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First Edition 1902.
Reprinted March and July 1903.

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GLASGOW: PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
BY ROBERT MACLEHOSE AND CO.



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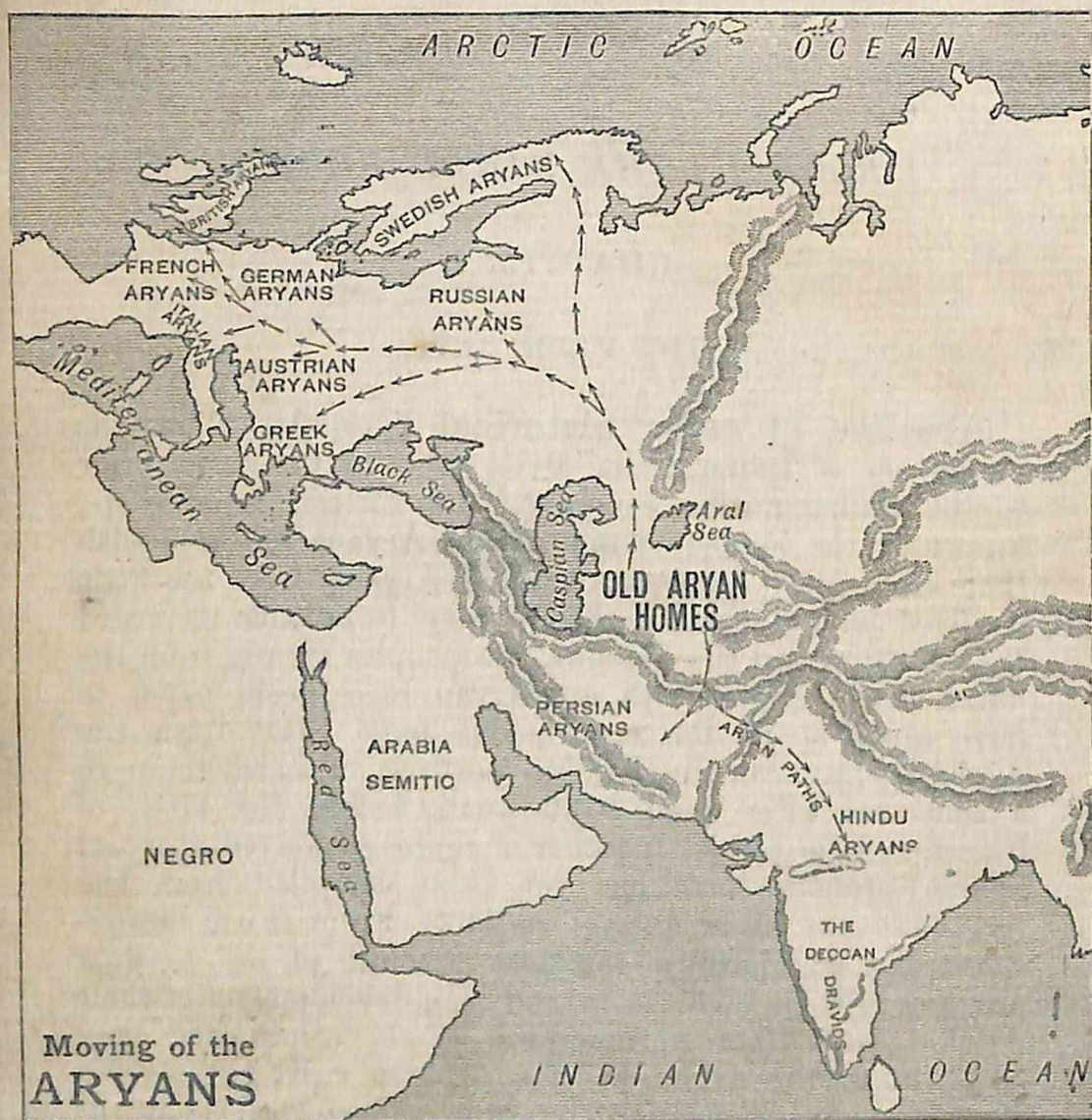
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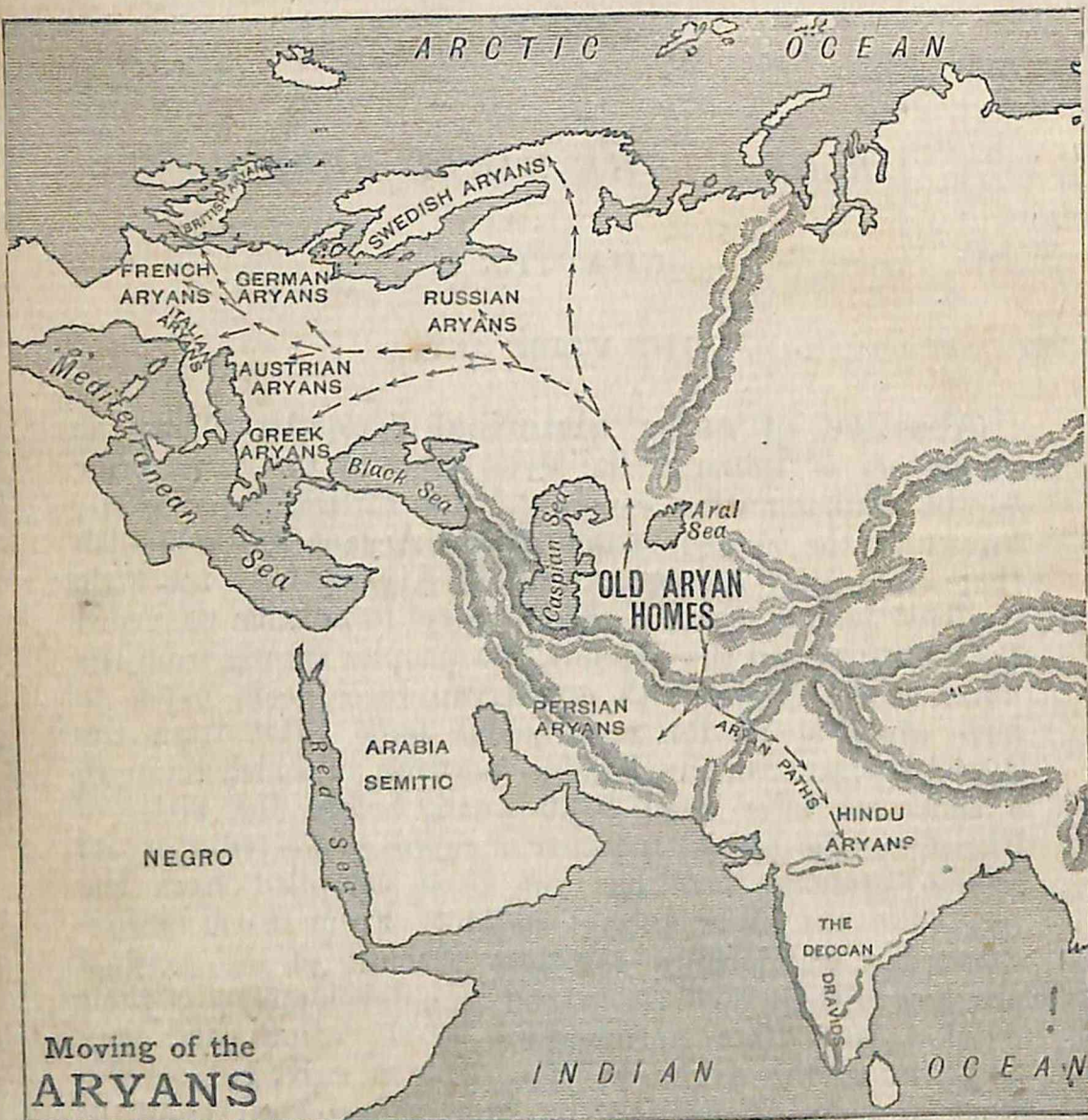
that the Aryan ancestors of the Hindus came as a conquering race from the north down into India; and by comparing the language of the hymns with other languages,



both ancient and modern, it has been proved beyond a doubt, that the men who composed those hymns belonged to a branch of a great race which conquered, and then combined with, the primitive peoples of Europe and Western Asia, forming in the course of time many distinct nationalities. The Aryan race may broadly speaking be

HISTORY OF INDIA FOR HIGH SCHOOLS.

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speaking, from 2000 B.C. to 1400 B.C. After the close of this period, known as the Vedic Period, the hymns were collected together, arranged, and compiled; but as writing was as yet unknown, the whole had to be committed to memory. Previous to that time they had been handed down in the families of their composers orally from father to son. It is difficult, indeed impossible, to attempt now to arrange the hymns in their chronological order; but still we are able to get from them a good deal of historical information regarding the changing manners and customs of the Aryans, and their struggles with the aboriginal inhabitants of Northern India for the possession of the land.

The Rig Veda is divided by its compilers into ten *Mandalas* or books, and, with the exception of the first and the last two, these are each ascribed to different *Rishis*, or sacred composers. The last book must have been composed considerably later than the others, for it differs from them in certain important particulars: the ideas are less primitive, it reflects a more advanced stage of society, and deals with a more complicated ritual. It is necessary to bear this in mind, otherwise it may give us wrong impressions of Vedic society, and of the thoughts and feelings of the early Aryan conquerors of Upper India.

Struggle with non-Aryans.—We can gather a tolerably clear idea of what was the state of India at the time of the Aryan invasion from the allusions in the hymns of the Rig Veda to the native races with whom the Aryans came in contact. They found the country peopled by dark-skinned savages, who worshipped demons or evil spirits, and lived principally by the chase. To the Aryans they seemed no better than wild beasts. Their colour, their gloomy and frightful superstitions, and their unclean habits, excited the utmost repugnance in the fair-skinned invaders. They looked upon them as unredeemable savages whom it was a virtue to exterminate.

At first when the invaders were few, their advance must have been slow, and the resistance they met with stubborn. Even when they had firmly established themselves across the Indus, and had cleared tracts of country and settled down to the peaceful pursuits of husbandry, the aborigines



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seen that some of the Aryan families had already begun to practise agriculture. The fertility of the Indian soil must have given a new stimulus to cultivation; and in the Rig Veda we find that agriculture became the main occupation of the people: though they still kept large herds of cattle and drove them out to pasture. Wheat and barley were the chief articles of their diet, but they did not disdain the use of animal food; and, strange as it may seem to a modern Hindu, there are frequent allusions in the hymns to the killing of cattle, and to the cooking of their flesh for human consumption. They even made use of an intoxicant, indulging freely in the juice of a plant called Soma. In one of the hymns the process of preparing the juice is described as a sacred rite: more than this, Soma was even deified, and one whole book of the Rig Veda is dedicated to it. Their constant wars with the aborigines and with each other naturally turned their attention to the improvement of weapons and the construction of shields and protective armour. They were thus led to acquiring considerable skill in metal work; and we hear of their putting it to other than warlike uses, for mention is made of metal ornaments, of golden crowns, necklaces, bracelets, and anklets.

Absence of caste, and freedom of women.—While the Aryans were still only settlers in the Punjab, there are two points concerning their social life of which it is specially important to take note: the one is the absence of caste distinctions, and the other is the social condition of women. There is no mention of such a system as caste in the Rig Veda, except in the tenth book, which, as has already been pointed out, was composed in a later age. Nor is there even a trace of the existence of hereditary divisions of the community corresponding in any way to it. There were indeed men and families famous for their skill in the composition of hymns, but the Rishis, as they were called, had no especial privileges. We have seen above that these early Hindus ate beef, and drank a fermented and intoxicating liquor, and that every man from the highest to the lowest was a warrior and a husbandman. There is therefore both negative and positive evidence that caste restrictions did not then exist. The very word 'varna,' which came to denote caste, meant only colour at first, and was employed



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complicated, and the ritual connected with it more exacting and intricate. This led in course of time to the compilation of three more Vedas, for special religious purposes: the Sama Veda, containing a selection of hymns, the majority of which are to be found also in the Rig Veda, intended to be chanted by priests on particular occasions; the Atharva Veda, containing magic incantations and prayers for success in the various affairs of life as well as for warding off evil; and the Yajur Veda, containing formulas to accompany sacrificial ceremonials. The two last deal with a later period of development, and it is probable that the Yajur Veda originated in the period when the Aryans were conquering and colonising the country beyond the Jumna. They are historically important as exhibiting a profound change coming over the Indo-Aryan character. The bright and cheerful view of life reflected in the Rig Veda in them has begun to give place to a less hopeful outlook and a quiet resignation to destiny.

CHAPTER II.

THE AGE OF THE BRAHMANAS.

The Brahmanas.—But it is not from these new Vedas any more than from the Rig Veda that we can derive the history of Aryan colonization beyond the Punjab. For this we must turn to another class of composition which sprang up in connection with the Vedas. In course of time the language of the hymns grew antiquated, and difficulties arose in regard to their meaning or the purposes for which they were composed. Commentaries in prose were therefore added to explain them, to show what was the origin of a hymn and the occasion of its use, besides setting forth the ritual connected with it. These prose works are called the Brahmanas, and came in time to be looked upon as no less sacred than the hymns themselves. The Brahmanas were composed during the period with which we shall now deal. Mixed up with dry descriptions of rites and ceremonies,



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and Panchâlas are mentioned as living side by side on the friendliest terms, equally prosperous and powerful. But in the later Brahmanas there are allusions to a fierce internecine war. The great Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, composed in a later age, celebrates the story of this conflict. Though quite unreliable from a historical point of view, this much at any rate in it stands out as fact: that there was a great war in the Doab between the Kurus and the Panchâlas for the possession of a particular strip of country, and that many kings and princes joined one side or the other. The picture that it paints of the manners and customs of those times makes it plain that while Aryan civilization had progressed, the race had lost nothing of the vindictiveness and passion for slaughter which had characterised its first encounters with the aborigines.

The rise to power of three new kingdoms.—As soon as the Doab had been conquered, bands of Aryans began to explore the country further east. A powerful tribe called the Kosalas, established a kingdom in Oudh. Another, called the Kashis, seized upon the country round about Benares; and a third known as the Videhas penetrated into Behar. It is curious to note how each new kingdom growing up on freshly conquered ground, surpassed in power and civilization the older kingdoms lying to the westward. Those who were in the van of Aryan colonisation, were also the most progressive in civilization.

The Ramayana.—The Ramayana, the other great Hindu epic, celebrates the exploits of a king of the Kosalas named Rama, who reigned at a place called Ajodhya. Unfortunately, like the Mahabharata, it is almost valueless as history. But though it does not relate the events of any age, it throws some light upon the manners and the social condition of this tribe of Aryans dwelling on the outskirts of civilization. Rama, the hero of the epic, may be a wholly mythical person, but in its account of the society and religious customs of the Kosalas we can discern a change coming over the more advanced portion of the Aryan race. We may note along with more polished and refined manners the ascendancy gained by the priests over the rest of the community. The Hindus of whom it tells are less vigorous than those of the Mahabharata, and have



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of the conquerors. Being simple savages they quickly learned to adapt themselves to the customs and beliefs of their masters, and in time lost their identity in contact with a people of superior intelligence and civilization.

Gradual absorption of non-Aryans.—Thus in time there grew up a class in the Aryan community engaged in servile toil and occupying a humble and subordinate position to the men of pure descent. When the supply was limited, the class was too valuable to be maltreated; but when it became numerous, as it must soon have done, it came to be looked upon as something vile and worthless, which it was necessary to suppress by every possible means; and many invidious distinctions were invented to differentiate the man of pure descent from the non-Aryan and the man of mixed parentage. Such as were not of pure Aryan blood were prevented from participating in the sacred rites, and were compelled to perform the meanest and most servile duties. They were taught that they had been created for servitude, and to do such work as was degrading to true-born Aryans. Their position was not so utterly distasteful to them as might be supposed, for by accepting it they could attach themselves to the all-conquering Aryans, and in return were afforded their powerful protection. They felt pride in being associated, though in a humble capacity, with those who were recognized as possessing intellectual and spiritual superiority. It was an honour to be taken within the pale of Hinduism, for however degraded might be a man's position therein, he was at any rate vastly superior in the social scale to the unregenerate demon-worshipper of the jungle. Thus the mass of the indigenous inhabitants came in time to be absorbed into the Aryan social system. But here and there in spots remote from the track of civilization isolated remnants of the aborigines managed to preserve unmolested their ancient habits and beliefs. To this day in India there are tribes of non-Aryans who have never wholly come under the Aryan influence. Such are the Bhils of the Vindhya hills, the Gonds of the Central Provinces, and the Santals of the Raj Mahal hills.

Origin of caste.—The first distinction therefore that arose in the Aryan community was between the pure Aryan

and the non-Aryan, in which latter class were included also the men of mixed descent. The distinction was at first mainly ethnological. The fair-skinned Aryan felt the utmost repugnance for the dark and stunted savage, and when he admitted him into the community it was only as a slave, and without granting him participation in his sacred rites. But as the settlements grew and expanded into kingdoms, gradually class distinctions arose among the Aryans themselves. Two privileged classes sprang up among them, the sacerdotal and the military, denoting at first merely professional distinctions. Society, as it grew more complex, required a division of labour: that some of its members should perform the religious rites, some should fight its battles, some should till its lands, and some should do menial service. As among the ancient Egyptians and the Israelites, so among the ancient Hindus professions tended to become hereditary, and were at last monopolised by particular classes of the community. Thus arose the Brahmans, the priesthood, formed of those who showed a special aptitude for the performance of rites and sacrifices; the Kshatriyas, a military aristocracy formed of those belonging to kingly and noble families, whose ancestors had led the Aryan hosts to battle against the aborigines; the Vaisyas, the mass of the people engaged in ordinary occupations, particularly in agriculture; and the Sudras, composed of subjected non-Aryans and those of mixed descent, who were the slaves and handicraftsmen of the community.

The Brahmans.—Mention has already been made on page 7 of the growth of a priestly aristocracy at the close of the Vedic period. In the age of expansion which followed, when rites were multiplied and sacrifices became more complicated, the priests, who alone knew how to perform them, came to be looked upon with ever-increasing reverence and respect. The sanctity of their lives, and the intellectual and spiritual superiority which they arrogated to themselves, set them apart from the rest of the community. At length when the priestly office was recognised as an hereditary one, and the priestly families came to be regarded as sacred, almost divine honours were paid to the Brahman.

The Kshatriyas.—The Kshatriyas were at first merely the military leaders of the Aryans against the aborigines, but when the tribal was superseded by the kingly form of government, the distinction between the Kshatriya and the people whom his ancestors had led to battle grew more and more marked, so that it was felt to be unbecoming for one of the Kshatriya race to marry into any other class but his own. Thus at last the priests and the warriors were separated out from the people; and to preserve the purity of their descent, they were absolutely forbidden to intermarry with any other class. The natural result of such a system was, that while the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas grew more haughty and exclusive, the people with no scope for social ambition grew less independent and less able to resist the imposition of debasing distinctions.

The Vaisyas and Sudras.—The Vaisyas, the body of the Aryan people, were during the period of the colonisation of the Gangetic plain, one undivided caste, and shared with Brahmans and Kshatriyas the rites and privileges of the Aryan race. The Sudras, on the other hand, formed of subjected aborigines and men of mixed descent, were excluded from these by the strictest rules. There was therefore still the main distinction between Aryan and non-Aryan; and the conquerors, though subdivided by caste, still felt themselves to be one nation and one race. The Brahman, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya had the Vedic religion in common, while the Sudra was rigorously kept out from all participation in its rites and sacrifices.

Intellectual activity.—The Hindus who dwelt along the banks of the Ganges and its tributaries were a changed race from the fierce warriors and cultivators who had poured down from the north into the Punjab. They had attained during their residence in India to a degree of culture and refinement remarkable in those early times. From the first they had been a thoughtful and contemplative race. Centuries of residence in the tropical plains of India, while taking away from them much of the fiery energy and vigour which had characterised the first immigrants, did not diminish their intellectual activity, but rather, by disposing them to sedentary habits promoted

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priest's education. Logic and mathematics were also subjects of study and research among them, though they had not yet attained to any remarkable degree of proficiency in them. Their chief delight, however, from the earliest times was in philosophy. Metaphysical speculation was to them an absorbing passion. The natural bent of their minds seems to have been towards it, and with such ardour did they pursue it, that they overlooked in favour of it subjects of more practical importance. From a too engrossing attention to it, they acquired an abstracted and impractical habit of mind, to which in great measure is no doubt due their contempt of history, their backwardness in the cultivation of the æsthetic faculties, and their neglect of political science.

Sanskrit a secret language.—But it must not be supposed that all the Brahman caste reached the same high intellectual level. Not a tithe of them probably at any time took part in the vigorous mental development and active inquiring spirit. The majority remained below, and lived the life of the people, sharing with them their thoughts and beliefs. Sanskrit, in which the Vedic hymns and the Brahmanas were composed, though it had developed into a language of surpassing force and beauty, was no longer a living one. To the general mass of the people it was an unknown tongue. It had long since become a secret language of the priests; and, while it served them as an almost perfect medium for the expression of their thoughts, it served also to create an air of mystery around them, and to confine the knowledge of the scriptures and of Brahman learning within the circle of their order.

Change in character of Indo-Aryan race.—Allusion has already been made to a profound change which had begun to come over the Indo-Aryan race towards the end of the Vedic period. With the shifting of the centre of Aryan civilization from the Punjab to the Gangetic plain their character became transformed. From a hopeful and vigorous people they changed into a sad and mystical one. They gradually outgrew their simple worship of the deified powers of nature, and the sacrifice and all that it symbolised became of supreme importance. The earlier Brahmanas are wholly taken up with descriptions of sacrificial ceremonies,

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speculations of the Brahmanas gave rise, reflect a national character transformed almost beyond recognition.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUTRA PERIOD.

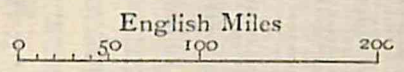
Aryavarta.—We have seen the Aryan invaders first conquering bit by bit the land between the Indus and the Saraswati, next passing on to the colonisation of Brahmarshidesa, the land of the Sacred Singers, between the Saraswati and the Ganges, then spreading over Madhyadesa, the Middle Land, as far as Oudh and Allahabad, and finally expanding over the whole of Northern India to Behar on the east and the Vindhya Hills on the south. To all this vast tract of country they gave the name of Aryavarta, the land of the Aryans, to distinguish it from Mlechcha-desa, the land of the unclean, which lay beyond. The period occupied in annexing and colonising successively the different parts of it must, roughly speaking, have been a thousand years, and lasted till about 1000 B.C.

Mlechcha-desa.—The era which now opens shows us Aryan civilization spreading to the south. Bands of Aryans had before this made expeditions beyond the Vindhya Hills, and holy men had penetrated into the jungles of Central India in search of solitudes in which to practise religious meditation. A few scattered settlements had already begun to spring up, and here and there patches of forest had been cleared for cultivation. But the country beyond Aryavarta was still to the mass of the Aryan people practically an unknown land. The conquest of Aryavarta had meant the spreading of the Aryan race over Northern India, but the colonisation of the country which lay to the south meant the gradual Hinduising of the tribes that peopled the Peninsular. It was in effect a social rather than an ethnical revolution. The aborigines were not hunted down and slaughtered wholesale, nor even dispossessed of the land, but, coming under the influence of a stronger race, they learned to adopt its civilization and religion. The

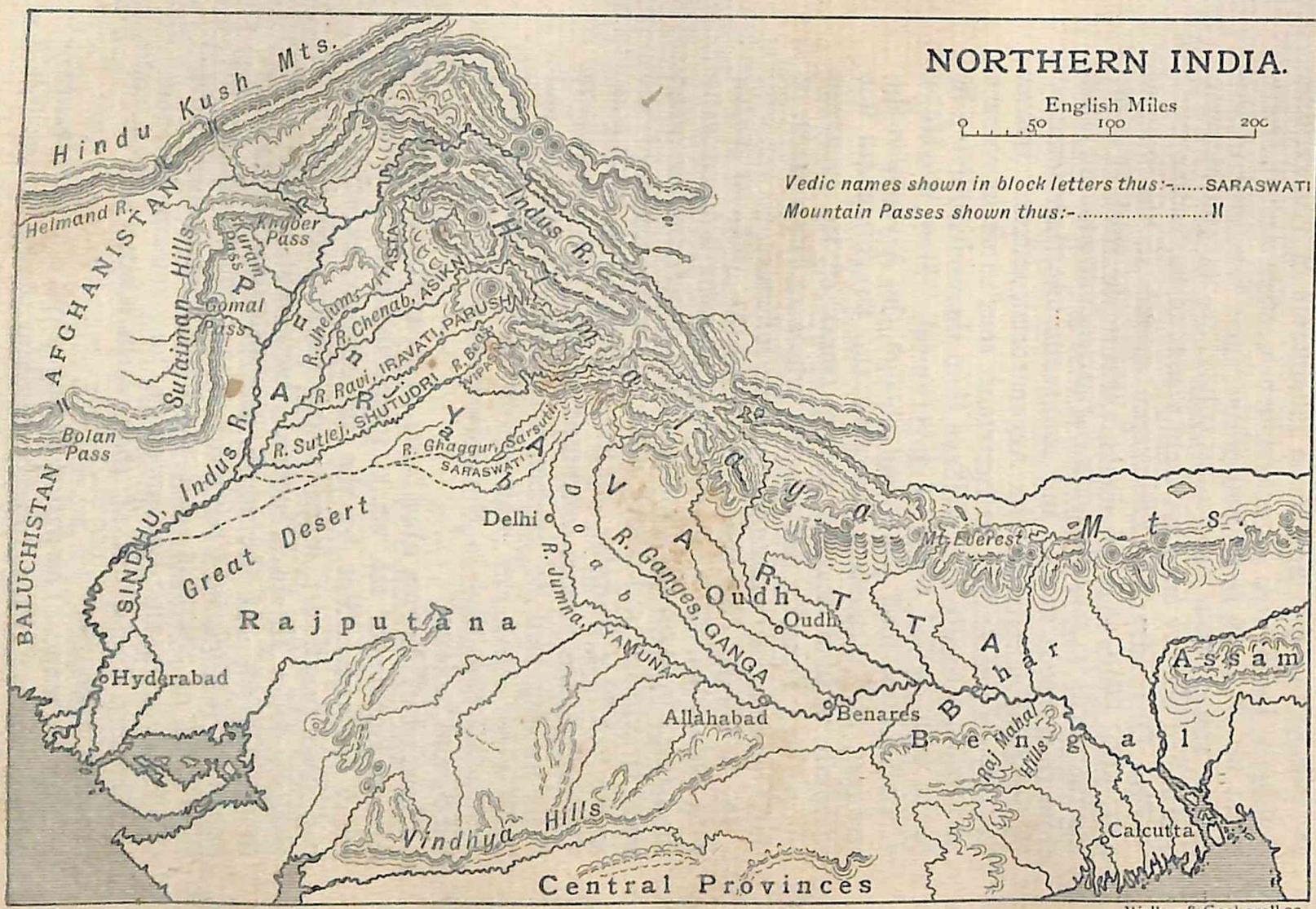


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NORTHERN INDIA.



Vedic names shown in block letters thus:-----SARASWATI
Mountain Passes shown thus:-----||



THE SUTRA PERIOD.

Dravidians, as the indigenous inhabitants of Central and Southern India are, for convenience, often called, were made up of many races, and while some were still in the savage state, others, and especially those in the extreme south, had already emerged from a state of barbarism.

The Dravidians.—The Aryan settlers in the jungles of Central India were no doubt aided in the work of clearing the fertile valleys by bodies of aborigines who migrated from their forest homes, and eventually lost their identity by becoming merged in the Aryan social system. But as the Aryans penetrated further south they came in contact with peoples hardly less civilized than themselves, living in towns with settled forms of government. Here a conflict of civilizations took place, and though the Aryan was the stronger, and ultimately prevailed, the Dravidian did not succumb without leaving strong traces of its existence behind it. Thus by degrees the whole of India south of the Vindhya Hills came under Aryan influence.

In the mixed race that arose from the union of Aryan with Dravidian, the preponderating element was naturally the latter; in some parts, perhaps, the population remained pure Dravidian, and there were no other traces of the Aryan but the adoption of his civilization and religion. The mass of the people continued to use their own tongue then, as they still do, in Southern India; and here and there a few small and scattered tribes far removed from civilization remained in the enjoyment of their primitive habits and beliefs.

Spread of Aryan civilization over the Deccan.—The Aryanising of the whole Peninsular must have taken many centuries. But by the 4th century B.C. the work had been practically finished, and Ceylon, too, had been brought under Hindu influence. Just as in Aryavarta, so in the Deccan and the south, the primitive settlements expanded in time into powerful states. The kingdoms of the Cholas on the east coast, the Cheras on the west, and the Pandyas in the extreme south long remained famous in Southern India, but of their earlier history little or nothing is known.

The Sutras.—The period during which the Brahmanas were composed lasted, roughly speaking, down to the 5th

century B.C. A reaction at length set in against the elaborate and pedantic style which had characterised it. Abridgment was felt to be necessary; for the task of committing to memory the sacred texts, with their interminable descriptions of ceremonials and sacrifices, became too great a burden even for the highly trained minds of the Brahmanas. Treatises therefore were compiled which contained in a condensed form the learning, the science, and the religious teaching of the Brahmanas. The Sutra, as the new style of composition was called, was as brief as the Brahmana had been verbose. It sought by means of aphorisms to compress as much meaning as possible into the fewest words, and thus frequently sacrificed perspicuity to brevity.

It is important to notice one great distinction which was made between the Sutras and the works which had preceded them. The Vedas and the Brahmanas were looked upon as sacred and eternal, and as having divine authority, but the Sutras were never held to be other than the work of man.

The different sacred schools of the Brahmanas throughout the length and breadth of India turned to this style of composition, so that there grew up a vast body of Sutras; some dealing with the details of Vedic sacrifices and religious ceremonials, some treating of manners and customs, and others setting forth domestic rites and duties. The most important from a historical point of view are the Dharma Sutras. These ancient treatises on law and morality have been the material out of which the codes, erroneously supposed to have been the inventions of later Hindu legislators, such, for instance, as the Code of Manu, have been compiled.

Progress of Learning.—During the Sutra period the Hindus made considerable progress in the arts and sciences, and particularly in their knowledge of philosophy, grammar, and philology. One of the most famous names connected with the age is that of Panini, the grammarian. His Sanskrit grammar in the form of aphorisms, has ever since remained the standard authority, and the type of a scientific treatise on this subject. But this period is chiefly remarkable for the systems of mental philosophy which were developed during it. This is not the place to enter into

descriptions of the different schools of philosophy which arose, but it is necessary for the sake of the period which follows, to say a few words about one of them.

The Sankhya System of Philosophy.—One of the first attempts to give a reasoned answer to the questions about the origin of things and the destiny of man was made by Kapila, who lived probably not earlier than the 7th century B.C. The Sankhya system which he founded was, like all other systems of Hindu Philosophy, derived from the teachings of the Upanishads. His object was to help mankind to escape from the life of suffering and pain, which is the lot of all living things. He taught that this end can be gained only by the soul attaining to perfect knowledge. By knowing itself it will be freed from the body, and therefore from pain and misery. Vedic rites are useless for this purpose, and he rejects them altogether. The historical importance of Kapila's system is that it is an open revolt against Vedic rites and sacrifices. In the age which followed, its essential doctrines were popularised by a great reformer who made it the basis of his teaching. In the hands of Buddha it blossomed into a religion destined to exercise the profoundest influence on the history of mankind.

Triumph of the Brahman caste.—The spread of Hinduism over the length and breadth of India brought with it a great extension of the caste system. We have seen that in the preceding age there were only four castes, and that the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas had gradually acquired a complete ascendancy over the rest. In the Sutra period the power and influence of the Kshatriya caste decayed. There are legendary accounts of fierce struggles between the two castes for supremacy. But the Kshatriyas had by this time declined from hardy warriors, into a military aristocracy, resting on the traditions of its glorious past; while the Brahmans on the other hand who claimed a complete monopoly of religion and learning, were ever growing more necessary to the community. We may believe, therefore, that if a war of extermination did at any time take place between Brahmans and Kshatriyas, the Brahmans were supported by the bulk of the community. At all events, in the Sutra period the Brahman became supreme.

Multiplication of castes.—Under Brahman supremacy the number of caste distinctions was gradually multiplied, and the rules relating thereto became more rigid and inflexible. There were two influences at work which tended to increase the number of caste subdivisions. First, the tendency noticeable in all early societies for professions to become hereditary; and secondly, the gradual incorporation into Hinduism of non-Aryan tribes with varying habits and religious customs. Those who followed a profession because their fathers had done so before them, jealously excluded outsiders from coming into competition with them, and gradually hedged themselves round with a number of rites and usages distinctive of their calling. Caste distinctions began to multiply most rapidly among the Sudras; for it was this caste which included most of those who followed professions, and all the aborigines who entered within the pale of Hinduism. It may, therefore, be readily understood how greatly during this period the system was extended. But besides growing more numerous, castes became more exclusive. Religion was employed to tighten the bands which held the members of a caste together, and under Brahman influence, restrictions were multiplied, and new restraints invented to hold the different castes, and caste subdivisions asunder.

