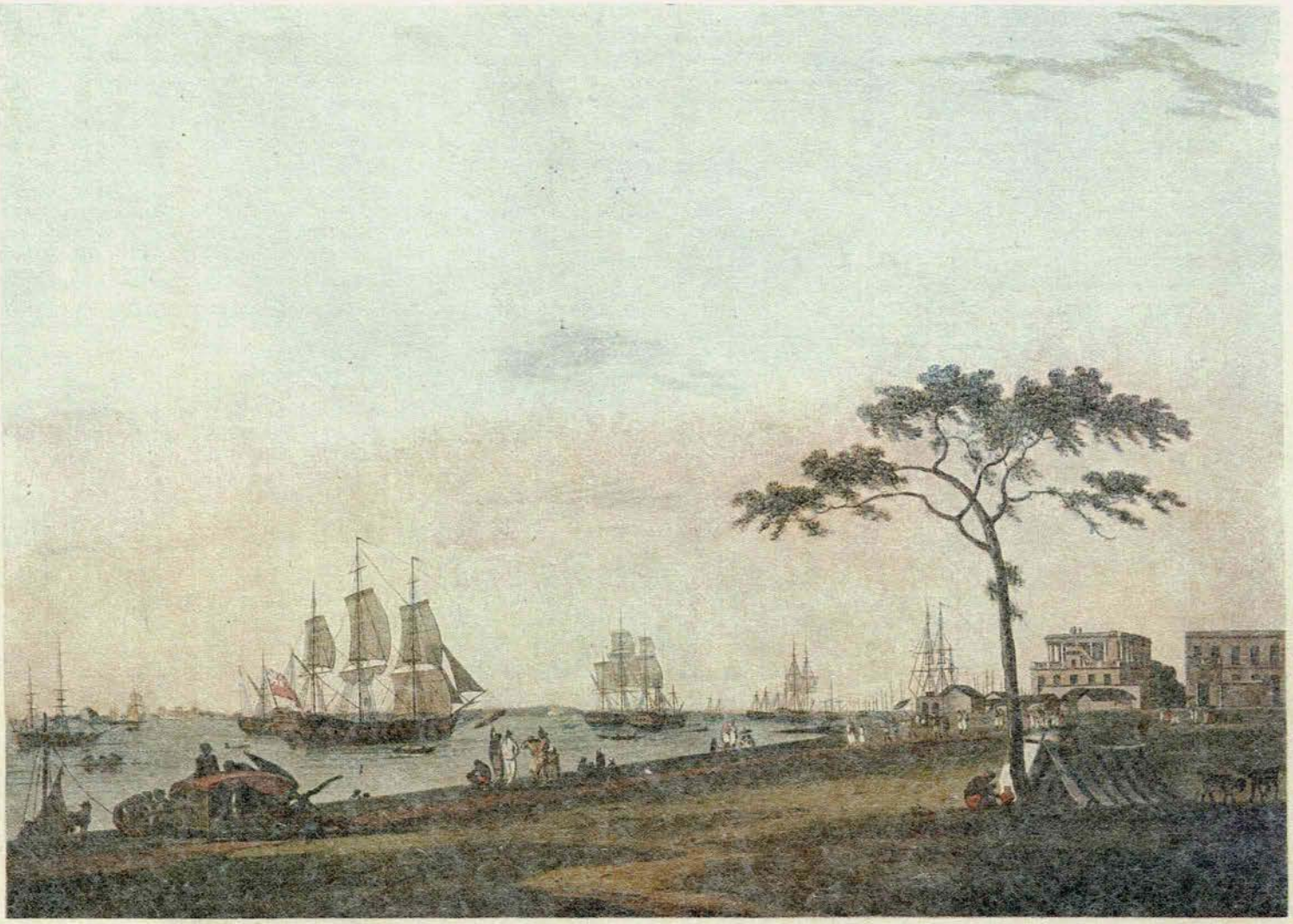
THE CYCLOPEDIA OF INDIA.



View taken on the ESPLANADE CALCUTTA, where is now CHANDPAL GHAT.
From an engraving by Thos' & Wm, DANIELL. 1797.

THE

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Historical.

PART II.

MOHAMMEDAN RULE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY MOHAMMEDAN INVASIONS: AFGHAN AND TURKI KINGS.

I.—Mahmoud (of Ghazni) and Mohammed Ghori.

In that glorious series of successes scored by the conquering Arabs of early Islam, India played but little part. Within a generation of the Hegira, the Arabs had conquered Egypt and North Africa, Syria and Persia. The outlying provinces of the Eastern Roman Empire were lopped off one by one, and the eternal struggle between Byzantium and Persia was terminated by the defeat of both at the hands of a common foe. The splendid Ommiad Khalifat, with its capital at Damascus, within a century of the Prophet's death ruled from the Oxus to the Ebro. The Hindu Kush, however, opposed a sufficient barrier to any Moslems who looked eagerly towards India, and the only wave of the mighty conquering flood which reached India was confined to a single corner of the vast peninsula, the lower valley of the Indus. In 712, at a time when the fatal battle of Xeres had just annihilated the Gothic kingdoms in Spain, and when Kashgar was being invaded by an Arab host, Sindh and Multan were added to the dominions of Islam by a young general, Mohammed Kasim. The oppression of the Hindu rulers and jealousies of race and creed, made the conquest of the mixed population in this region the work of a few months. Kasim's romantic career ended tragically, but the dominions he had conquered remained for a while under the successors of 'the Prophet,' though after a generation or two this leadership was only nominal. The Mohammedan government seems to have been honest and tolerant enough while it lasted, a characteristic which indeed was demanded by the necessity of conciliating the inhabitants, since the Mohammedans in Sindh received few, if any, reinforcements from head-quarters. Native dynasties soon rose again, and the early Arab triumph led to no great results. It was not the beginning of the Moslem conquest of India, but a single episode in the history of the land. The time was not yet ripe for extending the banner of Islam over the land of the Vedas and of Buddha. Moreover, the attack had been made from the wrong quarter, and had entered an unproductive region separated by barren wastes from the rich and tempting provinces of Hindustan. The Arabs had exhausted their strength in other conquests, and the subjection of India was reserved for the vigorous young race of Turks from Central Asia.

Arab conquest of Sindh, 712.

Failure of the Conquest.

The Turks were one amongst the many branches of that vast Mongol race, to which the Emperors of China, the Huns, the Sakas and the Yueh-chi belonged. The most ruthless devastators in the world's history, Attila, Jenghiz Khan, Timur, have all been Mongols. Attila was the chief of the Western Huns, who scourged Europe at a time when the White Huns under Toramana were afflicting India; Jenghiz Khan and Timur were chiefs of a later Mongol horde, known as Moguls; and Timur was the direct ancestor of the Mogul emperors of India. The Turks rose to power and fame midway between the Huns and Moguls. First appearing under that name in the 6th century, they at length during the 10th and 11th centuries became the dominant race in Asia and gave at least three great empires to history, that of the Seljuks, that of the Ottomans and that of the Ghaznavides. While Turkish warriors were acquiring control over the provinces of the Khalifat and building up the Seljuk empire under which the Khalifs sank to the position of *rois fénéants*, Alptagin, a Turkish warrior, founded a small principality at Ghazni, in the heart of the Afghan mountains. Sabuktagin, a slave of Alptagin, succeeded his master on the throne and rapidly extended the limits of his kingdom. Seistan and Khorasan were subdued, and a Brahman Raja in the Punjab was forced to pay tribute to the Turkish king. The invasion of India, thus pointed out by Sabuktagin, was undertaken on

Rise of the Turks.

Foundation of the Kingdom of Ghazni, 962.

a larger scale by his son Mahmoud who succeeded to the Ghaznavide throne in 997. A zealot of restless activity and insatiable ambition, Mahmoud vowed to wage yearly a Holy War against the infidels of Hindustan. "Between the years 1000 and 1026 he made at least sixteen distinct campaigns in India, in which he ranged across the plains from the Indus to the Ganges." Jaipal, that raja of the Punjab whom Sabuktagin had partially subdued, was overthrown by a powerful Turkish host and sought death on the funeral pyre rather than dishonour. His son Anandpal, with a measureless host, all but checked the career of the conqueror, but a sudden panic scattered his vast army, and Mahmoud became undisputed master of the Punjab. The plunder carried off to Ghazni was almost incredible in its value, and it stimulated the religious ardour of Mahmoud to fresh exertions. No concerted resistance seems to have been offered, and the disunion of the kingdoms of India served the conqueror in much the same way as the jealousies of native chiefs had assisted Alexander. Tomaras, Palas, Kalachuris and Chandellas, all succumbed beneath the overmastering energy of the Turk. Cities and forts innumerable were captured, temples and idols thrown down. The fame of Mahmoud's booty spread throughout Asia, and thousands of volunteers from beyond the Oxus came trooping into his camp. The year 1018 which marks his greatest campaign, saw the sack of Mathura and Kanouj, and the Bay of Bengal witnessed the terrific onslaught of the mountain zealots. The campaigns of Mahmoud concluded with the march into Gujerat and the sack of Somnath in 1026. The destruction of the sacred shrine and its famous linga, together with the removal of the temple gates to Ghazni, earned for the Iconoclast the execration of every pious Hindu and the veneration of every devoted Moslem. But Mahmoud aimed at no permanent conquest of India. His expeditions were little more than plundering raids: his followers clung to their Afghan home, and the forces of the Rajputs, though disunited, were too great to admit of a permanent occupation. Moreover, the wish to rule over India was probably lacking. Mahmoud had extended his rule over the greater part of Persia and chose rather to rule over a Moslem people than be the lord of 'infidels.' To Moslems he was the pattern king, zealous for the faith, and a mighty conqueror, yet wise and cultured, a liberal encourager of the arts, and a patron of learned men. At his cultivated court flourished Alberuni, the chronologist, famous for his account of India: Brihaki, whose memoirs are a mine of historical and biographical information: and Firdusi, whose great epic, the 'Shah Namah,' has earned him the title of 'the Persian Homer.' Mahmoud founded a great university at Ghazni, and was a lavish builder of mosques and productive public works. Such a man is not really a great constructive statesman. He does not elaborate principles of administration which will neutralize the possible incapacity of his successors, but he relies rather on his strong arm and vigilant activity to govern in accordance with the needs of the moment, and to meet all difficulties as they arise. Hence the dominions of Mahmoud were poorly knit together, and the vast empire rapidly fell to pieces when the genius of its creator was no more. For a century and a half, it is true, the Ghaznavide empire survived, but suffered continuous diminution in size and strength. As early as 1040 Persia and Khorasan passed over to the Seljuks, and the viceroys of the Punjab not seldom rebelled and sought to establish independence. But the Seljuk peril moved further west, and the Ghaznavides maintained their hold over Afghanistan in the Punjab. During the 12th century, however, a danger arose in their midst. An Afghan family inhabiting the castle of Firoz-Kol, in the hills of Ghor between Ghazni and Herat, entered upon a blood-feud with the later Ghaznavides, whose great ancestor they had eagerly followed into the plains of India. In 1155 Ala-ud-din, the 'world-burner,' sacked and razed the city of Ghazni, and drove his overlord into the Punjab. Thirty years later the nephews of this chief, Ghiyas-ud-din and Muiz-ud-din—generally known as Mohammed Ghori—overturned the once powerful empire of the Ghaznavides, and divided it between them. Ghiyas-ud-din remained for a time predominant in Afghanistan, while his brother overthrew the Mohammedan kingdoms of India, and then turned his arms against the Hindu kingdoms of the north. Sindh was subdued in 1182, and by the defeat of the last Ghaznavide, the Punjab fell into Mohammed's hands in 1186. Whatever assimilation between Moslem and Hindu had marked the last hundred years in the north-west was now brought to an end. Mohammed Ghori was imbued with the same fanatic zeal as his predecessor and prototype, Mahmoud the Iconoclast. Afghans, Turks, Persians flocked eagerly to his standard, and for years he harried the fair countries of Hindustan, overthrowing cities and kingdoms, destroying temples and idols. A decisive reverse experienced in 1191 at the hands of the Rajput lord of Delhi and Ajmir, Prithi Raja, was atoned for in 1192, when a charge of 12,000 horsemen in steel array shattered the Hindu chivalry. In 1193 Ajmir and Delhi fell into the hands of the conqueror, while in the following year Kanouj and Benares under their Gaharwar or Rahtore chiefs, as also Bundelkhand, became part of the Empire of Ghor. Mohammed was greatly assisted in these operations by his slave, Kutb-ud-din Aybek, who was appointed Viceroy of India. The latter busied himself with the reduction of Malwa and Gujerat, in which he was only partially successful, while another general, Bakhtiyar, with the greatest ease overcame the native dynasties in Behar and Bengal.* By 1205 nearly all India north of the Vindhyas had been subdued. Mohammed Ghori meanwhile busied himself with a disastrous expedition in Central Asia, but his Viceroy remained true

