on the good-will of others. Early debauchery had unnerved his body and his mind. He indulged immoderately in the use of ardent spirits, which inflamed his weak brain almost to madness. His chosen companions were flatterers, sprung from the dregs of the people, and recommended by nothing but buffoonery and servility. It is said that he had arrived at that last stage of human depravity, when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake—when the sight of pain as pain, where no advantage is to be gained, no offence punished, no danger averted, is an agreeable excitement. It had early been his amusement to torture beasts and birds ; and, when he grew up, he enjoyed with still keener relish the misery of his fellow creatures.

From a child Suraja Dowlah had hated the English. It was his whim to do so ; and his whims were never opposed. He had also formed a very exaggerated notion of the wealth which might be obtained by plundering them ; and his feeble and uncultivated mind was incapable of perceiving that the riches of Calcutta, had they been even greater than he imagined, would not compensate him for what he must lose, if the European trade, of which Bengal was a chief seat, should be driven by his violence to some other quarter. Pretexts for a quarrel were readily found. The English, in expectation of a war with France, had begun to fortify their settlement without a special permission from the Nabob. A rich native, whom he longed to plunder, had taken refuge at Calcutta, and had not been delivered up. On such grounds as these, Suraja Dowlah marched with a great army against Fort William.

The servants of the Company at Madras had been forced by Dupleix to become statesmen and soldiers. Those in Bengal were still mere traders, and were terrified and bewildered by the approaching danger. The governor, who had heard much of Suraja Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat, and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance ; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Nabob seated himself with regal pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell, the first in rank among the prisoners, to be brought before him. He abused the insolence of the English, and grumbled at the smallness of the treasure which he had found ; but promised to spare their lives, and retired to rest.

Then was committed that great crime, memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The English captives were left at the mercy of the guards ; and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor, that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice—the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls, and the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was one hundred and forty-six. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated ; they entreated ; but in vain. The guards threatened to cut down all who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

Nothing in history or fiction approaches the horror which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy. They strove to burst the door. Holwell, who even in that extremity, retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the gaolers. But the answer was, that nothing could be done without the

Nabob's orders, that the Nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if any body awoke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows, fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the murderers mocked their agonies—raved, prayed, blasphemed—implored the guards to fire among them. The gaolers in the mean time held lights to the bars, and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of their victims. At length the tumult died away in low gasps and moanings. The day broke. The Nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened. But it was some time before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses, on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When at length a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, staggered one by one out of the charnel-house. A pit was instantly dug. The dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in number, were flung into it promiscuously and covered up.

But these things, which, after the lapse of more than eighty years cannot be told or read without horror, awakened neither remorse nor pity in the bosom of the savage Nabob. He inflicted no punishment on the murderers. He showed no tenderness to the survivors. Some of them, indeed, from whom nothing was to be got, were suffered to depart ; but those from whom it was thought that any thing could be extorted, were treated with execrable cruelty. Holwell unable to walk, was carried before the tyrant, who reproached him, threatened him, and sent him up the country in irons, together with some other gentlemen who were suspected of knowing more than they chose to tell about the treasures of the Company. These persons, still bowed down by the sufferings of that great agony, were lodged in miserable sheds, and fed only with grain and water ; till at length the intercessions of the female relations of the Nabob procured their release.

Suraja Dowlah, in the mean time, sent letters to his nominal sovereign at Delhi, describing the late conquest in the most pompous language. He placed a garrison in Fort William, forbade any Englishman to dwell in the neighbourhood, and directed that, in memory of his great

actions, Calcutta should thenceforward be called Alinagore, that is to say, the port of God.

In August the news of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras, and excited the firecest and bitterest resentment. The cry of the whole settlement was for vengeance. Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of the intelligence, it was determined that an expedition should be sent to the Hoogly, and that Clive should be at the head of the land forces. The naval armament was under the command of Admiral Watson. Nine hundred English infantry—fine troops and full of spirit—and fifteen hundred sepoy, composed the army which sailed to punish a Prince who had more subjects and larger revenues than the king of Prussia, or the Empress Maria Theresa. In October the expedition sailed ; but it had to make its way against adverse winds, and did not reach Bengal till December.