Objects of the caste system.—There can be no doubt that at one time in the history of the Hindus, caste was useful for holding society together; that it was necessary for the preservation of social order; and that without it the non-Aryan element in Hinduism would have swamped the Aryan, and civilization retrograded instead of progressed. It was necessary in the then state of society that there should be one class of men at the top to whom it might look for guidance in religion and morality, a class that might hold aloft, uncontaminated by a baser civilization, Aryan traditions and beliefs. It was necessary also that there should be men who followed different professions, that each man should find his place and his work marked out for him from his birth, and that he should be held to his occupation by the strongest ties of religion and custom. Caste, in short, was necessary to the fullest life of those remote times, for it insured that the wants of society

should be attended to, and that its institutions should be preserved.

Evils attendant upon it.—But caste, while it served to maintain and spread Aryan religion and civilization in a land where the greater part of the inhabitants were unredeemed barbarians, from its inflexibility and the inexorable nature of its rules, was a system fatal to free and natural development. It stamped out individuality, and confined genius and talent within the narrow range of a particular calling, and thus exercised a depressing and debasing influence on all but the highest caste. The lowly Sudra, born to a particular occupation, must pursue his life's work without hope of social improvement. If the Hindus thereby acquired the virtues of patience and resignation, it was at the expense of energy and ambition, and all that makes for steady material progress.

Contact of Aryan with Dravidian.—While the Aryan race was spreading its civilization throughout the length and breadth of India, it did not wholly escape Dravidian influence. The further the Aryans migrated from their old homes, the more were they subjected to it, and the more were their civilization, their religion, and even their racial type liable to be modified thereby. There would always be the tendency for the lower strata of Aryan society to become merged in the non-Aryan part of the community, and the non-Aryan, while adopting the social customs and religious beliefs of the Aryan, would not be able to divest himself entirely of his own.

It is a common belief among primitive peoples that disease is due to evil spirits. In a land so much ravaged by the forms of disease peculiar to tropical countries as India, it is natural that the belief in local spirits of a malignant nature should be found among its rude and savage inhabitants. When the Aryans came among the aborigines, they found them a prey to cruel and gloomy superstitions, and haunted by the dread of demons supposed to be ever on the watch to injure those who neglected to propitiate them. To ward off their evil influence, strange, and often gruesome rites were considered necessary. We can understand with what horror and disgust the Aryan must have regarded a religion so different from his own bright, cheerful faith.



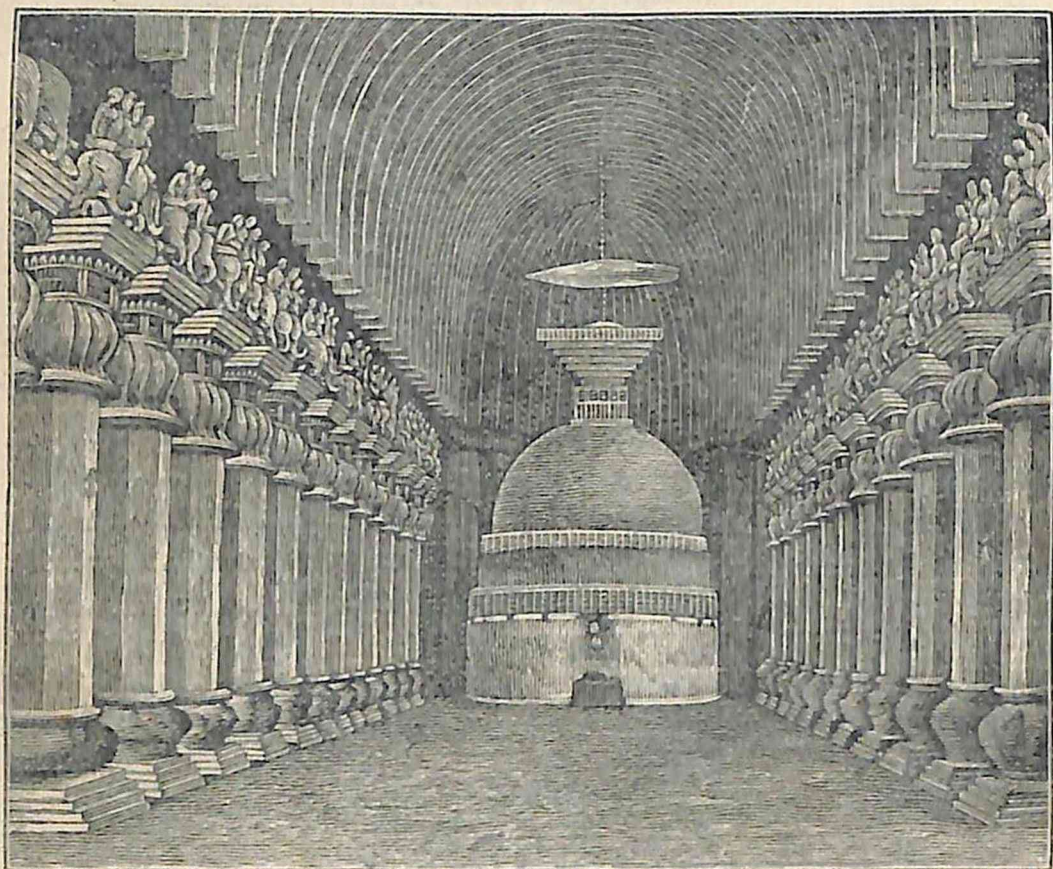
But as time wore on, those who advanced to settlements far removed from the strongholds of Aryan civilization may have come to regard Dravidian demon worship in a new light. While they could not fail to observe how much less than themselves the aborigines who propitiated the local spirits were ravaged by disease, they were not at the same time likely to perceive that it was because the indigenous man had gained a greater immunity by acclimatisation, and by adaptation in the course of centuries to the conditions of a jungle life. It must have seemed to them that the Dravidians were less ravaged by disease because they took pains to ward off the anger of the fierce malignant spirits who seemed to have the power, locally at any rate, to afflict mankind. We need not doubt that the priests of the old gods, being skilled in the art of spells and incantations, continued in spite of the spread of the Aryan faith to exercise a powerful influence, especially in times of famine and sickness. Thus into the pure Aryan faith, due to the merging of the two races in outlying tracts, crept non-Aryan superstitions and new forms of ritual, varying with the primitive superstitions of different localities.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BUDDHIST AGE.

Decline of Brahman influence.—Towards the close of the 7th century B.C. the Brahman caste, which had for so many centuries dominated the kingdoms of the middle land of Aryavarta, began to wane in power and influence. Kosala, which had been its stronghold, though still an important kingdom, was declining. Its capital, the ancient city of Ajodhya, which had been so long the scene of Brahman triumphs, and in which, indeed, their pride had reached its zenith, had been deserted by the rulers for a city further north. This change of capital, whatever may have been the cause, seems to have dealt a severe blow to Brahman prestige. Moreover, to the south-east a new

power had arisen hostile to Brahmanism, which was making its influence felt over the neighbouring kingdoms. This was Magadha in South Behar, ruled over by a Kshattriya dynasty of kings who held their court at Rajagriha on the Ganges.



INTERIOR VIEW OF KARLI.

Decay of Vedic Hinduism.—The 7th century B.C. and the first half of the 6th is a dark period in Indian history. The bright and joyous spirit of the Vedic religion had been smothered under a complicated mass of ritual, and the very meaning of its hymns had been forgotten, while the priests were busying themselves with outward forms and ceremonies. A great gulf yawned between the masses and their spiritual leaders. The Brahmans, resting on the traditions of their glorious past, were intent only upon the aggrandisement of their own order, and upon securing to it all the privileges they could; and the people, whom in



their intellectual arrogance they despised, left without guides and bound down by an iron system of caste, were sinking deeper and deeper into a state of ignorance and superstition.

Gautama Buddha.—But the dawn of a reformation was at hand even when the moral and religious state of the Hindus appeared most hopeless. About a hundred miles north of Benares, at the foot of the Himalayas, lay a city called Kapilavastu, the capital of a small principality occupied by a people called the Sakyas. In the year 557 B.C. Mahamaya, the wife of its King Suddhodana, gave birth to a son, called by his parents Siddhartha, but in after years more generally known by his family name of Gautama, who was destined to effect that reformation. From his youth upwards the prince was much given to study and contemplation. His serious mind was early impressed with the vanity of all earthly gains and hopes, and his sympathetic nature was deeply stirred on behalf of the lower orders, ground down under the cruel and oppressive system of caste. He saw that what passed for religion was a mere empty observance of forms and ceremonies, inwardly possessing nothing which could appeal to the hearts and imaginations of the people. So profoundly impressed was he with the need of a reformation that at length he determined to forsake his luxurious life and devote himself to the work of consoling and elevating mankind.

His enlightenment.—To this end he renounced kingdom, wife, and child, and went forth into the world a beggar, to seek the salvation of his fellow-men. For many years he sought in vain for the key to the mysteries of human life. Neither learning nor penances could help him; but at last, when he had almost abandoned hope, the truth flashed upon him. Salvation lay in a well-governed life, and love and pity for all living things. From henceforth he was Buddha the Enlightened, and he returned to the world to preach his gospel to all who would listen.

His doctrine.—He taught that salvation is within the reach of all, high and low caste alike; that he who leads a pure life, and helps his fellow-creatures has no need to propitiate the gods with sacrifice; and that a man's present state is the result of his own acts, either in this, or in a former life. But as life must mean, even for the happiest

of men, inevitably more of pain than of pleasure, it should be the object of a wise man to escape for ever from the weary round of existence, to gain the eternal rest of Nirvana, the extinction of the self. This end can be attained, not through Vedic sacrifices and Brahman mediation, but by the practise of virtuous living, by kindness to all living things, and by the suppression of the passions and desires. It is not difficult to trace in this the influence of Kapila's system of philosophy.

The secret of his success.—Throughout his life and teaching Buddha displayed no direct antagonism to the Brahmans; though he would not recognise that there was any inherent difference between them and other men. It is doubtful indeed if he deliberately set out to found a new religion. It seems more probable that he meant at first to be no more than a social reformer. He was deeply learned in the philosophy of the day, and much of what he taught was borrowed from that philosophy. The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul—the basis of his teaching—he had learnt from his early Hindu teachers. What, then, was the secret of his success? It was that he brought religion to the people, by boldly announcing that all men might obtain salvation by charity and holy living. He was therefore listened to, as no teacher before had been listened to by them. Prince and peasant, Brahman and Sudra, Aryan and non-Aryan alike, flocked to hear his message. The fame of his teaching spread like fire, and those who came only out of curiosity, attracted by the story of his early life and its great renunciation, were influenced like the rest by his gentleness and his simplicity, and above all by his deep earnestness. Bimbisara, King of Magadha, who had been his early friend, and Presanajit, King of Kosala, espoused his cause. His father, too, became one of his earliest converts.

His missionary labours and death.—Buddha's first appearance as a preacher was in the Deer Park near Benares, even then a city famous for its learning and devotion to religion. Within a few months he had gathered round him a host of enthusiastic disciples, women as well as men, and many of these he sent out to preach his message far and wide. He himself wandered throughout Oudh and

Behar for the remainder of his life, preaching and converting the people to his faith. At the age of 80, while engaged in one of these missionary journeys, he was taken ill near a place called Kusinagara, about 80 miles east of his native city, and there, teaching and exhorting to the last, he passed peacefully away.

Reformatory character of his creed.—It may seem strange that a religion which ignores the influence of a deity upon the destiny of man, and bids him seek in total extinction the only possible escape from the miseries of living, should have had so rapid and so wide an acceptance. But if we reflect that the religion the Hindus were then accustomed to not only held out to them no hope, no alleviation of the miseries of life, but on the other hand lent its weighty sanction to the grinding tyranny of caste, we shall not wonder at the popularity this new creed achieved. A religion such as Buddhism, that had within it so much of practical philanthropy, and dealt so vigorously with the abuses of the time, could not under such circumstances fail to commend itself to the majority whom it sought to set free from their cruel bondage.

Foundation of a monastic order.—In order to extend his teaching and to assist his more zealous disciples in making rapid progress towards the goal, Buddha established an order of ascetics. He himself had forsaken wealth, and power, and family, that he might not be drawn by them away from the path of right living, or for their sake desire to cling to life. He therefore urged such a mode of life upon his earnest disciples, though he never insisted upon their adopting it. Self-suppression, abstinence, and poverty were enjoined upon the members of this society. But in order to prevent enthusiasts from mortifying themselves in the manner of Hindu devotees, he was careful to lay down rules regarding food, clothing, and residence, remembering, no doubt, how, in the days when he was still searching for the truth, he had, all to no purpose, subjected his body to the severest penances. He therefore laid down for his disciples a middle path between pleasure and pain, by which man might attain to complete self-mastery without danger of injury to body or mind. Thus there sprang into existence in his lifetime an order of mendicants who dwelt together.

in monasteries provided for them by wealthy converts, and who spent their days in exhorting each other to be steadfast in the path, and in training themselves for the work of preaching and converting the people. Women as well as men were admitted to the Sangha or Society. Its members were known as Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, male and female mendicants. The creation of such an order gave stability and vitality to the new religion, and more than anything else helped after Buddha's death to keep together those who had embraced the faith.

The attitude of the Brahmans towards the new faith.—It may seem surprising that the Brahmans interfered so little with Buddha during his lifetime. It is probable that they regarded him at first as a mere reformer, and they therefore treated him with the same easy tolerance with which they were accustomed to treat the many itinerant preachers and propounders of new philosophic doctrines that arose in different parts of India in those times. Later on they no doubt feared in face of their diminishing prestige to attack one whose influence was so far-reaching, and who was supported by powerful kings. But the Sangha he had founded, in that it admitted all classes of men and women without distinction of caste, aimed too direct a blow against Brahmanism to be overlooked.

First two Buddhist Councils.—Buddha's body was cremated, and his ashes reverently preserved; but hardly had he passed away before dissensions and differences sprang up among his followers. To set these at rest, in the year 477 B.C. the leading Bhikkhus called together a council at Rajagriha, under the patronage of Ajatasutru, the powerful King of Magadha, the son and successor of Bimbisara, Buddha's early friend. At this council, at which 500 believers were present, the whole assembly chanted together the sacred laws of the faith to fix them on their memories. Harmony was for a time restored. But one hundred years later it was found necessary to hold another council at a place called Vaisali, about 70 miles north of Rajagriha; for differences had once more arisen. Meanwhile under the protection of the kings of Magadha, the new religion was spreading far and wide.

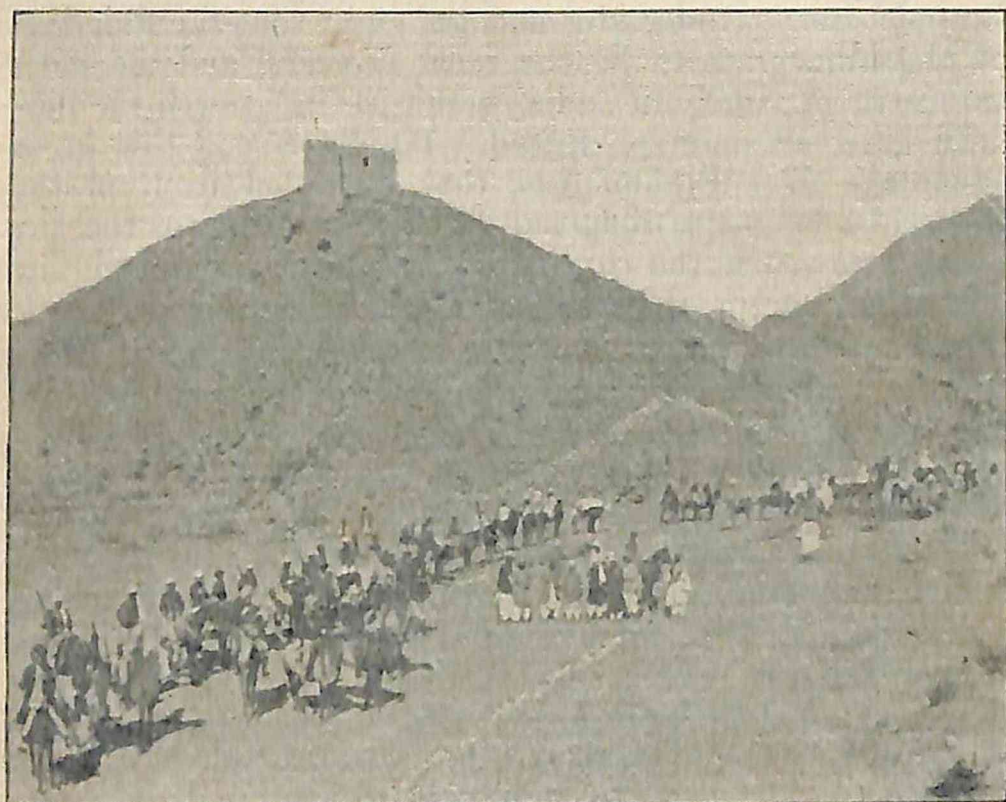
Progress of the new religion.—Bimbisara's dynasty came to an end early in the fourth century B.C. and was succeeded by that of the Nandas. The founder of this dynasty was of the Sudra caste, and, on that account probably, more favourably disposed to Buddhism than to Brahmanism. Under him and his eight sons the kingdom of Magadha grew to be the most powerful and the most extensive in Northern India, and with its growth the new faith grew also and prospered. Buddhism had this great advantage over Brahmanism, that it availed itself of the vernacular language to spread its teaching. It was thereby enabled to catch the ears of all. Wherever the Buddhist missionaries went they were listened to by eager crowds who had been shut out, by their lowly birth and their ignorance of Sanskrit, from the religion of the high caste Aryan. As they came with a peaceful message, and sought to make their teaching acceptable only by gentleness and toleration, they stirred up little antagonism.

Brahman influence still powerful.—But it must not be supposed that the Brahmans lost their influence altogether; for this, even when Buddhism became the prevailing religion, never was the case. Brahmanism was simply deposed from its hegemony, but the Brahmans still maintained their influence over large masses of the people. The Hindus had been too long accustomed to look up to them as their hereditary spiritual leaders to put off their awe and reverence for them. Moreover, Buddhism itself recognised the sanctity of the priesthood, and enjoined as much respect for Brahmans as for learned men of its own order. Its wise tolerance in this respect went far to disarm Brahman hostility. But we must leave the fortunes of Buddhism for a while and turn our attention to the Punjab, which after many centuries of obscurity once more became the scene of events important to India.

THE GREEK INVASION.

Alexander invades the Punjab.—In the year 327 B.C. India was subjected to another invasion in the North West. Alexander the Great, King of Macedon, having completed his conquest of the Persian Empire by the reduction

of the fierce and warlike tribes of Central Asia, suddenly made his appearance in the neighbourhood of Kabul with his invincible army of Greeks, and summoned the princes of the Punjab to do him homage.



KHYBER PASS.

The Punjab was then split up into several principalities, owing a sort of allegiance to an overlord of the Kshattriya caste who ruled the country lying between the Jhelum and the Chenab. At the time of Alexander's coming some of the petty kings, probably later immigrants from Central Asia known as Scythians, were in revolt against Porus, their Aryan overlord, and they therefore welcomed Alexander as a deliverer. Taxiles, the ruler of the country between the Indus and the Jhelum, whose capital was at Taxila upon the banks of the Indus, and the rebellious princes, hastened with rich gifts to pay homage to him, but Porus and the others took no notice of his summons. Since all had not acknowledged his authority, the warlike Alexander considered that he had received sufficient provocation to justify



an invasion. Had it not been for the jealousy and intrigues of these factious princes against their overlord, the task of invading India would have been a much more formidable one. As it was, Alexander was able unmolested to march down the dangerous Khyber Pass into the valley of Peshawar, to cross his army without opposition over the river Indus, and to use the country of Taxiles both as a source from which to draw supplies for his army and a base of operations in the ensuing campaign.

The battle of the Jhelum.—After halting some time at Taxila to complete his preparations, Alexander marched towards the Jhelum, where he heard that Porus with all the forces he could muster was waiting to dispute his passage. Alexander drew up his army on the bank of the river opposite that of Porus. But on one wild and stormy night, under cover of the darkness, leaving a portion of his forces behind him so as not to excite suspicion, he himself with the main body crossed the river at a spot a few miles distant. When the scouts of Porus informed him of what had happened, he immediately despatched his son with a considerable body of troops to check Alexander's advance. The son of Porus hurried forward gallantly to the attack; but the rain had made the ground soft, and the chariots on which he placed so much reliance stuck in the mud, and impeded rather than assisted him. In the battle which ensued, the Indian horsemen, though fighting with desperate courage, could not stand against the well-disciplined cavalry of the Greeks, and were driven in upon the supporting infantry. Behind the Greek cavalry came the steady phalanxes of veteran foot soldiers, who bore down all before them. The rout was soon complete, and the Indians fled precipitately, leaving their leader's body among the heaps of slain.

Submission of Porus.—When the news was brought to Porus that his son was killed and the force sent with him dispersed, he drew up his army in array, determined that the issue between himself and Alexander should be decided in one pitched battle. In front of his infantry he stationed his 200 elephants, which were to have been goaded forward by their drivers to trample down the enemy. He had besides an immense body of cavalry and a number of war-chariots. When the two opposing forces met, a sudden

panic seized the elephants, and turning round they rushed back upon his army, crushing men and horses and throwing the ranks into confusion. The Greeks following close upon the terrified elephants, quickly put to flight the whole army. Further resistance was vain, and Porus was obliged to tender his submission. Alexander was greatly pleased with the courage and spirit shown by his fallen enemy, and not only treated him with the honour due to his rank, but restored to him his kingdom. Porus repaid the kingly generosity of his conqueror by becoming henceforth his loyal and devoted friend.

Proposed attack on Magadha.—While at Taxila, Alexander had heard tidings of a kingdom on the banks of the Ganges which far surpassed in wealth and power any that he had yet met with. Therefore as soon as he had subdued Porus he determined to march on to its conquest. This kingdom was Magadha, over which the last of the Nanda dynasty was then reigning. His informant was Chandra Gupta, or Sandrocottus as the Greeks called him, an exiled prince from Nanda's court. With tales of the grandeur and magnificence of Nanda's capital the wily Indian fired Alexander's mind with lust of conquest, and then coolly proposed that they should invade the kingdom together, depose the reigning monarch, and place him, Chandra Gupta, on the throne. Alexander was impressed with the feasibility of the project, but was so greatly displeased with the presumption of the adventurer that Chandra Gupta was obliged to fly for his life from Taxila.

Alexander's departure and death.—The conqueror's war-worn veterans had had enough of fighting, and longed to return to Greece; and now, too, the south-west monsoon had begun to deluge the country with rain. When they heard that they would be required to march still further from their homes in Europe, they refused, in spite of threats, entreaties, and promises of plunder, to be led against Magadha. Alexander was therefore forced to relinquish his project, and to make his way back to Persia. Part of his troops were sent down the Jhelum and the Indus in boats to the sea, while he and the remainder marched along the banks. On the way he met with considerable opposition from the natives, and was himself severely wounded in the



assault and capture of Multan. Near the junction of the Five Rivers he halted for a while and began the construction of a city which he named Alexandria. There he left a Greek governor and garrison; then marching on to where



HEAD OF ALEXANDER (IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM).

the Indus branches out into its delta, he founded another city, Patala, which as Hyderabad, the capital of Sind, survives to this day. After suffering great hardships, and losing many of his soldiers in the wild and desolate country of Baluchistan, he reached Persia in 325 B.C. Two years later at Babylon, the capital, while busily maturing fresh schemes of conquest, he was seized with a fever and died.

Effects of his invasion.—Though Alexander added no portion of India to his vast dominions, yet by founding cities, establishing Greek garrisons, and setting up and dethroning kings, he had insured that the effects of his

invasion should endure. But the most important result of his invasion was that it brought into contact with each other the two most highly civilized nations of the ancient world—a contact that could not be otherwise than to their mutual advantage. While the Hindus of Northern India felt the influence of Greece in science and art, the Greeks must have imbibed from the Hindus something of their deep religious and philosophical speculations.

Chandra Gupta and Seleucus.—After Alexander's death his vast empire broke up, and in the scramble which ensued, Seleucus, one of his generals, seized upon the Province of Bactria, lying to the north of Afghanistan, and established there an independent Greek kingdom. As soon as he had consolidated his power, he invaded India, thinking to carry out the plans of conquest which had filled the mind of Alexander. But in the years which had passed since Alexander's death, Chandra Gupta, the exiled prince of Magadha, had actually succeeded in carrying out, single-handed, the project which he had proposed that he and Alexander should jointly effect. Taking advantage of the anarchy which followed the withdrawal of the Greeks from Northern India, he had by promises of plunder gathered together a powerful army of mercenaries and freebooters, and with its assistance overthrown and slain the last of the Nandas and seized his kingdom. He had since entered upon a career of conquest, and at the time of the invasion of Seleucus had extended his sway over the whole of Northern India. Seleucus therefore, unlike Alexander, had to face one powerful ruler instead of several petty kings who could not for their mutual jealousies act in concert. When he had penetrated as far as the Ganges, he found himself in such difficulties that he was glad to make peace with Chandra Gupta on terms very different from those of a victorious invader. He agreed to relinquish all territory south of Kabul to the Hindu king, in exchange for 500 elephants. An alliance was then concluded between the two monarchs, in proof of the good faith of which Seleucus gave his daughter in marriage to Chandra Gupta, and the latter agreed to receive a Greek ambassador at his court.

Megasthenes's account of Magadha.—This ambassador, whose name was Megasthenes, wrote an account

of his five years' sojourn at Chandra Gupta's capital, but unfortunately, fragments only of it have been preserved to us. The capital had been removed from Rajagriha by one of the early Nanda kings to Pataliputra, at the junction of the Ganges and the Sone. Megasthenes describes it as a city ten miles long by two miles broad, protected on one side by the Ganges, and on the other by a deep ditch, and surrounded on all sides by a wooden wall. The government was, so far as the capital was concerned, a paternal despotism. The people were entirely at the mercy of officials, and had no voice in public affairs. The empire of Magadha was a loose confederacy of 118 towns and principalities, under the suzerainty of the ruler of Pataliputra but practically independent as far as their internal administration was concerned.

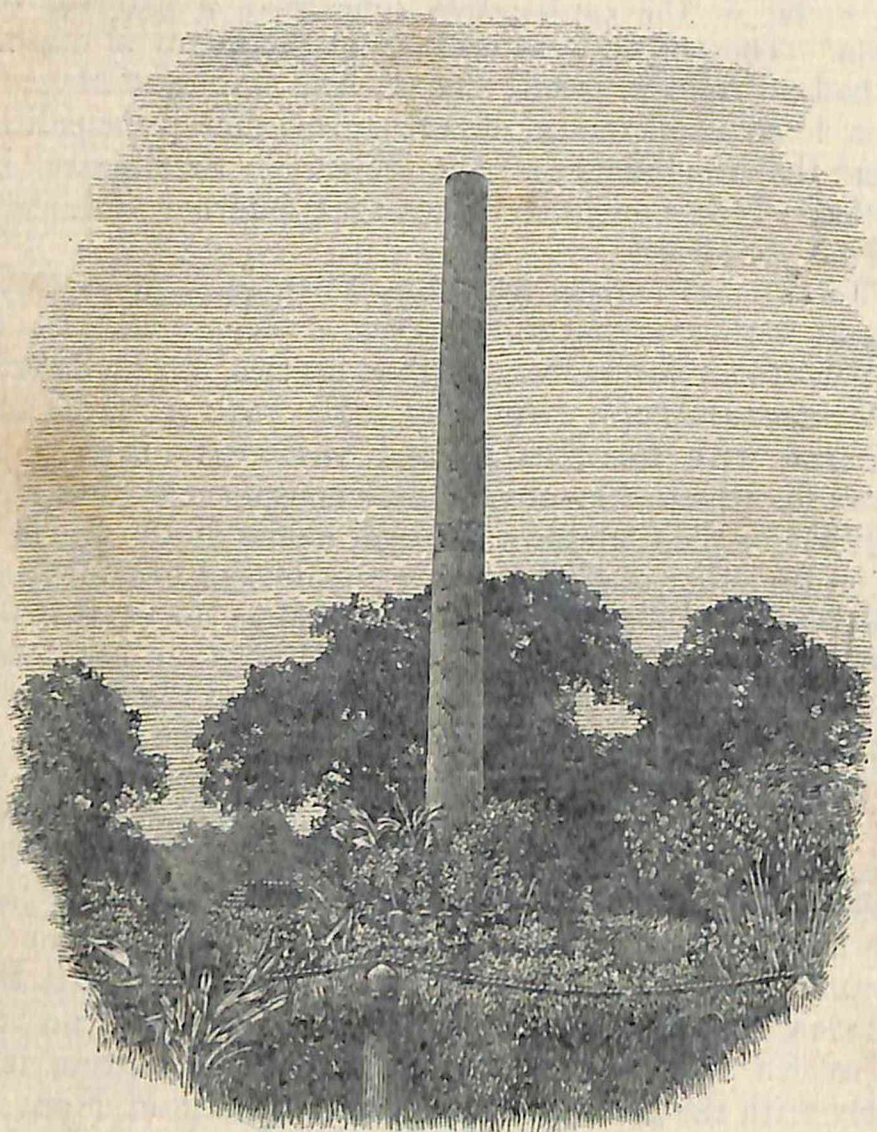
The social state of the Hindus.—Megasthenes remarks with approval the absence of slavery, and the exemption of cultivators from military service, but he deplors the stringency of the caste rules. He was very favourably impressed with the Hindus, and ascribes to them many virtues for which they are not now conspicuous. But when he speaks of their simple and frugal habits on the one hand, and on the other of their extravagant love of ornament and show, he is noticing traits which prevail to the present day. Strangely enough, he makes no reference to Buddhism; though it is thought by some that by one of the two classes of philosophers mentioned by him may be meant the Buddhist teachers. The omission may be due to the fact that in the time of Chandra Gupta, who was not a Buddhist king, the sect, deprived of royal favour, had dwindled to insignificance; or it may be that the ambassador was but a superficial observer, and relied too implicitly for his accounts of Hindu society upon what he gathered from Brahman sources. He states that the Hindus had no laws; but as his description of the Government agrees fairly closely with the form laid down in the Code of Manu, we may suppose that some portions of that sacred unwritten Code, the product of the Brahman law-givers of Northern India, were generally, if tacitly, observed. The village community was answerable through its headman to the king for its taxes and good conduct, but otherwise was

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allowed to manage its own internal affairs as it pleased. The king was the owner of all the land, and exacted for the royal treasury a fourth part of the produce of the soil.

THE RISE AND FALL OF BUDDHISM.

Asoka.—Chandra Gupta reigned for 24 years as King of Magadha, and overlord of many little kingdoms of



ASSOKA'S PILLAR.

Northern and North-Western India. He was the founder of a line of kings known as the Maurya dynasty, and was succeeded by his son Bindusara. This king, who reigned

for 28 years, extended his father's empire by fresh conquests. His successor was his son Asoka, one of the greatest of Indian rulers. Asoka came to the throne in 263 B.C. During his father's lifetime he had been successively governor of Ujjain and Taxila, and had given signal proof of his ability by suppressing a revolt which had broken out in the Punjab. There he came in contact with the Greeks, and formed a lasting friendship with Antiochus, the king of Bactria. The Buddhist chronicles declare that he succeeded in establishing himself upon his father's throne by the murder of the rightful heir, his elder brother, and the wholesale massacre of the members of the royal family. The early years of his reign were spent in extending still further the empire of Magadha by adding to it the territory of the Kalingas, lying between the eastern boundaries of his kingdom and the Bay of Bengal. Under him the empire of Magadha became the greatest that had up to then been known in India. So great did his power become that his suzerainty was acknowledged from Bactria in the north to the Krishna River in the south.

His conversion to Buddhism.—But it is not so much on this account that he has left so great a name in history as because of his zeal in the cause of Buddhism. He was not in early life a Buddhist; indeed, if we may believe the Buddhist chronicles, he had been as a young man ruthless and cruel, and very far removed in conduct from Buddhist ideals. But the horrors of the conquest of Kalinga, and the miseries inflicted thereby upon a prosperous and civilized people, so wrought upon his mind that they altered the whole tenor of his life. From that time he was troubled with remorse, and began to show a kindly leaning towards the Buddhist religion; and as he grew older, he came more and more under the influence of the Buddhist sages, till, in the eleventh year after his coronation, he openly avowed himself a convert to that mild and gentle creed. His was an ardent nature, and having made up his mind that salvation lay in the path that Buddha had revealed, he was determined to do all in his power to guide mankind along it. From that moment the power and the influence of the Brahmans, who had regained their ascendancy under his predecessors, rapidly declined.

Buddhism was established as the state religion of his empire, and its doctrines proclaimed far and wide.

Third Buddhist Council.—Two years after his conversion, a great council was called together at his capital, to settle the faith, to classify and compile the Buddhist scriptures, and to reduce them to writing. This is known as the Third Great Buddhist Council. It is important to notice in passing first, that the language employed was that in common use at the time, the Magadhi or Pali language, and secondly that in Asoka's time writing was freely in use in India.