Mahmoud of Ghazni, 997-1030.

His Indian Expeditions.

Sack of Somnath, 1026.

Mahmoud's character and Court.

Rise of the House of Ghor.

Mohammed Ghori's Conquest of India, 1182-1206.

* The fall of most of the native kingdoms was alluded to on pp. 38-39, Vol. I.

to him and he returned to India to resume the sovereignty. His death which shortly followed (1206) severed the connection between India and Afghanistan, Kutb-ud-din becoming the Sultan of India, while Ghor and Ghazni remained subject to the house of Ghor. Though the dominion so magnificently conquered was lost to the house of Ghor, it was not lost to Islam. Mohammed's conquests were of a far more permanent character than those of Mahmoud, and his successors so consolidated them, that from his day until the Indian Mutiny of 1857 there was always a Mohammedan king upon the throne of Delhi. First came five dynasties of Turkish and Afghan kings who filled the throne from 1206 to 1526. In 1526 Babar's conquest ushered in the Mogul period; thenceforward until 1857 with a few short breaks a Mogul reigned as the Mohammedan Emperor of India.

Characteristics of the Mohammedan Period.

Now that India had a Mohammedan king of her own, and was no longer merely part of a wider empire, this history can confine itself almost entirely to Indian matters, without pausing to examine the political situation of the bordering countries. The three centuries prior to 1526, as also in large measure those succeeding, are to be studied mainly from a biographical point of view. The gradual conquest of the peninsula by Mohammedan arms gives scope, of course, to military history, but the illustration of the art of war remains rather the work of the specialist. Of constitution building, or civil development, such as fills so large a space in the history of Western nations, there is little to be said. Men, not methods, make up the history of the East. Nor did the religions or social condition of the Hindus undergo great change during the period under treatment. Beyond the conversion, forcible or voluntary, of many millions of Hindus, the religious system established in Puranik times suffered from no great upheaval. The Mohammedans quarrelled amongst each other over religion, and bitter enmity was stirred up between Sunni, Shiah and Sufi; but such quarrels affected little the conditions of the masses and must be only noticed in so far as they fostered disunion among the governing race, or threatened the dismemberment of the Delhi Empire. On the whole, the social system of the Hindus, if it changed at all, changed for the worse. Still an opening was to be found for those who rebelled against caste bonds. Admission into the great caste of Islam overthrew all barriers opposed by the Hindu system to the ambition of the hereditarily degraded ones. Many Sudras availed themselves of this opportunity, particularly in Bengal. Still, for the majority, things remained unchanged. Strife might rage, first between Moslem and Hindu, then between Moslem and Moslem, but the humble ryot knew little and cared little for the stirring deeds going on around him. It is then on kings and thrones that one's eyes must steadily be fixed. A "drum and trumpet history" may find no justification in the case of a progressive state where political, social and religious evolution is proceeding. Such a style of history would have been as inapplicable to the Hindu Period of Indian history as to modern England or ancient Greece. But in the Mohammedan Period the barrenness of national life and intellectual movements is so marked that history cannot but be mainly political.

Its interest mainly political.

II.—The Slave, Khilji and Tughlak Dynasties.

The Slave Kings of Delhi, 1206-1290.

Kutb-ud-din, the first Slave Sultan of Delhi, survived his master only four years. Most of his conquests were made previous to 1205, and the rest of his life was devoted to administration and building. The Kutb Minar, the tallest minaret in the world, was constructed according to his order. The empire which Kutb-ud-din did not live long enough to consolidate was established on a firmer and wider basis by the great Altamsh, one of the many Turkish slaves who at this period rose to eminence, alike in India, Egypt and Western Asia. The greater part of Altamsh's reign was occupied with the repression of contumacious governors and wars against rebellious Hindus. The Rajputs of Malwa were defeated, and Mohammedan ascendancy more firmly planted north of the Vindhyas. The Mongol hordes of Jenghiz Khan appeared on the frontiers in 1221, but after ravaging the border provinces of Altamsh they turned their eyes westward, so that India had a short respite from barbarous invasion. The career of Altamsh was so successful that the Khalif of Bagdad sent to invest him with the robe of office as recognized sovereign of India. This recognition was marked by the introduction of a new silver coinage, the inscription on which—'Aid of the Commander of the Faithful'—asserted the connection between the Indian Sultans and the accredited head of the Moslem faith. Altamsh was succeeded after a short interval by his daughter, Raziya, the only female sovereign who ever sat on the Mohammedan throne of Delhi. Her kingly qualities had led Altamsh to indicate her as his heir, and she indeed displayed a capacity for rule seldom equalled by an Oriental woman. Learned, energetic, just and wise, she was equally fearless at the council board and at the head of her army, but the stern faith of Mohammed found little place for a female ruler. That she showed favour to an Abyssinian slave was the occasion of an offence which roused the Turkish chiefs against her, and after a short and chequered reign she was deposed and put to death. Ten years of plots and murders made up the inglorious reigns of a brother and nephew of Raziya, until in 1246, Nasir-ud-din, the youngest son of Altamsh, succeeded to the throne. A simple and religious gentleman, this monarch had no capacity for controlling the turbulent elements at work in the 13th century. Fortunately he was assisted, and served with consistent loyalty by Balban, a conspicuously able Turkish slave and a grandson-in-law of Altamsh. For twenty years Balban ruled as the vazir of his master, and for twenty years as sovereign in his own right. His ruthless severity and the rapidity of his strokes are famous in history. But it was only thus that the king of Delhi could make good his authority in such a time. The repeated inroads of Mongols, the disaffection of Hindus, the jealousies

Kutb-ud-din, 1206-1210.

Altamsh, 1211-1236.

Raziya, 1236-1240.

Balban (Sultan), 1266-1287.

and revolts of Turkish chiefs, the prevalence of robbery and brigandage, were elements of disintegration which but for a strong king, would have reduced India to a chaos. To resist the Mongols, Balban disciplined his army to the highest point of efficiency and himself remained constantly on the alert near his capital, ready to march at a moment's notice against the dreaded foe. His measures successfully warned off the Mongols, but as he was but seldom seen in the outlying provinces, the governors, with shortsighted policy, sought to make themselves independent. But when Tughril, governor of Bengal, revolted, his punishment became an awful warning to the rest. The slayer of Tughril was richly rewarded and the disaffected Hindus were inspired with fear by the severity of the conqueror. "The Sultan returned to Lakhnauti (after the defeat and death of Tughril) and there ordered that gibbets should be erected along both sides of the great *bazar*, which was more than a *kos* in length. He ordered all the sons and sons-in-law of Tughril, and all men who had served him, or borne arms for him, to be slain, and placed upon the gibbets.....The punishments went on during the two or three days that the Sultan remained at Lakhnauti, and the beholders were so horrified that they nearly died of fear."* A son of Balban was appointed Viceroy of the seditious province, and his descendants maintained the rule until after the Khilji dynasty of Delhi had passed away (1282-1339). Rebellious Turkish chiefs, whether landholders or officials, found their power ruthlessly curtailed. Thus Balban prevented anything in the nature of a barons' war, which would have been the signal for a widespread Hindu revolt. A year was spent in exterminating the outlaws and suppressing the forays of the hillmen, both of which had made travelling and commerce unsafe, and had even terrified the suburbs of the capital. So for sixty years to come, the roads were free from robbers, and the people became tractable, obedient and submissive.

The dignity of the imperial throne was rigidly upheld by Balban. "No sovereign had ever before exhibited such pomp and grandeur in Delhi.....For the twenty-two years that Balban reigned, he maintained the dignity, honour and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed. Certain of his attendants that waited on him in private assured me that they never saw him otherwise than full dressed. During the whole time that he was *Khan* and *Sultan*, extending over nearly forty years, he never conversed with persons of low origin or occupation, and never indulged in any familiarity, either with friends or strangers, by which the dignity of the sovereign could be lowered."† Similarly he gave no high posts to vulgar or worthless persons; had no base favourites; abstained from drinking and low pleasures. This was an ideal but seldom attained by the Turk and Afghan kings of Delhi, and it largely explains Balban's success as a statesman and Sultan. He was, in short, one of the most notable figures among the Mohammedan emperors of India. But, like Louis XIV of France, he did too much himself. He trained no ministers, and he left no fit successors. One capable son he had had, who pre-deceased him, and the throne fell to a grandson, who within three years "drank and debauched himself into a hopeless paralytic." A reaction against the Turks took place, and the Afghan clan of the Khiljis mounted the throne of Delhi.