The Nabob was revelling in fancied security at Moorshedabad. He was so profoundly ignorant of the state of foreign countries, that he often used to say that there were not ten thousand men in all Europe ; and it had never occurred to him as possible, that the English would dare to invade his dominions. But, though undisturbed by any fear of their military power, he began to miss them greatly. His revenues fell off ; and his ministers succeeded in making him understand that a ruler may sometimes find it more profitable to protect traders in the open enjoyment of their gains, than to put them to the torture for the purpose of discovering hidden chests of gold and jewels. He was already disposed to permit the Company to resume its mercantile operations in his country, when he received the news that an English armament was in the Hoogly. He instantly ordered all his troops to assemble at Moorshedabad, and marched towards Calcutta.

Clive had commenced operations with his usual vigour. He took Budgebudge, routed the garrison of Fort William, recovered Calcutta, stormed and sacked Hoogly. The Nabob, already disposed to make some concessions to the English, was confirmed in his pacific disposition by these proofs of their power and spirit. He accordingly made overtures to the chiefs of the invading armament, and offered to restore the factory, and to give compensation to those whom he had despoiled.

Clive's profession was war ; and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Suraja Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee composed chiefly of servants of the Company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs ; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts, and compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The promises of the Nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful ; and Clive consented to treat—though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished.

With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect, with eminent ability and valour, the plans of others. Henceforth he is to be chiefly regarded as a statesman ; and his military movements are to be considered as subordinate to his political designs. That in his new capacity he displayed great talents, and obtained great success, is undeniable. But it is also undeniable that the transactions in which he now began to take part, have left a stain on his moral character.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONQUEST OF BENGAL—Continued.

Negotiations—Omichund—Chandernagore taken—Indecision of the Nabob—Confederacy against him—Omichund's schemes—How defeated—BATTLE OF PLASSEY—Clive's victory—Mr. Jaffier made Nabob—Division of the spoil.

THE negotiations between the English and the Nabob were carried on chiefly by two agents—Mr. Watts, a servant of the Company, and a Bengalee of the name of Omichund. This Omichund had been one of the wealthiest native merchants resident at Calcutta, and had sustained great losses in consequence of the Nabob's expedition against that place. In the course of his commercial transactions, he had seen much of the English, and was peculiarly qualified to serve as a medium of communication between them and a native court. He possessed great influence with his own race, and had in large measure the Hindu talents—quick observation, tact, dexterity, perseverance;—and the Hindu vices—servility, greediness, and treachery.

The Nabob behaved with all the faithlessness of a native Indian statesman, and all the levity of a boy whose mind had been enfeebled by power and self indulgence. He promised, retracted, hesitated, evaded. At one time he advanced with his army in a threatening manner towards Calcutta; but when he saw the resolute front which the English presented, he fell back in alarm, and consented to make peace with them on their own terms. The treaty was no sooner concluded, than he formed new designs against them. He intrigued with the French authorities at Chandernagore. All this was well known to Clive and Watson. They determined accordingly to strike a decisive blow, and to attack Chandernagore, before the force there could be strengthened by new arrivals, either from the south of India or from Europe. Watson directed the expedition by water, Clive by land. The success of the combined movements was rapid and complete. The fort, the garrison, the

artillery, the military stores, all fell into the hands of the English. Nearly five hundred European troops were among the prisoners.

The Nabob had feared and hated the English, even while he was still able to oppose to them their French rivals. The French were now vanquished ; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear, and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day he ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. In the mean time, his wretched maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects—soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mahomedans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindus. A formidable confederacy was formed against him ; in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance, Mir Jaffier, the principal commander of the troops, and Jugget Seit, the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad, and the committee at Calcutta.

In the committee there was much hesitation ; but Clive's voice was given in favour of the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Suraja Dowlah, and to place Mir Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. In return, Mir Jaffier promised ample compensation to the Company and its servants, and a liberal donative to the army, the navy, and the committee. The odious vices of Suraja Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appeared fully to justify the resolution of deposing him. But nothing can justify the dissimulation which was practised.