Asoka's edicts.—In the thirteenth year after his coronation he began to issue edicts setting forth the tenets of the faith, and had them inscribed on rocks in different parts of his kingdom. These rock-cut edicts exist to the present day, noble memorials of his earnestness and piety, and records of the greatest interest and importance to the historian. In all of them he styles himself King Piyadasi, beloved of the gods, and he tells us in them that he has ordered the faithful to gather in each district every five years for religious instruction; that he has appointed Buddhist ministers to go into every land to attend to the spiritual needs of believers, and to teach those who have not yet heard the Law; that he has enjoined universal religious toleration, and exhorted his subjects to be ever extolling virtue, and imparting true religion to each other; that he has prohibited the slaughter of animals for food or sacrifice; that he has provided medicines for man and beast in all the realms over which he exercises suzerainty, dug wells along the public roads, and planted medicinal herbs, fruit trees, and trees to afford shade to travellers, wherever they were needed. The edicts also tell us how wide reaching was the influence of Asoka, and with what distant countries the Empire of Magadha had intercourse. Antiochus of Bactria, Ptolemy of Egypt, Antigonus of Macedon, and Alexander of Epirus received his missionaries, and permitted them to preach in their dominions.

His zeal for the faith.—In addition to the rock inscriptions, in the 26th and 27th years of his reign, he issued fresh edicts containing further religious and moral instructions, and had them inscribed on pillars in different

parts of his kingdom. His zeal in the propagation of the faith knew no bounds. Everywhere hospitals and dispensaries were established, schools opened for the teaching of religion, and ministers appointed to supervise the morals of his people. Buddhist monasteries enjoyed the special patronage of the state. Those who took monastic vows and wore the yellow robe were so numerous that the eastern portion of the empire became known as the land of the Viharas or monasteries. Mahendra his son, and Sanghamitra his daughter entered the order of Bhikkhus, and went together to Ceylon to spread the faith among its people. Their mission was from the first crowned with success. The king of the island embraced the new faith, and built for them a monastery, and there they lived and taught for the remainder of their lives. The missionary enterprise during Asoka's reign was extraordinarily vigorous and far-reaching. Buddhist mendicant monks penetrated to Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bactria, and Greece, Lower Burma and Indo-China, and to every part of India. Everything that could be done was done to spread the religion of Buddha and insure obedience to its tenets, short of persecution or forcible conversion. These the religion itself strictly forbade; for it is the special boast of Buddhism that from the first it has relied solely upon peaceful missionary work.

His greatness.—Asoka died in 223 B.C., after having reigned for forty-one years. He had been strong enough to keep in check the whole extent of his vast empire, and had preserved friendly relations with the independent kingdoms on its borders. Therefore during his long reign India enjoyed one of those periods of general peace which have occurred so seldom in her history. Few kings have had so good a title to be called Great as this earnest, noble-minded monarch, and none has exercised a greater influence for good upon his fellow-men.

Rise of the Andhras.—After Asoka's death six kings of the Mauriya dynasty ruled over Magadha. Then Pushya Mitra, the commander-in-chief of the last king, slew his master, and seized the throne. During his reign the Bactrian Greeks under Menander made an incursion into India, and penetrated as far as Sāketa in Kosala, but were defeated and driven out by him in 141 B.C. After

him the Empire of Magadha began rapidly to decline, and within a short time was overthrown by the Andhras of Southern India. The kingdom of the Andhras was situated to the east of Maharashtra, and had been in existence for several centuries. Having seized upon Magadha, the Andhras rapidly rose in power and importance, and for some time were the paramount power in India. Their kings were Buddhists, and the remains of stupas and monasteries erected by them are still to be seen scattered over the Deccan.

The Scythians.—About the year 126 B.C., a few years after Menander's inroad, the Bactrian kingdom was attacked and over-run by nomad hordes of wild barbarians from Central Asia. These were the Sakas or Scythians, a fierce and warlike race dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea. The remnant of the Bactrian Greeks fell back upon India, where they settled down, and for a while became a power in Northern India. But the Scythians, having subdued Afghanistan and Kashmir, turned their steps towards the Punjab, and pouring down in overwhelming numbers, soon made themselves the masters of the country. By the beginning of the Christian era they had become the paramount power in Northern India. But by this time, under the influence of Greek and Indian culture, they had changed from wandering savages into a settled and civilized people, and had established powerful kingdoms of their own.

Kanishka and the last Buddhist Council.—Kanishka, one of the Indo-Scythian kings, who ascended the throne in the year 78 A.D., ruled over a vast territory stretching northwards to Yarkand and Thibet, and southwards to the Nurbudda River. His capital was at Peshawar, then called Purushapura, and his glory nearly equalled that of the Great Asoka. He too was a zealous Buddhist, and in his reign also a Great Council was summoned to settle disputed points of doctrine. This Council, which was the last of the Buddhist Councils, settled the creed of the northern Buddhists, as Asoka's had settled that of the southern. It is significant of the revival of Brahman influence that the language used was Sanskrit, and that Brahmanical doctrine is much in evidence in these com-

mentaries. There are thus two schools of Buddhism, that of the northern Buddhists known as the Mahāyāna or High Path, and that of the southern Buddhists, the Hināyāna or Low Path school. It was in Kanishka's reign that Buddhist missionaries were sent northwards into Thibet and China. Kanishka is also famous for having established an era which is widely employed in India in reckoning historical dates. The Saka era, as it is called, marks the date of his coronation in 78 A.D. After his death Scythian kings descended from him held his throne for more than a hundred years. But the empire he had built up rapidly fell to pieces in the hands of his successors, and by the beginning of the 2nd century had dwindled to insignificance.

Kshahasata.—While Kanishka's empire was declining another kingdom was rising in power and importance. This was the kingdom of Kshahasata in Guzerat. Its rulers are known as the Kshatrapas, but little more about them than their names has been handed down to us. Nahapana, the founder of the line, began to rule in the year 119 A.D. An inscription of his has been discovered which shows that he favoured Hinduism, and paid extravagant honours to Brahmans. But in the seventh year of his reign Gautamiputra, the Buddhist king of the Andhras, marched out against him to punish him for his aggressions, and conquered and slew him. The kingdom, however, quickly recovered, and thirty years later Rudradaman, the fourth Kshatrpa, by extensive conquests made himself the most powerful king in India, and twice defeated the Andhra king.

The Guptas.—But while Kshatrpa and Andhra kings were struggling for the overlordship, fresh hordes of barbarians, Scythian and Cambodian or Afghan, kept pouring into India from the north, and spreading eastward and southward. Before the close of the third century a new empire, that of the Guptas, had arisen in Northern India. It is believed that the kings of the Gupta dynasty were of Scythian origin, for they are known as Mlechas or outcasts, that is foreigners; and as the Scythians were during all the first three centuries of the Christian era increasing their hold upon India, it is more than likely that this is so. Their capital was at a place called Kusamapur, which has been identified with Kanauj.

Chandra Gupta, the third king of the dynasty, assumed the title of King of Kings, which would indicate that he was a powerful monarch, if not the overlord of Northern India. He established a new era, to commemorate his accession to the throne in 319 A.D., known as the Gupta era. He was followed by Samudra Gupta, who has left behind him an inscription on one of Asoka's pillars, in which it is claimed for him that he conquered the whole of Aryavarta, and three kingdoms of Southern India besides, and that his suzerainty was acknowledged in Assam, Bengal, and Nepal in the east, and Malwa and Kandesh in the west: an empire, if the inscription is to be credited, as extensive as that of Asoka himself. His son and successor Chandra Gupta II. was no less renowned as a conqueror, and in the year 409 destroyed the Kshaharata kingdom.

Fa Hian's account of India.—During the reign of Chandra Gupta II., Fa Hian, a pious Chinese Buddhist, came to India on a pilgrimage to visit the hallowed spots where Buddha had lived and taught, and to procure for his countrymen authentic copies of the Buddhist scriptures. He has written an account of his journey, and from this much valuable information can be gathered regarding the state of India at the time. He found Buddhism in a flourishing state, and the country filled with monasteries. Buddhist monks were everywhere supported without stint; but Hindu temples also had their votaries, and in every large town flourished side by side with Buddhist monasteries. He visited Kanauj, but though this was in all probability the capital of the Gupta empire, he has little to say about it. The Guptas were Hindus by religion, and worshippers of Vishnu. It may be on this account that he passes them over; for in his eyes they were heretics, and therefore unworthy of attention. He found Srāvasti, the ancient capital of Kosala, which in Buddha's time had been a flourishing city, almost deserted. Kapilavastu, the birth-place of Buddha, was a scene of desolation. Kusinagra, where he died, was inhabited only by a few priests and their families. At Pataliputra he saw the ruins of Asoka's palace, and was much impressed with its magnificence even in decay. Close at hand there was a handsome monastery containing six or seven hundred monks.

Change in the character of Buddhism.—But Buddhism had undergone a change since the days of Asoka, and symptoms of degeneration had begun to manifest themselves. Gorgeous festivals, quite opposed to the spirit of the faith, had become recognised institutions, and image worship, for which no sanction could be found in the Buddhist scriptures, a universal practice. Fa Hian gives an interesting account of a Buddhist procession which he saw while staying at Pataliputra. Twenty four-wheeled cars, surmounted with gaudy imitation pagodas, were dragged through the streets amid shouting crowds. At the four corners of each car were images of Buddha in a sitting posture, and round the pagodas, under embroidered canopies, figures of the Devas adorned with ornaments of gold, silver, and glass. All the day of the procession, and the following night, multitudes of gaily-dressed worshippers, holding high festival, indulged in games and singing and dancing.

Corruption of the faith.—To such idolatrous pomp had the pure and simple faith of Buddha degenerated in the hands of its priests by the fifth century A.D. Just as the bright and cheerful Vedic religion of the early Aryan settlers had been smothered by the Brahman hierarchy of Kosala under a gorgeous ritual, so the light of Buddha's teaching was being in its turn extinguished by the priests under a mass of gaudy and idolatrous ceremonial. Buddhism being essentially a religion of the people, as opposed to Brahmanism, the religion of a caste, was more liable to be affected by current superstitions, and to be influenced by the idol worship prevalent among non-Aryan peoples. The Buddhist priests, being in most cases ignorant men drawn from the people, were unable wholly to shake off their old associations and beliefs, and permitted, even if they did not encourage, practises which were more in accordance with demon-worship than with the new faith.

From Pataliputra Fa Hian passed to Rajagriha, and here he saw the cave in which the first Buddhist council was held. From thence he went to Gaya to visit the famous tree under which Buddha had attained Buddhahood or enlightenment. Strangely enough, he found the place a wilderness, but the Bodhi-tree was still there. But in the deer park near Benares, in the country of the Kashis—where

the first sermon had been preached—two handsome monasteries had been built. He then returned to Pataliputra, and there at last procured copies of the Buddhist scriptures. It is an indication of the corruption of the faith that throughout the whole of northern India there was no copy of the Buddhist scriptures to be found, but the Bikkhus “trusted to tradition for their knowledge of the precepts.”

Kumâra Gupta.—Chandra Gupta II. died in 414, and was succeeded by Kumâra Gupta, who reigned till 452. A temple inscription has been discovered bearing reference to this king. In it Kumâra Gupta is spoken of as ‘reigning over the whole earth’—an exaggerated testimony to the greatness of his dominions, but proving that the empire of the Guptas must have been of vast extent.

The fall of the Gupta Empire.—Kumâra Gupta was succeeded by Skanda Gupta, during whose reign the terrible Huns from Central Asia made their first appearance in India. Skanda Gupta was able to repel them, but he was the last great ruler of his line, and after his death the Huns, pouring like locusts over Northern India, overran the outlying provinces of the empire. By the beginning of the sixth century the Gupta kingdom had suffered so much from the ravages of these barbarians that it was reduced to insignificance, and soon after disappeared from history. Its kings had been zealous Hindus, and it was during the time of their ascendancy that Buddhism began markedly to decline. Sanskrit learning revived under them, and the Sanskrit language, which through the influence of Buddhism had fallen much out of employment in favour of the vernaculars, once more came into general use among the learned.

The Huns.—The original home of the Huns seems to have lain somewhere between the Great Wall of China and the Caspian Sea. Being driven out thence, they settled in the neighbourhood of the Ural River. In the latter half of the fourth century A.D. they began a westward movement, and in less than a hundred years had overrun most of Central and Northern Europe. Under a dreaded leader, named Attila, at length they even laid the Roman Empire under tribute. But shortly after his death, which occurred

in 453 A.D., dissensions broke out among their chiefs, and the nations whom they had reduced to dependence combining against them, so signally defeated them in one pitched battle that they never recovered from the effects of it. Their power was completely broken, and they rapidly dispersed, the majority of them returning to Central Asia.

Invasion of India.—Within a few years of this event, under a leader named Toramân, the Central Asian Huns, no doubt joined by the fugitives from Europe, swept down upon India, carrying all before them with resistless force. Skanda Gupta's successors, strove in vain to check them. One after another the outlying provinces of the empire fell into their hands, till at length nothing but the part round about Kanauj was left. Toramân died about 515 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Mihirakula, who became even a greater scourge than his father. Wherever this ruthless and savage warrior went, he left behind him scenes of ruin and desolation to mark his victorious course. But his career of conquest and devastation was at length checked. A deliverer of Hindustan appeared in the person of Yasodharman, the king of Ujjain.

Yasodharman.—Malwa, of which Ujjain was the capital, had been before the coming of the Huns a dependency of the Gupta Empire; but in the confusion which ensued during the period of their invasions, Yasodharman, had made himself independent. His kingdom now became the rallying point of the Hindus, and was soon a powerful state. Mihirakula therefore marched against it, but was defeated and driven off. Yasodharman having lowered the prestige of the conqueror, assumed the offensive, and falling upon the Huns at Kahrôr in 533 A.D. so utterly routed them, that they never recovered from the defeat; and though their power was not extinguished in North-Western India, they were obliged to acknowledge the suzerainty of Yasodharman. After this signal success Yasodharman speedily made himself the master of Northern India. On an inscription which he has left, he claims to be the king of kings, and to be ruler of an empire stretching from Assam to the Arabian Sea.

The legend of Vikramaditya.—Efforts have been made to identify Yasodharman with the famous Vikra-

Vikramaditya of Sanskrit literature, the perfect pattern of a Hindu king. Vikramaditya has been to Hindu storytellers what King Arthur was to the bards and romancers of Western Europe in the middle ages. They have loved to bestow upon him every noble trait, and round his name there have gathered countless legends setting forth his valour and his piety. Just as Arthur, the British king, is fabled to have stemmed the tide of Saxon invasion, so Vikramaditya is related to have repelled the Scythians; and just as Arthur's Court was the centre of culture and refinement, so Vikramaditya's Court was the resort of poets and scholars. He is said to have gathered round him nine pre-eminent men of letters, the Navaratna, or nine jewels of his court, amongst whom were Kālidās, the greatest of Sanskrit poets and dramatists, Varāhamihira the astronomer, Amara the lexicographer, and Vararuchi the grammarian. But whether these four men were living in the time of Yasodharman, or were even contemporaries of one another, is more than doubtful—indeed such little evidence as there is seems rather to warrant a contrary opinion. Hindu scholars, unwilling to allow their legendary national hero to be relegated altogether to the realms of fiction, have been anxiously in search of evidence to connect him with some historical personage, and they have fixed upon Yasodharman as the most likely, because he drove back the terrible Huns, and ruled over a wide extent of Hindustan.

Confusion in Northern India.—After the death of Yasodharman, his kingdom must have rapidly declined, for there are no records of his successors, and very little is heard of Malwa subsequently. The period which follows is one of struggle for supremacy between the many petty kingdoms which had arisen out of the wreck of the Gupta Empire. The Huns still appear to have been giving trouble in the north; for, nearly 50 years after the battle of Kahrora, Prabhākara, King of Thaneswar, was engaged in conflict with them. The rulers of this kingdom must before this have thrown off the yoke of Malwa, for Prabhākara assumed the title of 'King of Kings.' Towards the close of his reign, his son Rajyavardhan, whom he had sent to command his army against the Huns, succeeded in reducing them to subjection. On the death of Prabhākara, the



King of Malwa made an attempt to recover Kanauj, which had been part of Yasodharman's Empire. The King of Kanauj, a near relation of Prabhākara was defeated and killed; but Rajyavardhan, returning from his campaign against the Huns, drove out the King of Malwa, and annexed Kanauj to his own dominions.

Persecution of Buddhists.—Rajyavardhan was a staunch supporter of Buddhism, as too had been his predecessors on the throne of Thaneswar, and on learning that Sasánka, the king of Western Bengal, was not only persecuting the Buddhists of Magadha, but had actually cut down the famous Bodhi-tree at Gaya, he marched against him. Sasánka was defeated and obliged to submit. But after the terms of peace had been settled, the too confiding Rajyavardhan accepted an invitation to his enemy's camp, and was there treacherously assassinated by his host. Sasánka was not long allowed to profit by this foul breach of hospitality, for Harshavardhan, the younger brother of Rajyavardhan, promptly marched an army into Bengal and destroyed his kingdom.

Revival of Kanauj.—Harshavardhan ascended the throne of Thaneswar under the title of Siladitya in 607. He was a great conqueror, and soon made himself the master of the whole of Northern India. Early in his reign he removed his capital to Kanauj, so that once more this city became the capital of a great empire.

Houen Tsang.—During his reign, another pious Chinese Buddhist named Houen Tsang made a pilgrimage to India, and he too, like Fa Hian, wrote an account of what he saw there. He arrived in India in 630, and remained in the country for 15 years. Being a man of superior intelligence and broader views than Fa Hian, his account is more reliable; and it throws a flood of light upon a dark portion of the history of India, as well as affording much valuable information concerning the manners and customs of the time.

His travels.—Houen Tsang passed through Kandahar and Kabul on his way to India. In the country of Afghanistan, Buddhism had degenerated into idolatry, and the stupas and images of Buddha had been invested with supernatural powers by the superstitious inhabitants. Many of

the monasteries were deserted, and Hindu temples were springing up in all directions. In Kashmir, where he stayed two years, he found the two religions flourishing side by side. The Buddhist monasteries were well kept up, and crowded with monks. He has much to tell of Kanishka and the Great Buddhist Council held in his reign. Time had not yet obliterated the traces of the dread Mihirakula's devastating invasions, and the memory of them was still fresh in men's minds. Houen Tsang calls him the persecutor of Buddhists; but he was rather a ruthless plunderer and devastator than a deliberate enemy of Buddhism, for he massacred Hindus and Buddhists indiscriminately. It is significant, however, that Buddhism had not recovered from the shock of his invasions, while Hinduism continued to gain ground in spite of them. In Mathura, Buddhism had a strong following, but the great attention paid to outward forms and ceremonies was a symptom of decay. Next he visited Thaneswar, the scene of the battle between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, celebrated in the Mahabharata. Near at hand, so he was told, were still to be seen the bones of the heroes scattered over the plain. If there were any bones visible, they could only have been those of men slain in some recent battle; but the existence of the tradition points to a struggle having actually taken place, and is therefore evidence of the fact of the Kuru Panchala War. Curiosity led him to Hardwar, near the source of the Ganges, which had already become a great place of Hindu pilgrimage, and there he saw thousands of pilgrims bathing in the sacred stream. Very few in that part of the country followed the law of Buddha, and the land was full of Hindu temples.

His stay at Kanauj.—Thence he passed on to Kanauj, and was much impressed with the grandeur of the capital. The city was surrounded by solid walls and deep ditches, and its wealth attracted foreign merchants from far and wide. The people were noble and gracious in appearance and famed for their learning and their piety, and their speech was considered the purest in Northern India. As Harshavardhan or Siladitya was a zealous Buddhist, the faith was prospering in his kingdom, and there were several hundred monasteries maintained and thousands of Bikkhus.

But even here Hinduism had a firm footing, and the people were almost equally divided between the two religions. Siladitya, after the manner of Asoka, held quinquennial religious assemblies, forbade the killing of animals, and provided hospitals and dispensaries throughout his kingdom. Later on, Houen Tsang had an opportunity of attending one of these quinquennial assemblies and the festival that followed it. For days continuously there were gorgeous processions in honour of Buddha, in which his image in gold was carried amid jewelled banners, embroidered umbrellas, clouds of incense, and showers of flowers. The king scattered the wealth of his treasury broadcast among the people, and feasted every day Buddhist sages and Brahmans indiscriminately. The idolatrous pomp exceeded even that witnessed by Fa Hian. After the festival, an assembly of learned men was convened, Brahmans and Buddhists alike, and discussions were held on the merits of the two faiths. To commemorate the great occasion, a tower was constructed on the banks of the Ganges; but on the last day of the festival a fire broke out in it, and it was destroyed. According to Houen Tsang, this was the work of the Brahmans. Whether this was so or not, the charge is evidence that the Brahmans were suspected by the Buddhists to be working secretly against them, and that there was much distrust and ill-feeling existing between the two sects.

He continues his journey.—At Allahabad, then called Prayag, Hinduism was almost the sole religion followed, and Houen Tsang saw there immense multitudes of Hindus bathing at the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, just as they do now. Sravasti, the capital of Kosala, was deserted and in ruins, and the neighbourhood round about was once more under Brahman influence. Kapilavastu and Kusinagara were desolate, forsaken even by the monks. Benares was full of Hindu temples, and had become, then as now, a centre of orthodox Hinduism. But in the deer-park close at hand, where Buddha had preached his first sermon, there was a magnificent monastery, built partly of stone and partly of brick, 200 feet high. It possessed a noble image of Buddha in copper, and was inhabited by 1500 monks.

He reaches his destination.—At length he reached Magadha, the holy land of Buddhists. Here, at any rate, Buddhism still flourished, and the monks were men of piety and learning. Pataliputra had almost disappeared, nothing but portions of the ruined outer wall remained. Close to Gaya, which had become a Brahman colony, was the spot made famous by the Bodhi Tree. The tree itself, or what remained of it, was surrounded by high brick walls, and all around were innumerable stupas and images of Buddha, many of which were believed to exercise miraculous powers. It was a place to which pilgrims flocked in thousands after the rainy season every year, to present their offerings, burn incense, and deposit flowers. Near at hand was the stateliest and most beautiful of all the Buddhist monasteries. It was a monastery and temple combined, and had been built by a king of Ceylon. Its exterior was a mass of ornamental work, and the utmost skill of the architect and the artist had been lavished upon it. Within was an image of Buddha in gold and silver adorned with precious stones. Since, during the Buddhist period, Indian sculpture and architecture attained their highest excellence, this building at Gaya must have been one of the noblest specimens of ancient Indian art.

Nalanda.—Close to Gaya was Nalanda, the famous Buddhist University, the ruins of which are still to be seen. It was the great seat of Buddhist learning, and was the resort of scholars and sages, Brahman and Buddhist alike, from all parts of India. The monastery was on a gigantic scale, and is said to have been capable of holding 10,000 monks, besides containing numerous lecture-rooms and halls for religious conferences. It was the last stronghold of Buddhism, and was still in Houden Tsang's time thronged with renowned teachers and multitudes of students. The Chinese pilgrim was met on his arrival and escorted to the monastery by 200 monks, and welcomed by a great assembly within its walls. A lodging was allotted to him in one of the buildings, and there he stayed five years till he had mastered the Buddhist Scriptures and acquired some knowledge of the Sanskrit literature of the Brahmans.

He resumes his travels.—He thereafter proceeded on his travels again and passed through Bengal, then

divided into five petty kingdoms, on to Orissa. In the latter kingdom Buddhism was the prevailing religion, and there were a hundred monasteries, and thousands of monks. Puri was a famous place of Buddhist pilgrimage, but not then as now so much frequented by Hindu pilgrims.

The kingdom of Kalinga which had been conquered by Asoka had sunk to insignificance, and much of the country was overgrown with jungle. Berar, which was then known as Kosala, but must be distinguished from the ancient kingdom in the north, was ruled over by a Kshattriya king, who honoured the laws of Buddha. Houen Tsang speaks of a rock-cut monastery there which was the wonder of all India. In his time it was in ruins, and a story was told that it had been wrecked by the Brahmans. The tale is a further indication of the growing hostility between the two religions.

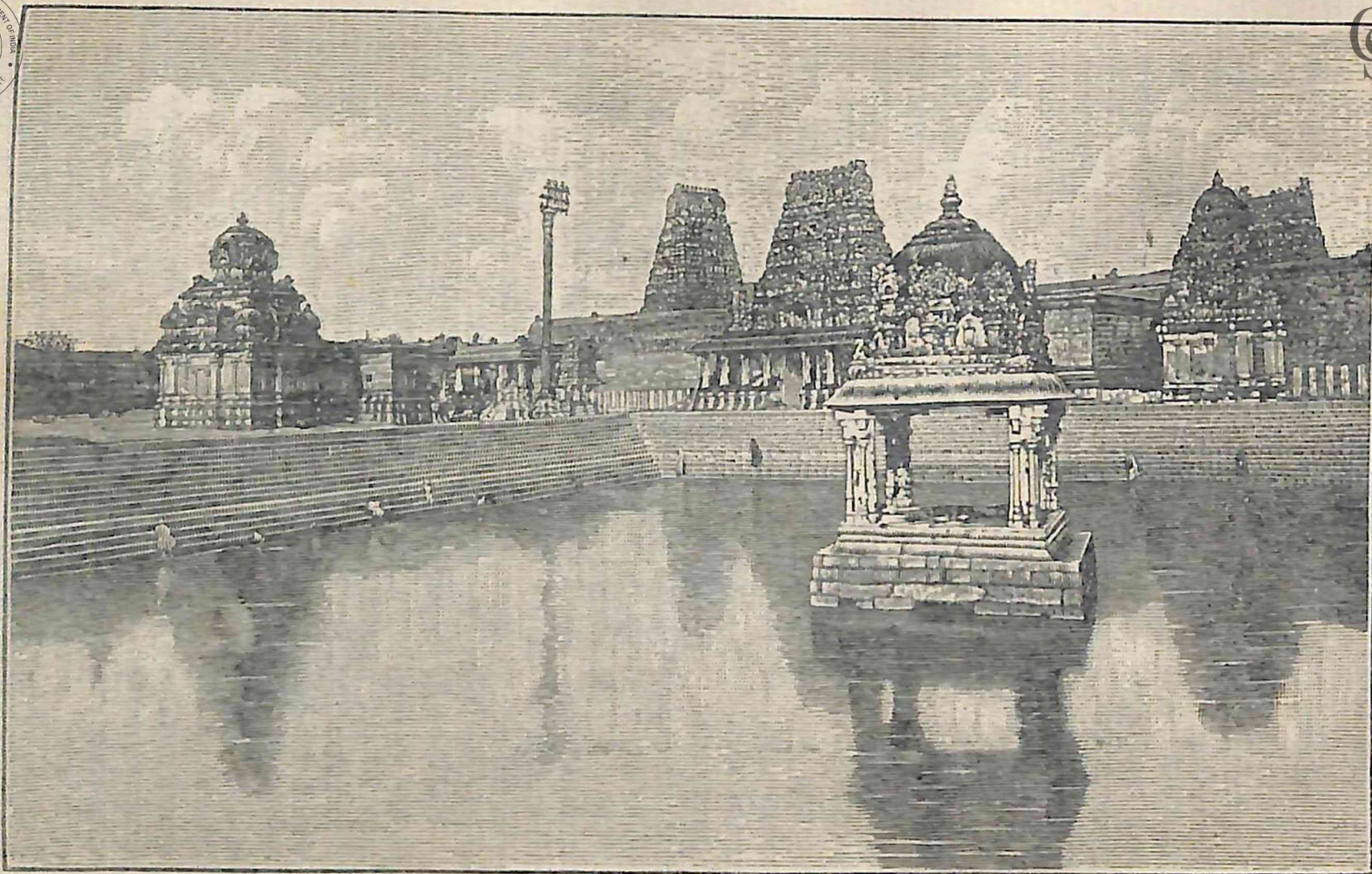
The ancient Andhra kingdom which he next visited had greatly declined in prosperity. In this ancient stronghold of Buddhism, the Hindu temples now outnumbered the Buddhist monasteries. Chola, which in old days had been one of the most important kingdoms of Southern India, was mostly desolate, and its cities in ruins. There were many temples of the Hindus, but the Buddhist convents for the most part were deserted and the priests ignorant and dirty. Next he visited Kānchi, the modern Conjivaram, then one of the finest cities in India and the capital of Dravida, a kingdom that had arisen out of the ruins of the old Chola State. He was much impressed with the beauty of its buildings and the enlightenment of its people. Buddhism flourished there, and he saw hundreds of monasteries and thousands of priests. Turning northwards, he took his way along the Western Ghats to Maharashtra. It had long been a powerful and important kingdom, and its ruler had successfully withstood the all-conquering armies of Siladitya. Houen Tsang gives an account of the character of the people which does credit to his powers of observation. He speaks of their impetuosity in war, their impulsiveness, their pride, and their vindictiveness, traits for which in after days the race became conspicuous.

From thence he journeyed on to Malwa, and there

he found many monasteries and 2000 Buddhist priests. But it is probable that Hinduism was the prevailing religion, for he mentions that the Brahmans were very numerous. He speaks in glowing terms of the inhabitants, and says that they were renowned in Western India for their learning and politeness. Gujrat was the last place of importance visited by him. A new kingdom had arisen there called the Valabhi kingdom; and Kshaharata, where the Kshatrapas had reigned, was a dependency of it. The king was closely related to Siladitya, and was a zealous Buddhist; but Hinduism had many followers in the kingdom. The people were polite and learned like those of Malwa, and had amassed great wealth in trade. Velabhi was in fact the emporium of Western India.

Decline of Buddhism.—In Houen Tsang's account we may note the general decline of Buddhism in India, and the rising tide of Hinduism. He has unconsciously indicated for us some of the causes of that decline. The faith had grown corrupt in the hands of illiterate priests. By the majority of the clergy and laity the ethics of Buddha's teaching had been forgotten. The simple story of his life had been so surrounded by legends and miraculous tales, that its significance was obscured. The divine honours paid to his relics, and the mysterious powers attributed to them and to his image were idolatrous practises utterly at variance with the true doctrine. In short, to all but a few the spirit of the faith was dead, and Buddhism, like Vedic Hinduism before it, had become a mere husk of religion. The monastic system, which in its infancy had been its strength, had grown to unwieldly proportions. The monasteries had become wealthy corporations, and those who joined the order of Bikkhus were often idle, dissolute and avaricious. The people, left without spiritual guidance, were slipping back into the old superstitions, the devil worship, and the witchcraft which Buddhism had never really succeeded in expelling.

The new Hinduism.—It may seem at first sight surprising that Hinduism should have been able to undermine Buddhism, and impose again the shackles of caste upon the people. But when we realize what the new Hinduism was, and how Buddhism had ceased to stimu-



CONJIVERAM.

late religious fervour among its followers, we shall not wonder that the latter eventually succumbed. During the long period in which Buddhism was in the ascendant, the Brahmans were putting into practice the lesson that their deposition had taught them. If they were to regain their lost authority, they could only do so by popularising their faith. They therefore set to work to make their religion acceptable to all classes of the people. By incorporating into it current superstitions and local religious practices they succeeded at length in devising a system which, while it made room for religious forms and beliefs peculiar to different peoples and districts, preserved such of the traits of Hinduism as would enable those of widely different creeds to recognise each other as belonging essentially to the same religion. In their hands a religious system was developed so vast and so far-reaching that every sect, caste, tribe or people might find represented in it its own religious views. Buddhism itself was largely drawn upon in the process of construction; so that to this day, though expelled as a religion from the country, its influence is strongly marked upon the character of the system which has supplanted it. Even aboriginal superstitions were not discarded; so that in its lower forms Hinduism is tainted with Dravidian demon-worship, and wild rites and gross and fantastic forms of idolatry have crept into it, or left their mark upon it.

Failure of Buddhism as a popular religion.—To people so smothered in superstition and so credulous as the bulk of the natives of India, an impersonal faith such as Buddhism could not carry strong conviction. A religion which taught that mankind, independently of the gods, could work out its own salvation was at variance with immemorial tradition, and seemingly opposed to facts. Floods and drought, famine and epidemics were to them actual manifestations of the power of spirits influencing the destiny of man, and therefore requiring to be propitiated with rites and sacrifices. While Buddhism was the religion of mighty kings and princes, the people outwardly conformed to it, but it need not be doubted that they still remained a prey to their old superstitions. When Buddhism, in its struggle to maintain its waning popularity,

began to make concessions to idolatry and compromises with spirit-worship, it was attempting to fight its more adaptable rival on its own ground. Hinduism could incorporate old forms of belief without losing in the process its essential characteristics, but Buddhism could not do so without sapping the very foundations of its creed.