The Khilji dynasty lasted thirty years, and included six sovereigns. The first, Jalal-ud-din, was a mild old man of seventy years, who systematically refused to shed blood even for flagrant crimes. After the defeat of a revolt led by a nephew of Balban, the Sultan entertained the captive nobles as his guests. "He had shown great attention to those prisoners who deserved death, and had made them his guests. He had removed the fetters of rebels who all deserved punishment, and had set them free." Such unwonted clemency exasperated his followers, who were accustomed to look for dignity and severity in their rulers. The malcontents found a leader in Ala-ud-din, the Sultan's nephew. The simple, unsuspecting king was beguiled into a trap and brutally murdered. This base crime, for a time at least, brought its perpetrator no ill luck. Ala-ud-din was a powerful ruler, who reigned with unexampled vigour for twenty years, and greatly extended the Moslem dominion in India. He was even more successful in his conquests than Balban, the pre-eminent monarch of the preceding dynasty. His skill as a soldier had been proved by a successful invasion of the Deccan, and the capture of Deogiri, the Mahratta capital, during the life of Jalal-ud-din. Soon after his accession the new Sultan was confronted with the Mongol danger in the north-west, but a host of 200,000 Mongols were dispersed by the dash of the Moslem charge. Prosperity seemed to attend all the Sultan's undertakings, and in the words of Barni: "One success followed another; despatches of victory came in from all sides. Every year he had two or three sons born, affairs of state went on according to his wish and to his satisfaction, his treasury was overflowing, boxes and caskets of jewels and pearls were daily displayed before his eyes, he had numerous elephants in his stables and 70,000 horses in the city and its environs, two or three regions were subject to his sway, and he had no apprehension of enemies to his kingdom or of any rival to his throne. All this prosperity intoxicated him. Vast desires and great aims, far beyond him, or a hundred thousand like him, formed their germs in his brain, and he entertained fancies which had never occurred to any king before him. In his exaltation, ignorance, and folly, he quite lost his head, forming the most impossible schemes, and nourishing the most extravagant desires. He was a man of no learning, and never associated with men of learning. He could not read or write a letter. He was bad tempered, obstinate, and hard-hearted, but the world smiled upon him, fortune befriended him, and his schemes were generally successful, so he only became the more reckless and arrogant." Such wild schemes were the establishment of a new religion, and the dream of conquering the world in the form of a second Alexander. An uncle of the historian Barni counselled

The Khiljis, 1290-1320. Jalal-ud-din, 1290-1295.

Ala-ud-din, 1295-1316.

Extends the Mohammedan Empire.

His character and vast schemes.

* Barni, *Tarikh-i Firoz Shah*. Elliot, *History of India as told by its own historians*. Vol. III, p. 119.

† Barni, *ibid*, p. 100.

the Sultan to abjure this fool's paradise, to give up wine-bibbing and to reduce the still independent Hindu strongholds of Rajputana and Western India. The wisdom of this advice was proved when even the capture of the Hindu fort, Rantambhor, near Delhi, taxed all his energies. A series of mutinies and insurrections assisted to rouse Ala-ud-din from his security and pride. Having reduced the realm to order, he next directed his attention to the means of preventing rebellion in the future. The methods employed were extraordinary and tyrannical. Widespread confiscations of property took place: "the people were pressed and amerced, money was exacted from them on every kind of pretence. All the pensions, grants in land, and endowments in the country were appropriated.

Mutinies and revolts.

The people were all so absorbed in obtaining the means of living that the very name of rebellion was never mentioned.* Secondly, he provided so carefully for the acquisition of intelligence, that no action of good or bad men was concealed from him. No one could stir without his knowledge, and whatever happened in the houses of nobles, great men and officials, was communicated to the Sultan by his reporters..... The system of reporting went to such a length that nobles dared not speak aloud even in the largest palaces, and if they had anything to say they communicated by signs. In their own houses, night and day, dread of the reports of the spies made them tremble. .....The transactions in the bazars, the buying and selling, and the bargains made, were all reported to the Sultan by his spies, and were all kept under control. Thirdly, he prohibited wine-drinking and wine-selling, and also the use of intoxicating drugs. Dicing also was forbidden.....Fourthly, the Sultan gave commands that noblemen and great men should not visit each other's houses, or give feasts or hold meetings. They were forbidden to form alliances without consent from the throne, and they were also prohibited from allowing people to resort to their houses.....No stranger was admitted into a nobleman's house. Feasting and hospitality fell quite into disuse." These regulations involved a tyranny more galling than that of the most ruthless Roman emperor or the most autocratic Russian czar, in that they interfered more grievously with the liberties of the individual under his own domestic roof than any other edicts of which history bears record. They were supplemented by a series of provisions specially applicable to Hindus, and amounting to persecution. The Hindu, rich and poor alike, was ground down by the wheel of taxation into beggary, and was deliberately deprived not only of the luxuries, but frequently of the necessaries of life. A Mohammedan kazi or judge, consulted by Ala-ud-din on the subject of his government, declared these edicts, particularly those relating to Mohammedans, to be illegal. Still the Sultan defied the law and persisted in his repression. When in 1303 a renewed Mongol invasion necessitated a thorough reorganization of the royal forces, Ala-ud-din tried experiments in political economy. Being without sufficient treasure to keep on foot a large standing army at high pay, he limited the price of food by royal edict. By a systematic control of markets the price of grain was cheapened. Quantities of corn were stored up in the royal granaries, and in the event of famine it was distributed to the people at the fixed price. To sell at enhanced prices was an offence met by the severest punishments, but there is no doubt that the king's settlement was successful. A strong and contented army was kept on foot, and further Mongol attempts were so crushed that India enjoyed security from invasion for many a year and "the ryots carried on their agriculture in peace."

Repressive measures.

Mongol invasions, 1303, etc.

Experiments in political economy.

Ala-ud-din was now at the zenith of his power. He resumed his plans for the conquest of the Deccan, and from 1308 to 1311 scored a number of important successes. Rama Deva, the Yadava ruler of Deogiri, who had been conquered fifteen years before, had re-asserted his independence. He was again subdued and left in the position of a tributary prince. The same fate overtook the Raja of Warangal in the Telingana country, and an expedition directed to the Malabar coast penetrated as far south as Mysore and brought home quantities of plunder. Ala-ud-din had penetrated further into the Deccan than any of his Moslem predecessors, but Mohammed Tughlak, who shortly afterwards reigned in Delhi, enjoyed a wider Indian empire. The later years of the Sultan were embittered by the growth of a fatal dropsy and by the misbehaviour of his sons. He became infatuated with an unworthy favourite, Malik Kafur, which bred a deadly feud between Kafur and the royal family. Slaves and worthless people took the place of the wise and able administrators who had served the throne so faithfully. Kafur is not incredibly asserted to have hastened the death of his master, but the proscription of the royal family which he entered upon to secure his power only had for its end his own murder, and the throne passed to Mubarak Shah, a profligate and easy-going son of the late Sultan, seventeen years of age. All the wise enactments together with the undue exactions of the late reign were immediately reversed: the Hindus regained their liberty and every one did as it pleased him. The king shamelessly abandoned all religion and all morality, and became the tool of a vile Hindu favourite, styled Khusru Khan, a pariah from Gujerat. Rebellions were punished with the most brutal cruelty and finally Khusru Khan murdered his master and ascended the throne as Nasir-ud-din II.

Conquests in the Deccan, 1308-1311.

Death of the Sultan, 1316.

Mubarak Shah, 1316-1320.

The reign of terror which followed is unexampled even in the history of the East. "The harem of the Sultan was brutally ravished, everyone worth killing, was killed in the palace; three days after the murder of his sovereign Khusru took to wife the

Nasir-ud-din, 1321.

* *Mediæval India* (The Story of the Nations) S. Lane Poole. See also Barni in Elliot's History, Vol. III, pp. 222-5.

queen of his victim, a Hindu princess to whom such an alliance was an unspeakable profanation; the wives and daughters of the royal family and of the great nobles were delivered over to the scum of Khusru's pariahs; the flames of bloodshed and brutality reddened the sky, the holy Koran was desecrated, idols were set up in the mosques.'' This tyranny, equally loathsome to Mohammedans and Hindus, was ended after four months by the one man in the kingdom who enjoyed universal esteem. Ghazi Beg Tughlak, who had held the frontiers against the Mongols with unvarying success, put himself at the head of the old nobility, overthrew the contemptible upstart, and in deference to the general invitation mounted the throne as king under the name of Ghias-ud-din.

The Tughlak dynasty, 1321-1414.