It was impossible that a plot which had so many ramifications should long remain entirely concealed. Enough reached the ears of the Nabob to arouse his suspicions. But he was soon quieted by the fictions and artifices which

the inventive genius of Omichund produced with miraculous readiness. All was going well ; the plot was nearly ripe ; when Clive learned that Omichund was likely to play false. The artful Bengalee had been promised a liberal compensation for all that he had lost at Calcutta. But this would not satisfy him. His services had been great. He held the thread of the whole intrigue. By one word breathed in the ear of Suraja Dowlah, he could undo all that he had done. The lives of Watts, of Mir Jaffier, of all the conspirators, were at his mercy ; and he determined to take advantage of his situation, and to make his own terms. He demanded three hundred thousand pounds sterling, as the price of his secrecy and of his assistance. The committee, incensed by the treachery, and appalled by the danger, knew not what course to take. But Clive was more than Omichund's match in Omichund's own arts. The man, he said, was a villain. Any artifice which would defeat such knavery was justifiable. The best course would be to promise what was asked. Omichund would soon be at their mercy, and then they might punish him by withholding from him, not only the bribe which he now demanded, but also the compensation which all the other sufferers of Calcutta were to receive.

His advice was taken ; but how was the wary and sagacious Hindu to be deceived ? He had demanded that an article touching his claims should be inserted in the treaty between Mir Jaffier and the English, and he would not be satisfied unless he saw it with his own eyes. Clive had an expedient ready. Two treaties were drawn up, one on white paper, the other on red—the former real, the latter fictitious. In the former, Omichund's name was not mentioned : the latter, which was to be shown to him, contained a stipulation in his favour.

But another difficulty arose. Admiral Watson had scruples about signing the red treaty. Omichund's vigilance and acuteness were such, that the absence of so important a name would probably awaken his suspicions. But Clive was not a man to do anything by halves. Admiral Watson's name was forged.

All was now ready for action. Mr. Watts fled secretly from Moorsshedabad. Clive put his troops in motion, and wrote to the Nabob in a tone very different from that of

his previous letters. He set forth all the wrongs which the British had suffered, offered to submit the points in dispute to the arbitration of Mir Jaffier ; and concluded by announcing that, as the rains were about to set in, he and his men would do themselves the honour of waiting on his highness for an answer.

Suraja Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. It had been agreed that Mir Jaffier should separate himself from the Nabob, and carry over his division to Clive. But, as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbuzar ; the Nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey ; and still Mir Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements, and returned evasive answers to the earnest remonstrances of the English General.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate ; and whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting ; and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed nearly an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put every thing to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed, and at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep : he heard, through

the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk, when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize he was in a few hours to contend.

The day broke—the day which was to decide the fate of India. (June 23, 1757.) At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces. The force which Clive had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English, and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the rank of the little army were the men of the Thirty-Ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colours, amidst many honourable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto, *Primus in Indis*.

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Suraja Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered the army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventur-

ed to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Suraja Dowlah were dispersed, never to re-assemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable waggons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed, and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of nearly sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Mir Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But, as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next day he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honours due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Suraja Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet dromedary could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his councillors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Mir Jaffier had arrived; and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred

sepoys. For his residence had been assigned a palace, which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Mir Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new Nabob to the seat of honour, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian language.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favor of Clive, who had, up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the Company, and said in English, 'It is now time to undeceive 'Omichund.' 'Omichund,' said Mr. Scrafton in Hindustani, 'the red treaty is a take-in. You are to have nothing.' Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived; but his mind was injured. It has been said that he sunk into idiocy; but Professor Wilson doubts it, from the fact that, some time after, Clive recommended him to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, as "a person capable of rendering great services, and, therefore, not wholly to be discarded."

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONQUEST OF BENGAL—Continued.

Honesty the best Policy—British influence in India owing to this maxim having been acted on—Death of Suraja Dowlah—Clive appointed Governor—His vigorous administration—Shah Alum's army—Melts away at the approach of Clive—Mir Jaffier's gratitude—War with the Dutch—Clive victorious—Returns to England—Count Lally.

In the transaction narrated in the last chapter Clive was altogether in the wrong. He committed not only a crime, but a blunder. That honesty is the best policy, is a maxim generally correct, even with respect to the temporal interest of individuals ; but, with respect to societies, the rule is subject to still fewer exceptions, and that for this reason, that the life of societies is longer than the life of individuals. It is possible to mention men who have owed great worldly prosperity to breaches of private faith. But it is not possible to mention a state which has, on the whole, been a gainer by a breach of public faith.

The entire history of British India is an illustration of this great truth, that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy—that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth. During a long course of years, the English rulers of India, surrounded by allies and enemies whom no engagement could bind, have generally acted with sincerity and uprightness ; and the event has proved that sincerity and uprightness are wisdom. English valour and English intelligence have done less to extend and to preserve their Oriental empire than English veracity. All that they could have gained by imitating the doublings, the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries which have been employed against them, is as nothing, when compared with what they have gained by being the one power in India on whose word reliance can be placed. No oath which superstition can devise, no

hostage however precious, inspires a hundredth part of the confidence which is produced by the 'yea, yea,' and 'nay, nay,' of a British envoy. No fastness, however strong by art or nature, gives to its inmates a security like that enjoyed by the chief who, passing through the territories of powerful and deadly enemies, is armed with the British guarantee.