Want of political unity in India.—From Houen Tsang's description of Indian society we may gather that the races of India were on the whole learned and polite, and justified the esteem in which they were held by foreigners who came in contact with them. But political unity was unknown among them. Such union as there was at any time did not rest upon a stable and far-reaching form of government, but upon the prowess of some great leader who compelled his neighbours to recognise his suzerainty. Empires therefore, as soon as the reigning monarchy showed signs of weakness, fell to pieces as quickly as they had arisen. The petty kingdoms of which they were composed, being mere tributaries, independent of the central authority in matters of internal administration, were always ready to revolt as soon as they thought themselves strong enough to do so; while the people, having no political life, were scarcely affected by a change of rule. But this very lack of political life served to strengthen the bonds of religion and to preserve ancient customs and beliefs; and to it may perhaps be attributed the fact that there are no more conservative peoples in the world than those of Hindustan.

Fall of Kanauj.—Siladitya died about 648 A.D. after reigning for 50 years. He had been a great king, and his authority had been respected far and wide. He was a man of learning as well as of piety, and encouraged learned men to come to Kanauj. Bānabhatta, one of the greatest of Indian poets, flourished at his court, and he himself under the name of Sriharsha is supposed to be the author of the famous Sanskrit drama Ratnāvali. But his display of religious zeal had been excessive, and he had squandered the resources of the state upon it. When he died he left an empty treasury to his successor. After his death his empire quickly fell to pieces, and within a hundred years Kanauj itself was sacked by a king of Kashmir named Lalitaditya.

It is said that the conqueror carried off with him as part of the spoils of war the poet Bhavabhuti, who was then living at the court of Kanauj.

CHAPTER V.

RAJPUT ASCENDENCY.

The Rajputs.—With the fall of Kanauj the history of Northern India practically ceases for two hundred years. The records of what happened during these centuries are scarce and meagre, and the literary remains do not guide us in reconstructing the history of that time. All that we know is that at the end of it Buddhism has almost been swept out of the land, and a new power, that of the Rajputs, has arisen. Who these Rajputs were is a mystery, but there are grounds for believing that they were foreigners who settled in India, and were in course of time converted to Hinduism. They are spoken of in the legend which gives an account of their origin as sprung from four Kshatriyas, re-created in order to drive out the enemies of the Vedas. By the enemies of the Vedas it is thought that the Buddhists are meant, and as Buddhism expressly denied the efficacy of Vedic sacrifices for salvation, it is probable that this is so. If the Rajputs came into India after the Aryans, they must have been of Scythian origin; for they arose in Western India, and, as has already been shown, in the early centuries of the Christian era there were continuous inroads of Scythian hordes into those parts of India. Like the Aryans before them, the Scythians in time lost their identity by becoming merged in the peoples among whom they lived. But they infused some of their warlike qualities into the mixed race descended from them, and thus wherever they settled the people exhibited a proud and martial spirit.

Their rise to power.—It will be remembered that Hsuen Tsang relates that the king of Maharashtra successfully resisted Siladitya. This was Pulikesin, king of the

Chalukya Rajputs. When Siladitya's Empire fell to pieces, and darkness closed over Northern India, the Chalukya Rajputs rose to prominence, overthrew the rich Valabhi kingdom, and made themselves the masters of the Deccan and of Gujrat. Other powerful Rajput tribes seized upon portions of Central and Northern India. Of these the most important were the Chohans, in the country round about Delhi, the Rahtors of Kanauj, and the Gehlots of Maiwar.

Persecution of the Buddhists.—The Rajputs were the self-constituted champions of Hinduism, and in their zeal for the faith they had adopted they were prepared to take any measures that were necessary to stamp out Buddhism. There can be little doubt that they resorted to violent means to achieve their object, and that where they found the Buddhists obdurate, they did not scruple to massacre the priests, raze their monasteries to the ground, and destroy their images and stupas. To this work they were instigated by the Brahmans, and it is probable that for their services in re-establishing Hinduism, the Brahmans rewarded them by inventing the fiction alluded to above, that they were miraculously sprung from the Kshattriya race. As early as the 8th century, Kumarila Bhatta, a Deccan Brahman and a great controversial writer who laid the foundations of Modern Hinduism, had openly advocated force if arguments were of no avail in combatting Buddhism.

Sankara Acharya.—While the Rajputs were expelling Buddhism by force, a champion of Hinduism arose in Southern India and started a religious movement which did even more than Rajput persecution to sweep Buddhism out of India. Sankara Acharya, who was born in Malabar in 788 A.D. was a profound Sanscrit scholar, a deep philosophical thinker, and a great preacher. During his short life—he died when he was 32—he wandered from place to place preaching against Buddhism, and propounding his Vedantic philosophy with its doctrine of the one Supreme Being, till he stirred up a revolution second only to that of Buddha. His teaching spread throughout the length and breadth of India, and in the hands of his disciples the form of Hinduism which he preached became one of the most widely adopted in the country. But though Sankara

Acharya condemned Buddhism, he wisely decided to adopt the monastic system which had been so important a feature of that religion, and had helped so much to give stability to the faith in its early days. The sect of Hinduism which he founded therefore has its monks and monasteries and observes many of the regulations which Buddha formulated for the use of the Bikkhus.

Puranik Hinduism.—The new Hinduism which the Rajputs were so zealous in spreading, and which the Brahmans had been so patiently constructing through the many centuries that Buddhism prevailed, is known as Puranic Hinduism, and differs in many points from the old Vedic Hinduism. Two points require special notice, one being the change in the conception of deity, and the other the change in the form of worship. The Vedic deities representing the phenomena of nature, as the sun, the clouds, the sky, and fire, were relegated in Puranic Hinduism to the position of minor gods, and in their place was substituted the Supreme Being in his triple form of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer. The conception of a Supreme Being is as old as the Rig Veda, but this three-fold division of his powers arose during the Buddhist era. Under one or other of these names the deity came at some time to be worshipped. But Brahma was soon neglected, and Hindus by the time of the Rajput supremacy were mainly divided into Vaisnavas, or followers of Vishnu, and Saivas, or followers of Siva. Within these two main divisions, however, many sects sprang up, ranging from the highest to the most degraded forms of worship. The works which glorify the Supreme Spirit under his three manifestations are called the Puranas, because they profess to contain the *old* Vedic faith; though as a matter of fact they have little in common with it. As we might expect from their origin, they exalt the Brahman at the expense of the lower castes. But they do not make the mistake of ignoring the low caste man altogether; for they are an attempt to fit religion to all classes of the people. Every phase of Hinduism is represented in them, from the highest ethical teaching and the purest conceptions of deity to the crudest and most degrading superstitions of the non-Aryan.

As regards the change in the form of worship, it will be

remembered in the old Vedic days the Aryan householder, when performing religious services to the gods, offered sacrifices in the fire of his own hearth. Up till the time of Buddhism there was no such thing as image worship, nor had temples become essential for the worship of the gods. But by the time of the Rajputs, temples and the adoration of images had superseded the older form of worship by the domestic fireside. It is hardly necessary to point out how much the building of temples, and the setting up of idols strengthened the hold of the priests upon the people. They were now, more than ever, the custodians of the national religion, and the people venerated them almost as blindly as the idols they guarded. To give money or bequeath land for the support of priests and temples were looked upon as acts of peculiar sanctity, and it was regarded as a duty incumbent upon all worshippers to make offerings according to their means at the shrine of the god whom they had come to venerate. In the course of centuries the temples amassed by such means great riches, and a large proportion of the wealth of the country became devoted to religious uses.

Brahman supremacy re-established.—Thus, though the history of Northern India is almost a blank from the 8th till the latter half of the 10th century, it is possible to infer from the events which preceded and succeeded this period, the condition of the country during it. The old powerful kingdoms decayed, and with their decay Buddhism, which they had always tolerated if not actually patronised, was swept, not without violence, from the land. When the curtain rises again, the brave and haughty Rajputs are in possession of the ancient capitals of Northern India, and Brahman supremacy has been completely re-established.

BOOK II.—THE MUHAMMEDAN PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

AFGHAN RULE.

Islam.—While the Rajputs were making themselves the masters of Northern India and Puranic Hinduism was everywhere replacing Buddhism, a new religion was steadily spreading from its home in Arabia over the neighbouring countries. Islam, as it was called, was the very opposite of Buddhism, both in its teaching and the methods it adopted to make converts. Buddhism made light of gods, and taught that man independently of them could work out his own salvation. "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His prophet," was the formula of Islamic faith. Buddhists were strictly enjoined to use none but peaceful means to spread their gospel, and to be tolerant in their dealings with those who held other religious beliefs. Muhammedans, on the contrary, were to war with unbelievers, and, if necessary, to force their faith upon them at the sword's point.

Arab triumphs.—A religion such as this was well adapted to the natures of the fierce and impulsive Arabs. They eagerly embraced it, and thereby were, for the first time, united together into one people. Made strong by faith, and filled with holy zeal to fulfil their prophet's injunction to conquer and convert the world, they poured out under the white banners of their religion upon the neighbouring countries. They were naturally a brave, hardy, and warlike people, but religious enthusiasm had welded them into an irresistible conquering force; and within a hundred years of the death of Muhammad, so great was



the success of their arms, that they had already reached the borders of India.

Conquest of Sindh.—Scarcely then had Hinduism emerged from its struggle with Buddhism before it was called upon to fight for its very existence with a formidable and openly aggressive rival. The first warnings of the coming storm occurred in Sindh. Desultory inroads of Arabs had taken place during the seventh century, but these had been mere plundering raids, and no attempt had been made to effect a permanent settlement. But in 712 a determined and successful effort was made to gain a footing in the country. A youthful general, Muhammad, son of Kasim, led an organised expedition against Dahir, the Rajput King of Sindh. After reducing the surrounding country, he forced the king to take refuge in Alor, his capital, and there besieged him. The Rajputs defended the city with obstinate valour till Dahir was slain and the provisions began to run short. Further resistance being vain, the women and children, it is said, preferring death to dishonour and slavery, with desperate resolution flung themselves upon a huge pyre and perished in its flames; while the men, rather than yield, rushed out upon the overwhelming numbers of the besiegers and fell fighting sword in hand. Muhammad after this soon reduced Sindh, and the Hindus had to submit to Moslem rule and to pay tribute. Those who would not embrace Islam were also forced to pay a poll tax, but were otherwise tolerantly treated. Two and a half years after his conquest of Sindh, Muhammad was recalled by the Muhammedan Governor of Persia, whose displeasure he had incurred, and was put to death. Then intrigues and quarrels ensued, and within forty years the Moslem power was so weakened that the Rajputs were able to rise against their rulers and to drive them out of Sindh.

Continued ascendancy of Rajputs.—After this India had peace from Muhammedan invasion till the end of the 10th century. During this period the Rajputs continued to extend their conquests, and by the end of it the whole of Western and North-Western India was ruled by Rajput kings and princes. Puranic Hinduism flourished greatly under their patronage. Tales and legends multiplied,

and Krishna, the hero of the Mahabharata, and Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, about this time were deified and worshipped as incarnations of the Supreme Being by the sect of the Vaisnavas.

Pathan invasion of the Punjab.—But all the while Moslem power was extending and closing in on India. At last, in 979, Jaipal, the Rajput Prince of Lahore, precipitated the conflict by marching an army up the Khyber Pass into Afghanistan, to exact compensation from Sabuktigin, the Muhammedan King of Ghazni, for raids on Indian territory committed by Afghans dwelling on the frontier. The Hindus suffered severely from the intense cold of that mountainous region, and after many had perished in a terrible snow-storm, they were so dispirited that Jaipal was forced to retrace his steps. The Afghans now pressed close upon his army, and also cut off his retreat by seizing the passes ahead. Jaipal was forced to surrender to save his army from annihilation, and had to agree to pay a large indemnity to Sabuktigin before he was allowed to return with the remnant of his troops to India. The sum was more than he could pay at the time, and he promised to send the remainder when he returned to Lahore. But, in the security of his capital, he refused to fulfil his promise, and even flung into prison the men whom Sabuktigin had sent to fetch the money. This rash act drew upon India the first Muhammedan invasion. Sabuktigin promptly descended upon him to avenge the insult, and, though the neighbouring Rajput princes came to Jaipal's assistance, he was defeated and the province of Peshawar wrested from him. Sabuktigin returned to Ghazni, where he died in 997. Though he never returned to India, he maintained a strong garrison at Peshawar to hold the further end of the Khyber Pass. Thus was India deprived by the folly of an Indian king of her natural defence against a northern invader.

Mahmud of Ghazni.—Sabuktigin was succeeded by his son Mahmud, who, when little more than a child, had already proved himself a daring warrior and a skilful general. The first two years of his reign were spent in consolidating his power, a task in which he showed great administrative ability. His father's expedition against Jaipal had proved that the undisciplined valour of the Hindus could not with-

stand a well-delivered attack, and the stories of the fabulous wealth of Hindu kings had excited his avarice. He therefore turned his attention as soon as he had leisure to this rich field of enterprise, and in the year 1001 led the first of his many expeditions into India. Jaipal, his father's enemy, with a number of petty chiefs, marched out to meet him. The opposing armies met near Peshawar, and the Hindus were signally defeated. Jaipal escaped from the battle, but was pursued and overtaken by Mahmud at the Sutlej. On payment of a large ransom and the promise of an annual tribute, he was released; and Mahmud, satisfied with the amount of plunder he had taken, returned to Ghazni. But the proud Rajput would not survive his double defeat and, having made over his kingdom to his son Anangapal, mounted the funeral pyre and perished in its flames.

Signal defeat of the Hindus.—During the next few years Mahmud paid three brief visits to India—two to collect arrears of tribute and one to punish a rebellious chief in Multan. Anangapal, although a tributary of Mahmud's, had been concerned in the Multan rising. Mahmud's next expedition was therefore directed against him. In 1009 he appeared with a large force of horse and foot at Peshawar. Anangapal, who had had timely warning of his approach, had meanwhile summoned all the powerful princes of Northern India to his aid, pointing out to them the necessity of combining against their common enemy. The kings of Delhi and Kanauj, of Ujjain and Gwalior, besides a host of petty princes, hurried to his assistance, realising that a national crisis had arisen, and that the coming struggle would be one between Islam and Hinduism. Northern India was now fully alive to the danger to which it was exposed, and bands of warriors flocked from all directions to the Punjab; while women sold their jewels, melted down their golden ornaments, and laboured at the loom to assist the holy cause. Mahmud was alarmed at the enormous and well-equipped host gathering before him, and, afraid to assume the offensive, entrenched himself at Bhatindah. The armies are said to have been encamped facing each other for forty days. Then the Hindus, growing impatient, attacked, using the same formation as Porus had used against Alexander, and

with the same disastrous result. The elephants took fright, and, turning, trampled down the men behind them. Mahmud's cavalry followed close upon them, and, dashing in upon the broken ranks of the Hindus, inflicted terrible slaughter upon them, and scattered them in flight. Hindustan now lay at Mahmud's mercy, but he contented himself for the present with the sack of the wealthy temple of Nagarkote in Kangra, and returned to Ghazni.

Thaneswar plundered.—His next expedition of importance, undertaken ostensibly in the cause of religion, was against Thaneswar in 1014. After a brief defence this ancient and wealthy city fell into his hands, and was given up to sack. The idols were of course destroyed, and the temples plundered of their vast hoards of treasure. Mahmud's army then turned back to Ghazni loaded with booty, and encumbered with hundreds of slaves.

Muttra plundered.—The Punjab was by this time gutted from end to end, so that Mahmud was forced to go further afield in search of plunder, and in 1018 he marched against Kanauj. The king of that city, being wholly unprepared to resist an attack, threw himself upon the conqueror's mercy, and Mahmud, taking pity on the suppliant, in spite of the splendour and magnificence which he saw within the city, spared it on condition that the king would acknowledge allegiance to him. But the expedition could not return empty handed, so he led his army against Muttra. This city, renowned throughout Hindustan for the beauty of its temples and its wealth, was given up for twenty days to plunder. The enormous booty, and the countless slaves they took, well recompensed his soldiers for their disappointment at Kanauj.

Permanent occupation of Lahore.—In 1021 Mahmud marched against Jaipal II., son of Anangapal, who during his brief reign had proved himself continuously troublesome to the Muhammedans. Jaipal was defeated, and fled to Ajmir, and Mahmud, having annexed his kingdom, placed a Muhammedan Governor at Lahore. This was an event of great importance, since it gave a permanent foundation to Moslem power in India.

Plunder of Somnath.—In 1026 he undertook his sixteenth and greatest expedition into India. At Somnath,

in the south of Guzerat, was a temple of Siva which was reputed to be one of the wealthiest and holiest in all India, and was besides a great place of pilgrimage. Mahmud was told that the priests of the temple had defied him to reduce Somnath, and he therefore determined to show them how vain was their trust in idols. Marching through Rajputana and Guzerat, and easily overcoming the opposition he met with on the way, he arrived before Somnath and laid siege to it. He met with the most stubborn resistance from the Rajput garrison, and was at one time even in danger of defeat. For two days they held him at bay, and then he broke into the city, but not before 5000 of the defenders had fallen and many of his own soldiers had been slain. Somnath was, according to custom, delivered up to plunder. Temples were looted, images destroyed, and the city ransacked by his soldiery for the wealth which it was known to contain. Mahmud then retraced his steps, carrying with him treasure to a fabulous amount. But on the way the Jats of Rajputana hung upon the skirts of his army, cutting off stragglers and plundering the baggage whenever a chance occurred. At length, to avoid the attacks to which his army was continually subjected, he was forced to turn aside from the cultivated tracts, and lead his demoralised troops through waterless deserts, where multitudes died of thirst and exposure.

His last expedition.—Mahmud was furious at the disastrous termination of the campaign, and his seventeenth and last expedition was undertaken to punish those who had molested his return march from Somnath. Rajputana was overrun, and terrible vengeance taken upon its unruly inhabitants.

His death.—After a reign of 33 years, in which he had devastated Northern India and added to his own dominions the Punjab, Bokhara, Samarkand, and part of Persia, in 1030 this remarkable man died. For his services in the cause of his religion he gained the name of "The Image Breaker." But it is doubtful whether avarice and the love of conquest rather than religion had not led him to invade India. Besides being a great conqueror and a successful administrator, he was also a patron of arts and letters. The spoils of Hindustan were used to enrich and beautify his

capital, and Ghazni was converted by him into a magnificent and stately city, with a museum, a library, and a university. The scholar Alberuni flourished at his court, and the great Persian poet Ferdausi wrote his Shah Namah in his honour.

Decline of Ghazni.—After the death of Mahmud the kingdom of Ghazni began to decline in power. A fresh horde of barbarians, the Saljuk Turks, appeared in Central Asia, and the kings of Ghazni were too busy repelling their invasions to be able to turn their attention to India. The Hindus, thus left to themselves, began to recover from the shock of Mahmud's invasions, and assuming the offensive wrested the sacred Nagarkote from the Muhammedan governor of the Punjab.

Hinduism still flourishing.—Except in those parts where the Muhammedans had established their rule, Hindustan was little affected by Mahmud's invasions. During the 11th century the Rajputs continued to extend their conquests, Puranic Hinduism grew and prospered, and much literary activity was displayed in different parts of the country. Rajyapala, the Rajput ruler of Kanauj, added Western Bengal to his dominions, and King Bhoja of Malwa attained to great renown in Central India. Raja Bhoja, like the legendary hero Vikramaditya, is the subject of many a Hindu story. He was a famous patron of literature, and is himself the reputed author of several well-known works. Bhāskara Acharya, the greatest of Indian astronomers, composed his works during this period, and in this century the modern languages of India, Hindi, Bengali, Mahratti, Tamil, and Telegu, came largely into use for literary purposes. Early in the twelfth century Ramanuja, a great reformer, popularised the worship of Vishnu as the one Supreme Being, and many Vaisnava sects were founded by his followers throughout Hindustan.

Rise of Ghor.—While the Ghazni kingdom was declining, a rival kingdom was rising at Ghor near Kandahar. Early in the 12th century a quarrel broke out between the two kingdoms, which led to reprisals and a bitter feud. Hostilities continued with varying fortune for many years; till at length in 1149 Alauddin, King of Ghor, in revenge for the treacherous murder of his brother, laid siege to Ghazni, and after a vigorous assault succeeded in cap-

turing it. The vengeance that he wreaked upon it was terrible. For seven days his soldiers massacred the inhabitants indiscriminately, while the city was given up to sack and all its noble buildings destroyed. The chiefs who had betrayed his brother were led away in chains to Ghor and there put to death, and their blood mixed with the mortar of the fortifications which Alauddin was building round the city. The ruthless butchery of the defenceless inhabitants of Ghazni, and the wanton destruction of its stately edifices, gained for Alauddin the name of Jahānsoz, the Incendiary of the World. The King of Ghazni, before the city fell into the hands of his vengeful enemy, had, luckily for him, made his escape towards India with his son Khusru. But he did not live to reach it, for on the way he died, worn out with age and broken with misfortunes. Khusru, however, reached the Punjab in safety, and in this dependency of the shattered Ghaznavi kingdom set up his capital at Lahore. He died in 1160 after a reign of seven years, and was succeeded by his son.

Muhammad Ghorī.—Alauddin meanwhile had died, and one of his nephews had become King of Ghor, and another Governor of Ghazni. The latter, named Shaha-buddin, but better known to history as Muhammad Ghorī, determined to reduce the Punjab to its former allegiance to Ghazni. After two unsuccessful attempts, in 1186 he captured Lahore and took its king prisoner. The last of the Ghaznavi dynasty was sent as a captive to Ghor, and the Punjab passed into the hands of the conqueror without a struggle.

Dissensions among Rajputs of Northern India.—Muhammad Ghorī had long wished to emulate the conqueror Mahmud, and now that he was master of the Punjab, and thus provided with a base in India itself from which to undertake the conquest of Hindustan, he lost no time in preparing an expedition for that purpose. There were at this time two great rival Rajput kingdoms in Northern India, Kanauj ruled over by Jay Chandra, and Delhi and Ajmir united into one kingdom under Prithvi Raj. But a feud had arisen between the two kings, and at the time of Muhammad Ghorī's coming the Rajput chiefs of Northern India were divided into two parties, one siding

with Jay Chandra and the other with Prithvi. As in the days of Porus, so now the Hindus could not set aside their differences to meet a common enemy, and thus when the Muhammedans came down upon India they had the luck to find a disunited Hindustan.

Fall of Delhi.—Muhammad attacked Prithvi's kingdom first, and captured the town of Bhatindah in 1191. Prithvi, who had already in many a fight proved himself a redoubtable leader, straightway marched out against him, and encountering him not far from Thaneswar, utterly defeated him and chased him back to Peshawar.

Muhammad was obliged to return to Ghazni. But he had known defeat before, and he was a man not easily to be discouraged or turned from his purpose; and having spent the next two years in making fresh preparations, he swept down upon India once more. Prithvi was again deserted by many who should have helped him, but collecting round him as many of the Rajput chiefs as would follow him, he encamped against Muhammad for the second time near Thaneswar. For some time the opposing armies passively watched each other. But one morning before dawn the Muhammedans suddenly attacked the Indian camp. The Hindus were completely taken by surprise and thrown into great confusion; and though they rallied and fought stubbornly throughout the day, the Muhammedans maintained their first advantage, and by evening the issue was no longer in doubt. Then Prithvi was captured, fighting in the fore-front of his army, and in despair the Hindus at once broke and fled. Prithvi was put to death by his ungenerous conqueror, and his kingdom annexed. Kutbuddin, a Turkish slave, who by his military genius had raised himself to the rank of general in his master's service, was appointed Governor of Delhi with the charge of the conquered territory. Muhammad then returned to Ghazni to recruit for a fresh invasion.

Annexation of Kanauj.—Jay Chandra had soon good cause to regret that he had not laid aside his enmity and helped Prithvi to repel the common enemy, for in 1194 Muhammad returned and marched against Kanauj. Jay Chandra made one great effort at Etawah to repel him, but was defeated and slain. His kingdom passed at once

to his conqueror, who, after formally annexing it and placing a Muhammedan garrison there to keep order, withdrew to Afghanistan. But rather than submit to Moslem rule, many of the Rajput chiefs of Northern India migrated to Rajputana, where they founded kingdoms which endure to this day.

Further Muhammedan conquests.—Muhammad again returned to Ghazni and on the death of his brother, the King of Ghor, in 1196, was crowned King of Ghor and Ghazni. During his absence from India, Kutbuddin the Governor of Delhi conquered Guzerat, and Bakhtiyar Khilji, the general whom he had left behind in Kanauj, annexed first Oudh and Behar, and then Western Bengal, the last named without a struggle.

Death of Muhammad.—Muhammad's Indian Empire was now of vast extent, and practically comprised the whole of Northern India as far as Guzerat on the west and the delta of the Ganges on the east. But annexations had followed each other so quickly that he had had no time to consolidate his empire. He therefore spent the rest of his days in subduing rebellions in the north, or marching expeditions into India to punish refractory Hindu chiefs. In the year 1206, while on his way back to Ghor from one of these expeditions, his camp was attacked at night by the Ghakkars, a hill tribe whom he had punished three years before with great severity for raiding the Punjab. So sudden and unexpected was their attack that before they could be driven off they actually succeeded in penetrating to the king's tent and stabbed him to death while he lay asleep. Though not comparable with Mahmud as a general, Muhammad left by his conquests a more lasting effect upon India. While Mahmud had been content with raiding and plundering, Muhammad aimed at extension of dominions, and though he showed less capacity than Mahmud for administering a vast empire, the generals he left behind him were able to hold the conquered countries for him, and firmly to establish Moslem rule in India.

The Slave Dynasty 1206-1290.—After Muhammad's death, his empire, as might have been expected, fell to pieces. Kutbuddin, the Governor of Delhi, set up as an independent sovereign, and proclaimed himself Emperor of

India in 1206. He was the founder of a line of kings known as the Slave Dynasty, because, like him, several of his successors were originally slaves. Kutbuddin, after reigning for four years, was killed by a fall from his horse. His name is chiefly remembered in connection with the Kutb Minár, a tapering and graceful tower of red sandstone, inscribed with verses of the Kurân, erected by him at Delhi. He was succeeded by his son, a weak and dissolute man, during whose brief reign the Muhammedan governors of Sindh and Bengal declared themselves independent. Before he had been upon the throne a single year he was deposed by Altamsh, the Governor of Burdwan, who had once been his father's slave.

First appearance of the Moghuls.—During Altamsh's reign the Moghuls made their first irruption into India. By the military genius of a great leader, Chengiz Khan, the nomad tribes of Tartary had been gathered together into one people, and their fighting men converted from undisciplined but hardy savages into well-trained soldiers. After overrunning the whole of China, they poured in vast hordes into Central Asia. One after another the Muhammedan kingdoms fell before them, the fields were laid waste, and the cities sacked and destroyed. Wherever the Moghuls met with resistance they signalled the defeat of their enemies with appalling massacres. The world has known no more pitiless and inhuman campaigns than those of Chengiz Khan and his generals, and no more furious and blood-thirsty soldiers than the early Moghuls. Before he died this "world stormer," as he is called, who had started life as the chieftain of a petty Mongolian tribe, had created an empire stretching from the Dneiper to the China Sea. India narrowly escaped the horrors of one of his devastating invasions. On one occasion while in pursuit of an Afghan prince who had fled to India, he appeared on the banks of the Indus, and Peshawar was actually ravaged by his troops. But, hearing that Altamsh had, in terror of his name, turned back the fugitive, he withdrew to attack Herat, the inhabitants of which had risen against the Moghul governor. As an instance of his ferocity, it may be mentioned that when the town fell into his hands, he put to death man, woman, and child. It is

said that on this occasion alone 1,600,000 people were butchered in cold blood.

Altamsh subdues Northern India.—The retirement of Chengiz Khan left Altamsh free to punish the rebellious governors of Sindh and Bengal. After successful campaigns against both, he turned his attention to his independent Hindu neighbours, and invaded Rajputana. The fortresses of Rantambhor and Gwalior were captured after protracted sieges, and then Ujjain, the ancient capital of Malwa, was taken. It is needless, perhaps, to add that wherever he went he broke down images and demolished temples. At his death, which occurred in 1236, he had made himself the master of all Northern India as far south as the Vindhya Hills.

Causes of Muhammedan success.—It may seem surprising that the Hindus, who so enormously outnumbered their conquerors, and who had fought so stoutly for their independence, should have been held in check from any general rising against their Muhammedan rulers. The explanation is to be found in the immense number of hardy, well trained soldiers, available at all times for repressing them. When Ghazni fell, Khusru was followed into India by bands of Turki warriors fleeing from the general massacre; and when the Moghuls swept down upon Central Asia, many of the soldiery of Afghanistan, Samarcand, and Bokhara fled to India, and took service under Moslem rulers. There was thus an almost inexhaustible supply of the finest fighting material ready to hand, and a Hindu rising could be crushed before it had time to grow formidable. The Muhammedan Emperor of Delhi in particular, from the position of his capital, could always command as many mercenaries as he wanted to wage his wars. But while the presence of Afghan and Turki soldiers strengthened the hold which the Muhammedans had over India, it was at the same time a fruitful source of danger and weakness to the Delhi Empire; for it enabled pretenders to the throne, and rebellious governors to surround themselves rapidly with large and well-disciplined armies.

Sultan Raziya.—Altamsh was succeeded by his son, a feeble and cruel debauchee, who was deposed after a reign

of six months and put to death. His sister Raziya, a woman of remarkable vigour and ability, was raised to the throne in his stead. She is known by the name of Sultan Raziya, a tribute to her masculine energy, and owns the proud distinction of having been the only woman who sat upon the throne of Delhi. She began her reign well, and acted up to her reputation for learning and good sense; but, unfortunately for herself, excited the jealousy of her nobles by showing too great a partiality for an Abyssinian slave. A rebellion was the result, which ended in her being deposed and put to death, after a reign of three and a half years.

Reappearance of the Moghuls.—The next two kings, who were only distinguished for vice and cruelty, were, after brief reigns, both assassinated. Nasiruddin Ahmad, a younger brother of Raziya, then seized the throne and occupied it for 21 years. During his reign the Moghuls again made their appearance in the Punjab, and their invasions from this time forward became a constant source of annoyance to the Pathan rulers of Delhi. The Rajputs of Mewat seized the opportunity to revolt, and the Ghakkars renewed their raids upon the Punjab. But owing to the energy and ability of his minister Balban, the tide of Moghul invasion was stemmed, the Rajputs were subdued, and the Ghakkars driven back to their native hills.

Balban.—After Nasiruddin's death, in 1266, Balban seized his master's throne. He was a remarkable man, and, though nearly 60 years of age, still in full vigour. His career had been an unusually checkered one even for those wild times. Starting life as Altamsh's slave, he had gradually risen to the highest post in the kingdom, and had at length even been considered worthy to marry his master's daughter. His enemies had reason to tremble at his name, for he was as cruel as he was able. His first act on becoming king was to massacre the band of confederates who had helped him to the throne. Governors suspected of harbouring treasonable designs were flogged, sometimes even to death, before his eyes. The Rajputs of Mewat and Malwa, who had again risen, were hunted from their fastnesses, and nearly exterminated, and lastly a revolt



in Bengal was put down with merciless severity. His long reign was a succession of Hindu revolts, rebellions of Muhammedan governors, and Moghul invasions, but the old warrior was strong enough to hold his kingdom against them all. His capital became the asylum of ruined kings and princes from Central Asia, who had been driven out of their dominions by Moghul invasions, and was filled with poets and men of letters from northern countries.

End of the Slave dynasty.—Balban died in 1287, and was succeeded by a grandson, who, like so many of his predecessors on the throne, was weak, dissolute, and cruel. Jalaluddin Khilji, governor of the Punjab, whom he had appointed his minister, poisoned him after he had reigned three years, and seized the throne. Thus the slave dynasty was brought to an end in 1290, after lasting for 84 years. The cruelty and viciousness of most of its kings had alienated the Muhammedans and goaded the Hindus to revolt. When it ceased the Moslem Empire in India was no firmer than it had been when Kutbuddin, the founder, ascended the throne of Delhi.

The Khilji dynasty—1290-1320.—Jalaluddin, the founder of the Khilji dynasty, was an old man when he usurped the throne. Fifty years of his life had been spent in repelling Moghul invasions in the Punjab, and he was now only anxious to finish his days in peace. But his nephew, Alauddin, governor of Kara, near Allahabad, was of a restless and daring spirit, and could not be restrained. His first exploit was the capture of Bhilsa, south of the Vindhya hills, 300 miles away, with a handful of cavalry. The Raja was taken unawares by the suddenness of the raid and forced to submit, and his city was plundered. Emboldened by this success, Alauddin made a dash upon Maharashtra with a body of 8000 troops. The Raja was surprised in his capital of Devagiri, and obliged to sue for peace to save the city from sack. The price demanded was a portion of his territory, an enormous ransom, and the promise of a yearly tribute. Alauddin then galloped back to Kara, laden with booty. The old king, on the news of his return, hastened to congratulate his victorious nephew, and for his pains was stabbed to death by him while in the act of embracing him.