The Turkish house of Tughlak ruled at Delhi for nearly a hundred years. Ghazi proved a just and vigorous king. Order was quickly restored, rebellions in Bengal and the Deccan were crushed; peace and prosperity reigned once more in Hindustan. Already old at his accession, the accidental death of the Sultan in 1325 only slightly anticipated his fate. He was succeeded by his son, Prince Jauna, who, under the name of the Sultan Mohammed ibn Tughlak, was the remarkable figure of the dynasty. We cannot improve upon Elphinstone's summary of his character. ''It is admitted on all hands that he was the most eloquent and accomplished prince of his age. His letters, both in Arabic and Persian, were admired for their elegance, long after he had ceased to reign. His memory was extraordinary, and besides a thorough knowledge of logic, and the philosophy of the Greeks, he was much attached to mathematics, and to physical science, and used, himself, to attend sick persons, for the purpose of watching the symptoms of any extraordinary disease. He was regular in his devotions, abstained from wine, and conformed in his private life to all the moral precepts of his religion. In war he was distinguished for his gallantry and personal activity, so that his contemporaries were justified in esteeming him as one of the wonders of the age. Yet the whole of these splendid talents and accomplishments were given to him in vain: they were accompanied by a perversion of judgment which, after every allowance for the intoxication of absolute power, leaves us in doubt whether he was not affected by some degree of insanity. His whole life was spent in pursuing visionary schemes by means equally irrational and with a total disregard of the sufferings which they occasioned to his subjects, and its results were more calamitous than those of any other Indian reign.''* Though mentally Ala-ud-din, the greatest Sultan of the preceding dynasty, cannot bear comparison with Mohammed Tughlak, yet his rough and ready methods were more successful than the idealistic schemes of this man of genius. Tughlak was too clever for his age: above all he was too impatient. The clash between a reforming spirit and a dull national conservatism finds an excellent parallel in Joseph II of Austria, most remarkable of the enlightened European despots of the 18th century. The projects which operated to the ruin of the country and the decay of the people, are catalogued by Barni as (1) Increase in the assessments of the Doab whereby cultivation was arrested, famine arose and loyal people became rebels. (2) The transference of the capital from Delhi to the more central Deogiri now re-named Daulatabad. The whole population of Delhi were ordered to remove themselves 700 miles to their new quarters. Delhi was left deserted and fell into decay, nor was the scheme successful. The unfortunate people were ordered to trek back to their original homes, but few survived to return. (3) The experiment of a copper token currency. Copper tankas were issued to pass at the value of the contemporary silver tanka, the object being to enrich the country by the increase of the currency. But the new tokens were forged by private individuals on all sides, and soon ceased to represent the actual credit of the treasury. ''When trade was interrupted on every side, and when the copper tankas had become more worthless than clods, the Sultan repealed his edict, and in great wrath he proclaimed that whoever possessed copper coins should bring them to the treasury and receive the old ones in exchange.'' Mountains of copper coins poured into the treasury, and wonderful to relate the run on the reserve seems to have been met somehow or other, so that accidentally the people were enriched. Still the experiment had increased the distrust which the Sultan's methods of government inspired. (4) The fourth project which diminished his treasure, and so brought distress upon the country, was his design of conquering Khorasan and Irak. The coveted countries were not acquired, but those which he possessed were lost; and his treasure, which is the true source of political power, was expended. (5) As if the project of conquering Persia were too small, Mohammed dreamt of invading China; and in the preparation of a great armament to effect an impossible task poured out his money like water. The drain in the treasury necessitated fresh taxation, and an oppressive fiscal system inspired revolt. The taxes were not paid, and the Sultan, irritated beyond endurance, hunted the Hindus like wild beasts. Boundless prodigality was another source of evil. The treasury was drained of wealth to keep up an undue magnificence at court, and distinguished strangers were loaded with gifts in lands and money. Thus Ibn Batuta, the Arab traveller, on arrival at Delhi, was taken into favour, given fiefs and cash, appointed to a judgeship and finally sent as the Sultan's ambassador to China. Throughout the reign insurrection sprang up on all sides with Hydra-like persistency. As soon as one was quelled, another took its place. The Sultan, disgusted with the failure of his disinterested plans for the just government of his people, displayed the greatest cruelty. 'The more the people resist, the more I inflict chastisement.' Some were trodden under foot of elephants, and carved in pieces by the iron blades fast-

Ghias-ud-din Tughlak, 1321-1325.

Mohammed Tughlak, 1325-1350.

His mistaken projects.

Drain on the treasury.

Revolts.

Generosity and cruelty of the Sultan.

* Elphinstone: *History of India* (Ed. Cowell), p. 404.

ened to the animal's tusks. A nephew of the Sultan, suspected of treason, was flayed and roasted alive, and his cooked flesh sent to his family, an act exactly parallel to that accredited by Greek tragedy to Atreus. It is these contradictions between acts of extravagant generosity and others of incredible cruelty which are so striking. The contrasts in Tughlak's character are worthy of treatment by a Shakespeare. He was not blind to the evil which was rampant, but tried to mitigate the public distress by remission of taxation in some cases, by open justice dispensed by his own royal hand, by free distribution of food and of agricultural loans.

Disintegration of the Empire begins.

These were, however, experiments tried too late, mostly in 1341; the mischief was already done and disintegration had set in. Bengal was lost to the Empire in 1339, the Deccan shortly afterwards, and when the Sultan died in 1350, the revolts in Oudh, Malwa, Gujerat and Sindh had not been suppressed.

Mohammed Tughlak had ruled over a larger and more splendid Empire than any of his predecessors. His father had recovered the distant provinces, and the reputation of Mohammed had given him in the early years of his reign an authority unprecedented in Mohammedan India. But his misdirected genius resulted in the ruin of this magnificent empire. As a ruler he was a transcendent failure, though as a character he inspires perennial interest.

He was succeeded by a cousin, Firoz Shah, already a man of middle age. The history of the reign written by a contemporary, Shams-i-Siraj Afif, though some allowance must be made for the spirit of eulogium customary at the court, supplies clear proof of the excellence of Firoz Shah, his virtues and munificence, his benevolence and the extreme affection in which he was held. The work is also valuable for the interest it displays in administrative details, and the evidence it accumulates as to the condition of India under Mohammedan rule. Firoz Shah was no great conqueror, but a good and far-seeing ruler. He arrested for a time further disintegration in the empire, though he made no very great effort to retain the revolted provinces. The Deccan was allowed to remain independent under the Bahmani dynasty, and two half-hearted expeditions to Bengal did not suffice to reconvert the king of that country into a viceroy subordinate to Delhi. Firoz, however, gained some military glory in Sindh, after protracted operations against a rebellious native chief, "The Jam," and reduced the Rai of Nagarkhot, who held the hilly country of Kangra. Still the limits of the Empire were more restricted than they had been fifty years before, and it is regrettable that more provinces and people were not able to enjoy the good government of this model Sultan. Firoz assuaged the wounds inflicted by the mad schemes of his predecessor and reversed Mohammed Tughlak's policy in every particular. The victims of the latter's ferocity or their representatives were indemnified. Demands in excess of the regular government dues were rigidly forbidden. "Such rules were made that the ryots grew rich, and were satisfied. Their homes were replete with grain, property, houses and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver, no woman was without her ornaments, and no house was wanting in excellent beds and couches. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of the Almighty."* The Sultan strove hard to increase the productivity of his realm by public works of utility. Canals, dams, reservoirs, bridges, monasteries, colleges and inns for travellers were scattered profusely over the land. The great Jumna canal built by Firoz still supplies a large area with irrigation and brings water to Delhi. The people were able to reap two harvests instead of one. Waste lands were reclaimed. Twelve hundred market gardens were laid out, and the proceeds helped to swell the annual budget, of which a considerable share was expended in poor relief, in ministrations to the sick and donations to pious objects. The Sultan was also an enthusiastic builder. He renamed old cities and founded new ones. Amongst his foundations was Firozabad on the Jumna, ten miles from Delhi, which became the favourite royal seat. The Sultan's building operations supplied thousands with work, and there were no unemployed labourers in the kingdom. Firoz was especially fortunate in his great vazir Khan-i-Jahan (Lord of the World), a converted Hindu of good family, who had reached high office in the last reign. Until his death in 1371, the vazir remained faithful to his master, and he must receive a fair share of credit for the blessings conferred upon the people during this reign. The Hindus at this time received fair treatment, provided they paid the *Jiziya* or poll-tax and refrained from the public worship of idols. It is interesting to note that hitherto the Brahmans had been excused from payment of the *Jiziya*. But in accordance with the advice of the learned lawyers, Firoz ordered them to be taxed at a moderate rate. Though addicted to the wine-cup, the Sultan lived a holy and healthy life, free from vice, giving himself up to administration and the chase, and devoutly partaking in all the public prayers of Islam. The only mistake which can be reasonably attributed to him is the accumulation at Delhi of hosts of slaves, who were destined to become a rebellious element in the state, and the settlement of too large jagirs on his followers, a policy which tended to make the noblemen too rich and independent. Firoz died in 1388, worn out with years, but universally venerated by his people. He left behind him a brief summary of the *res gestæ* of his reign in which he modestly relates his efforts to restore good government under 'the help and guidance of the Almighty.' Among the interesting facts here mentioned and not alluded to by Afif is the voluntary adoption of Islam by great numbers of Hindus, in order to be exonerated from the *Jiziya*.

Firoz Shah, 1351-1388.

Benevolently governs a more limited Empire.

Public works.

Treatment of Hindus.

The memoirs of Firoz Shah.

III.—Dissolution of the Empire.

The multiplication of slaves and the accumulation of great fiefs in the hands of courtiers bore fruit in the next generation. During the twenty-four years which followed the death of Firoz Shah, six of his sons and

* Afif's *Tarikh*. Elliot, Vol. III, p. 290.

grandsons sat upon the throne, and witnessed the dismemberment of the Empire. The governors of provinces declared themselves independent and established hereditary dynasties in Oudh, Malwa and Gujerat. At the same time there took place a marked Hindu revival. The old Hindu rajas and the hill tribes regained their independence. When the Sayyids replaced the Tughlaks at Delhi in 1414, the so-called kingdom had shrunk to a small area round the capital, little more, indeed, than the Doab and Rohtak. The hardy Turks and Afghans had yielded to luxury and the enervation of the climate. Moreover, they had lost their distinguishing traits and the prestige of a conquering race by inter-marriage with Hindus and by the admission of numbers of Hindu converts into their fold. Another movement there was which contributed to shatter the power of Delhi. The Mongol attacks, lately remitted for a time, were now renewed by the great conqueror Timur, who with his Tartar horsemen descended like a scourge upon the plains of Hindustan in 1398. Timur had already conquered all the west and centre of Asia, when he was attracted to India by its reputed wealth. In his memoirs, whose genuineness is beyond dispute, he says: "My great officers told me that the inhabitants of Hindustan were infidels and unbelievers. In obedience to the order of Almighty God I determined on an expedition against them." Desire of plunder and religious motives together prompted the expedition. Timur pretended zeal for Islam, and yet the Mohammedan princes of India suffered equally with the Hindus from his devastating raid. The Punjab was rapidly overrun amid massacre and plundering, and Timur arrived before the capital where the Indian army of the Delhi Sultan was prepared for a decisive contest. The Indians, despite their courage and their elephants, were outnumbered and outgeneralled, and the conqueror gave thanks to God with tears. Infamous as Timur was for tolerating, even ordering, the most brutal massacres, the Moslem Uiema strove to arrange a ransom for the lives of the people. The proposition was accepted, yet whether owing to the Mogul's perfidy or the insubordination of his troops, slaughter and pillage began in the streets of Delhi,* and for several days the city was turned into a shambles. After a series of feasts and functions the Tartar horde left Delhi with immense spoils and carried on a 'Holy war' against the infidels (Hindus). The valley of the Ganges was turned into a waste as far as Hardwar, after which Timur felt that his mission was accomplished, and "quitted India, leaving anarchy, famine, and pestilence behind him." The 'conquest' had only been a plundering raid, like those of Mahmoud or Jenghiz Khan, though far more terrible. But it dealt another blow at the crumbling Delhi empire, and that is its chief importance in Indian history. Thenceforward, until the days of the Mogul empire, Delhi never regained her old ascendancy. The last Tughlak Sultan died in 1412, and for two years the Government was conducted by Doulat Khan Lodi, who made no pretensions to the royal dignity. In 1414 he was expelled by Khisr Khan, a Sayyid or descendant of the prophet. Khisr and three successors reigned at Delhi over a variable but always minute kingdom until 1451, fighting yearly campaigns against the rajas and Mohammedan chiefs who now encircled the late capital of the Indian empire. Anarchy and assassination at home there also were, and a powerful Afghan family, the Lodis, who had suffered from the jealousy of the Sayyids, at last succeeded in supplanting them on the throne of Delhi in the person of Bahlol Lodi in 1451.