The mightiest princes of the East can scarcely, by the offer of enormous usury, draw forth any portion of the wealth which is concealed under the hearths of their subjects. The British Government offers only four per cent, and avarice hastens to bring forth tens of millions of rupees from its most secret repositories. A hostile monarch may promise mountains of gold to the sepoys, on condition that they will desert the standard of the Company. The Company promises only a moderate pension after a long service. But every sepoy knows that the promise of the Company will be kept; he knows that if he live a hundred years, his rice and salt are as secure as the salary of the Governor General; and he knows that there is not another state in India which would not, in spite of the most solemn vows, leave him to die of hunger in a ditch as soon as he had ceased to be useful. The greatest advantage which a government can possess, is to be the one trustworthy government in the midst of governments which nobody can trust. This advantage the English enjoy in Asia, and this forms the great security for the permanence of their empire.

Omichund was not the only victim of the revolution, Suraja Dowlah was taken a few days after his flight, and was brought before Mir Jaffier. There he flung himself on the ground in convulsions of fear, and with tears and loud cries implored the mercy which he had never shown. Mir Jaffier hesitated; but his son Miran, a youth of seventeen, who in feebleness of brain and savageness of nature greatly resembled their wretched captive, was implacable. Suraja Dowlah was led into a secret chamber, to which in a short time the ministers of death were sent. In this act the English bore no part; and Mir Jaffier understood so much of their feelings, that he thought it necessary to apologize to them for having avenged them on their most malignant enemy.

The shower of wealth now fell copiously on the Company and its servants. A sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Fort William. The fleet which conveyed this treasure consisted of more than a hundred boats, and performed its triumphal voyage with flags flying and music playing. Calcutta, which but a few months ago had been desolate, was now more prosperous than ever. Trade revived ; and the signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds.

Mir Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which had placed him on it. He was not, indeed, a mere boy ; nor had he been so unfortunate as to be born in the purple. He was not therefore quite so imbecile or quite as depraved as his predecessor had been. But he had none of the talents or virtues which his post required ; and his son and heir, Miran, was another Suraja Dowlah. The recent revolution had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new Nabob. The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government.

While things were in this state, a ship arrived with dispatches, which had been written at the India-House before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner ; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the responsibility of disobeying these preposterous orders and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented ; and it soon appeared that the servants of the Company had only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The Directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their possessions in

Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the south of India. The English regarded him as the only man who could force Mir Jaffier to keep his engagements with them. Mir Jaffier regarded him as the only man who could protect the dynasty against turbulent subjects and encroaching neighbours.

It is but justice to say, that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition against the tract lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this tract the French still had the ascendancy; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was entrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.

While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the western frontier. The Great Mogul was a prisoner at Delhi, in the hands of a subject. His eldest son, named Shah Alum, destined to be the sport, during many years, of adverse fortune, and to be a tool in the hands, first of the Mahrattas, and then of the English, had fled from the palace of his father. His birth was still revered in India. Some powerful princes, the Nabob of Oude in particular, were inclined to favour him. He found it easy to draw to his standard great numbers of the military adventurers with whom every part of the country swarmed. An army of forty thousand men, of various races and religions, Mahrattas, Rohillas, Jats, and Afghans, was speedily assembled round him; and he formed the design of overthrowing the upstart whom the English had elevated to a throne, and of establishing his own authority throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

Jaffier's terror was extreme; and the only expedient which occurred to him was to purchase, by the payment of a large sum of money, an accommodation with Shah Alum. This expedient had been repeatedly employed by those who, before him, had ruled the rich and unwarlike provinces near the mouth of the Ganges. But Clive treated the suggestion with a scorn worthy of his strong

sense and dauntless courage, 'If you do this,' he wrote, 'you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury. I beg your excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you.' He wrote in a similar strain to the governor of Patna, a brave native soldier, whom he highly esteemed. 'Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part.'