Alauddin.—Alauddin, after this dastardly act, marched on Delhi, and having by bribery and intimidation allayed all opposition, seized the crown, in 1296. He signalised his accession by hunting down and murdering the sons of Jelaluddin to make his position secure. The first two years of his reign were spent in campaigns against the Moghuls, whom he defeated and drove out of the Punjab. In the third year he made an expedition into Guzerat. The Raja fled before him, and the country was annexed. He next turned his attention to the Rajputs of Rajputana, who had never ceased, in spite of merciless repression, to raid the neighbouring Muhammedan territory.

Invades Rajputana.—As has already been stated, when the Muhammedans conquered Northern India many Rajput chiefs with their retainers fled to Rajputana, and there established small independent kingdoms. For mutual protection they formed themselves into a loose confederacy, recognising the Rana of Chittor as their overlord. Alauddin was determined to put a stop to their raiding, and he therefore marched the next year into Rajputana to punish them. The capital of the Jaipur Rajputs was captured by assault after a stubborn defence, and its inhabitants massacred; then laying waste the country, he marched against Chittor. The fortress held out for six months before he could reduce it, and the Rajputs fought to the last with desperate valour. The Rana was captured when it fell; but an heroic remnant of the garrison cut their way through the besiegers and fled to the Aravalli Hills. From there, under a nephew of the Rana, they made themselves so troublesome by continually sallying out and raiding and ravaging the country round that Alauddin was glad at last to restore Chittor, on condition that his suzerainty was acknowledged.

Campaign against the Moghuls.—After reducing Chittor, Alauddin was forced to turn his attention to the Punjab, where a fresh invasion of Moghuls was taking place. This kept him busy for the next two years. Nothing could exceed the ferocity he displayed in the conduct of this campaign. The Moghuls had by this time been converted to Islam, but they belonged to the sect of Shiah, while Alauddin and his Afghan soldiers were Sunnis. They were therefore anathema to him on this

account; and, moreover, they were but partially civilized, and are said to have been wantonly cruel and brutal. Captives received no mercy at his hands. Men were put to death in cold blood, and women and children sold as slaves. Thousands of wretched prisoners were sent in chains to Delhi, where they were trampled upon by the state elephants to make a public spectacle, and their skulls afterwards heaped up in pyramids at the city gates.

Kafur's campaign in Southern India.—While Alauddin was engaged in suppressing Rajput revolts and repelling Moghul invasions, Malik Kafur, his favourite general, was conducting a campaign against the independent Hindu kingdoms of Southern India. Kafur was a converted Hindu, and had been given as a slave to Alauddin during the expedition to Guzerat. Alauddin had taken a great fancy to him, and had marked him at once for high command. At that time the chief kingdoms of the Deccan were Maharashtra, Telingana, and Dwāra Samudra in North Mysore. All three were ruled over by Rajput kings. Had they combined they would have been more than a match for the Muhammedans; but they were no wiser than the Rajputs of Delhi and Kanauj had been when Muhammad Ghori descended upon Northern India. The excuse for Kafur's expedition was that the Raja of Maharashtra had failed to pay his tribute. His country was quickly overrun, his capital pillaged, and he himself was sent a prisoner to Delhi. But he succeeded by rich gifts in pleasing Alauddin so well during his captivity that he was restored to his dominions. After the conquest of Maharashtra Kafur led his army south. Dwāra Samudra was laid waste, Warangal, the capital of Telingana, sacked, and the country ravaged almost as far as Cape Comorin in the extreme south. The campaign was a proof of the wealth of the Hindu kingdoms of the Deccan, and also of their defencelessness, and the facts were not forgotten.

Last years of Alauddin.—Kafur then returned to his master, and was rewarded by being made Prime Minister. Alauddin's constitution was now enfeebled and his vigour greatly impaired, but his ferocity was no whit abated. His brother was put to death under suspicion of treason, his rebellious nephews were blinded and then beheaded,

and the queen and her two sons, accused of plotting against him, imprisoned. The news that his health was failing was the signal for a general revolt. Chittor regained its independence, and the Muhammedan garrisons were driven out of the Deccan. Rebellion and sedition spread far and wide; his very palace became a hot-bed of intrigue. In the midst of these disorders in the year 1316 he died, his end being hastened, it is said, by poison given him by his favourite, Kafur. Kafur placed Alauddin's youngest son upon the throne, and began to administer the empire as regent. But Mubarak, an elder brother of the young king, who had narrowly escaped assassination at the hands of Kafur, heading a successful rebellion, slew the regent, put out the eyes of the puppet ruler and imprisoned him, and had himself proclaimed king.

Decline and fall of the Khilji dynasty.—Mubarak proved himself a worthless debauchee, and entrusted the government of the state to slaves, one of whom, named Malik Khusru, a renegade Hindu, was made Prime Minister. Khusru took the earliest opportunity to murder his master and seize his throne. His first act as ruler was to cut off the House of Khilji root and branch by the murder of every member of Alauddin's family. But he was as stupid as he was brutal and cruel, and while he persecuted Hindus he insulted the religion of Muhammedans. Within five months of his accession he was deposed and put to death by Ghazi Beg Tughlak, Governor of the Punjab, whom the disgusted nobles had called in to rid them of the tyrant. No member of the Khilji family remaining, Ghazi Beg was chosen king, under the title of Ghiasuddin, Champion of the Faith, in 1320.

The Tughlak Dynasty, 1320-1414—The new king, who had begun life as a Turki slave, was the first of a line of kings known as the Tughlak Sultans. Delhi had become such a nest of sedition, owing to the number of wild Pathan and Turki adventurers from Central Asia that resorted to it, that he considered it unsafe to live there. He therefore removed his capital to a place about four miles away, which he called Tughlakabad. He had hardly been on the throne four years when he was killed under suspicious circumstances by the collapse of a wooden pavilion erected for his reception by his son and successor.

Muhammad Tughlak.—This son was the celebrated Muhammad Tughlak, one of the strangest characters in all history. He was a man of deep learning and great abilities, simple in his manner of living, and brave and skilful in war. But his violence of temper, his waywardness, and his inhumanity made his long reign a curse instead of a blessing to his subjects. The position to which he had succeeded was one of extreme difficulty. His empire stretched from Assam on the east to Maharashtra on the west, but, owing to the rebellious nature of the Muhammedan governors and the untameable spirit of the Rajputs, it was never under complete control. The country was flooded with petty Afghan chiefs and their retainers—landless men who had been forced to seek refuge in India under pressure of Moghul invasions. They were restless freebooters, without any feelings of loyalty to the Delhi Emperor, and, when not engaged as mercenaries in plundering expeditions against the Hindus, were always ready to take part in any mischief that might be afoot. And in the north the Moghuls were becoming more continuously troublesome; their troops were better disciplined, and their raids more systematic and more skilfully executed.

His folly and inhumanity.—A cruel and capricious tyrant like Muhammad Tughlak, who frequently betrayed in his conduct symptoms of insanity, was hardly the man to administer such an empire. In order that he might be left alone to deal with his rebellious subjects, he emptied his treasury in bribing the Moghuls to retire from the Punjab; and then to raise money he increased the land-tax to such an extent that the cultivators in despair abandoned their lands and fled to the jungles. To punish them for this, bands of soldiers were sent out to surround the tracts in which they had taken shelter, and hunt them down and kill them like wild beasts. On one occasion, in an outburst of mad fury, he personally conducted a general massacre of the Hindus of Kanauj. The desolated country was soon a prey to famine, Delhi itself was stricken and thousands within the city died of starvation. In the midst of these horrors, being struck by the beauty of Devagiri, he determined, with characteristic impulsiveness, at once to make it his capital. The wretched famished people of Delhi were

ordered to evacuate the city, on pain of death if they disobeyed, and march with all their belongings a distance of 800 miles. In spite of the fearful mortality which occurred, and though the project had to be abandoned as utterly impracticable, he had the folly and inhumanity to make a second attempt, and thus sacrificed to his whim the lives of many thousands more. At his wits' end for money, he sent out an expedition of 100,000 men, by way of Assam, to plunder China. The few who returned to tell the tale of failure were put to death by the furious and disappointed monarch. Another expedition was equipped and sent against Persia; but the soldiers, being without pay, deserted in such large numbers that the project had to be abandoned. As a last desperate measure for filling his treasury, he issued a forced copper currency. For a time it was successful, and his coins were accepted as tokens of fictitious value. But foreign merchants refused to accept them, and counterfeiters took to imitating them. A panic was the natural result, trade stopped, and beggary and misery spread throughout the land.

General revolt.—Rebellion and anarchy followed closely on the heels of ruin and famine. The Governor of Malwa, his nephew, first raised the signal of revolt, and being captured was flayed alive by his ferocious uncle. Rebellions in the Punjab and Sindh followed, but were quickly suppressed. Then came a rising in Guzerat, and while Muhammad was engaged in putting it down the governors of Lower Bengal and the Deccan asserted their independence, and the Hindu kings of Southern India threw off their allegiance. The whole country was up in arms against the oppressor. Having crushed the rising in Guzerat, Muhammad hurried towards the Deccan; but on the way he was seized with a fever and died. His reign of terror had lasted 27 years, and during it his empire had been subjected to every kind of calamity. He left to his successor a much reduced kingdom, an empty treasury, and a plentiful crop of troubles.

Vijayanagar founded.—During the reign of Muhammad Tuglak two notable events occurred in the south. These were the establishment of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, and the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom,

the first independent Muhammedan State in the Deccan. The result of Malik Kafur's expeditions into Southern India in the time of Alauddin Kilji had been to plunge the country into a state of anarchy. The ancient Hindu kingdoms were overthrown or so weakened that there existed for a time no ruler with sufficient power to restore order or to cope with Muhammedan raiders. But the misgovernment of Muhammad Tuglak so distracted his empire that a Hindu prince of Telingana, named Bukka Ray, was able without molestation to build up out of the ruins of the lately destroyed Hindu kingdoms a new Hindu empire. This extensive kingdom, to which the name of Vijayanagar was given, after its capital, became for a couple of hundred years the last stronghold of independent Hinduism. So great did it at last become that in the beginning of the 16th century, under a ruler named Krishnadeo Rai, it comprised the whole of the Peninsula south of the Krishna river.

The Bahmani kingdom established.—The Bahmani kingdom owed its origin to a combination of the Muhammedan noblemen in the Deccan to resist the cruel oppressions of Muhammad Tuglak. Their leader was a man named Hasan, who, though of good birth, had in early life been reduced by poverty to take service under a Brahman called Gangu. On the death of Muhammad Tuglak, his successor being too weak to put down the rising acknowledged the independence of the Deccan, and thus Hasan became the founder of an independent Muhammedan kingdom. He ascended the throne in 1347 under the title of Sultan Alauddin Hasan Gangu Bahmani. The last two names he took in honour of his old Brahman master, who had befriended him through life, and whom he now in gratitude made his first Prime Minister. His capital was at a place called Kulbarga, west of Golconda, and before he died he was ruler over a kingdom stretching from Berar in the north to the Krishna river in the south.

Rivalry between them.—Between two such powerful kingdoms growing up together, the one the champion of Hinduism, the other representing militant Islam, as might be expected, war was almost unceasing. Acts of aggression followed by bloody reprisals make up most of the history of

both, the Hindus being not less cruel and vindictive than the Muhammedans.

Feroz Tuglak.—Muhammad was succeeded in 1351 by his cousin, Feroz Tuglak, a very different stamp of man. He was a pious Muhammedan, and more anxious to spread his religion than to extend his dominions. During his reign many Hindus were converted to Islam, especially in Bengal, by the efforts of itinerant Muhammedan preachers. He did not attempt to recover the lost provinces in the Deccan, but acknowledged the Muhammedan governors as independent sovereigns. Distant expeditions with his empty treasury were out of the question. Though nominally Emperor of Northern India, he was in reality only King of the Punjab and the North-West Provinces. Bengal had become an independent kingdom during the last days of his predecessor, and Malwa and Guzerat were practically self-governing during his reign. He spent his reign in works of public utility, and in the amelioration of the condition of his subjects. Much of the land which had fallen out of cultivation in Muhammad's reign was reclaimed, taxes were lightened, canals were cut, tanks dug, roads constructed, caravanserais built, and hospitals, schools, and colleges opened. He was certainly a more enlightened ruler than any of his predecessors, but unfortunately, like them, he could not refrain from persecuting Hindus. He died in 1388 after a long and peaceful reign of 38 years.

Independent Muhammedan kingdoms.—After his death anarchy and rebellion broke out afresh. His successors were weak and cruel, and soon completed the ruin of the empire which Muhammad had begun. Within six years nothing remained to the Emperor of Delhi but the capital itself and the country round about it. But though the empire had decayed, the Muhammedans were increasing their hold upon India. Bengal, Jaunpur, Sindh, Guzerat, and the Deccan, having thrown off their allegiance to the Delhi ruler, had become powerful Muhammedan kingdoms, and their Hindu subjects had learnt to submit with patience to the rule of the foreigner. Rajputana and the south were now the last strongholds of independent Hinduism.

Timur sacks Delhi.—In 1398 another world-stormer from Central Asia swept down upon India. Timur, or

Tamerlane, as he is sometimes called, was a descendant of the terrible Chengiz Khan. While Chengiz was a mere ruthless plunderer, Timur, who was a Muhammedan, professed religious zeal as the ground of conquest. The wild Tartar tribes who had invaded Central Asia under Chengiz Khan, had during the 13th century become converted to Islam, and were full of enthusiasm for their new faith. Religious fanaticism, added to their lust of plunder, made them, if possible, more ferocious and callous of human suffering than ever, and certainly more formidable in war. Timur had the genius of his ancestor for converting savage hordes into well-trained armies, and an equal ambition for conquest. He was over sixty years of age, and the ruler of an empire greater even than that of Chengiz Khan, when hearing of the wealth of India and the enfeebled state of the Pathan rulers of Delhi he determined to invade it. Giving out that his mission was to destroy idolatry, he marched with an immense army down the Khyber Pass into the Punjab. Timur was destitute of humanity, and his soldiers were brutal and cruel to a degree unsurpassed in the annals of war. City after city fell before him and was plundered, and those of its inhabitants that were not taken as slaves were put to the sword. Wherever he went he spread ruin and desolation. Panic preceded his approach, and those who could, abandoning everything, fled for their lives; so that the country was filled with hurrying and terrified fugitives. At length he reached Delhi, but before commencing the siege, he ordered a massacre of his Indian captives, that he might be unencumbered by them in the attack, and might engage with all his forces in the assault. In obedience to this cruel order 100,000 helpless prisoners were butchered in cold blood in the space of an hour or two. The day before the attack Mahmud Tuglak the Emperor slipped away from the doomed city, and fled to Guzerat. After a feeble resistance the inhabitants capitulated on a promise that their lives should be spared. Timur then entered with his army, and proclaimed himself the Emperor of Hindustan. But notwithstanding his promise, he gave the city up to sack. For five days his soldiers raged through it without restraint, pillaging and massacring till the houses were

more than a match for the enervated Afghans of the Indian plains. By mid-day Babar had gained a decisive victory. 15,000 of the enemy lay dead upon the field, and Ibrahim Lodi was himself among the slain. In Delhi, which at once submitted to him without a struggle, Babar had himself proclaimed Emperor of India. He then marched upon Agra, captured it, and seized the family of Ibrahim. Northern India now lay at the feet of the Moghuls.

Mahmud Gawan.—The year 1526, which is memorable as the date of the foundation of the Moghul empire in India, is also noteworthy as the year in which the Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan came to an end. Between the years 1435 and 1461, under two weak and vicious rulers, the kingdom rapidly declined. Then the genius of one man, Mahmud Gawan, infused into it for a time fresh vitality. During the 25 years that he served the reigning princes as Prime Minister, he succeeded not only in maintaining a just and firm government, but by annexing the Konkan and the Northern Circars, and completing the subjugation of Telingana, even extended the boundaries of the state. He was a man of learning and piety, simple in his habits, and incorruptible, employing his great wealth without stint in charities and objects of public utility. His name is justly revered as that of one of the most humane and public-spirited statesmen that India has produced. But all his virtues could not save him from an evil fate. In the faithful discharge of his duties he aroused the jealousy and the hatred of the turbulent Deccani nobility, and they at length contrived his ruin. He was executed on a false charge by order of the sovereign for whom he had worked so ably and so disinterestedly.

Break-up of the Bahmani kingdom.—After his death the state was rent by factions and quickly fell to pieces. But out of the ruins of the Bahmani kingdom there arose five small and vigorous independent states, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Golconda. But they all continued to display the factiousness of the parent kingdom, were always at war with one another, and could not even combine for mutual protection against a common foe. Thus the extinction of the Bahmani kingdom greatly

weakened Muhammedan power in the Deccan, and may justly be said to have contributed ultimately not a little to the downfall of Islamic supremacy in India.

India under the Pathan kings.—The Pathan kings of Delhi had held their dominions under a sort of military despotism. They had contented themselves with garrisoning important places with their mercenaries, collecting the land tax in the country immediately under them, wresting tribute from Hindu Rajas, and exacting contributions from Muhammedan governors, when they felt themselves strong enough to enforce obedience; they had never attempted directly to administer their territories. During all this period the Muhammedans continued to persecute the conquered Hindus. Their own chroniclers testify with pride to the uncompromising way in which their rulers destroyed idols and temples, and slew by thousands those who persisted in idolatry. Even so mild and beneficent a ruler as Feroz Tuglak takes credit to himself for the destruction of shrines and the massacre of obdurate idolators; while of the ruthless and bloodthirsty Alauddin it is recorded that “when he advanced from Kara the Hindus in alarm descended into the ground like ants. He departed towards the garden of Behar to dye the soil as red as a tulip.”

Condition of the Hindus.—But the Hindus, while subject at all times to religious persecution, enjoyed under their conquerors a large measure of liberty. Their social system remained unimpaired, and the Brahmans retained over them their power and influence undiminished. Though many converts were made to Islam, they were mostly from among those who had nothing to lose and everything to gain in the social scale by turning Muhammedan. The great mass of the people remained as before; and so far from the regulations of caste being relaxed, the persecutions to which they were subjected only made them hold to them more tenaciously than ever.

Union of Hindus and Muhammedans in the Deccan.—In Northern India there was very little sympathy between the rulers and the ruled, and their religious differences made any sort of union impossible. But with the growth of independent Muhammedan kingdoms in Bengal, Sindh, and the Deccan, Hindus and Muhammedans had to

more than a match for the enervated Afghans of the Indian plains. By mid-day Babar had gained a decisive victory. 15,000 of the enemy lay dead upon the field, and Ibrahim Lodi was himself among the slain. In Delhi, which at once submitted to him without a struggle, Babar had himself proclaimed Emperor of India. He then marched upon Agra, captured it, and seized the family of Ibrahim. Northern India now lay at the feet of the Moghuls.

Mahmud Gawan.—The year 1526, which is memorable as the date of the foundation of the Moghul empire in India, is also noteworthy as the year in which the Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan came to an end. Between the years 1435 and 1461, under two weak and vicious rulers, the kingdom rapidly declined. Then the genius of one man, Mahmud Gawan, infused into it for a time fresh vitality. During the 25 years that he served the reigning princes as Prime Minister, he succeeded not only in maintaining a just and firm government, but by annexing the Konkan and the Northern Circars, and completing the subjugation of Telingana, even extended the boundaries of the state. He was a man of learning and piety, simple in his habits, and incorruptible, employing his great wealth without stint in charities and objects of public utility. His name is justly revered as that of one of the most humane and public-spirited statesmen that India has produced. But all his virtues could not save him from an evil fate. In the faithful discharge of his duties he aroused the jealousy and the hatred of the turbulent Deccani nobility, and they at length contrived his ruin. He was executed on a false charge by order of the sovereign for whom he had worked so ably and so disinterestedly.

Break-up of the Bahmani kingdom.—After his death the state was rent by factions and quickly fell to pieces. But out of the ruins of the Bahmani kingdom there arose five small and vigorous independent states, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, and Golconda. But they all continued to display the factiousness of the parent kingdom, were always at war with one another, and could not even combine for mutual protection against a common foe. Thus the extinction of the Bahmani kingdom greatly



weakened Muhammedan power in the Deccan, and may justly be said to have contributed ultimately not a little to the downfall of Islamic supremacy in India.

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adapt themselves to a different condition of things. These kingdoms were essentially Indian, for the foreign element was small, and the rulers could not look to the north, as the Delhi Emperor looked, for a continuous and inexhaustible supply of Muhammedan mercenaries. It was therefore necessary to treat Hindu subjects with some consideration. In course of time, under the influence of climate and surroundings, racial differences grew less marked and antipathies less vehement. Hindus and Muhammedans came to regard each other as countrymen, and Hindu officers were employed in posts of trust side by side with Muhammedans. Although divided by the impassable barrier of religious difference, and maintaining an uncompromising attitude in the matter of their social and domestic regulations, they learnt in time to regard each other with a less intolerant spirit, so that it became possible for them to live together in some sort of harmony.

Babar drives the Afghans out of Northern India.—Babar and his son Humayan, after the fall of Agra, set about tranquillising the country round. The Afghans, though decisively beaten at Paniput, did not without further struggle relinquish Northern India to the Moghuls. They rallied at Jaunpur, and there made a desperate effort to set up a rival kingdom. But it was of no avail, and they were defeated and driven out of the North-West Provinces and Oudh.

Defeats the Rajputs.—Hardly had the Afghans been subdued before Sangram Singh, the Rana of Chittor, headed a combination of Rajputs against Babar. Sangram Singh had taken advantage of the stormy times preceding the fall of the Pathan empire to extend his dominions and consolidate his power. He was therefore a formidable adversary, especially as Mahmud Lodi, brother of the late king, with 10,000 men had joined him, hoping with his assistance to drive the Moghuls out of India. In the year 1527 the allies marched upon Agra, and encountered Babar at Fatehpur Sikri, close by. The fate of India hung upon the issue of the battle. At one time during the fight the Moghuls began to give way, and defeat seemed imminent. But their better discipline saved them, and, rallying under Babar's exhortations, they made one supreme effort, and



snatched the victory from the already exultant enemy. The advancing Hindus and Afghans were checked, then driven back, and finally routed with great slaughter. Babar gave the Rajputs no chance to recover. Following up his success, he assumed the offensive, and completely broke their power in Northern India by the capture of all their principal strongholds. In 1529 Behar was added to his dominions. He was now the ruler of an empire stretching from Bokhara to Multan, and from the Arabian Sea to the eastern borders of Behar.

Death of Babar.—Babar died in 1530 at the age of 50. In many respects he was an ideal Eastern monarch. He was brave and generous, frank and impulsive, cheerful and patient under misfortunes, fond of letters himself, and a patron of learning; and if in his dealings with his enemies he showed himself callous and cruel, he only acted after the manner of his times. On his death the empire he had created was divided up between his four sons. Humayun, the eldest, became Emperor of Delhi, and Kámran, the second, ruler of the Punjab and Afghanistan. The other two sons were provided with Indian governorships under their eldest brother.

Humayun's critical position.—Humayun's position was a critical one. The Afghans had not yet abandoned all hope of wresting India from the Moghuls, and were again giving trouble in the eastern portion of his dominions. Bahadur Shah, the King of Guzerat, was absorbing into his kingdom the neighbouring territories; and Sher Shah, a Pathan soldier of fortune, had made himself the master of Behar; added to which the jealousy existing between Kámran and Humayun made it impossible for the latter to obtain from the north the fresh supplies of Moghul soldiers necessary for the defence of his kingdom.

Bahadur Shah driven out of Guzerat.—A few months before Babar's death, Bahadur Shah had captured Chittor and placed there a Muhammedan garrison. Soon after Humayun's accession, the widow of the late Rana appealed to him to expel the Afghan governor. Humayun, who had a private grudge against Bahadur and was alarmed at his growing power, readily responded to her appeal and marched an army into Rajputana. Chittor was captured,

Malwa annexed, and Bahadur chased into Guzerat. Humayun, following close behind, forced him to fly from place to place, and ultimately drove him from his kingdom. The campaign concluded with the storming and capture of Champanir, the hill fort in which were stored the treasures of the kingdom. In this last exploit Humayun displayed conspicuous courage, being one of the first to scale its walls.

Struggle with Sher Shah.—But while Humayun was thus employed, Sher Shah had conquered Bengal and proclaimed himself its king. He had also seized the strong fort of Chunar, on the Ganges. Humayun was thus forced to leave Guzerat and hurry back to the north. As soon as he had gone, Bahadur Shah returned and recovered all the territory which had been taken from him. After a siege of six months, Humayun captured Chunar, and Sher Shah fled back to Bengal. Humayun followed in pursuit, and took Patna and Gaur, the capital of Bengal, on the way; but he was unable to overtake Sher Shah, who made good his escape to the jungle. As the rainy season had commenced, Humayun decided to retire; but sickness broke out in his army, and his retreat was cut off by floods. Whereupon Sher Shah emerged from his hiding-place, recovered Behar and Chunar, and laid siege to Jaunpore. Humayun, as soon as the rains were over, began to retreat. Sher Shah at once abandoned the siege of Jaunpore, and hurried back to cut him off. The two armies met at Buxar in 1539, and encamped opposite each other. Humayun, fearing to engage with his weakened forces, entered into negotiations with Sher Shah, and agreed to appoint him Governor of Behar and Bengal. Scarcely were the terms of peace agreed upon when the treacherous Afghans fell upon the rear of Humayun's army. The Moghuls, taken unawares, were seized with panic, and, flying in disorder, plunged into the Ganges, where thousands of them were drowned. Humayun himself leapt on horseback into the river, and attempted to swim across; but his horse sank beneath him, and but for the assistance of a water-carrier, who lent him his inflated *mashak*, he too would have been drowned.

Flight of Humayun.—Sher Shah continued his victorious course as far as Kanauj, while Humayun fled before him to Agra. Both occupied the next few months



in preparation for a final struggle. Sher Shah was now the champion of the Pathans against the Moghuls. Afghan chiefs flocked to his standard from all directions, and he had soon an immense army with him. Humayun, on the other hand, was hampered by the intrigues of his brothers, and was forced to face the crisis with what Moghuls he could collect in Northern India. The armies met at Kanauj in 1540, and the Moghuls were again defeated with great slaughter. Humayun was obliged to fly for his life and to abandon his kingdom to the victor. Kámran refused to afford him refuge in his dominions, and he had to turn aside and make his way with his family to Persia through the desert of Sindh. On the way to Amarkot, in 1542, his famous son Akbar was born. The fugitives, after enduring great hardships, at last reached Persia and threw themselves on the protection of the king. But shelter was only granted them on the humiliating conditions that they would become Shiahhs instead of Sunnis.

Sher Shah at Delhi.—After the victory of Kanauj Sher Shah ascended the throne of Delhi. The lessons of the past were not lost upon a man so able. He perceived that if he was to be free from Moghul incursions, he must get possession of the Punjab. Kámran, anxious to be on good terms with so formidable an antagonist, readily ceded it to him; and Sher Shah lost no time in building a strong fort at Rhotas on the Jhelum as a protection against invasion. That he might be able to move an army quickly to any point in his wide dominions, he constructed a road stretching from Gaur to his new fort in the Punjab, a distance of 2000 miles. Along both sides of it he planted trees, dug wells and built serais. Three other similar but shorter strategic roads, traversing different portions of his empire, were also made by him.

His administration.—Sher Shah was not only a great general, he was also a great administrator. Though almost continually occupied during his short reign with military operations, he found time to devise an admirable system of revenue collections, and to effect many improvements in civil government. It may justly be claimed for him that he laid the foundations of the successful system of administration adopted by his great successors the Moghul emperors.

Hindus for the first time under a Pathan emperor of Delhi were exempt from state persecution, and were even employed in such important posts as those of revenue accountants. The land revenue was fixed at one-fourth of the produce, and means devised to prevent, as far as possible, undue exactions. Sher Shah was the strongest and ablest Afghan ruler that ever sat upon the throne of Delhi. None of his predecessors had realised as he did the duties and responsibilities of a king towards his subjects; and Northern India enjoyed under him a sense of security such as it had never known under any previous Muhammedan monarch.

His campaign against the Rajputs and death.—After making himself master of the Punjab he turned his attention to the Rajput chiefs in the south of his dominions, who now that they had had some time to recover from the crushing defeats inflicted upon them by Babar, according to their custom had recommenced to harass their Muhammedan neighbours. Malwa was overrun, and the fortresses of Gwalior and Rantambhor reduced, and then siege was laid to the stronghold of Raysia. With characteristic treachery Sher Shah promised the garrison that if they would submit he would spare their lives and property: but when they opened the gates on the faith of this promise, he massacred them to a man. For while he was just and capable as a ruler, he was an unscrupulous, crafty, and cruel enemy. The next year he invaded Marwar, and after narrowly escaping defeat at the hands of a Marwar chief, succeeded in subjugating it. In 1545 while engaged in besieging Kalanjar, an almost impregnable fortress, he was mortally injured by an explosion of gunpowder. Although dying and in great pain, he continued to direct the operations up to the last, and expired just as the news of its capture was received.

Himu.—His second son, Islam Shah, commonly known as Salim, succeeded him, and worthily followed in his footsteps till his death in 1552. Then Muhammad Adil, a nephew of Sher Shah, usurped the throne, after foully murdering Islam's little son with his own hand, and by his vices and his folly did his best to undo all the good work of his predecessors. He had, however, the good luck to select as his Prime Minister a man of uncommon abilities,

both as a general and an administrator. This remarkable man, whose name was Himu, was a low caste Hindu, and had been a petty shopkeeper till Muhammad took him into his service. He was, moreover, hideous, deformed, and of a weakly constitution. While his master was wasting his treasures, and indulging himself in pleasures with low and dissolute companions, Himu, triumphing over his infirmities and natural disadvantages, was administering the empire with conspicuous success. The proud Pathan nobles, however, could not endure the humiliation of being governed by a man of Himu's antecedents, and they rose in rebellion. But one after another they were attacked and defeated in a series of brilliant campaigns by the man they had so much despised.

Return of Humayun.—But while Himu was busy quelling insurrections in the eastern districts, Humayun, who with the assistance of the King of Persia had made himself master of Kabul and had for some time been watching the course of events in India, took advantage of the favourable opportunity offered by the quarrels and dissensions of the Afghan chiefs to descend upon the country. In 1555 he gained a decisive victory at Sirhind over Sikander, the Governor of the Punjab; and in the autumn of the same year marched upon Delhi, which submitted to him without a struggle. He was now again, after an absence of nine years, restored to his kingdom. But he was not destined to enjoy for long the throne which he had regained after so many years of exile. Six months after his return, in the month of January, 1556, he was so severely injured by a fall from the terrace of his library that he died from the effects, after an illness of four days.

CHAPTER II.

MOGHUL SUPREMACY.

Akbar the Great, 1556-1605.—At the time of Humayun's death his son Akbar was engaged with Bairam Khan, his father's faithful companion in exile, in subjugating the

Punjab. Akbar was then not fourteen years of age, but during his short life had experienced so many vicissitudes of fortune, and had already gained such a practical acquaintance with



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affairs, that he was shrewd and prudent beyond his years. He was, moreover, by nature manly and self-reliant. His first act on his accession to the throne was to appoint Bairam Khan his Prime Minister and to entrust him with the regency. His choice could not have fallen upon a better person, for Bairam was a man of iron will and a consummate general, capable both of dealing with Akbar's unruly subjects and directing his forces in the coming struggle. Humayun had had no time to consolidate his power, and his son's

position was therefore a precarious one; for Delhi and Agra and the country round alone had been properly subjugated. Sikander was making a determined effort to regain the Punjab, and Himu was still undefeated and holding the country to the east in the name of his master, Muhammad Adil.

Defeat of Himu.—As soon as he heard of Humayun's death, Himu marched westward with a formidable army, captured Agra, and expelled the Moghul garrison from Delhi. Then without loss of time he advanced against Akbar and Bairam Khan. On the news of Himu's approach with his unbeaten troops, the majority of Akbar's counselors advised him to retire on Kabul rather than undertake the hopeless task of attempting to recover his father's

Indian dominions. But Akbar, who was supported by Bairam Khan, was not inclined to yield without a struggle, and determined to give battle to the victorious Himu. Gathering together all the forces he could muster, he advanced to meet him. The two armies encountered each other in the autumn of 1556 at Panipat, and once more on that historic field the Moghuls and the Afghans contended for the sovereignty of India. But jealousy and dissension were at work to ruin the Afghan cause; for Himu, after the capture of Delhi, elated with his unbroken succession of victories and ignoring the existence of Muhammad Adil, whom he had left behind at Chunar, had proclaimed himself king, under the title of Vikramaditya. His presumption and treachery to his master alienated from him the Afghans in his army, and they would not obey his orders, but in the battle fought recklessly and without concerted action, upsetting all his plans. The well-disciplined Moghuls, therefore, under the skilful direction of Bairam Khan, though far outnumbered, gained a decisive victory. Himu, though wounded, would not leave the battlefield, and, in the general rout which followed, was taken captive. He was executed the same day, and with his death the empire of Northern India passed finally from the Afghans to the Moghuls.