Later Tughlaks, 1388-1412.

Break-up of the Empire.

Invasion of Timur, 1398-9.

The Sayyids at Delhi, 1414-1451.

Before pursuing the fortunes of the Lodi Sultan, which again elevated Delhi to a position of some supremacy in the north, we must briefly notice the new states which had arisen on the break-up of the empire at the end of the 14th century. Besides Bengal and the Deccan, over which the Delhi empire lost all control during the reign of Mohammed Tughlak, three great fiefs of the empire were converted into independent and important kingdoms just before or after Timur's invasion. Thus in 1394 the governor of the province now called Oudh assumed independence, and founded the Sharqi or Eastern dynasty, which included six members. Jaunpur, a city founded by Firoz Shah on the Gumti, became the capital of these kings, and gave its name to the new state. For nearly a century the Sharqi dynasty enjoyed considerable power, and the third of the line, Ibrahim Shah, who reigned from 1401 to 1440, was an energetic and enlightened prince, who left behind him some fine specimens of architecture, such as the Atala Mosque at Jaunpur. He could probably have mounted the throne of Delhi had he chosen, but contented himself with ruling his own superior dominions, and actually allied himself by marriage with the Sayyids. Ibrahim's grandson greatly extended the frontiers, and even conducted a conquering raid into Orissa. But when he tried conclusions with the new Lodi Sultan at Delhi, he was decisively defeated, and the kingdom of Jaunpur was re-annexed to Delhi in 1477. There now no longer existed a buffer-state between Delhi and Bengal.

Independent kingdoms.

Moslem kingdom of Jaunpur, 1394-1477.

In 1401 the Governor of Malwa, or at least of a part of the district known as Malwa, made himself independent and ruled over this strongly Rajput province with some success. He was a descendant of the Ghoris, but his grandson was assassinated and succeeded by a Khilji, who raised the kingdom of Malwa to a stronger position. In the days of Rajput ascendancy before the coming of Mohammed Ghori to India, the Parmars of Malwa had been constantly occupied in wars of self-preservation against the rival states around. Now, after a century of subjection to the Delhi empire, the kingdom of Malwa under a Moslem ruler underwent the same vicissitudes. There was strife with Delhi and Jaunpur, strife with the Deccan Sultans, and unending strife with the persistent Rajput Ranas of Chitor. Finally, Malwa

Moslem kingdom of Malwa, 1401-1531.

* Cf. with the state of affairs at Nadir Shah's occupation of Delhi in 1739.

was seized by Bahadur Shah, a great king of Gujerat, in 1531.

Gujerat, including Kathiawar, girt in by deserts and mountains, had successfully resisted the arms of Ghori and the slave kings of Delhi, and, like Malwa, had only been definitely annexed to the empire by the conquering might of Ala-ud-din. From the empire it broke away again about the same time as Malwa and Jaunpur, and in a similar way. Zafar Khan, who enjoyed the fief of Gujerat, assumed independence in 1396, and founded a Moslem dynasty which ruled the kingdom until Akbar annexed it to the Mogul empire in 1572. Wars with Malwa and Khandesh, with the Deccan kings of the Bahmani dynasty and the pirates of the Malabar Coast occupied much of the energy of these Gujerat Sultans. The second of the line founded Ahmednagar and Ahmedabad, the latter of which became the capital of Gujerat, and was adorned with mosques and tombs so many and beautiful as to earn for it the title 'Queen of the West.' The Gujerat coast towns had from the earliest times conducted most of the sea-borne Indian trade, and it was this trade that attracted the Portuguese soon after Vasco de Gama's famous discovery of the Cape route to India in 1498. The Mamluk Sultans of Egypt, as also the Venetians, had an interest in keeping out the new-comers. But after an initial defeat, the Portuguese admiral, Almeida, overcame the combined fleet of Egypt and Gujerat off Diu in 1509. Mahomed Shah, greatest of the kings of Gujerat, conciliated the earliest of the European settlers by offering them the port of Diu. The conquest of Goa by Albuquerque took place about the same time. With the annexation of Malwa in 1531, the kingdom of Gujerat reached its greatest extent. Its fall in 1572 was rendered inevitable by internal factions and intrigues.

Moslem kingdom of Gujerat, 1396-1572.

On the Southern border of Gujerat, but separated by almost impenetrable forests, lay the small and unimportant kingdom of Khandesh. It formed the lower part of the valley of the Tapti, and was ruled by a Moslem dynasty from 1399 to 1599, the founder having, like the founders of the states just mentioned, thrown off his allegiance to Delhi in the troublous times subsequent upon the death of Firoz Shah. This kingdom did not figure greatly in the history of the time: it seems to have enjoyed great prosperity, and to have been in some sort of subordination to the Sultans of Gujerat, whose protection was doubtless of great value.

Moslem kingdom of Khandesh, 1359-1599.

Of no greater importance than Khandesh, and even less interesting from the history connected with them, were the independent kingdoms set up about this time in Sindh and the Punjab. There were besides a host of Rajput chiefs whose greatness belongs to the pre-Mohammedan times, but who with the decline of Delhi asserted themselves in their new homes, chiefly in Rajputana, and achieved an independence which the Moguls in many cases so respected, that they have survived up to the present day. Such were the Rajputs of Chitor (now Udaipur), Jodhpur (Marwar), Bikanir and Jesalmir.

Rajput States.

Bengal had, like the Deccan, been independent of Delhi since the days of Mohammed Tughlak. At first rival kings reigned in Eastern and Western Bengal, but both portions were united in 1352 under a dynasty which reigned almost continuously until 1487. Lakhnauti, or Gaur, was latterly, as it had been originally, the capital of the Moslem rulers of Bengal. Four other Afghan or Turki dynasties filled up the century intervening between 1487 and Akbar's conquest of Bengal in 1576. Little is known of these rulers, but their sway seems to have been very extensive and to have included part of Behar, as well as Chittagong and, latterly, Orissa.

Moslem dynasties in Bengal, 1339-1576.

Mohammed Tughlak was the last king of Delhi in this period to hold authority south of the Vindhyas. With his failure to hold the Deccan the old Hindu kingdoms revived, and a new Moslem kingdom was founded. The kingdom of Warangal or Telingana, which roughly corresponded to the old Andhra dominion, raised its head, but the new State of Vijayanagar, founded in the place of the old kingdom of Karnatika which, like the other dynasties of the South, had succumbed to the Mohammedans in 1310, now became the paramount power in the peninsula proper. The new State was ruled by an offshoot from the Warangal dynasty: it extended from sea to sea south of the river Krishna. Further to the north Hasan Gangu, an Afghan or Parsian, succeeded in making himself king of the Deccan, and founded what is known as the Bahmani dynasty. The realm under his sway roughly corresponded to the Nizam's dominions of to-day together with the portion of the Bombay Presidency south of the Tapti, but at first exclusive of the Konkan. It extended from Berar on the north to the Krishna on the south. Hasan Gangu was assisted in the establishment of his kingdom by the neighbouring Hindu rajas of the south. But when they had served his purpose, he turned against them. Warangal was soon subdued and seems to have been permanently subordinated to the Bahmanids, though not quite extinguished. Vijayanagar was involved in ceaseless wars with its Moslem neighbour, and in spite of its vast resources was almost consistently beaten and forced to pay tribute. The Hindu rajas had only helped to throw off the slightly-felt yoke of Delhi in order to strengthen the enemies at their gates. The Moslem Sultans of Kulburga—Hasan Gangu's capital—besides being at strife with their Hindu rivals in the south, were not seldom embroiled with the Moslem kings of Malwa and Gujerat. The latter, like the Delhi emperors from whom they had broken off, were Sunnis, whereas Hasan Gangu and the majority of his descendants were of the Shiah persuasion. The feelings entertained between Sunnis and Shiahs at this time were not dissimilar from those which armed Catholics and Protestants against each other in the religious wars of Europe. The Shiah movement approximated more nearly to Brahmanism than Sunnism ever did, and the Moslems of the Deccan were far more influenced by Hinduism than the Moslems of the north. Hindus formed

Kingdoms of the Deccan.

The Bahmani kingdom and Vijayanagar.

Character and history of the Bahmanids.

a far greater portion of the population under the Bahmani kings than under the emperors of Delhi; hence the treatment meted out to them was more favourable. A tolerant spirit was abroad: we find even regiments of Moslems taking service under the Rajas of Vijayanagar against the Moslem Sultans of the Deccan. The secular struggle waged between the kings of the Deccan and of Vijayanagar was then mainly of political import. The Hindu rajas strove to possess themselves of the fertile Doab of Raichur; the Moslem Sultans as firmly resisted these attempts. The history of the Bahmanids is redolent of crime and slaughter: indiscriminate massacre, the dagger and the poison cup are all too common. Several Sultans were absolute butchers, others weltered in vice or drowned themselves in drink. The two most notable Sultans were Mohammed I., who distinguished himself by successful operations against Vijayanagar, and Firoz Shah, whose religion was woman, but who eagerly studied literature and science. The first was the son of Hasan Gangu, the second began to reign in 1397 and married the daughter of Deva Rai of Vijayanagar. The kingdom finally broke up from internal causes. The governors of the provinces broke out into rebellion, and established independent kingdoms, whose fortunes we are here unable to trace. Even the nominal supremacy of the Bahmanids came to an end in 1526. Their dominions were divided among the Adil Shiahs of Bijapur (1489-1686), the Kutb Shiahs of Golkonda (1512-1687), the Barid Shiahs of Bidar (1492 circ. 1609), the Nizam Shiahs of Ahmednagar (1490-1595) and the Imad Shiahs of Berar (1484-1572). The dates of their extinction mark their subjection to the Mogul empire, a process which was not concluded until the time of Aurangzeb. Of all these kingdoms that of Bijapur was the most powerful, and by reason of its dealings with the Portuguese, the most interesting.