He kept his word. Shah Alum had invested Patna, and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the Colonel was advancing, by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only four hundred and fifty Europeans and two thousand five hundred sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the East. As soon as his advanced guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. A few French adventurers who were about the person of the prince, advised to try the chance of battle; but in vain. In a few days this great army, which had been regarded with so much uneasiness by the Court of Moorshedabad, melted away before the mere terror of the British name.

The conqueror returned in triumph to Fort William. The joy of Mir Jaffier was as unbounded as his fears had been, and led him to bestow on his preserver a princely token of gratitude. The quit-rent which the East India Company was bound to pay to the Nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta, amounted to near thirty thousand pounds sterling a year. The whole of this splendid estate, sufficient to support with dignity the highest rank of the British peerage, was now conferred on Clive for life.

This present Clive was justified in accepting. It was a present which, from its very nature could be no secret. In fact, the Company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Mir Jaffier's grant.

But the gratitude of Mir Jaffier did not last long. He had for some time felt that the powerful ally who had set him up, might pull him down, and had been looking round for support against the formidable strength by which he had

himself been hitherto supported. He knew that it would be impossible to find among the natives of India any force which would look the Colonel's little army in the face. The French power in Bengal was extinct. But the fame of the Dutch had anciently been great in the Eastern seas ; and it was not yet distinctly known in Asia how much the power of Holland had declined in Europe. Secret communications passed between the court of Moorshedabad, and the Dutch factory at Chinsura ; and urgent letters were sent from Chinsura, exhorting the government of Batavia to fit out an expedition which might balance the power of the English in Bengal.

The authorities of Batavia, eager to extend the influence of their country—still more eager to obtain for themselves a share of the wealth which had recently raised so many English adventurers to opulence—equipped a powerful armament. Seven large ships from Java arrived unexpectedly in the Hoogly. The military force on board amounted to fifteen hundred men, of whom about one half were Europeans. The enterprise was well timed. Clive had sent such large detachments to oppose the French in the Carnatic, that his army was now inferior in number to that of the Dutch. He knew that Mir Jaffier secretly favored the invaders. He knew that he took on himself a serious responsibility, if he attacked the forces of a friendly power ; that the English ministers could not wish to see a war with Holland added to that in which they were already engaged with France ; that they might disavow his acts ; that they might punish him. He had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe, through the Dutch East India Company ; and he had therefore a strong interest in avoiding any quarrel. But he was satisfied, that if he suffered the Batavian armament to pass up the river and to join the garrison at Chinsura, Mir Jaffier would throw himself into the arms of these new allies, and that the English ascendancy in Bengal would be exposed to most serious danger.

Clive took his resolution with characteristic boldness, and was most ably seconded by his officers, particularly by Colonel Forde, to whom the most important part of the operations was entrusted. The Dutch attempted to force a passage. The English encountered them both by land and water. On both elements the money had a great superiority of force. On both they were signally defeated. Their ships

were taken. Their troops were put to a total rout. Almost all the European soldiers, who constituted the main strength of the invading army, were killed or taken. The conquerors sat down before Chinsura ; and the chiefs of that settlement, now thoroughly humbled, consented to the terms which Clive dictated. They engaged to build no fortifications, and to raise no troops beyond a small force necessary for the police of their factories ; and it was distinctly provided that any violation of these covenants should be punished with instant expulsion from Bengal.

Three months after this great victory, Clive sailed for England (1760.) At home, honours and rewards awaited him—not indeed equal to his claims or to his ambition ; but still such as, when his age, his rank in the army, and his original place in society are considered, must be pronounced rare and splendid. He was raised to the Irish peerage, and encouraged to expect an English title. George the Third, who had just ascended the throne, received him with great distinction. The ministers paid marked attention ; and Pitt, whose influence in the House of Commons and in the country was unbounded, was eager to mark his regard for one whose exploits had contributed so much to the lustre of that memorable period.

While these events had been transpiring in Bengal, the English had not been inactive on the Coromandel Coast. Clive had left brave and experienced men, trained by himself, and the foremost among these was Colonel Coote. The French had appointed Count Lally, an officer of Irish extraction, Governor-general of their settlements in India ; and in 1758, he had arrived with a strong force under his command. Lally was impetuous and self-willed ; he knew nothing of India or the complex structure of its society, and at the very outset of his career excited the prejudices of the people against him by the outrages he committed on their habits and feelings.