Defeat of Sikandar.—By the victory of Panipat and the death of Himu, Akbar was left the master of Northern India, and he proceeded without opposition to take possession of Agra and Delhi. But his position was still by no means secure, for early in the following year, 1557, news was brought to him that Sikandar Sur, the Afghan governor of the Punjab whom his father had defeated at Sirhind, issuing from the strong fort of Mankot, had defeated the Moghul troops left in the Punjab to watch him. His victory encouraged the disaffected Afghan nobles to try conclusions with the Moghuls once again, and they flocked to him from all the neighbouring districts. The situation was critical, but Akbar wisely lost no time in dealing with it. Marching rapidly upon Lahore, he forced Sikandar Sur to retire, and drove him back to Mankot. For six months he besieged the place, and then Sikandar finding further resistance hopeless, surrendered. Akbar magnanimously allowed him to retire to Bengal,

after exacting a promise from him that he would not again take up arms against him.

Bairam's regency.—During the next two years Bairam Khan continued in his double office of regent and tutor to the young king. His skill and firmness were much needed, for the Moghul power was by no means firmly established. Only the Punjab and the country round about Delhi had been subdued, and the Afghans were still masters of a large part of India. But Bairam's methods though admirably fitted for the pacification of a turbulent kingdom were the reverse of conciliatory; and as the country settled down his rule came to be regarded as unduly harsh and oppressive. His iron will and his relentlessness made for him many enemies; and they were not slow to point out to their youthful sovereign that the regent was administering his dominions without reference to him, and that his cruel and overbearing conduct were estranging many of the king's loyal subjects. Akbar, though not unmindful of the debt of gratitude that he owed to his faithful servant, had observed with displeasure the way in which Bairam had on more than one occasion arbitrarily put to death men whose only fault appeared to be an enmity to the regent. Moreover Bairam had in his self-sufficiency omitted to take account of the fact that his master was rapidly developing from a boy into a man of singularly strong character. The relations between Akbar and Bairam could therefore only grow more strained as time went on.

Bairam dismissed.—At length in the year 1560 Akbar, who was now in his eighteenth year, determined to take the government into his own hands. Bairam had frequently expressed an intention of retiring from the regency, as soon as he could do so without damage to the interests of the young Emperor, in order that he might be able to make the pilgrimage to Mecca before old age should incapacitate him from taking so long a journey. Akbar, therefore, while issuing a proclamation to the effect that he had assumed the administration of affairs and that he alone was to be obeyed, sent a message to Bairam informing him that he was now free to undertake the pilgrimage he had so often expressed a wish to make. It was not to be expected that Bairam would tamely submit to so summary

a dismissal. But Akbar was well aware of the nature of the man with whom he had to deal, and prudently made preparations to meet rebellious opposition. It was well that he did so; for Bairam, who had quitted Agra, before the announcement of the proclamation, was in a few months in open revolt against his master. But Bairam soon found that he could not as a rebel command the ready obedience to which he had been accustomed as a regent, and that the influence he had so long and so powerfully exercised was no longer his. After a short and ineffectual resistance he was forced to throw himself on Akbar's mercy. Akbar was of too noble a nature to forget that the old man now suing for his life, had been his own and his father's most loyal and devoted servant. He readily forgave him, provided him with money, and left him, now thoroughly humbled, to proceed on his pilgrimage to Mecca. But Bairam was never destined to carry out his project; for while at Guzerat, completing his preparations for the journey, he was assassinated by an Afghan whose father he had put to death some years before.

Akbar quells rebellion.—After the defeat of Bairam, Akbar returned to Delhi to assume the full responsibility of the empire. His position was still far from secure. The Punjab, Ajmir, Gwalior, Delhi, and Agra acknowledged his sovereignty, but in the east the Afghans were still all powerful. Akbar's army, which was officered by Moghul and Turkoman adventurers, was attached to him only by the hope of plunder, while his foremost generals were more anxious to increase their own power than to support his authority. The next seven years, indeed, were mainly spent by him in putting down rebellions among his own followers. First Khan Zaman, who had driven the Afghans from Jaunpore, believing himself strong enough to resist his youthful sovereign, raised the standard of revolt; next Adam Khan, the conqueror of Malwa, tried to make himself independent; and then Asaf Khan, the Governor of Karra, having possessed himself of much booty by the plunder of Garamandal, rebelled rather than give it up to his master. But like Bairam, they were destined to find that Akbar, though so young, was not a man to be trifled with, and that they

were no match for him, either in generalship or readiness of resource. Akbar never gave his enemies time to consolidate their power; for by forced marches he was upon them long before they expected him, and had dealt them a crushing blow before they could concentrate their forces. Lastly his brother, the Governor of Kabul, treacherously invaded the Punjab, while Akbar was engaged in subduing his rebellious generals. All were in turn defeated, being unable to resist the suddenness and vigour of his attack.

Conciliates the Rajputs.—By 1566, Akbar had succeeded in establishing peace throughout his empire, and was now free to embark on schemes of conquest at the expense of his Hindu neighbours. Rajputana, which had so long been a thorn in the side of the Delhi Empire, naturally claimed his early attention. But Akbar, while following the traditional policy of the Kings of Delhi, was wiser than his predecessors; for though he was just as eager to conquer, he desired to conciliate rather than to crush those whom he forced to submit to his authority. The Raja of Ambar, the modern Jaipur, became his personal friend, and even gave his daughter in marriage to the Emperor. In return Akbar appointed the Raja's son to a high military post. The Raja of Marwar, now Jodhpur, and other Rajput princes, after a brief struggle, submitted, and became loyal servants of their conqueror. The granddaughter of the Jodhpur Raja was given in marriage to Akbar's eldest son, Prince Salim. But the proud Rana of Mewar, Uday Singh, rather than yield, retired to the rocky fastnesses of the Aravalli hills, leaving behind him a garrison of 800 Rajputs to defend his fortress of Chittor.

Resistance of Udaipur.—The defence of this fort by the Rajputs, under their brave leader Jay Mal, is one of the most stirring events in the history of those times. Akbar conducted the siege in person, yet with all his skill and determination he could not overcome the defenders. But one night Jay Mal, having too rashly exposed himself upon the fortifications, was shot by the Emperor's own hand. It is said that the garrison were so depressed at this incident that they concluded that further resistance was impossible, and in despair, rushing out, sword in hand, upon the besiegers, perished to man. Uday Singh, in the depths

of the Aravalli hills, managed to maintain his independence till his death nine years after this event. His son, Pratap Singh, the founder of the modern Udaipur, regained after many hardships and reverses much of his father's territory. Alone of all the Rajput princes it is the proud boast of the Ranas of Udaipur that no ruler of their house ever submitted to the indignity of a family alliance with the Moghul Emperors of Delhi. In 1570, by the capture of the two strong hill forts of Rantambhor and Kalanjar, Akbar completed the conquest of Rajputana. Then the state of anarchy into which the Muhammedan kingdom of Guzerat had fallen tempted him to invade it. In the course of a few months the whole country was subdued and annexed to the empire.

Conquest of Bengal.—Bengal was now the only part of Northern India that did not owe allegiance to Akbar. The Afghan nobles, driven further and further east by the expansion of the Moghul Empire, had found an asylum in Bengal at the court of the Afghan ruler, Daud Khan. But they had not yet learnt the uselessness of struggling with the Moghul, and they were of such a turbulent disposition that they could neither agree together nor live at peace with their powerful neighbour. They had for years been raiding Moghul territory, and fighting on the borders had been continuous. Akbar, now that he had subdued and pacified all the rest of Northern India, lost no time in dealing with them. An army was accordingly dispatched against them, and in the year 1575, at the battle of Agmahal, the power of the Afghans was completely broken, and the province passed to the Moghuls. But the country was soon in a state of rebellion again, for the Moghul landholders, who had been put in possession of the estates of the Pathans, threw off their allegiance to the Emperor of Delhi. In their attempt to assert their independence they were supported by the Afghan remnant; and in a short time Orissa and part of Bengal were again in open rebellion. Akbar had had by this time sufficient experience of Afghan turbulence and Moghul treachery. He therefore determined to try a new experiment, and, as soon as the rising was put down, entrusted the government of it to a Hindu, Raja Todar Mal, a man of approved loyalty and

ability, both as a general and an organiser. So well did the plan answer that the governorship continued to be held by Hindus down to the time of Akbar's death.

Annexation of Kashmir.—Kashmir had been from ancient times a Hindu kingdom, but during the period of Afghan supremacy, towards the middle of the fourteenth century, a Muhammedan adventurer deposed the reigning Hindu king and succeeded in establishing himself upon the throne. The dynasty descended from him held the throne for a hundred years. Then the Thibetans invaded the country, destroyed the government, and reduced the wretched inhabitants to a state of the greatest misery. The fertility and beauty of the country, and the healthiness of its climate, have at all times made Kashmir the envy of surrounding kingdoms. Akbar particularly coveted the possession of it, and he therefore, under the pretext of putting an end to the state of anarchy existing there, sent an expedition into Kashmir and annexed it in 1586.

Conquest of Sindh and Kandahar.—In 1592 the Muhammedan kingdom of Sindh, which had for some time been showing symptoms of decay, collapsed, and Akbar seized upon the occasion to take possession of the country. In accordance with his wise and kindly practice he treated the deposed ruler with becoming respect, and made him a nobleman of his court. In 1594 Kandahar, under similar circumstances, was invaded by the Imperial troops, and likewise fell into his hands and was incorporated in his empire. But though Akbar now claimed sovereignty over territory stretching as far northwards as Kabul and Kandahar, he was never able thoroughly to subdue the wild tribes living among the rocky hills and valleys round about the Khyber Pass. In an attempt to subjugate them his troops suffered a severe defeat, and their Hindu general, Raja Birbal, Akbar's intimate friend and trusted councillor, was killed.

Fall of Vijayanagar.—During the early part of his reign an event occurred in the Deccan which, though unconnected with his rule, was of considerable importance in the history of Southern India. This was the overthrow of the powerful Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar. The Muhammedan kings of Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda, and Ahmad-

nagar, incensed at the conduct of Ram Raja, the ruler of Vijayanagar, who had behaved with great barbarity in a war against Ahmadnagar, made common cause against him, invaded his country, and utterly defeated him at Talikot in the year 1565. Signal vengeance was taken by the conquerors upon the vanquished Hindus. Ram Raja, who fell into their hands, was put to death with tortures, his city sacked, and his people slaughtered. So complete was the havoc wrought that Vijayanagar never recovered from the blow. Its capital, one of the most magnificent cities in India, adorned with stately temples and palaces, was so completely wrecked that it had to be abandoned. The kingdom sunk at once into insignificance and practically disappeared from history.

Moghul expedition to the Deccan.—After the overthrow of Vijayanagar the Muhammedan kingdoms resumed the strife among themselves. At length in 1572 the King of Ahmadnagar conquered and annexed the neighbouring kingdom of Berar. Ahmadnagar became at once the most important kingdom in the Deccan, and seemed to have a great future before it. But in a few years, by the factiousness of its nobles and princes, it was brought to the verge of ruin. In 1595 a party which had temporarily obtained possession of the capital invoked the aid of the Moghuls against its rivals. Akbar, having no other enterprise on hand at the time, readily responded to the invitation, seeing in it a chance of extending his dominions to the southward. A large army was despatched under his son, Prince Murad; but before it reached Ahmadnagar the faction which had called it in had been expelled from the capital. The impending danger had united all parties in the state, and the rival factions, laying aside their differences, joined in opposing the invaders. By common consent Chand Bibi, or Chand Sultana, a royal princess, was appointed regent of the state. She was a woman of masculine vigour, and had long been famed in the Deccan for her spirit and her intellect, and though now in her fiftieth year had lost nothing of her energy. Not only did she organise a complete defence, but when the Moghuls delivered the attack she directed in person the operations to repel them. Thanks mainly to her exertions and her

inspiring personality the expedition was unable to effect the capture of the city, and at length withdrew on the condition that Berar should be ceded to the Moghul emperor.

Fall of Ahmadnagar.—Chand Sultana had thus saved the state, but hardly were the Moghuls gone when civil war broke out once more, and in a riot which took place within the city the brave Sultana was murdered. The Moghuls again interfered on the pretext of restoring order, invested the capital, and after a short siege captured it. A portion of the kingdom was annexed to the Moghul Empire and its king removed to the fortress of Gwalior. The little kingdom of Khandesh, which lay to the westward of Berar, and therefore now within the borders of the Moghul Empire, was also annexed at the same time. Being weak and isolated, it succumbed without a struggle.

Akbar's system of government.—Akbar was now the master of an empire stretching from Kandahar and Kabul on the west and north to Bengal and Orissa in the east and Ahmadnagar in the south. But he did not, as former great conquerors had done, rest content with maintaining a nominal sovereignty over his vast dominions. He made it his endeavour to exercise a real control over the whole. For this purpose he parcelled out his empire into fifteen *subahs* or provinces, over each of which he placed a governor, with complete civil and military control, but answerable for his conduct of the government to the Central Authority. The governor was assisted by a *deewan* or revenue collector, and a *faujdar* or military commander. Justice was administered by a *mir-i-adl* or chief justice, assisted by a *kazi* or law officer, to conduct the trial and explain the law. The city police were placed under a *kotwal* or police superintendent, with magisterial powers; but in the country districts the landholders and villagers were left to their own devices. Thus the Hindu village system remained intact, and the peasantry had still to protect themselves as best they could against oppressive landholders, extortionate revenue collectors, and the attacks of bands of robbers.

His revenue system.—Akbar did not alter Sher Shah's revenue system, but extended its operations to new tracts of country. It is worth while, however, to observe



that while Sher Shah had been content with one-fourth of the gross produce as rent, Akbar required one-third. Under Raja Todar Mal a fresh revenue settlement was carried out, and all cultivated lands were surveyed and classified according to their productive power. It was at first intended to repeat the survey annually, but as this was found troublesome and expensive, it was afterwards made every ten years. So strictly was the Imperial revenue exacted that Akbar received yearly from this source more than is now taken by the Indian government, in spite of the enormous extension of cultivation that has occurred during the period of British rule.

Precaution against mutiny.—One of the greatest dangers to which a ruler or a governor is subjected, who is obliged to maintain a large standing army, is a rising among his troops. It was necessary for a despotic ruler, such as the Emperor of Delhi, to maintain a large standing army to provide against all emergencies; but this army, which was intended for his protection, was often also the chief source of his anxiety. Mutinies would frequently break out, and popular leaders would be joined by large numbers of discontented soldiers in their attempts to assert their independence, or to overthrow the central government itself. Akbar successfully met this danger by attaching the soldiers to himself. In place of the old system, by which the generals were provided with *jagirs* or grants of land out of which to pay the troops under their command, he arranged as far as possible that the soldiers should receive money payments direct. Where this was not possible, he made the military landholders dependent for their holdings upon himself. Thus the officers and the rank and file were alike interested in maintaining the emperor's authority.

Wise treatment of Hindus.—None of Akbar's predecessors had ever considered it necessary to conciliate their Hindu subjects; scarcely any had even refrained from persecuting them. Thus when, as so frequently happened, Muhammedan governors rebelled, a Delhi emperor not only could not rely upon Hindu support, but if the rebellion became formidable, had to face the added risk of a Hindu rising. Akbar was the first emperor to adopt a policy of conciliation towards the Hindus. We have seen how he bound certain

of the great Rajput princes to him by marriage connections, and how he appointed Hindu noblemen to important positions of trust both in the army and the administration. Indeed the ablest and most trusted of his generals and administrators was a Hindoo named Raja Man Singh. Hindus were admitted among the number of his most familiar friends, and no one enjoyed a closer intimacy with the emperor than the witty and accomplished Brahman, Raja Birbal. But that which did more than anything else to reconcile his Hindu subjects to Muhammedan rule was the abolition of the hated *jizya*, or poll-tax, on non-Muhammedans, and the remission of the taxes levied on Hindu pilgrims. His treatment of his Hindu subjects displays the emperor's character in a very pleasant light. He showed the deepest interest in their welfare; but while he respected their laws and customs, he would not countenance such of their rites as he considered cruel or unreasonable. He forbade child marriages and the compulsory immolation of widows upon their husbands' pyres; he put a stop to trials by ordeal and animal sacrifices; and legalised the marriage of Hindu widows. He was rewarded for his wise policy towards his Hindu subjects by gaining in return their loyalty and affection. It was largely by their aid that he was enabled to subdue the Pathan princes and nobles of Northern India, and that the forces of rebellion were kept in check in all parts of his vast dominions throughout his long reign.

His religious toleration.—Akbar's liberal-minded policy towards Hindus did not please the more bigoted section of his Muhammedan subjects; and there were not wanting those who attributed the broadness of his views in matters of religion to the influence of his Hindu wives upon him. It is certain that, as he grew older, he grew more tolerant of other religious systems, and less strict in his observance of the tenets of Islam. But though he was not a devout Musalman, he was deeply interested in questions of religion, and an earnest seeker after divine truth. He was accustomed in the evenings constantly to hold assemblies at which the doctors of various religions argued and disputed before him, each in favour of the teachings of his own faith. Hindus, Buddhists, Musalmans, and Chris-

tians alike were represented at these disputations, and were listened to by the emperor with perfect impartiality.

Abul Fazl and Abul Faizi.—In his religious speculations, and in his liberal policy, Akbar was encouraged by two men in particular. Abul Faizi and Abul Fazl were brothers who entered the emperor's service, one in the twelfth, and the other in the eighteenth year of his reign. Both were men of irreproachable character, great learning, and liberal views. Abul Faizi's name is still revered as that of one of the greatest Persian poets that India has produced. He was, moreover, a diligent student of Sanskrit, and, by means of Persian translations, introduced Akbar to the poetry and philosophy of the Hindus. Abul Fazl rose by his administrative ability to the post of Prime Minister, and to be the most trusted adviser of his sovereign. Like his brother, he applied himself to letters, and produced a great work, the *Akbar Namah*, a history of Akbar's reign, which has been of the greatest value to historians. It contains, amongst other matters of interest and importance, the *Ain-i-Akbari*, a statistical survey of the empire, full of information regarding Akbar's system of administration. The brothers were men of great intellect, and deeply read in religion and philosophy, but study and reflection had led them to abandon the religion of Islam, and they had come to be regarded as little better than atheists. It is small wonder, therefore, that zealous Muhammedans regarded them with distrust, and hated them as the perverters of their sovereign. Time only served to widen the breach between Akbar and the orthodox among his subjects. In his old age, false friends and flatterers instigated him to found a new religion compounded of various faiths, and to proclaim himself a heaven-sent prophet. We need not dwell upon this last infirmity of a noble mind, but it is much to the discredit of Abul Fazl that he not only did not restrain him, but encouraged him in these extravagant absurdities.

Conduct of his sons.—Akbar's old age was clouded by many sorrows, chief among which was the conduct of his sons. In 1599, Sultan Murad died through the effects of continued intemperance. In 1601, Salim, his eldest son, instigated no doubt by the Muhammedan party



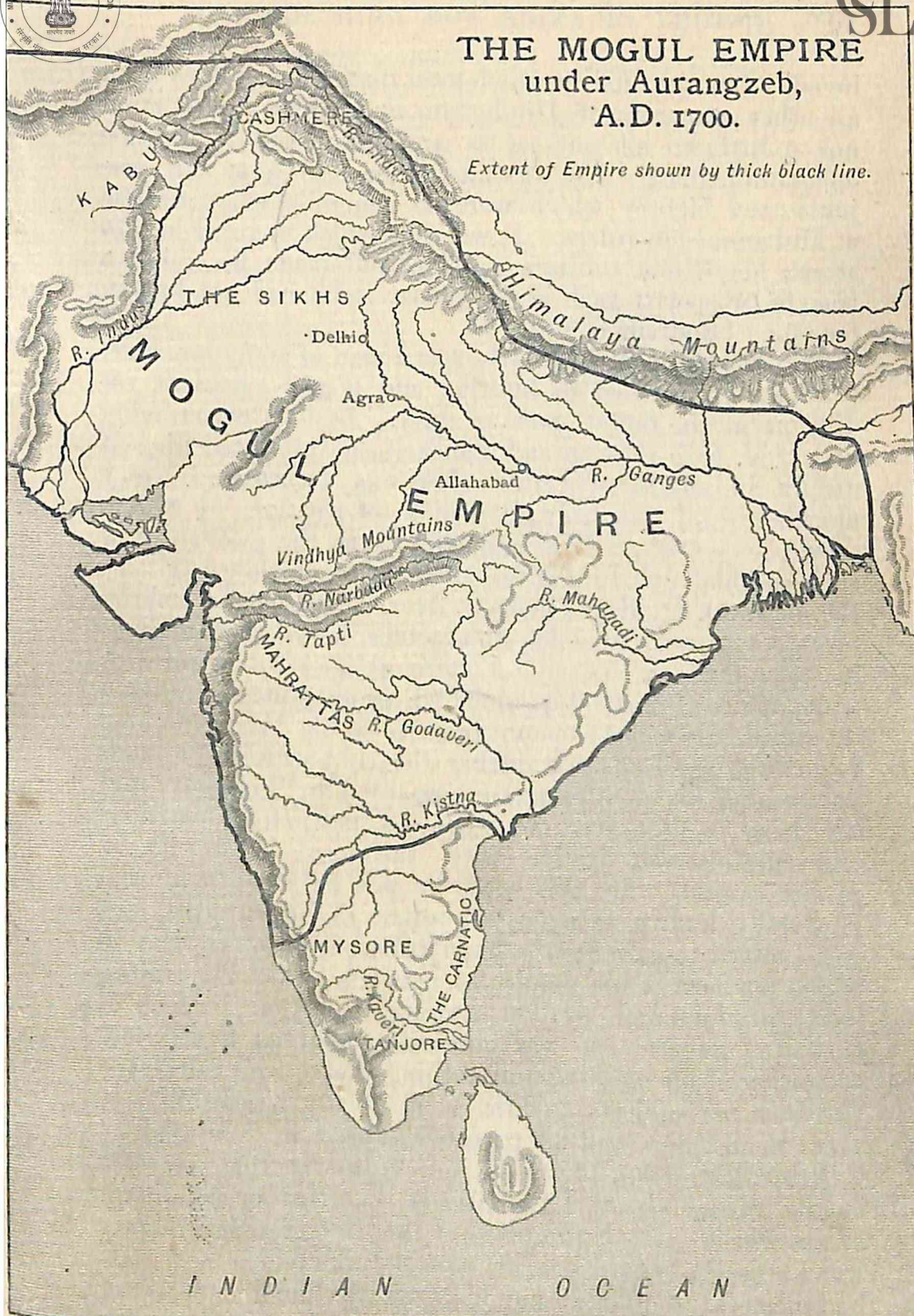
which was scandalised at the emperor's religious views, rebelled against him. His revolt was easily suppressed, but, instead of punishing him, his forgiving father appointed him Viceroy of Bengal and Orissa. Salim, however, showed no signs of repentance, and spent his time chiefly at Allahabad in drunkenness and debauchery, and in plotting against his father. At length he actually went so far as to cause the Prime Minister, Abul Fazl, to be assassinated. The news of Abul Fazl's death was a great blow to Akbar, and he was visibly shaken by it. A year or two later Sultan Danyal, his third son, also fell a victim to intemperate habits.

Death of Akbar.—This quick succession of troubles told greatly on Akbar's health, and it became clear to all that his end was not far off. Salim's enemies at court now did all they could to persuade the emperor to pass him over and nominate his grandson Khusru, Salim's son, as his successor. Thus the old man's few remaining days were darkened by intrigues within his own palace. The next year, feeling that he was failing fast, and desiring to put an end to the plots and counter plots going on around him, the emperor sent for Salim, was reconciled to him, and nominated him his successor. He did not survive this event many days, for in the autumn of the same year he died at Agra, under circumstances which gave rise to the suspicion that he was poisoned.

His character.—Akbar's greatness, for he was the greatest Muhammedan ruler that ever reigned in Hindustan, was due to a combination of remarkable qualities. Besides bestowing upon him an excellent understanding, nature had endowed him with an inspiring personality. He was a handsome man, slightly above the middle height, possessed of great physical strength and an iron constitution. His forehead was broad and his countenance open and dignified, his speech and manners were courteous and attractive, and his bearing was on all occasions noble and kingly. Added to his mental and physical qualifications, he was brave without rashness, and, in the hour of danger, cool and deliberate. Though generous and affectionate, and averse from bloodshed, he could be stern and relentless on occasion, and was as well able to make himself feared as

THE MOGUL EMPIRE under Aurangzeb, A.D. 1700.

Extent of Empire shown by thick black line.



loved. But the quality which most distinguished him from all other emperors of Hindustan, and which contributed not a little to his success as an administrator, was his open mindedness. He was altogether free from the prejudice and bigotry which were so generally characteristic of Muhammedan rulers. It was this which enabled him to attach his Hindu subjects to him, and made his reign a time of prosperity such as Northern India had not known for many hundreds of years.

His manner of life.—He was a man of many interests, passionately devoted to hunting and manly exercises, yet diligent in the performance of duty. Besides encouraging literature, both Persian and Sanskrit, he interested himself deeply in affairs of state. He was accustomed every morning in full assembly to dispose of petitions by whomsoever presented to him, and to redress the grievances of such as clamoured to him for justice, though they might be the meanest of his subjects. Every evening he held a private audience, at which the nobles, holding office about his person or at the capital, were obliged to be present, when affairs of state were debated, or questions of religion discussed. It was a constant practice of his during his long reign to proceed on tour during the cold weather through portions of his dominions, accompanied by his court and his army. Wherever he went he listened to petitions and administered justice with the same regularity as at his capital. In this way he not only made himself personally known to a large number of his subjects, but was enabled to gain at first hand information of the way in which portions of his empire at a distance from his capital, were administered by his provincial officers. Such a system of government was admirably adapted to the consolidation of his empire; and nothing was so well calculated to attach his subjects to him as his ready accessibility to them at all times, and his personal interest in their affairs.

Jahangir, 1605-1627.—Prince Salim on his accession to the throne assumed the title of Jahangir or conqueror of the world. His assumption of the Imperial Sovereignty was naturally regarded with considerable misgivings. He had been a rebellious son, a drunkard like his brothers, and notorious for his vice and cruelty. But the responsi-

bilities of sovereignty seem to have worked a change in his character; for his rule was on the whole wise and statesmanlike, and he showed a considerable amount of his father's capacity for business, as well as his love of justice. During his reign the empire continued for the most part to enjoy internal peace, and Akbar's measures of reform were carefully adhered to, and his system of administration further elaborated. The emperor, like his father, sat every day in public audience to hear complaints and redress grievances, and was always genuinely anxious to give his subjects every opportunity of direct access to him. Outwardly, he professed himself to be a good Musalman, was during the day time staid and sober in his demeanour, and even issued an edict against intemperance and punished those of his Muhammedan subjects who made use of wine. But the vice of drunkenness had taken too strong a hold upon him ever to be shaken off, and throughout the whole of his reign he was accustomed to indulge in almost nightly orgies of intemperance.



JAHANGIR.

Rebellion of Khusru.—Shortly after his accession, Khusru, his eldest son, who had schemed so hard during the last days of Akbar's reign to be nominated the emperor's successor, fearing his father's wrath, fled to the Punjab, seized Lahore, and there raised the standard of revolt. Jahangir proceeded against him in person at once, captured Lahore, and took him prisoner on the banks of the Jhelum, as he was in the act of escaping to Kabul.

But the vice of drunkenness had taken too strong a hold upon him ever to be shaken off, and throughout the whole of his reign he was accustomed to indulge in almost nightly orgies of intemperance.



Khusru was kept in confinement for the remainder of his life; but those who had had the rashness to support him were treated with merciless severity. Seven hundred of his adherents, many of whom belonged to the rising sect of the Sikhs, were impaled in a line outside the city of Lahore as a lesson to rebels against the Imperial authority.

Submission of Udaipur.—In 1614 the Rana of Udaipur, who had so stubbornly resisted Akbar, was forced to submit to Jahangir. The credit of his subjugation was due to Prince Karram, the emperor's third son, who, as commander of the Imperial forces against the Rana, greatly distinguished himself in the conduct of the campaign. The Rana was treated with great magnanimity; his kingdom was restored to him, and his son was appointed to a high military command in the Imperial army.

Malik Amber.—During the greater part of his reign Jahangir was troubled by affairs in the Deccan. It will be remembered that Akbar had only succeeded after much severe fighting in annexing the northern part of the Kingdom of Ahmadnagar. After the fall of the capital, Malik Amber, an Abyssinian general in the service of the ruler of the state, succeeded in establishing a new capital at Kirki, afterwards called Aurungabad, and on three occasions defeated Moghul armies sent against him. At length, in 1610, he actually recovered Ahmadnagar. As the Moghul governor of the Deccan seemed unable to cope with him, Jahangir sent Prince Karram against him; but, though he succeeded in compelling Malik Amber to retire from Ahmadnagar, he could not subdue him altogether, and Malik Amber maintained his independence till his death in 1626.

Sir Thomas Roe's visit.—In the year 1615 Sir Thomas Roe, an oriental scholar sent by James I. as an ambassador from the English Court to Jahangir, arrived in India at the port of Surat and made his way northwards through Burhânpur, the seat of the Moghul governor of the Deccan, and Chittor to Ajmir. Here he fell in with the emperor and his court proceeding on tour to Guzerat. He was granted a magnificent reception, kindly entertained by Jahangir, and permitted to accompany the court on its journey south. The object of Sir Thomas Roe's embassy



was to advance the interests of an English company trading in the Moghul's dominions, and he was successful in securing for it many valuable concessions. His letters written during his visit contain matter of much historical interest, and enable us to judge of the condition of the country on the evidence of an impartial and enlightened eye-witness. While struck with wonder at the splendour of the court, and the magnificence of the Moghul Emperor, he noticed that the nobles were in debt, the administration corrupt, and the peasantry living in abject poverty. Everywhere were signs of misgovernment and decaying prosperity. Bands of robbers and outlaws infested the country, plundering the villages, and even cutting off stragglers from the Imperial camp. The cities of the Deccan bore a neglected appearance, and much land had fallen out of cultivation. The scheme of administration, for want of some effective system of central supervision and control, failed to secure good government in the outlying provinces of the empire.

Nur Jahan's influence.—An account of Jahangir's reign would be incomplete without some mention of his wife, Nur Jahan, the 'Delight of the World.' This remarkable woman, who became the emperor's wife in the year 1611, came of a poor but noble Persian family. Jahangir, drunkard and debauchee as he was, seems to have been sincerely attached to her, and to have had so high an opinion of her intelligence as to have consulted her upon all matters of state. Till his death her influence was paramount in the state, and it was necessary for those who would avoid the emperor's displeasure, not to cross the will of his imperious wife. Her ambition for power, and her talent for intrigue, led, on more than one occasion, to a grave crisis. First, Prince Kurram having incurred her resentment, was goaded into rebellion against his father by the news that she was working to secure the nomination of his younger brother Shariya as heir to the throne, and had succeeded so far in estranging his father from him that the emperor, forgetful of his services, had already decided upon his humiliation. Muhabat Khan, a general of great experience who was sent to the Deccan against him, quickly succeeded in overcoming him, and forced him to quit the province and fly to Bengal. Here, after some further

resistance, he was compelled to submit. Then Muhabat Khan, though he had fought under Akbar, and was the most eminent man in the empire, because his influence with Jahangir had aroused her jealousy, found himself arraigned on charges of oppression and corruption, and ordered instantly to repair to court. Jahangir was on tour on the banks of the Jhelum when Muhabat Khan arrived, and the camp was at the time being crossed over the river. The troops had already crossed, and the emperor and his court were about to follow. Muhabat, who well knew that his ruin was determined upon, conceived the bold but desperate plan of taking the emperor prisoner. By the aid of the Rajput body-guard, whom Nur Jahan had offended, he successfully carried out his daring scheme; and for nearly a whole year Jahangir was a captive in his hands. Then Nur Jahan, who had joined him in his captivity, succeeded by a clever stratagem in liberating the emperor. Muhabat Khan fled to the Deccan, and there joined Prince Kurram, who was once more in open revolt. But before the emperor could take steps to punish them, he was seized with a severe attack of asthma and died.

Discovery of the sea route to India.—In the course of the narrative of Jahangir's reign, mention has been made of an English company of merchants trading in the dominions of the Moghul Emperor. It will be as well, therefore, at this point to say something of the intercourse which, by means of commerce, sprang up during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries between Europe and India. In the year 1497 the famous Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, after doubling the Cape of Good Hope and skirting along the Eastern Coast of Africa, boldly steered across the Indian Ocean in the hope of discovering the much sought for sea route to India. His daring adventure was crowned with success; for in May, 1498, he reached Calicut on its western coast. The Raja or Zamorin of Calicut received him well, and after a stay of six months he returned to Portugal with the news of his great discovery. In proof of his statement he brought back with him a cargo of Indian spices and a friendly message from the Zamorin to the King of Portugal.

Portuguese settlement established.—The Portu-



guese lost no time in taking advantage of his discovery. Two years later a well-equipped expedition was dispatched to India by the newly found route, with a royal commission from the King of Portugal to open up trade with the East. The fleet arrived at Calicut in the year 1500, and at first all went well, but the Muhammedan traders who were accustomed to frequent the place were jealous of the Portuguese, and a serious quarrel arose which put an end to all prospects of trade at that port. The expedition, however, had better luck at Cochin, a city then very little inferior to Calicut, for it succeeded in establishing there a factory, or agency, for the purchase of goods before it returned to Portugal. In the year 1503 a fort was built to protect this factory, and a garrison of 150 Portuguese soldiers left to guard it.