Break-up of their Empire, 1526.

The kingdom of Vijayanagar has a history of its own, but its main interest lies in the relationship with the Bahmanid kingdom, the constant and futile wars which exhausted the strength of successive rajas. Krishna and Deva Rai were the greatest of these sovereigns, and Deva Rai, a contemporary of Firoz Shah Bahmani, was the only raja of Vijayanagar who scored a decisive success against his Moslem neighbour. A certain Abdur Razzak was sent by a successor of Timur as ambassador to Vijayanagar, and subsequently wrote an interesting account of his visit and the state of that kingdom in the middle of the 15th century. The realm seems to have been prosperous and well populated: it abounded in temples and was guarded by eleven lacs of men and more than 1,000 elephants. "The city of Vijayanagar is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth."* It had seven fortified walls, one within the other, and in the very heart of the city was situated a magnificent royal palace, where many rivulets flowed through channels of cut stone.

The rajas of Vijayanagar.

The dismemberment of the Bahmani kingdom upset the balance of power in the peninsula. The great Hindu kingdom became more formidable and at last gained possession of the Doab of Raichur. The Sultans of Bijapur were pleased to obtain the assistance of Ram Rai, the last raja of Vijayanagar, against the Moslem Sultan of Ahmednagar. But the overbearing insolence of Ram Rai at length banded together all the Moslems against him. The divided Sultans forgot their quarrels and coalesced against the enemy of their faith, with the result that the Hindus were defeated in the great battle of Talikot, and the Hindu Empire of the south was shattered. But the Mohammedan confederates, divided by jealousies, were unable to annex much of the conquered kingdom. The rest of the territory remained in the hands of petty Hindu chiefs, some of whom are still to be traced in the poligars of the Madras Presidency, and others such as the Rajahs of Cochin and Travancore, obtained a more considerable independent power. The greater part of Vijayanagar, however, is now covered by the Madras Presidency and the native state of Mysore.

Fall of Vijayanagar, 1565.

IV.—The Character of Mohammedan Rule in the Afghan Period.

The spread of Mohammedan rule and civilization over India bears some slight analogy to the earlier dissemination of Aryanism over the sub-continent. The Aryan Hindus spread their civilization over India in three stages and during three distinct periods. In the Vedic Age they conquered the Punjab, in the Epic Age they subdued the northern plains—Hindustan proper, and in the Rationalist Age they penetrated the Deccan and carried their religion and civilization to the south. Similarly Mahmoud of Ghazni conquered the Punjab; Mohammed Ghori and the Slave kings subdued Hindustan, and the Khilji dynasty carried their arms victoriously over the Deccan. The empire became dismembered, but the formation of independent Mussalman states carried on the steady expansion of Mohammedan power. Finally, the Moguls came and erected a greater empire, as the kings of Magadha had done in the Buddhist period. Akbar crowned the edifice as Asoka had done before him. Politically the progress of Islam displays the same unsatisfactory features as we have noticed in the Hindu periods. "The history of Mussalman India treats of a consecutive line of Sultans; it betrays the utter insecurity of thrones and dynasties. The government was spasmodic, good or bad according to the virtues or vices of the reigning Sultan. The dominion was sometimes expanded by further conquests: sometimes it was contracted by internal revolutions." Benevolent rulers alternate with fanatical butchers or vicious debauchees. The security enjoyed under a mild and tolerant sovereign is rudely shattered by a palace intrigue and a blood-thirsty assassination. The rise and fall of dynasties, and the lack of stability enjoyed by a despotically governed state is thus exemplified by the Mussalman and the ancient Hindu rulers of India alike. But if anything, the Mussalman was a more typically oriental despot, more cruel and oppressive than his Hindu prototypes.

Stages of Mohammedan conquest.

Insecurity of the government under the despotic principle.

* Elliot's *History*, Vol. IV, p. 110.

The explanation can doubtless be found in the fact that he was a foreigner in the land dependent chiefly for his position on military force. Moreover, he was the representative of a militant religion, severely antagonistic to the religions of the country. Still, Mohammedan rule in the three centuries before the Mogul empire was established was not without its saving graces. Oppression, intolerance and cruelty may have been the usual characteristics of the Bahmanid Sultans, but a number of mild, tolerant and capable sovereigns sat upon the throne of Delhi. Even an oppressor like Ala-ud-din did much for the country's security and prosperity, and Mohammed Tughlak, for all his failure, was animated by the right motives. Moreover, the Afghan rulers did not as a rule disturb the internal administrative arrangements. The mass of the people continued to live under their anciently constituted authorities, whether hereditary landlords (zemindars) or the communistic village system. They were less harassed by wars than their brother peasantry in Europe during feudal times. "Dynasties succeeded dynasties, wars swept by the fenced and defended villages, but the agriculturists continued their useful labour from century to century, little caring who sat on the throne of Delhi, or on the provincial *masnud*. The follies and crimes of kings, which fill so large a space in histories, did not generally touch the well-being of the masses; wars and dissensions among rival chiefs generally left them at peace; and acts of oppression affecting the agricultural population were not frequent, because they were not conducive to the interests of the rulers themselves." The raids of Mahmoud no doubt brought the ryots to the verge of destitution as did the invasion of Timur, four centuries later, but when once the Mohammedans had settled in the country, they had little to gain and everything to lose by plundering their subjects. Even during the actual conquest it was the rich shrines of Hindu gods rather than the mass of the peasantry who suffered from the greed of the conquerors. While few of the Delhi emperors were actively destructive of the people's well-being, several were zealous promoters of the national prosperity. The canals and public works of Firoz Shah Tughlak cannot but have increased the productivity of the country, and the economical experiments of Ala-ud-din Khilji, we are told, ensured a sufficient livelihood to all and sundry. The general prosperity of the country and the magnificence of the cities is also borne out by the accounts of foreign travellers, Nicolo Conti the Venetian and Abdur Razzak the Tartar.

The masses on the whole free from oppression.

Prosperity of the country.

Nor was the social and religious system of the Hindus unduly interfered with. Although Islam gained a firm footing in the country, and mosques were erected in every town, the Hindu, while despised as an idolater, was not, with rare exceptions, converted by force. After the first massacres, dictated by the fanaticism of the conquerors, were over, the Hindu was given the option of adopting Islam or paying the *jiziya*, a poll-tax levied on the males. Numbers no doubt preferred the first alternative, particularly where, as in the lower castes, to enter the single caste of Islam meant exemption from the contempt and social degradation meted out by Brahmans to Sudras. The social system of Puranik Hinduism had granted a monoply of power to the highest hereditary castes. But even a Sudra or a Pariah might hope by adopting Islam to rise in accordance with his merits. Some such did rise to the highest pinnacles of power and became vazirs under the Delhi kings. The majority of Hindus, however, retained their religion and their social system at the expense of the *jiziya*, and were but little molested. Hinduism, of course, sank to a subordinate position, and Sanskrit learning died a natural death. Still the period was not without native religious movements. Several great Vishnava reformers flourished at this time, and the movement, though it originated in the independent south, spread even to Bengal and Hindustan. Ramanuja, who lived in the Karnatik in the 12th century, was followed by a series of missionary apostles, who proclaimed the existence of one god under the title of Vishnu. This faith in popular monotheism was preached by Ramandanda in Hindustan during the 14th century, and by Vidyepati and Chaitaniya in Behar and Bengal respectively, during the 15th century. It was preached to Mohammedans as well as Hindus, and was perhaps an attempt to combine the essence of the two religions. But it appealed pre-eminently to the Hindus and it gave an impetus to the new languages, Hindi and Bengali, which were being evolved from the old Prakrits. To the same age belongs Nanak, who by preaching a monotheistic Hinduism in the Punjab founded the fraternity of Sikhs, at first a peaceful sect, later a valiant and fanatical military power.

Persistence of Hinduism.

Religious movements.

Literary culture went hand-in-hand with those religious movements during the age of the Afghan rule. A mass of sacred literature and of songs and poems was composed in Hindi and Bengali, but native literature in this period flourished rather in the south, where the glorious Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar held sway. Thus the Tamil language, which had formerly been the vehicle of the Buddhists and Jains, was now employed by the votaries of Siva and Vishnu. Sanskrit survived in Vijayanagar, and the brothers Sayana and Madhava, both ministers at the court of the first king, wrote, the first, valuable philosophical and speculative works, the second, a renowned commentary on the Vedas.

Literature. (*a*) Hindu.

But literature flourished more abundantly at the court of the Delhi Sultans. Many of these sovereigns were great patrons of art and learning. Almost every reign had its own historian, some even two or three. The writings of these men, to be found in Elliot's valuable "History of India as told by its own historians," deal mostly with the lives and doings of the kings, but some few touch upon the movements of the time and the conditions of the people. Some of the kings themselves compiled memoirs, and others were zealous students of the Koran. In matters of art the Mohammedans excelled all predecessors. The Kutb Minar is a standing testimony to their artistic culture; the Jama Masjid at Delhi, the Atala Mosque at

(*b*) Mohammedan.

Jaunpur and the Golden Mosque at Gaur eclipse the architectural achievements of the Hindus. The emperors likewise built more magnificent palaces and laid out more extensive gardens than India had been acquainted with. Finally, a new and uniform gold coinage was introduced, a useful common law for criminal and administrative cases was built up, and the empire gave birth to a new language, the Urdu or Hindustani, formed by a combination of the Persian and Arabic of the early Mohammedan conquerors with the vernacular of Hindustan, as spoken in the region round Kanouj.

Afghan architecture, law, etc.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOGUL* EMPIRE.

I.—The Foundation of the Empire.