While Lally and Bussy were engaged in violent quarrels Coote on the 21st of November, 1759, proceeded with some British reinforcements to Conjeveram, where the rest of the army of the Carnatic was stationed. He then suddenly fell upon the fort of Wandewash, carried it by storm on the 29th, marched to Corongoly, and took that place also from the French by the 10th of December. Having

obtained the services of some Mahratta horse, Lally surprised and took Conjeveram, but he was disappointed in his expectation of finding their magazines and provisions for his half famished people. He next attempted to recover the fortress of Wandewash, where the breaches they had made were still open, and where the English had hardly any artillery. But Coote reached the spot, and compelled the French to retire. Lally's pride, however, forbade his retreating far, and he drew up in order of battle at a short distance from the walls of Wandewash.

He had with him 2,250 Europeans and 1,300 sepoy; but his Mahratta allies kept aloof. Coote had only 1,900 Europeans, but he had 2,100 sepoy, 1,250 black cavalry, and twenty-six field pieces. The black cavalry, however, did no more for him than Lally's Maharattas did for the French, as they kept out of the reach of shot. Lally, however, had about 300 European cavalry, while Coote had none. But at the very commencement of the battle, the French horse, which Lally conducted in person, were thrown into disorder by a few cannon balls. Lally hastened to the infantry, and led them on with great gallantry; for, however deficient in cool judgment, he had courage in abundance. His regiment of Lorraine, which charged in column, broke through the battalion opposed to it; but that battalion wrapped round the flanks of the bold Lorrainers, and almost destroyed their mass by a few discharges. In a short time, the French were more thoroughly defeated than ever they had been up to this period. Bussy, who gallantly put himself at the head of a battalion to try a bayonet charge, was abandoned by his men, and taken prisoner. Lally escaped, protected by some of his French cavalry.

He had lost much in this battle, and retreated to the strong hill fortress of Gingee. Instead of following him, Coote resolved to attempt the recovery of Arcot, which he succeeded in taking on the 9th of January, 1760. Lally then retreated to Pondicherry. The French flag was soon struck from nearly every place where it had yet floated. Timery surrendered, Devi Cottah was evacuated, Trinomalee, surrendered, Permacoil and Alamparva were taken by storm. Carical, the place next in importance to Pondicherry, surrendered on the 6th of April. The fall of Vellore, Chillambarem and Cuddalore, followed in rapid

succession : and on the 4th of January, 1761, Lally was compelled to make an unconditional surrender of Pondicherry to Colonel Coote.

Admiral Pococke, who since the death of Watson had commanded the English fleet in India, had cruised between Bombay and Pondicherry, and thus prevented any assistance reaching Lally. A few days after Colonel Coote entered the city, Lally returned to France, where he was charged with having been the cause of the loss of India and unjustly executed.

CHAPTER XXV.

EVENTS DURING CLIVE'S ABSENCE.

The Council in Calcutta—Shah Alum's threatened invasion—Col. Calliaud's victory—Defence of Patna—Mir Jaffier deposed—Succeeded by Mir Cossim—His disputes with the Company—Open Rupture—Patna taken and retaken—Massacre of English Prisoners—Major Adams' victory—Mir Cossim's flight—Mutiny in the English Camp—Its suppression by Carnac and Monro.

During Clive's five years' absence from India, the gentlemen of the council, and the governor, Mr. Vansittart, had proceeded without any fixed plan, without any consistency and without courage. They had mixed some native revolutions without any political aim, and they had interfered, with others without generosity, and without justice. They had thus almost destroyed the moral influence of England.

At the period when Clive took his departure from the country, in February, 1760, it was rumoured that the Shah Alum had collected another army, and was again advancing upon Patna and Moorshedabad. With the assistance of the nabob of Oude, he collected a numerous army, advanced to Patna, and defeated the governor, Ramnarrain, who had been left by the Calcutta government with only seventy Europeans and one weak battalion of English sepoys. But Colonel Calliaud coming up with 300 English, 1,000 sepoys, and a native force, commanded by Miran the son of Mir Jaffier, completely routed Shah Alum, and compelled him once more to retire from before Patna.

As however, Miran would not pursue with his cavalry, and as a strong body of Mahratta horse joined the other side, the young Mogul, instead of retiring towards Benares, took the route of Moorshedabad, being also joined, at this time, by the erratic M. Law, and his small body of French. But, being followed up by the British sepoys, Shah Alum, set fire to his camp and fled towards Oude. Yet, encouraged by the junction of the naib of Purneah, who, after many intrigues threw off the mask, and repaired to the