Albuquerque.—To Albuquerque, the second governor appointed by the King of Portugal to look after his interests in the East Indies, belongs the credit of having firmly established the Portuguese upon the mainland of India, and of having first given practical shape to the idea of establishing a Portuguese empire in the East. Between the years 1509 and 1515, when he died, he succeeded in converting the Indian Ocean into a Christian trade route by destroying the commerce of the Arabs; and by the seizure of Goa in 1510 he gave to his countrymen that which was essential for a maritime empire, a fine harbour in a central situation.

Causes of Portuguese failure.—During the next hundred years the Portuguese grew rich and prosperous in the enjoyment of the monopoly of the trade they had created by their enterprise. But their superstition and bigotry stood in the way of their dreams of empire; for they not only prevented them from conciliating the natives, but often even led them to commit in the name of religion acts of atrocious cruelty. Moreover, in their dealings with them, they were harsh and unjust, and their officials, from the highest to the lowest, grossly corrupt. They thus stirred up so great a hatred of themselves that they became subject to continual attacks at the hands of neighbouring Indian Rājahs. In time, the drain upon the resources of Portugal to maintain sufficient European soldiers for the

defence of its eastern possessions became more than the little state could stand. But an event which helped more than anything else to effect the ruin of its eastern trade was the union of Portugal with Spain under Philip II. in 1580. Not only were Portugal's interests made subservient to those of Spain, but the English and the Dutch, who were at war with Spain, now preyed upon the Portuguese merchant ships as much as upon the Spanish. What was worse, both Dutch and English vessels began to make their appearance in eastern waters, and to compete with the Portuguese for the trade of the Indies.

Successful English rivalry.—So profitable did the English soon find their eastern trade that in the year 1600 a company of merchants was formed in London for the purpose of trading directly with India. The first voyages of the company's ships were highly successful, but they met with serious opposition from the Portuguese. In the year 1612, an expedition consisting of two vessels under the command of Captain Best was attacked by a strong Portuguese fleet at Swally, not far from Surat. A stubborn fight lasting four days ensued, the English trying to force their way through to Surat, and the Portuguese endeavouring to beat them off. In the end the Portuguese, in spite of their overwhelming numbers, had to give way, and the English proceeded in triumph to Surat. This victory was a great blow to the prestige of the Portuguese, who had hitherto been regarded in India as invincible. The English were therefore treated with great respect on landing, and within a year succeeded in establishing factories on Indian soil at Surat, Ahmadabad, and Cambay, in the possession of which they were later assured by a decree of Jahangir, dated 11th of January, 1613. Before the Emperor's death, general permission was granted to them to trade throughout the Moghul Empire, and to exercise jurisdiction over their own servants. Thus did the English succeed in ousting the Portuguese from their monopoly of the Indian trade and in laying the foundation of their Indian Empire.

Shah Jahan, 1627-1658.—On the news of Jahangir's death, Prince Kurram and Muhábat Khan hurried up from the Deccan. Shariyar, aided by Nur Jahan, had mean-

while made an attempt to seize the throne. Fortunately for Prince Kurram, he had a powerful friend at court in the person of Asaf Khan, Jahangir's chief minister. Kurram had married his daughter Mumtaz Mahal, and Asaf Khan was therefore deeply interested in helping him to secure the throne. While Kurram and Muhábat were still upon the way, Asaf Khan, acting with great promptitude, placed the queen mother under restraint, and then collecting an army attacked Shariyar, defeated him and took him captive. Kurram, therefore, on his arrival found no obstacle in the way of his accession, and at once proclaimed himself Emperor under the name of Shah Jahan, King of the World, a title which his father had conferred upon him after his defeat of the Rana of Udaypur. His first act was to put to death, as a measure of precaution, his rival Shariyar and two of his nephews.

Fall of Ahmadnagar.—Shortly after his accession, Khan Jahan Lodi, the Viceroy of the Deccan, who was conducting the campaign against Ahmadnagar, rebelled and joined forces with the sons of Malik Amber. He was soon defeated and slain, but Ahmadnagar held out for another six years, till 1636, and then the kingdom was finally incorporated in the Empire. As Bijapur had assisted Ahmadnagar in its struggle against the Moghuls, it was now in its turn attacked. But the campaign against it was unsuccessful, and a peace was shortly concluded by which the King of Bijapur, on condition of being let alone, agreed to pay tribute to the Moghul Emperor.

Rising power of Mahratta chiefs.—The stubborn resistance which the Moghuls encountered at Bijapur was due in great measure to the assistance which the state received from a Hindu general named Shahji Bhonsla and his followers. Shahji had been in the service of the ruler of Ahmadnagar, and after the fall of that state had found employment in Bijapur. His home was at Poona in Maharashtra, but he claimed descent from the family of the Rajput rulers of Udaypur. The Hindu peoples of the Mahratta country or Maharashtra had in spite of invasion and conquest always enjoyed a large measure of independence. They had moreover lost nothing of the hardy and warlike nature for which they had been famous in the days

of Houen Tsang, and their Muhammedan rulers had been glad to enrol large numbers of them in their armies. Mahratta generals from time to time had obtained extensive grants of land for distinguished services. Shahji's own land at Poona had been obtained in this way. The destruction of Ahmadnagar by the Moghuls, and the

weakening of the other Muhammedan kingdoms of the Deccan, only served to strengthen the power and influence of such Mahratta chiefs as Shahji. In fact, the Delhi Emperors in their blind desire to extend their dominions were breaking down the bulwarks of their empire in the south.

Portuguese driven out of Hoogly—While Shah Jahan was occupied with matters in the Deccan, affairs in Bengal also claimed his attention. During



SHAH JAHAN

Jahangir's reign, the Portuguese had been allowed to establish a factory at Hoogly. Here they had fortified themselves, and had established a flourishing trade. Meanwhile the King of Arakan, who lived in dread of Moghul invasion, had enlisted in his service a large number of Portuguese refugees from Goa, Cochin, Malacca, and other eastern settlements, and had allowed them to occupy the seaport town of Chittagong. From this base they were accustomed to make marauding expeditions in light galleys among the islands at the mouth of the Ganges, chiefly for the purpose of carrying off the inhabitants as slaves. The Portuguese at Hoogly encouraged them in these nefarious expeditions by buying large numbers of their captives. To such a pitch had these wretches carried their acts of rapine and piracy that whole tracts of flourishing country had been depopulated by them. Shah Jahan, who was no friend to Christians, and who had a grudge against the Portuguese for refusing to assist him, when as Prince Kurram he was in

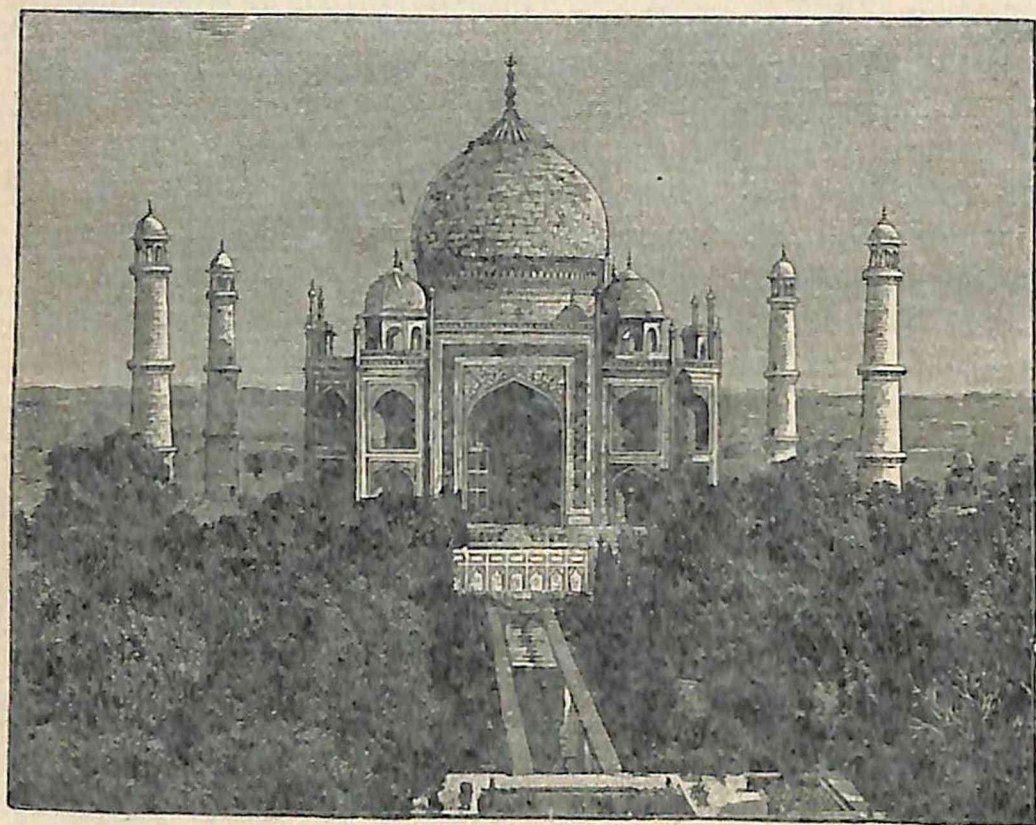


revolt against his father, determined to punish the Portuguese at Hoogly for the part they had played in this traffic with his subjects. Accordingly, in the year 1631, an expedition was sent against them, and they were driven out of Hoogly with great slaughter. Large numbers of them were taken captive, and, in their turn, sold as slaves.

Kandahar lost to the empire.—During Jahangir's reign the King of Persia had invaded Kandahar and wrested it from the Moghul Empire, but his treatment of the conquered province had been so harsh and unjust that he not only incurred the hatred of its inhabitants, but by his exactions had driven even the Persian Governor, Ali Mardan Khan, to despair. In the year 1637 Ali Mardan, finding his position intolerable, invited Shah Jahan to take possession of the country. The offer was gratefully accepted, and Ali Mardan henceforth became a trusted servant of the Moghul Emperor. But ten years later the Persians recaptured Kandahar, and Aurungzeb, the Emperor's third son, who was sent to recover it from them, was utterly defeated, and with difficulty escaped with the remnant of his shattered forces. From this time forward Kandahar was finally lost to the Moghul Emperor.

Shah Jahan's magnificence.—Under Shah Jahan the Moghul Empire may be said to have reached the zenith of its power and glory. Not only did the old provinces yield a greater income, owing to the long period of internal peace and the wider application of Akbar's reforms, but by the settlement carried out in the Moghul Provinces of the Deccan under Shah Jahan's able and upright minister, Saadullah Khan, and by the contributions levied from the tributary Muhammedan kingdoms in the south, the sources of revenue were greatly increased. Shah Jahan had thus the means at his disposal of indulging to his heart's content his fondness for display. His famous Peacock Throne, constructed in imitation of that which had adorned the palace of the Kings of Vijayanagar, was estimated to be worth six crores of rupees. It was of solid gold, studded with a mass of costly jewels of all kinds, and was a miracle of exquisite workmanship. The splendid specimens of Moghul architecture erected during his reign bear witness to his magnificence. Delhi was enriched with

Two stately and magnificent buildings, the Dewani Khas and the Juma Musjid; and at Agra, where he generally resided, he erected the Taj Mahal, the most beautiful mausoleum in the world, over the body of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. It is built entirely of white marble, and decorated with mosaics formed of various precious stones. In perfec-



TAJ MAHAL

tion of finish, down to the minutest detail, there is no building that can surpass it.

Shah Jahan's unruly sons.—The old age of Shah Jahan was saddened by the unruly conduct of his four sons, Dara, Shuja, Aurungzeb, and Murad. Each was animated with the sole desire of securing for himself the succession to the throne, and consequently regarded the others with suspicion and hatred. Shah Jahan, in order as far as possible to put a stop to their quarrels and intrigues, appointed them governors of four distant provinces. Dara was appointed to Kabul and Multan, but did not actually leave the court, Shuja was sent to Bengal, Aurungzeb to the Deccan, and Murad to Guzerat. This plan, though it

may have averted an immediate calamity, so far from effectually curbing their ambitions, gave them the means of furthering their designs. Under the pretence of preserving order, they began to raise huge armies and make every preparation for war in anticipation of their father's death.

Dara, the eldest, was a brave and generous prince, liberal-minded, and fond of learning, but he was of a quick temper, haughty, and disdainful of advice, and by the looseness of his religious views had incurred the dislike of the orthodox Muhammedans about his father's court. It was said of him that Christian missionaries and Brahman pundits found in him a more appreciative and sympathetic listener than the doctors of his own religion. Shuja was a skilful general, and a man of ability and address; but excesses had undermined his constitution, and he was gradually losing nerve and vigour. Aurungzeb was "reserved and subtle, and a complete master of the art of dissimulation." Unlike his elder brothers he was a strict Muhammedan, even to the point of bigotry. Though cruel, austere, and distrustful, even of his most intimate friends, his great abilities and his religious enthusiasm gained for him many adherents among the Muhammedan nobles whom Dara had estranged by his arrogance, and Shuja had disgusted by his shameless self-indulgence. Murad, the youngest, was an open-hearted, brave and reckless soldier, fond of sport and wine, but, while no less ambitious than his brothers, was inferior to them in ability.

Mir Jumla.—While Aurungzeb was acting as Viceroy of the Deccan, he received a letter from Mir Jumla, the vizier of the King of Golconda, suggesting a plan by which he might at one swoop seize both king and capital. Mir Jumla, who was a Persian by birth, was one of the ablest as well as one of the wealthiest men in Hindustan; and Golconda owed much of its prosperity to his skilful conduct of its affairs. Under his leadership its troops had lately invaded the Carnatic, and by the plunder of its ancient temples acquired immense wealth in gold and jewels. On that occasion he had appropriated to his own use a large portion of the profits of

the expedition, and had thereby incurred the anger of the king, already jealous of his increasing power and influence. Believing that his ruin was determined upon, he addressed his treacherous letter to Aurungzeb.

Aurungzeb's expedition against Golconda.—The latter, for all his professions of piety, was not averse from making use of so despicable a means of increasing his power. In accordance with Mir Jumla's advice he suddenly marched into the Golconda state at the head of five thousand horse, giving out that he was an ambassador from the Emperor of Delhi. The king, anxious to receive so distinguished an embassy with due honour, came out from his capital to meet him, and would have fallen into his hands had he not received warning of the fate awaiting him, in time to make his escape back to Golconda. There he was besieged by Aurungzeb, who would no doubt have captured the place had not Shah Jahan peremptorily ordered him to return to his province. The king, however, was made to agree to the most humiliating terms as the price of Aurungzeb's relinquishing the siege. On his way back from this expedition, in company with Mir Jumla, Aurungzeb laid siege to and captured the powerful fort of Bidar. But perhaps the most important result of this expedition was that Aurungzeb and Mir Jumla, both men of unlimited ambition and remarkable abilities, were from this time bound together in a close friendship and unity of interests.

Struggle among the Princes for the throne.—Shortly after this event, in 1657, Shah Jahan was taken seriously ill, and it was rumoured abroad that he was dead. His four sons at once began to put their ambitious projects into execution. Shuja marched from Bengal upon Agra, and, announcing that he was coming to avenge the death of his father, who he declared had been poisoned by Dara, proclaimed himself Emperor. Murad in Guzerat likewise assumed the royal title, and, to replenish his treasury, plundered Surat. Dara, who was acting as Regent for his sick father, at once despatched a powerful army under his son, Sulaiman Shikoh, and Raja Jay Singh of Jaipur against Shuja. A battle between them took place near Benares, and Shuja was defeated and driven back to

Bengal. Aurengzeb, too crafty to make an attempt upon his father's throne single-handed, offered his services to Murad, protesting that he had no designs himself upon the crown, but only wished to co-operate with him against their common enemy, the infidel Dara.

Alliance of Murad and Aurungzeb.—Murad welcomed his alliance without suspicion, and having joined forces the two proceeded northwards together. An army sent against them by Dara was defeated, and then Dara himself, at the head of the Imperial troops, marched out against them. The two contending armies met at Samgarh, afterwards known as Fatehgarh, the city of victory. In the fight which ensued all three brothers displayed the most determined valour. But there was treachery on Dara's side, and he was deserted in the battle by part of his army led by a Muhammedan general whom he had once too deeply offended ever to be forgiven. In the end he was forced to give way and fly for his life. The victory was complete. Aurungzeb hastened to salute Murad as Emperor, and the two together marched upon the capital.

Shah Jahan made prisoner.—Meanwhile they had received convincing proofs that Shah Jahan was not dead, but was actually recovering from his illness. They, therefore, on their arrival hypocritically sent to assure their aged father of their respect and affection, but began at once to plot how they might get possession of his person. The Emperor attempted to temporise with them, and thus gave them time to mature a scheme for his capture. One night, by the help of Sultan Mahmud, Aurungzeb's eldest son, who was in attendance on the Emperor, they contrived to take the guard unawares, seize the gates and make the old man a captive in his own palace.

With this event, which occurred in June, 1658, Shah Jahan's reign came to an end; for though he lived for another eight years he never again recovered his liberty. His reign had been a time of peace and prosperity. Though an orthodox Muhammedan, he had continued the enlightened policy of his grandfather, making no invidious distinctions between Hindus and Muhammedans. His rule, on the whole, had been mild and just, and his subjects had come to regard him with respect and affection, forgetting, in

their pity for his sorrowful old age, the unfilial conduct of his youth and his cruel treatment of his rivals for the throne.

Murad made prisoner.—Having thus disposed of their father, Aurungzeb and Murad, leaving Shaista Khan, the uncle of Aurungzeb, in charge of Agra, started in pursuit of Dara, who had fled to the Punjab. Aurungzeb continued to treat his younger brother with extravagant deference, that he might not excite his suspicions, but all the while he was seeking for a means of quietly getting rid of him; for he not only had no further need of him in carrying out his own designs, but found him the one obstacle left in his path to the throne. Having first by bribes and promises tampered successfully with the loyalty of the soldiers, he one night invited Murad to supper, and, knowing his weakness for wine, tempted him to drink to excess. The unsuspecting Murad fell into the trap, and the next morning when he awoke from his drunken sleep found himself a prisoner in his brother's hands. Aurungzeb, throwing aside all his simulated respect, now openly denounced him as a drunkard, unfit to rule, and sent him in chains to the fortress of Salimgarh.

Aurungzeb, 1658-1707.—Murad thus being put out of the way, Aurungzeb proclaimed himself Emperor. Then resuming the pursuit of Dara, he pressed him so closely that he forced him to fly to Sindh. But hearing that Shuja had again collected a formidable army, and was marching on the capital, he abandoned the chase of Dara and returned to give battle to Shuja. The brothers met at a place called Khajua, near Fatehpur. For a long time the issue was undecided; but an act of treachery on the part of one of Shuja's generals, similar to that practised upon Dara at Fatehgarh, eventually gave the victory to Aurungzeb. Shuja was forced to fly, and Aurungzeb returned to the capital, leaving his son, Sultan Mahmud, and Mir Jumla, to hunt him down. A quarrel, however, arose between them; and Sultan Mahmud, who was already suspected of disloyalty to his father, openly went over to the enemy. But Shuja, fearing a plot, put no trust in him, and he was forced at last in despair to return to Mir Jumla. Aurungzeb, on hearing of the incident, ordered

him off as a state prisoner to the fortress of Gwalior, to which Murad had already been transferred; and there he remained till his death. The wretched Shuja, pursued by Mir Jumla, was driven further and further east till at length he was obliged to throw himself upon the King of Arakan. Here, after being plundered of the little treasure he still had with him, he was insulted and then attacked, and, being forced to fly for his life, perished in an attempt to escape to the mountains.

Aurangzeb disposes of his rivals.—Dara's fate was equally tragic. He made one more attempt to retrieve his fortunes, got together a considerable force, and met Aurungzeb at Ajmir, but was defeated and again forced to fly. After wandering through Western India with an ever-decreasing retinue, exposed to attacks from bands of robbers, and suffering great hardships and privations, he sought at length the protection of a petty Afghan chief whom he had once befriended. But it was only to be robbed by his treacherous host of what little treasure he possessed, and then betrayed by him into the hands of Aurungzeb. From him he had no mercy to expect; for there had always been the bitterest enmity between the two, and, moreover, Dara had openly declared his intention of putting Aurungzeb to death if he caught him. Dressed in mean and filthy attire he was paraded on a worn-out elephant through the city of Agra, then cast into prison, and there beheaded on a charge of apostasy. His son, Sulaiman Shikoh, was likewise soon betrayed into the Emperor's hands; but the treatment which Dara had received had so horrified and exasperated the people of Agra that Aurungzeb found it impolitic to repeat it in the case of the son. He was, therefore, sent as a state prisoner to the fortress of Gwalior, and there, with his younger brother, who had preceded him thither, quietly put away by poison. Murad did not long survive them. He was shortly after executed on a trumped-up charge of murder, brought against him by the son of a man whom he had put to death in the days when he was Governor of Guzerat.

Reasons for Aurungzeb's success.—It may seem remarkable that Aurungzeb, in spite of his unnatural treatment of his father and the murder of his brothers and

nephews, should have been able to secure the support of powerful noblemen and generals in carrying out his usurpation of the throne. It will be as well, therefore, to explain how this came about. In Akbar's reign, as we have seen, there was an influential party at court which viewed, with deep resentment, the Emperor's laxity in matters of religion.



AURUNGZEB.

During the two succeeding reigns this party, though kept in check by the wise tolerance of the Emperor, steadily gained in power and influence. Its members, professing a rigid observance of the tenets of the faith, were uncompromising in their views and austere in their private lives. To them a free-thinker like Dara, a debauchee like Shuja, and a wine-drinker like Murad appeared unfit for the succession to the throne. On the other hand Aurungzeb's Puritanical manner of life, his religious zeal, and even his bigotry strongly appealed to them, and marked him out in their

eyes as an ideal Muhammedan ruler. And as, with consummate cunning, he was always able, even when his conduct was most unnatural, to make it seem that he was guided by his notions of religious duty, they never wavered in their allegiance to him, even if they suspected him of any but disinterested motives. Many, too, undoubtedly joined his party, being corrupted by his gold and promises. But when once it became evident that he must win in the struggle for the crown, the whole body of nobles, whatever were their private feelings, went over to his side. Nor are they to be severely blamed for this, for under the Moghul

rulers of India the whole land was looked upon as the property of the king. The nobles of the court held their grants directly from the reigning sovereign, and were liable to have them increased, diminished, or even confiscated according to his will or pleasure. For their own sakes, therefore, Shah Jahan's nobles found it necessary to acquiesce in Aurungzeb's usurpation.

Aurungzeb as Emperor.—In May, 1665, Aurungzeb, feeling now that his position was secure, had himself crowned Emperor, under the title of Alamgir, or Conqueror of the World. It might have been expected that such a crafty and remorseless prince would have made a bad king. But it was not so; for Aurungzeb, having attained the summit of his desires, soon gave proof that he entertained the loftiest ideals of kingly duty. Not even Akbar laboured more unceasingly in the administration of the Empire, nor showed a keener desire to see that justice was done in every part of it. His religion, which had seemed to many to be assumed as a cloak for his ambition, was found to be deep and sincere.

Affairs in the Deccan.—We must now return to affairs in the Deccan. Whilst the Moghul princes were fighting among themselves for the possession of the throne, events of the highest importance were occurring there.

Sivaji—When Shahji entered the service of the King of Bijapur he placed his ancestral home at Poona under the charge of a Mahratta Brahman named Dadaji Kondeo, and also entrusted him with the guardianship of his little son Sivaji. The boy was brought up as an orthodox Hindu; and the duty of protecting his religion from the insults heaped upon it by the Muhammedans was strongly impressed upon him from his childhood. Before he grew to manhood he began to exhibit such a spirit of adventure, and so great a skill in organising predatory expeditions, that his fame soon attracted to him bands of daring Mahratta robbers. His success was so remarkable that before long he felt himself strong enough to enter on a career of conquest at the expense of his Muhammedan neighbours, already weakened by dissensions among themselves and by the attacks of the Moghuls.

Conquers the Konkan.—His first important achieve-

ment, when he was yet only 19 years of age, was the capture, in 1646, of the hill fort of Torna, belonging to the King of Bijapur. From the plunder taken on this occasion he found means to build Rajgarh, a fort which became thenceforward the centre and the stronghold of his rocky dominions. The capture of Torna was quickly followed by the capture of other forts belonging to Bijapur ; and at length emboldened by success he went so far as to plunder a convoy of treasure on its way to the capital. The King of Bijapur, enraged more by this act of brigandage than by the capture of his border forts, retaliated by seizing his father Shahji and flinging him into prison, in the hope of bringing the rebellious son to terms. But Sivaji was equal to the occasion, and threw himself upon the protection of Shah Jahan. The King of Bijapur, threatened with so powerful a combination against his state, was forced to release Shahji and to come to terms. Sivaji thereafter continued to plunder the territory of Bijapur with impunity, and with each new conquest growing more confident, began at length to ravage Moghul territory as well. By the year 1689 he had by a series of campaigns conquered the whole of the Konkan with the exceptions of Goa, belonging to the Portuguese, and Bombay, where there was an English settlement.

Murder of Afzal Khan.—The King of Bijapur, at last thoroughly alarmed at his growing power, determined to make a genuine effort to crush him. A large army was sent under the command of Afzal Khan, a Pathan general, to hunt him down in his mountain fastnesses. Sivaji, who was as crafty and treacherous as he was daring and skilful, pretending to be cowed by the sight of so large a force, lured Afzal Khan to a private interview at a spot close to Rajgarh to arrange the terms of his submission. When Afzal Khan arrived Sivaji met him with becoming deference, but while in the act of embracing him, stabbed him to death with a deadly weapon called Baghnakh (tiger's claws), which he had concealed in the palm of his hand. He and his followers then rushed out upon the Bijapur troops, who, deprived of their leader and taken unawares, were panic-stricken, routed them with heavy slaughter and chased them back to the plains.

Sivaji plunders the Moghul Deccan.—This ex-



plot of Sivaji's brought him to the notice of Aurungzeb, then as viceroy of the Deccan maturing schemes for the conquest of Bijapur. He saw in Sivaji and his brigands a means of weakening the power of Bijapur, and he therefore encouraged him in his aggressions upon that state, little dreaming that the Mahratta robber was destined to be the founder of a power which should in his own day shake the Moghul throne to its foundations. Sivaji shortly after made peace with Bijapur, and then when Aurungzeb left the Deccan to join his brother Murad against Dara, began systematically to plunder Moghul territory. So troublesome did he become that Aurungzeb, as soon as he had defeated his brothers, and established himself firmly on the throne, sent Shaista Khan to the Deccan with instructions to extirpate Sivaji and his band of robbers.

Shaista Khan sent against him.—In 1661 Shaista Khan, having made all his preparations, marched into the Konkan with a large and well-equipped force. One after another the Mahratta forts went down before him, and even Shahji's house at Poona fell into his hands. Believing that he had completely crushed his foe, he made his enemy's ancestral home his headquarters. In fancied security he omitted to take proper precautions to guard against a surprise. But one night Sivaji with a chosen band, all cunningly disguised, managed to gain admittance to the house. Before help could be summoned they had fallen upon the inmates with their swords, and despatched the greater number. Shaista Khan himself escaped with a slight wound, but his son was among the slain. In the confusion which ensued Sivaji and his comrades made off unscathed to a mountain fort. Shaista Khan was soon after recalled to court.

Sivaji plunders Surat.—Sivaji's next adventure was even more daring. In 1664, pretending to be a Rajah on his way to the court of the Moghul Emperor, he succeeded in reaching the neighbourhood of Surat without arousing suspicion. Then at the head of a band of 3000 Mahrattas he made a sudden dash upon the city, which fell almost without a struggle into his hands. For three days the wretched inhabitants were cruelly tortured to make them disburse their wealth. The English under

their valiant President, Sir George Oxenden, alone held out against him, and made so stout a resistance that they saved not only their own but their neighbour's property. Sivaji and his followers, after burning what they could not take away with them, returned unmolested to Rajgarh, laden with an immense booty valued at several millions sterling. The attack on Surat was peculiarly exasperating to the Muhammedans, for the city was the port of embarkation for pilgrims on the way to Mecca. Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, who had been associated with Shaista Khan in the command of the Moghul forces in the Deccan, was suspected of having connived at both Sivaji's latest exploits, and was recalled to court; but he prudently retired instead to his own territory,

Sivaji submits to Aurungzeb.—Sivaji now assumed the title of Rajah, and began to coin money. About this time too he collected a fleet that he might combine the profession of pirate with that of brigand. Sailing along the coast he laid waste the seaboard far and wide, and by the sack of Barsilor, the chief port of Bijapur, obtained immense booty. Then in open derision of the Moghul power, which he had bearded with such impunity when he sacked Surat, he began to prey upon the pilgrim ships leaving that port for Mecca. This was too much, and Aurungzeb, thoroughly aroused, sent another expedition against him under the command of Rajah Jay Singh of Jeypur and Dilir Khan. Sivaji now found himself face to face with a force he could neither conquer nor evade, and after a brief struggle was compelled to submit. The terms of peace were that he was to surrender twenty of his forts, and unite with the Moghuls against Bijapur, the desire of conquering which Aurungzeb had never relinquished. In return he was acknowledged as a Rajah, and permitted to take the *chauth* or fourth part of the revenues of certain districts, and his son was made a commander of 5000 horse in the Moghul army.

Mir Jumla's expedition to Assam.—Meanwhile in Bengal, Mir Jumla, who after the defeat and death of Shuja had been appointed Subahdar or governor of that province, was despatched on an expedition against the King of Assam. It was suspected that Aurungzeb, who

trusted no man, was anxious that Mir Jumla should be employed at as great a distance from the capital as possible. He knew by experience how ambitious and unscrupulous Mir Jumla was, and he feared that being at the head of a powerful and victorious army, he might be tempted to set up an independent kingdom in Bengal, or even to aspire to the Imperial throne, should a favourable opportunity present itself. The expedition was at first successful; the capital of the kingdom of Assam was occupied and sacked, and the country ravaged far and wide by the troops. But the rainy season setting in with its customary violence in those parts, soon made it difficult for the vast and unwieldy Moghul army to continue the campaign and complete the subjugation of the country. Then a terrible outbreak of cholera occurred which swept away thousands of the invaders, and made it necessary for the decimated army to retire. The Assamese at once began to take heart and to assume the offensive, and by their guerilla tactics so harassed the retreat that only the consummate generalship of Mir Jumla saved the expedition from ending in disaster. The army reached Bengal in 1663 with an enormous quantity of plunder; but Mir Jumla was so broken in health by fatigue and exposure that he died from the effects almost immediately. Aurungzeb was undoubtedly relieved at the news of his death. "You mourn," he said to Mir Jumla's son, "a loving father, and I the most powerful and most dangerous of my friends."

Suppression of piracy in Bengal.—Shaista Khan, who had fared so ill in the Deccan, was appointed to succeed Mir Jumla, and was ordered to undertake, as soon as possible, an expedition against the King of Arakan, to punish him for his insolent treatment of Prince Shuja. For though Shuja was a fugitive and in disgrace when he sought the king's protection, yet, argued Aurungzeb, as a Moghul prince he should have been respected. Moreover, the pirates of Chittagong, whom the King of Arakan continued to protect and encourage, had grown more daring of late, and their ravages more far-reaching. Shaista Khan determined to deal with them first. But being unable to meet them on the sea for want of ships, he made use of deceit to get them into his hands. By threats and promises

he succeeded in inducing them to desert the King of Arakan, and then, when he had decoyed them away, treated them with the contempt they deserved. Having disarmed them and deprived them of their galleys, he settled them in a place a few miles south of Dacca and left them to live, as best they could, by honest means. Being quite unfitted to pursue any peaceful calling, they soon sank into a state of abject misery, and tasted to the full themselves the bitterness of poverty and despair. Having thus isolated the King of Arakan, Shaista Khan, in 1666, proceeded to invade his country, and quickly conquered and annexed it. This event, though seemingly insignificant, was in truth of the highest importance; for, by the suppression of piracy in the Bay of Bengal, Shaista Khan made it possible for English traders to gain a firm foothold in Bengal.

Aurangzeb's devotion to duty.—In January, 1666, Shah Jahan died, and with his death Aurungzeb was freed from the last cause of anxiety. Fortune had so far smiled upon the usurper's every undertaking, and there was now no one left who could make his position insecure. The Moghul empire was still at the zenith of its glory, and its revenues were greater than they had ever been before. The Emperor, with his high sense of kingly duty, seemed pre eminently fitted to govern so vast and so splendid an empire. Being a man of simple habits and austere religious views, he began at once to introduce a rigid system of economy in place of the profligate expenditure which had marked the latter portion of his father's reign. By way of setting an example, he ordained for his own household the most frugal mode of living, and it is said, employed his little leisure in embroidering caps to defray its expenses. Taxes which pressed hardly on the poor, and licenses which brought into the treasury profit from immorality and vice, were abolished, and every effort was made to govern the empire according to the strictest tenets of Islam. The Emperor's watchfulness to prevent corruption and injustice in any part of his dominions was unceasing. In short, by his devotion to duty he did his best to atone for the crimes which he had committed to secure the throne. Yet, as if in punishment for his former wickedness, from this time forward every project failed

him, and the empire, in spite of his unremitting care, began steadily to decline.