Bahlol, the Afghan chief of the House of Lodi, held the throne of Delhi which he had seized from the last of the Sayyids for thirty-seven years. Having been semi-independent viceroy of the Punjab, he once more added that province to the dominion of Delhi. He subdued the small principalities round the capital, and by the recovery of Jaunpur† he once more stretched out the Eastern frontier as far as Behar. Behar itself was subdued by Sikandar Shah, the son of Bahlol, so that the frontier of the empire once more extended to Benares and marched with the independent kingdom of Bengal. The power of Delhi would seem to invite comparison with that of a century before, but in reality there was little cohesion to hold the empire together. The provinces were governed almost independently by "an aristocracy of rapacious and turbulent chiefs, for the principle of bestowing on followers vast jagirs, which were converted into hereditary governorships, had steadily grown in the later years of Afghan rule." That the empire was even more loosely strung together than the Saxon kingdom in England in the time of the great Eoldormen was proved by the events of the next reign. Sikandar was succeeded by his son Ibrahim, third and last of the Lodi kings. He gave himself airs and made himself unpopular with that powerful class—the Afghan noblemen—on whom his power depended. Revolts arose in the east and in the west, and the state was subject to such anarchy that at last Ala-ud-din, uncle of the Sultan, betook himself to Kabul to seek the assistance of its king in wresting the throne of Delhi from its incompetent possessor. Babar liked the project well, but he intended to seize the dominion of Hindustan for himself, and not to play the game of another. He is one of the most interesting and fascinating figures in Indian history. Descended from both Jenghiz Khan and Timur, he added to the energy of the Mongol the courage of the Turk and the culture of the Persian. About 1494, when he was but twelve years of age, he was called to rule over the small kingdom of Farghana (Khokand) on the Jaxartes, the only part of the extensive empire of Timur which remained in the family of that conqueror. Babar conquered Samarkhand when still a youth, but was forced to fight hard against the Uzbeg Turks for both possessions. On the whole, his struggles were ineffectual, and he had to content himself with a small kingdom in Afghanistan which he acquired in 1504. In Kabul he spent his manhood, and finally abandoned the hope of a restored empire in Central Asia for the new scheme of an Indian conquest. Years of arduous adventure and desperate expeditions made of him a seasoned warrior and an experienced general. But he was also a profound politician, an educated and accomplished man, an eminent scholar in several languages, an elegant poet, a fastidious critic, an exact observer, and a great admirer of nature. "Good-humoured, brave, munificent, sagacious, and frank in his character, he might have been a Henry IV. if his training had been in Europe; and even as he is, he is less stained, perhaps, by the Asiatic vices of cruelty and perfidy than any other in the list of Asia's conquerors."* Babar's life and character find a fitting memorial in the Memoirs written by himself. "Babar's memoirs form one of the best and most faithful pieces of autobiography extant; they are infinitely superior to the hypocritical revelations of Timur, and the pompous declaration of Jehangir—not inferior in any respect to the 'Expedition' of Xenophon, and but little below the Commentaries of Cæsar." The greater part of the Memoirs is taken up with the earlier struggles of their author, but the Indian campaigns are vividly described in the later chapters. He also wrote a valuable statistical account of India. "This contains not only an exact statement of the boundaries, population, resources, revenues and divisions of Hindustan, but a full enumeration of all its useful fruits, trees, birds, beasts and fishes, with such a minute description of their several habitudes and peculiarities as would make no contemptible figure in a modern work of natural history."†

Lodi Sultans, 1451-1526.

Babar the Mogul.

His life, character and memoirs.

Such was the man who was called upon to found an imperial dynasty in India. He had raided the Punjab as early as 1519 and had in all made three expeditions into north-west India, before he was called in by Ala-ud-din, the claimant of the Delhi throne. In 1524 Babar entered the Punjab, and being assisted by the insurgent governor, Doulat Khan, he seized Lahore and overran the country. Ala-ud-din was still treated by him as a king, but in the following year Babar, having meanwhile returned to Kabul to seek reinforcements, threw off the mask. Leaving Kabul in the autumn of 1525, he resolved to seize the crown of Delhi for himself. Doulat Khan and his Afghans now turned against him, but were dispersed at little cost, and the conqueror proceeded across the Doab towards the goal of every Indian con-

His invasions of India, 1519-1524.

Final invasion and capture of Delhi, 1525-6.

* Mogul, or better Moghal, is the Arabic spelling of 'Mongol,' and is the conventional appellation of the Babarids—the dynasty founded by Babar in India. As a matter of fact, the family were of Turkish as well as Mongol race.

† See p. 8 above.

* Elliot, Vol IV, p 219.

† Ibid, p. 220.

queror. The battle which decided the fate of an empire was fought in the historic plain of Panipat and is graphically described by the victor himself.* Sultan Ibrahim Lodi is said to have mustered 100,000 men and 100 elephants. But Babar was a master in the art of war. He posted his forces most carefully, improving the natural position by artificial defences, and protecting his front by the cannon which his Turks—the best artillery men of the middle ages—could be trusted to make full use of. A furious attack on the enemy's centre supported by the flank attacks of his Mogul cavalry wedged the Afghan forces together in a confused mass, where fighting was impracticable. Ibrahim was killed, his army broke and fled, and Babar was master of the field. He describes Ibrahim as "a young man of no experience, who was negligent in all his movements, marched without order, retired or halted without plan, and engaged in battle without foresight." Agra and Delhi were at once occupied, and the immense spoil of the treasuries fell into the conqueror's hands. The generosity of Babar bound his followers to him more closely. But he was not yet master of Hindustan. The people were hostile, a brother of Ibrahim was in the field, and the Rajputs were arming. The excessive heat, and the lack of grain, caused a murmuring amongst the troops. But Babar, like Cæsar when threatened with mutiny, by a few timely words put the murmurers to shame. Then at last his clemency brought over many of the enemies to his side. He established his hold over the plains none too soon. A vast confederacy of Rajputs had now to be met. Animated by a strong national spirit, they were led by the formidable Rana Sanga of Chitor, the terror of whose name inspired Babar's soldiers with an almost panic fear. "There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who uttered a manly opinion." At this crisis Babar, feeling that some act of repentance was called for, renounced wine—he had ever been a great drinker—and broke his drinking cups of gold and silver, the fragments of which were distributed to the poor. Next, he called his officers together and addressed them: "Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into this world is subject to dissolution. How much better it is to die with honour than to live with infamy? Let us, then, with one accord, swear on God's holy word, that none of us will even think of turning his face from this warfare, nor desert from the battle and slaughter that ensues, till his soul is separated from his body." All thereupon seized the Koran, and swore to this effect. The army, its confidence restored, advanced from Sikri (near Agra) until the hosts confronted each other at Kanwaha. An irresistible Rajput charge nearly broke down the disciplined defence, but a flanking Mogul movement combined with an advance of the artillery and household troops brought about a repetition of Panipat. The Rajputs were pressed into a disordered crowd, until the chivalry of India broke and fled in every direction. Kanwaha shattered the Hindu confederacy as Panipat overthrew the Mohammedan Afghans. There was no more trouble with the Rajputs. But the Afghans had seized the occasion of Babar's pre-occupation to resume the offensive in the neighbourhood of Kanouj. He skilfully crossed the Ganges in the teeth of a hostile force, broke and dispersed the Afghan army, and returned to enjoy a little well-earned repose at Agra. But it was not for long. Mahmoud Lodi, the brother of the ill-fated Ibrahim, collected a vast army with the hope of an Afghan restoration. Jaunpur (Oudh) and Behar declared for him. When, however, Babar led out his army early in 1529, the forces of the Afghans melted away. Behar was easily overrun and Mahmoud sought protection in Bengal. A hostile army massed itself upon the frontiers of that province, and there could be no peace until the rebels were completely shattered. So Babar forced the passage of the Gogra in the teeth of the Bengalis. "The movement was brilliantly carried out in the face of a determined resistance. Attacked in front and rear and flank, the enemy broke and fled. Good generalship had once more guided valour to victory. The result was the collapse of the Afghan rebellion, and the conclusion of a treaty of peace with Bengal. In three battles Babar had reduced northern India to submission."* The rest of Babar's all too short life—a year and a half—was mainly devoted to administration. But no new principles of administration were yet evolved. The old fief system was retained, and that spelt anarchy as soon as ever a weak emperor should mount the throne. It was reserved for Akbar to consolidate on a new and lasting basis the empire his grandfather had conquered by the sword. Babar died in his palace at Agra in December 1530, worn out with the exertions of a career adventurous beyond example. He had not spared himself. Even to the end when consumed by fever he evinced extraordinary vigour. He could swim the Ganges in thirty-six strokes; he often rode eighty miles a day. It is interesting to know that he hankered after his mountain home in Afghanistan, a sentiment which, as noticed before, precluded Mahmoud of Ghazni from attempting any permanent conquest of India. "Hindustan," he says "is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society, of frankly mixing together, or of familiar intercourse; they have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture; they have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazaars, no baths or colleges, no candles, no torches, not a candlestick." But it is to be remembered that he was only acquainted

First battle of Panipat, 1526.

The Rajput Confederacy.

Battle of Kanwaha, 1527.

The Afghans resume the offensive, but are dispersed, 1528.

Final suppression of the Afghans, 1529.

Death of Babar, 1530.

* For full details of the operations before and afterwards, see Erskine's elaborate "*History of Babar and Humayun.*" This work may be regarded as a final authority on the reigns of the first two Mogul Emperors.

* Lane Poole's *Babar* in 'Rulers of India' series.

with a small part of the country, and that that part had been scourged with wars and rebellions for many a year. He finds, however, some compensation in the abundance of gold and silver and in the pleasant climate during the rainy season.