His short-sightedness.—It must be admitted, however, that most of the disasters which subsequently overtook the empire were due to the emperor's short-sightedness and bigotry as much as to his evil fortune. A notable instance of his want of foresight occurred in the very month in which his father died. Sivaji, after his submission, had so distinguished himself as an ally of the Moghuls in the invasion of Bijapur that he was invited to court as a special mark of Imperial favour. But on his arrival, instead of the honourable reception which the terms of his invitation had led him to expect, he was treated with marked coldness by Aurungzeb, and found himself virtually a prisoner at court. By a clever stratagem he managed to effect his escape, and in the disguise of a religious mendicant made his way on foot to the Deccan, vowing vengeance against the faithless Emperor. Aurungzeb thus made an implacable enemy of the one man above all others in Southern India whose friendship it was his interest to preserve. Nor was his treatment of the Muhammedan kingdoms of the Deccan that of a wise and far-seeing statesman. By seizing every opportunity to weaken them, by making war upon them himself, and by encouraging Sivaji in his acts of aggression upon them, he was merely paving the way for the enterprising Mahrattas to establish a powerful and militant Hindu confederacy in Southern India, and at the same time breaking down the barriers which protected the confines of his empire from their desolating invasions.

Sivaji openly defies the Moghuls.—Sivaji, on his return to his kingdom, lost no time in putting his threats into execution, and began at once to ravage Moghul territory. Aurungzeb, who was still at war with Bijapur, now found himself confronted with the Mahrattas as well. He felt that if he was to accomplish the subjugation of the Muhammedan kingdoms of the Deccan, upon which he had set his heart, he must hide his resentment and buy off the hostility of the Mahrattas. Accordingly, in 1667 Jaswant Singh, the Rajput leader of the Moghul troops, was commissioned to open negotiations with Sivaji. By the terms

of the treaty agreed upon Sivaji's independence was recognised, and the territories taken from him by the Moghuls restored. He thus became more powerful than ever, and in the following year forced the kings of Golconda and Bijapur to pay him tribute. For the next two years he was busy in consolidating his kingdom, and then war between him and the Moghuls broke out afresh. The Moghul Deccan was ravaged far and wide by his troops, the hill forts were stormed and many of them captured, and Surat was once again plundered. Aurungzeb, suspecting treachery among his generals, made frequent changes; but the Mahrattas, so far from being subdued, actually profited thereby, and began in 1670 for the first time to levy chauth from portions of the Moghul Deccan. In 1674 Sivaji was enthroned with great pomp and ceremony at his capital Rajghur, and openly proclaimed himself the 'champion of the Hindu gods against Aurungzeb.'

Aurungzeb persecutes Hindus.—Meanwhile trouble was brewing in Northern India. Aurungzeb's predecessors on the Moghul throne had had the wisdom to leave their Hindu subjects in the enjoyment of their ancient customs and religion. But, upon the death of Shah Jahan, the bigoted and uncompromising Sunnis of the court became all-powerful, and, under their instigation, the Emperor began to harass his Hindu subjects. Benares, as the centre of Hinduism, was the first place to feel the weight of his displeasure. To show his contempt for its idolatrous practices, the Emperor ordered certain of its famous temples to be destroyed, and out of their materials erected a stately mosque to dominate the city. Muttra and other holy Hindu cities were similarly desecrated, and general orders were issued to provincial governors to destroy temples, remove idols, and close Hindu schools. The campaign of persecution thus begun stirred up a wave of fanaticism which spread far and wide. Even the cities of the faithful Rajputs did not escape desecration.

Hindu estrangement.—This insensate policy led, as a matter of course, to widespread disaffection among the Hindus, and to many local disturbances. In 1676 a serious rebellion broke out at Narnaul, north of Delhi, among a sect of Hindu fanatics, known as Satnamis, which was not



put down for a whole year. But, instead of acting as a warning to the Emperor, the revolt roused all his latent bigotry and perverseness of character. By way of retaliation for what he deemed Hindu insolence, he dismissed from the revenue service all his Hindu officers, and filled their places with inexperienced Muhammedans. As a natural result the revenue system fell into confusion, and he soon found himself without sufficient funds to carry on his expensive and disastrous campaigns in the Deccan. He thereupon, as an expedient for replenishing the treasury, in 1677 revived the hated Jiziya, or poll-tax, on non-Muhammedans. The estrangement between him and his Hindu subjects was now complete, and he did not scruple to use force to coerce them. When crowds of Hindus thronged about his palace to protest against the obnoxious measure, he ordered them to be charged by the state elephants, and many were trampled upon and killed. He would not even exempt the loyal Rajputs from the tax.

Rajput revolt.—About this time Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, the famous Rajput general, died, while on active service in Afghanistan. As his widow and children were on their way back to Jodhpur, they passed close to Delhi. The Emperor, who had only too good reason to fear trouble in Rajputana, attempted to seize them as hostages for the good behaviour of the Rajputs. By the devoted courage of her retainers, the Rani and her children succeeded in eluding their pursuers and escaped to their home. This act of treachery, coupled with the imposition of the Jiziya, roused nearly the whole of Rajputana to revolt, and the Emperor was forced to relax his efforts in the Deccan in order to deal with so formidable a rebellion. His three sons—Muazzim from the Deccan, Azam from Bengal, and Akbar, who was at court—were each sent in command of armies into Rajputana from different points, with orders to lay waste the country with fire and sword, sack the towns and villages, and desecrate the temples. His instructions were faithfully carried out, and Rajputana was given up to the horrors of an invasion exceeding those perpetrated by the early Pathan conquerors.

Rebellion suppressed.—In the midst of this ruthless campaign of repression, Prince Akbar, his third son, suddenly

went over to the enemy, and was soon at the head of an army of 60,000 exasperated and desperate Rajputs. Aurungzeb however was as usual equal to the occasion. He wrote a seemingly friendly letter to his son, which he contrived should fall into the hands of his Rajput allies, congratulating him upon the skilful way in which, while luring them on to destruction, he had feigned to be their deliverer. The Rajputs were completely deceived by this cunning device, and were furious with Akbar for his supposed treachery. With difficulty he escaped out of their hands and fled southward to the Deccan. Muazzim and Azam after this speedily reduced the rebels to sullen submission. But henceforth this proud and haughty race instead of being a bulwark of the empire was an ever-present source of weakness and anxiety.

Aurungzeb goes to the Deccan.—Meanwhile in the Deccan affairs had not been prospering with Aurungzeb. Bijapur and Golconda, though greatly weakened, were still holding out, and though Sivaji had died in 1680, the Mahratta power which he had organised was growing more formidable than ever. Prince Akbar, after his flight from Rajputana, had for a year taken refuge with Sambaji, Sivaji's son and successor. Aurungzeb was much incensed at this ; as soon as the war in Rajputana was brought to a conclusion, he bent all his energies to the task of subjugating the Deccan. He felt that if he was to carry out his scheme of conquest there, and punish the insolent Mahrattas, he must employ all the resources of his empire. In 1683, after spending two years in making his preparations, he marched out from Ahmadnagar to effect his purpose at the head of an army the like of which had not before been seen in India.

Fall of Bijapur and Golconda.—The Grand Army, as it was called, was in fact several armies under different commands. The part commanded by the Emperor himself commenced operations against Bijapur, but for some time effected nothing ; for the Mahrattas, by laying waste the country behind it, and thus cutting off its supplies, rendered any movements in force impossible. Meanwhile Muazzim, who had been sent against Golconda, after a successful campaign had, much to his father's annoyance, admitted



the king to terms of peace. The whole army was now directed against Bijapur; and the kingdom which had withstood the Moghuls so long was in 1686 at last conquered and added to the Empire. After the fall of Bijapur, Aurungzeb, who was equally bent upon the destruction of Golconda, refused to ratify the terms of peace concluded with the king by his son, and proceeded at once against it. Attacked by the whole of the Imperial army, and deprived of the assistance of the sister kingdom, it made but a feeble resistance, and was reduced within the year and annexed.

Capture of Sambaji.—Thus at last Aurungzeb had succeeded in carrying out his long-cherished dream of conquest, and nothing now lay between him and the insolent Mahrattas. Sambaji had neither the genius for organisation nor the military instincts of his father. While Bijapur and Golconda were falling he made no strenuous effort to save them, but stood aloof most of the time a disinterested spectator. He was, moreover, a cruel and rapacious ruler, and had by harsh treatment and exactions alienated many of his confederates; so that he had to face Aurungzeb's Grand Army single handed with forces weakened by disaffection. The Moghuls pressed him so vigorously that he was obliged to fall back, letting fort after fort fall into their hands. At length in 1689 he was surprised and captured, and the Mahratta power apparently all but destroyed. Sambaji, when brought before Aurungzeb, instead of displaying a submissive spirit, had the temerity to heap invectives upon the Emperor and his religion. For this the infuriated Emperor ordered his offending tongue to be instantly torn out, and then, after subjecting him to further cruel tortures, had his head struck off.

Aurungzeb's rebellious sons.—The war in the Deccan had lasted so long that the resources of the Empire were greatly diminished thereby; but at its conclusion Aurungzeb was the ruler of a more extensive Empire than any of his predecessors, and he began at last to look forward to a time of peace in which to restore his disordered finances. But his hopes were doomed to speedy disappointment. He was now in his turn to taste the bitterness occasioned by rebellious children, and to reap the fruits of

his habitual suspicion and distrust. His youngest son, Akbar, was in exile and disgrace never to return; next, Muazzim, his eldest, fell under suspicion of plotting against his father, and was kept in close confinement; and then Azam, his second son, rebelled. The Emperor dared not trust any of his generals with the settlement of affairs in the Deccan, and was therefore forced himself, though now advanced in age, to remain in the field in order to complete the subjugation of Maharashtra.

Hindu revolts.—But the Mahrattas, instead of submitting after the capture of Sambaji, began on the contrary almost immediately to revive, and the Emperor had the mortification of realising that the reduction of the Muhammedan kingdoms of the south had greatly increased the difficulty of suppressing Mahratta brigandage. For in the anarchy which ensued upon the fall of Bijapur and Golconda, the Mahrattas almost with impunity ravaged the Deccan, and quickly recovering from their defeats grew bolder and more enterprising than before. To the anxiety caused him by his sons and the annoyance from the Mahrattas, were added Hindu rebellions in the north. The Jats, between the Jumna and the Chambal, raised the standard of revolt, and though treated with merciless severity, could not be completely subdued; the angry and resentful Rajputs were combining into a hostile confederacy; and between the Sutlej and the Ravi the Sikhs, a militant religious sect founded by a Hindu reformer Nanaka, were growing yearly more formidable in spite of rigorous repression.

Mahratta successes.—The Grand Army in the Deccan, though commanded by the Emperor in person, was steadily losing ground, and, while constantly harassed by the enterprising enemy, could never bring on a pitched battle, and inflict a serious reverse upon them. For the Moghul army was unwieldy, while the Mahrattas, mounted on wiry ponies, and carrying on their saddles all that they required, were extremely mobile. The former moved slowly and deliberately, encumbered by its transport; the latter scoured the country round in all directions, turning up where they were least expected and cutting off convoys, and ravaging and plundering the districts from which the Moghuls obtained

their supplies. At length by their guerilla tactics they so wore down the Moghuls and exhausted their resources that all the country of the Deccan except that which was in the immediate vicinity of the Moghul camps passed into the hands of the Mahrattas.

General disorder.—In 1695 the Bhima, upon the banks of which the Emperor had pitched his camp, swollen by heavy rain, suddenly overflowed and swept away 12,000 of his soldiers, besides vast quantities of stores and provisions. Disaster followed disaster; and year by year, in spite of all he could do, the Mahrattas grew stronger, while his own forces grew more timid and disheartened. The finances of the empire were failing, and in his absence from the capital corruption, oppression, and every species of misgovernment were flourishing unchecked. Yet he did not despair, and, though past eighty years of age, did not relinquish the vain struggle. All the while, too, he continued to pay the closest attention to public business, and to spend hours daily over the minutest details of administration.

Death of Aurungzeb.—With all his faults, it is impossible not to admire the indomitable spirit with which the old man met his misfortunes. He had never trusted any one, least of all his children and relations, and now in his old age, unloved and unbefriended, he had to face alone an appalling accumulation of disasters. Yet he bore up against it all with calm courage, and fought and laboured on, stubbornly refusing to acknowledge defeat. At length, in 1706, after twenty-four years of continuous campaigning in the Deccan, when to continue in the field against the Mahrattas would mean the annihilation of his disorganised and dispirited troops, and perhaps his falling himself into the hands of the enemy, he retired to Ahmadnagar; and there, in the very place from which the Grand Army had started out with such high hopes so many years before, the Emperor's spirit broke at last, and, worn out in body and mind, he gradually sank and died, a prey to remorse and despair.

His character.—The character of Aurungzeb is one of the strangest in history, and most difficult to read. That he was a sincerely religious man there can be no doubt,

blameless in his private life, and doing his public duties according to his lights conscientiously and unremittingly. He was, too, a man of culture and refinement; and, strange as it may appear, rather prone to mildness than severity. Indeed, much of the misgovernment of his reign is attributable to the too great leniency with which he treated corrupt officials. His personal courage is undeniable, and his whole life bears witness to his coolness and readiness of resource in times of danger. Such a man should have made a successful ruler of a great empire; but against these high and kingly qualities must be set off a suspiciousness, perversity and narrowness almost unexampled in history.

Aurangzeb never really trusted any man, and in return was never thoroughly trusted himself. It was this particular trait in his character, more perhaps than his obstinacy and bigotry, which alienated his subjects from him, and he was, in consequence of it, always badly served. The great Akbar—and in a lesser measure his successors—had always at their beck and call a number of powerful noblemen, both Hindu and Muhammedan, attached to them as much by respect and affection as interest; but the cold and suspicious Aurungzeb allowed no intimacy with him nor placed his confidence in anyone. It was his policy to play off one powerful nobleman against another, Hindu against Muhammedan, and to be ever on the watch to check the growth of power and ambition. He ruled by an elaborate system of espionage, and, while he was feared and respected, was regarded with distrust and dislike. Such a system led of necessity to misgovernment and corruption. High officers of state, realising the insecurity of their position under the jealous and suspicious eye of the Emperor, sought in the shortest time possible to enrich themselves by extortion and malpractices against the day when they should incur his displeasure; while the Emperor, being without powerful and influential friends and relatives upon whose support he could rely in time of trouble, hesitated to punish wrongdoers in high places with due severity. The people, accustomed from the days of Akbar to regard the emperor as the fountain of justice, cried to him in vain against their oppressors; and thus misruled led to widespread disaffection and murmurs against



the throne. Added to all this, he had no tolerance for those who differed from him in religious belief, whether Shiah or Hindu, and would not temporise with them nor turn from the path which, as a strict Muhammedan, he believed to be his duty to follow, however insurmountable the obstacles before him.

Revival of the Hindus.—It will be as well to pause here, and briefly survey the state of India at the time of Aurungzeb's death. We have seen the Moghul Empire steadily drifting into a state of anarchy and decay, and Hinduism, which had lain so long under the yoke of Islam, asserting itself once more in the Punjab, in Rajputana, and in Southern India. In the north the Hindus were still no more than struggling against their oppressors, but in the Deccan the bold and skilful Mahrattas had already emerged from the long contest as conquerors. Maharashtra was practically free, and the adjoining portions of the Moghul Deccan were actually tributary to Sivaji's successors.

Growing importance of English settlements.—But, besides the Mahrattas, two other powers destined to play an important part in the subsequent history of India were now coming into prominence. These were the English and the French. During the long reign of Aurungzeb, in spite of many lets and hindrances, the English had gradually extended their trade, till at his death they possessed many factories along the Indian coast. At Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, forts had been built and prosperous towns had grown up; and within the territorial jurisdiction of the Presidencies, as these three places were called, the English maintained civil governments, collected revenue from their lands, and dispensed justice to their native subjects.

The Company's change of Policy.—The change from quiet trading in defenceless factories to the establishment of forts and the maintenance of civil governments resulted from the force of circumstances, and not from any wish of the Company's to become a territorial ruler in India. The Directors in England long cherished the belief that the acquisition of territory and the erecting of forts was impolitic. They argued that the Portuguese had been

ruined by the expense of maintaining garrisons to guard their Indian Empire. While the Moghul Empire was strong enough to preserve order the doctrine of peaceful trade was a sound one. But when, in consequence of Aurungzeb's disastrous wars in the Deccan, the control of the central authority was weakened, the Company's settlements fell a prey to rapacious Provincial Governors, and were liable also to attacks from roving bands of Mahratta brigands. Towards the end of the seventeenth century it became evident even to the Directors that a change of policy was necessary, and at length in response to the urgent appeals of their harassed servants, they finally decided to renounce their traditional policy and to establish a dominion in India. This momentous decision was arrived at in the year 1688. Thus was the Company compelled at length in self-preservation to take its place as a territorial ruler in India.

Establishment of French settlements.—From the year 1604 the French had made four unsuccessful attempts to found trading companies in India. At last, in 1664, Colbert succeeded in establishing a French East India Company on a firm footing. Ten years later the French obtained a grant of land from the Bijapur state, and built thereon a city called Pondicherry, the New Town; and in the very year in which the English declared their intention of becoming a ruling power in India, Shaista Khan, the Mughal viceroy of Bengal, permitted the French to establish a factory at Chandernagore. Pondicherry, after passing through a period of storm and stress, by the beginning of the 18th century had already risen through the ability of Martin, its founder and governor, to a position of importance as a great emporium of trade in Southern India.

CHAPTER III.

DECLINE OF THE MOGHUL EMPIRE.

Aurungzeb's will.—On the death of Aurungzeb there was the usual fratricidal war for the possession of the throne. Before his death Aurungzeb had portioned his

empire among his three surviving children, perhaps hoping thus to prevent strife among them, or realising by his own failure the impossibility of one man's governing such vast dominions. Muazzim, his eldest son, was to be Emperor of Delhi and to rule over Northern India; Azam, the second, with his capital at Agra, was to be ruler of Western India; and Kam Baksh, the youngest, was to be the governor of the lately-annexed Muhammedan kingdoms of the south—Golconda and Bijapur.

Bahadur Shah.—Azam, however, would not acquiesce in this arrangement, and marched upon Delhi to dispute his brother's claim. The brothers met to the north of Agra, and Azam was defeated and slain. The credit of the victory was due not so much to Muazzim as to Zulfikar Khan, one of Aurungzeb's most famous generals. Muazzim thereupon ascended the throne under the title of Bahadur Shah, in 1707. He was a mild and kindly man, anxious only for the preservation of peace. But hardly was he seated on the throne before Kam Baksh, refusing to acknowledge his sovereignty, declared himself independent in the Deccan. Zulfikar Khan, without awaiting orders, marched against him; and before the Emperor could intervene the prince had been defeated in a pitched battle, mortally wounded and taken prisoner.

Campaign against the Sikhs.—Bahadur Shah, as soon as peace was restored, turned his attention to the conciliation of his Hindu subjects. But Aurungzeb's policy had so deeply stirred their resentment, that they were not to be won over. The Emperor, however, had the wisdom to profit by his father's mistakes and did not attempt to coerce them. Recognising the uselessness of continuing the struggle with the Mahrattas he acknowledged the claim of their leader Sahu, the grandson of Sivaji, to levy chauth, even in part of the Moghul Deccan. He also made peace with the Rajputs on terms which virtually conceded their independence. The Sikhs could not be treated with similar lenity; for under the persecutions of Aurungzeb they had developed into an irreconcilable and dangerously aggressive militant sect. They had invaded the Eastern Punjab and seized Sirhind, and were bent on wreaking vengeance upon Muhammedans generally. Under their leader Banda they had begun to

take fearful reprisals upon Muhammedans, torturing mullahs, burning mosques, and putting whole villages to the sword. Bahadur Shah, in spite of his mildness, was a man of spirit, and in 1710 marched out against them in person, defeated them with great slaughter, and drove them to take refuge in the hills. But their leader Banda escaped, and the Sikhs, like the Mahrattas, quickly recovered and again assumed the offensive.

Death of Bahadur Shah.—The Emperor was an old man when he ascended the throne, and he was now over seventy. It was a misfortune for the Empire that he had not many years to live; for though he could not have restored it, he could, had time been granted him, by his conciliatory and tolerant policy have saved from dissolution what was left. The campaign against the Sikhs was his last achievement, and in 1712 while at Lahore he died, worn out by exposure and fatigue.

The Peshwaship made an hereditary office.—During Bahadur Shah's brief reign events of importance were following each other in quick succession in the Deccan. Sahu, the son of Sambaji, who had been taken prisoner along with his father by Aurungzeb and brought up at the Moghul court, was restored to his kingdom by Bahadur Shah, and with the support of the Moghuls had got himself crowned at Satara in 1708. But his claim to succeed to the throne of his grandfather was disputed by his uncle and his uncle's sons; and a civil war broke out which divided the Mahrattas into two factions and greatly weakened them. Sahu, who was even more lazy and self indulgent than his father, troubled himself so little with affairs of state, that his kingdom soon fell into the utmost confusion. It began to look as if the Mahratta power would decline as rapidly as it had arisen. But in the year 1712, just when things appeared to be at their worst, he had the good fortune to select as his Peshwa, or chief minister, a Brahman of remarkable ability named Balaji Bishwanath. This man, by his energy and statesmanship, not only saved the tottering state from ruin, but reconstituted the Mahratta power on a firmer and more enduring basis. His indolent master was only too glad to leave the management of the kingdom to him, and in grateful recognition of his services granted

the office of Peshwa as an hereditary possession to his family. Soon all power passed into the hands of the powerful minister, and the king became a puppet in his hands.

Form of Mahratta Government.—It is interesting to note how the Mahratta form of government had thus accidentally been brought into conformity with the ancient Hindu ideal. There was the submissive king, descended from a noble Kshatriya family, whose ancestors had won their position by the sword; there were the warrior chiefs of the confederacy that led the Mahratta hosts to battle; there was the Brahman Prime Minister transacting all affairs of state; and there was the low caste element supplied by the Dravidians of the Konkan, who formed the bulk of the Mahratta population. Thus at the time of Bahadur Shah's death, while the Moghul Empire, beset on all sides by enemies and torn by internal dissensions, was hurrying to its fall, the Mahratta power had taken a new lease of life, and was being consolidated under the form of government most likely to be popular with its Hindu subjects.

Jahandar Shah.—Upon Bahadur Shah's death, the Empire, according to now established custom, was the scene of a life and death struggle among the royal princes. At last, by the aid of the still all-powerful Zulfikar Khan, the weakest gained possession of the throne. Assuming the title of Jahandar Shah he signalised his accession in the usual way by the slaughter of all the relatives of the late Emperor upon whom he could lay his hands. But he was as feeble as he was cruel, and was during his brief reign a mere puppet in the hands of Zulfikar Khan. Zulfikar, though a fine soldier, was a bad administrator. Corruption and oppression had never been so rife before throughout the Empire; and, in the Moghul Deccan, Daud Khan, a Pathan general, whom he had appointed viceroy, was allowed to commit all sorts of excesses. At the end of one year's misrule, two brothers, Syad Husain Ali, governor of Behar, and Syad Abdullah, governor of Allahabad, set up a rival to Jahandar in the person of Farukh Siyyar, a grandson of Bahadur Shah, who had escaped the general massacre of his relatives. The brothers marched upon the capital, and Jahandar and Zulfikar marched out to meet them. A



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battle was fought near Agra in 1713, in which the Syads gained a complete victory. Jahandar and Zulfikar were taken prisoners and both put to death, and Farukh Siyyar was at once placed upon the throne.

Farukh Siyyar.—The new emperor was, like his predecessor, a mere figurehead, and all real power was exercised by the Syads during the five years of his reign. Husain Ali was appointed governor of the Deccan, and Daud Khan was ordered off to Guzerat. But Daud Khan declined to go, and prepared to resist the new viceroy. The latter therefore attacked him, and after a stubbornly contested fight Daud Khan was defeated and killed. Husain Ali found his governorship anything but a sinecure, for a war with the Mahrattas broke out almost immediately, and he had so little success against them that he was forced to conclude an ignominious treaty, by which the Moghul Deccan was acknowledged as tributary to Sahu. This was the greatest disgrace that had yet befallen the Moghul Empire.

Deputation from Calcutta.—In the year 1716 the English in Calcutta sent a deputation to the Emperor to complain of the exactions of the governor of Bengal. With the deputation was a surgeon named Hamilton. It so happened that at the time of its arrival at Delhi the Emperor was ill, and the court physicians had failed to restore him to health. The services of Hamilton were called in, and he had the good fortune speedily to effect a cure. The Emperor was so pleased with his skill that he asked him to name his reward. The patriotic Hamilton, disregarding self interest, asked that the English in Bengal might be exempted from custom dues and granted the possession of certain villages in the neighbourhood of their settlement at Calcutta. His request was granted, and a patent issued accordingly in 1717. This seemingly trivial incident proved to be one of the most important steps in the consolidation of the British power in India.

Persecution of the Sikhs.—While the deputation was at Delhi it witnessed a terrible scene characteristic of those troubled times. A campaign against the Sikhs had just been brought to a successful conclusion. Banda, their leader, had at last been captured and sent a prisoner to



Delhi along with 740 wretches saved from the general massacre for a worse fate. They who had taken such fearful reprisals upon Muhammedans, in their turn, could expect no pity. After being first exhibited in public before the exasperated people, and subjected to every sort of insult, they were put to death with cruel tortures. The Sikhs showed themselves to be as brave as they had been remorselessly cruel, and, glorying in their martyrdom, met their fate with heroic fortitude.

Mahrattas at Delhi.—About this time, 1719, the feeble Emperor made an attempt to throw off the yoke of the Syads, which had long been irksome to him. Husain Ali, Governor of the Deccan, hearing of it, promptly made a treaty of alliance with the Mahrattas and marched upon Delhi, accompanied by a body of 10,000 Mahratta horsemen, under the command of Balaji Bishwanath. On his way he was joined by a famous general and statesman, named Chingleech Khan. The allies speedily brushed aside all opposition, seized the Emperor and put him to death. This was the first interference of the Mahrattas in the affairs of Delhi, and it marks an epoch in their history. They had now seen with their own eyes the rottenness of the Moghul Empire, and the lesson was not lost upon them.

Rapid decline of the Moghul Empire.—After the assassination of Farukh Siyyar the Syads set up a puppet Emperor; but he died of consumption after reigning for three months only. Then they selected another; but he likewise died within the year. Meanwhile the Empire was fast hastening to dissolution. The Mahrattas were formally granted permission to levy the chauth throughout the Moghul Deccan and also to take an additional 10 per cent., and their absolute control of the Konkan was acknowledged; the Jodhpur Raja, Ajit Singh, was made the viceroy of the subahs of Ajmir and Khandesh; Jay Singh of Amber was appointed Governor of Guzerat; and Chingleech Khan was given charge of Malwa: but all were virtually independent. The Jats, too, had by this time established their independence in the territory now known as Bharthpur, between the Chambal and Agra. The control of the central authority was gone, and the people,



without hope of redress from the oppressions of petty rulers, were sunk in apathy and despair.

Muhammad Shah.—The Syads now selected another grandson of Bahadur Shah's, named Roshan Akhtar, and placed him on the throne in 1719, under the title of Muhammad Shah. But the end of the Syad domination was at hand. A rival party had arisen, headed by the redoubtable Chinkleech Khan, with whom was associated a Persian adventurer named Saadat Khan. In 1720, Chinkleech being ordered to hand over the governorship of Malwa and appear at court, went into open rebellion, seized Khandesh and made himself master of the Deccan. He was secretly supported by the Emperor, who saw in him a means of deliverance from the yoke of the Syads. Husain Ali, who marched to the Deccan to oppose him, was assassinated on the way. Abdullah, the surviving brother, was shortly after defeated in the battle of Shâhpûr, near Agra. Thus ended the domination of the Syads. The revolution was complete, and Chinkleech was invited by the Emperor to come to Delhi and assume the office of Prime Minister. From henceforward he is better known by his titles of Asaf Jâh and Nizam ul Mulk.

The kingdom of Oudh founded.—Saadat Khan, for his services in the overthrow of the Syads, was appointed Governor of Oudh. But, taking advantage of the weakness of the central authority, he very soon converted his subah into an independent state. No attempt was subsequently made by the Delhi Emperors to recover the lost province or to assert their authority over the ruler, and for the next 130 years Oudh was ruled by Nawabs descended from Saadat Khan.

The kingdom of Hyderabad founded.—Two years later Asaf Jâh resigned the Prime Ministership and retired to the Moghul Deccan, where, choosing Hyderabad as his capital, he set up as an independent sovereign. The ten remaining years of his life were spent in establishing his authority and repelling Mahratta attacks. At his death he left to his successors (who, like himself, bore the title of Nizam) a considerable kingdom, that, through many vicissitudes, has survived to the present day.



Death of Balaji Bishwanath.—In 1720 Balaji, the first of the Peshwas, died. By organising the Mahratta Confederacy on a religious basis, in which the Brahman influence predominated, he had converted it from loosely cohering bands of freebooters into a united and irresistible power, which nothing but internal dissensions could destroy. He was succeeded by his son, Baji Rao, a man of great ability and insatiable ambition.

Mahrattas threaten Delhi.—About the time that the Nizam was founding his kingdom of Hyderabad several Mahratta leaders, destined themselves to be the founders of kingdoms, were coming into prominence. The chief of these were Ranaji Sindhia, who had at one time served as the Peshwa's slipper-bearer, Malhar Rao Holkar, a Sudra by caste, and Pilaji Gaekwar, a cowherd. With their rise to power began a campaign of aggression upon neighbouring states which did not stop till the very gates of Delhi had been reached. By 1734 the Mahrattas had completely overrun Malwa, and plundering expeditions had been sent out across the Jumna threatening the Moghul capital itself. Saadat Ali, coming to the assistance of the Emperor, succeeded in repelling the invaders, but only temporarily; for in 1736, under the Peshwa Baji Rao, the Mahrattas again advanced to the walls of Delhi and actually began to plunder its suburbs.

Mahrattas paramount in India.—The feeble Emperor sent urgent messages for assistance to the Nizam, appointed him Governor of Malwa and Guzerat, and called upon all the subject princes of the Moghul Empire to join him in expelling the Mahrattas. The Nizam responded to the appeal at the head of a large army, and, marching against the Mahrattas, compelled them to retire from Delhi. He then encamped his vast army at Bhopal, while he waited for reinforcements from the Deccan. But these never arrived, and meanwhile Baji Rao had surrounded his camp with an army of 80,000 Mahratta horse. Being unable to break through the investing ring, and finding himself in a state of siege with but a few days' provisions for his army, he was forced to capitulate. He was only allowed his freedom on his agreeing to sign a convention, by which he renounced the governorship of Malwa,

ceded the territory between the Narbuddah and the Chambal to the Mahrattas, and engaged to pay from the imperial treasury of Delhi fifty lakhs of rupees. Sindhia and Holkar, as a reward for their services, were appointed governors of the newly-acquired territory, the subah of Malwa being divided between them. Mahratta power thus became paramount in India, and it looked as if a Hindu empire was once again to be established over Hindustan.

Invasion of Nadir Shah.—But while the Nizam and Baji Rao were settling the terms of the Convention of Bhopal, a fresh invader from the north had made his way into India. This was Nadir Shah, who, starting life as a shepherd of Khorāsan, had by his military genius made himself at length the master of the Persian Empire. In 1736 he had had himself crowned Shah at Ispahan; but his ambition for conquest was insatiable, and, after spending the next two years in overcoming the Afghans, in 1738, on a frivolous pretext, he invaded the Punjab and advanced upon Delhi. The Nizam and Saadat Khan, combining their forces, hastened to oppose him. The contending armies met near Karnal, and as usual the dwellers in the Indian plains proved no match for hardy invaders from the north. After a brief struggle the Indians broke and fled, and the Persians continued their progress towards Delhi unopposed. The Emperor, Muhammad Shah, seeing the uselessness of further resistance, surrendered, and Nadir and his army entered Delhi.

Sack of Delhi.—On the second day of the occupation a rumour spread among the inhabitants that Nadir Shah was dead, and they rose against the invaders. Seven hundred of the Persian soldiers, caught in the act of plunder, were killed in the streets by riotous mobs of citizens, before the report was found to be false. Nadir was furious at this act of treachery, and ordered a general massacre. For the best part of a whole day the city was given up to sack and slaughter. The Persians laid their hands upon everything of value that they could take away with them, and slew indiscriminately all who came in their way. The treasury was plundered, money and jewels were extorted from nobles and wealthy traders, and the famous Peacock Throne