The country ruled over by Babar comprised little more than the Punjab and the modern United Provinces: Bengal, Malwa and Gujerat were independent, nor were the chiefs of Rajputana too much crushed to renew their efforts under a sovereign less strong than Babar. The natural policy of Humayun, that Emperor's successor, was, then, to complete his father's work, just as in an earlier age Altamsh and Balban had completed the conquest of the north begun by Mohammed Ghori and Aybek. But Humayun, though pleasable, affectionate, accomplished and brave, badly lacked character and resolution. He was too light-hearted and forgiving; he lacked the necessary sternness and the power of concentrated effort which his father had possessed. Thus he failed to cope with the forces of disaffection and hostility with which he was surrounded. "There were three ominous clouds on his horizon when he came to the throne." On the north-west was his brother Kamran, who ruled Kabul and the Punjab, and was ready on every occasion to act the traitor. He held the main recruiting ground of the Mogul army, a fact which largely explains the failures of Humayun. On the east were the Afghans in Behar, with a member of the deposed Lodi dynasty at their head. Many Afghans throughout the inherited dominions of Humayun still held fiefs and only awaited their opportunity to join the anti-Mogul movement. On the south was Bahadur Shah, the great Mussalman king of Gujerat,* who had lately annexed Malwa, and was now hard pressing the Rajputs in that neighbourhood. There is little doubt that had Humayun brought the whole of his strength to bear upon each enemy in turn, he must have been successful. But he weakened his chances by vacillation until the grand army left by Babar was depleted by losses and had its confidence destroyed. Contenting himself with a wholly incomplete success against the Afghans in 1531, he turned towards Gujerat, and after he had quietly witnessed the capture of Chitor by Bahadur Shah, and thereby earned the hatred of the Rajputs, he attacked the army of that Sultan. Through the mistaken tactics of the Gujeratis rather than through superior might Humayun overthrew the foe, pursued the Sultan to the extremity of his kingdom, and the whole realm fell into his hands. But the invader made no effort to keep the provinces he had won. The army was allowed to demoralize itself by protracted festivities, and no sooner was the back of Humayun turned to face the Afghan foe than Gujerat and Malwa threw off the Mogul yoke and returned to the allegiance of their lawful sovereign. The Afghans were certainly the more dangerous foe, as a certain Farid of the Sur family who has assumed the name of Sher Khan (or Shah), was organizing with startling ability a powerful anti-Mogul movement in the eastern provinces. Many years before Babar had said to his minister: "Keep an eye on Sher Khan, he is a clever man, and the marks of royalty are visible on his forehead. I have seen many Afghan nobles, greater men than he, but they never made any impression on me; but as soon as I saw this man, it entered into my mind that he ought to be arrested, for I find in him the qualities of greatness and the marks of mightiness."* This great man had now virtually become the ruler of Behar and was occupied in rapidly reducing all Bengal to his sway. Humayun 'the unfortunate,' having wasted a whole year in merry-making at Agra, at last proceeded against this stalwart foe. The easy capture of Chunar fortress (1537) induced false confidence, and whilst Sher Shah shut himself up in the impregnable fort of Rohtas, Humayun marched into Bengal where he frittered away six precious months in sight-seeing and indulgence. Thus he allowed his communications to be cut while Sher Shah extended his authority as far west as Kanouj and the brothers of Humayun were stirring up mutiny in the capital. News of these events at last roused the feckless Emperor from his torpor, but only to be disastrously defeated by his vigilant foe in a great battle near Buxar. It was a surprise attack, and the Mogul army was without difficulty routed, the emperor escaping across the Ganges by the support of a water-skin provided by a friendly *bhisti*. After a year of feeble preparations on the part of Humayun and vigorous action on the part of Sher Shah, the forces gathered for the final conflict opposite the city of Kanouj. Sher Shah with apparent chivalry but real strategy allowed the Moguls to cross to the north of the Ganges. He awaited them in a strongly entrenched position and the general engagement which followed was hardly for a moment doubtful. The Moguls, oppressed by heat and floods, were half-hearted and weary. "Before the enemy had let fly an arrow," says the historian Haidar Mirza, "we were virtually defeated, not a gun was fired, not a man was wounded, friend or foe." A panic flight to the Ganges involved the emperor in imminent danger. He was carried over by an elephant, and surrendered to fate, saying that supernatural beings had been fighting against his soldiers. He fled to Multan and Sindh and disappears from Indian history for fifteen years. But by 1547 he had reconquered Kandahar and Kabul from his brothers and was once more in a position to make a bid for Indian empire when the opportunity should be favourable.

Meanwhile Sher Shah had seized the throne of Delhi and busied himself with the reduction of Hindustan. He appeared to the Afghan Mussalmans of India less of a usurper than the Mogul, and his great talents undoubtedly conceded to him the right

Humayun, 1530-1540 and 1555-1556.

His enemies.

Conquest of Gujerat and Malwa, 1534.

Their loss, 1535.

Sher Shah and the Afghan movement.

Humayun invades Bengal, 1538.

Battle of Buxar, 1539.

Battle of the Ganges, 1540.

Flight of Humayun.

Sher Shah, 1540-1545.

* See p. 9 supra.

* Abbas Khan, *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, Elliot, IV, p. 331.

to reign. The Punjab, which had not been subject to Humayun, was taken from the treacherous brother of the ill-fated monarch: Malwa was conquered, the rajas of Marwar and Mewar were subdued. Whilst superintending the siege of Kalinjar, that impregnable fortress which figures in every Indian war of the period, the Sultan was involved in the explosion of a magazine, and expired before his work of reorganization was complete. Still he had accomplished much. Abbas Khan,* the historian, gives a vigorous account of the matters wherein the Sultan was busied day and night: "When fortune gave into the hands of Sher Shah the bridle of power, and the kingdom of Hind fell under his dominion, he made certain laws, both from his own ideas, and by extracting them from the works of the learned, for securing relief from tyranny, and for the repression of crime and villany; for maintaining the prosperity of his realms, the safety of the highways, and the comfort of merchants and troops." He attended to all business in his own person, and temporal affairs were not unmixed with devotion. Day and night were divided into portions for each separate business, "for," said he, "it behoves the great to be always active." Careful rules were framed for the collection of the revenue, the average share of the government in the crops being fixed at one-third. The land was divided into 116,000 fiscal unions, and assessment was to be annual. Courts of justice were appointed in every place. Four important highways were constructed, one of which fully furnished with inns for travellers and shaded with trees extended from the Jhelam to the Bay of Bengal. Careful regulations were made for the protection of the roads from thieves and highway robbers. The welfare of the cultivator even in time of war and in hostile countries was scrupulously observed, and the Hindu subjects of Sher Shah were free from oppression. Consequently all the parganas, or villages, were "prosperous and tranquil, and there was not one place which was contumacious or desolated; the whole country was settled and happy; corn was cheap, nor during his time was there anywhere scarcity or famine." The chronicler remarks that "in the time of Sher Shah's rule, a decrepit old woman might place a basket full of gold ornaments on her head and go on a journey, and no thief or robber would come near her, for fear of the punishments which Sher Shah inflicted." Fortunately his administrative reforms did not pass away with his death, but many of the so-called original conceptions of Akbar and his ministers were modelled upon them. Hence his efforts have an importance beyond his own life-time, a merit absent from the reforms of his greatest predecessors on the Delhi throne. Another great service he rendered to the country was that he reduced the turbulent Afghans to obedience. No man dared act in opposition to his regulations, and the exactions of the great fief holders were checked by the imperial officials in much the same way as the greed of the Roman provincial governor was reduced to impotence by the supervision of the early Cæsars.

His wise administration.

Revenue and other reforms.

Unusual security of the country.

* Elliot, IV.—409 *sq.*

Under the incompetent rule of his successor the ancient rivalries of the Afghans were revived, and Selim's eight years reign was consumed in intrigues and fruitless quarrels. Then followed a period of greater confusion. The young son of Selim was murdered by his uncle, Adil Shah, but the real power of the State passed into the hands of Hemu, a low caste Hindu, not without abilities. Such a régime was, however, so repugnant to the proud Afghans that pretenders and rebellions arose both in the Central Provinces and in the Punjab. Humayun, who from his kingdom in Afghanistan, had been watching his opportunity, descended into the plains of India and after two engagements once more seated himself upon the throne of Delhi. The dispossessed Sur family gathered together their forces in the East and were fain to follow the guidance of the despised Hemu. While preparations were being made for the final struggle Humayun, pursued now as ever by ill-luck, slipped from the steps of his palace, and died in his forty-ninth year. It was left to his youthful son Akbar to plant the Mogul dynasty firmly in Hindustan.

Selim Shah, 1545-1553.

Adil Shah, 1553-1555.

Humayun's return, 1555.

Death, 1556.

II.—Akbar the Magnificent.

Akbar was now thirteen years of age. Humayun during his wanderings after the overthrow in 1540 had fallen in love with and had married the daughter of a Sayyid, or member of the Prophet's family, and Akbar was born during the retreat across Sindh in 1542. He was without exception the greatest of the Moguls, perhaps the most striking and capable of all the Indian sovereigns up to his time, whether Hindu or Mohammedan. It is to be noticed that the sixteenth century was an age of great sovereigns. Amongst the European contemporaries of Akbar were Elizabeth of England, Ivan the Terrible of Russia, Soliman the Great of Turkey, and Henry IV of France. The sixteenth century was also a period of long reigns. The emperors Charles V, and Phillip II, of Spain each ruled 40 years, Elizabeth 45, Soliman the Great 46, and Ivan the Terrible, 51. In Asia, where long reigns are rarer, Akbar's forty-nine years of rule would make him unique amongst Indian emperors of the first rank, did not his great-grandson Aurangzeb hold the sceptre for an identical period. Asoka, Akbar's great prototype, was regarded as enjoying a very lengthy reign, but he cannot have ruled for more than forty or forty-one years.

During his reign of nearly half a century Akbar had his fill of fighting. Noted as an administrator and a broadminded statesman, he was forced to distinguish himself first as a soldier. At the outset of his reign he possessed only the Punjab and Delhi, and he had to struggle even to maintain himself on the throne of Delhi. Twenty years of severe fighting was needed to bring Hindustan into subjection and numerous campaigns ensued during the next twenty years to round off the boundaries of the kingdom. "The reign was

Accession of Akbar, 1556.

Akbar the true founder of the Mogul Empire.

thus a perpetual series of efforts towards the expansion of an originally small territory." Thus, while Akbar was the true founder and organizer of the empire which Babar had projected, his reign only marked the beginning of the golden age of Mogul rule. At Humayun's death Akbar was engaged with Bairam Khan, his father's faithful companion in exile and a consummate general, in subjugating the Punjab. Bairam was wisely invested with the Regency. Contrary to the despairing advice of the other generals, he refused to retreat to Kabul, and urged his master to make a bid for the empire which Humayun had not lived long enough to consolidate. Sikandar Sur was left for the moment in the west, and the Mogul forces turned to meet Hemu, who meanwhile had with his Afghans seized Agra and Delhi and had proclaimed himself king. The armies met on the field of Panipat where Babar thrity years before had overthrown the Afghan power. The Mogul archers did such execution that the eye of the Hindu leader was pierced, and "the masterless crowd broke up like a herd of stampeded horses." Hemu was captured and despatched by the sword of Bairam. Delhi opened its gates, and Akbar, the main danger having been successfully met, was planted firmly on the throne. Sikandar, to whose standards the beaten Afghan nobles flocked, was tackled in the following year, and after an eight months' siege, surrendered his fortress of Mankot and was allowed to retire under parole to Bengal. These successes were mainly the work of Bairam Khan, but though he was indispensable in a time of warlike crisis, his arbitrary and overbearing character was harmful in the time of peace. He raised up for himself a host of enemies, and above all the powerful foster-mother of Akbar, Maham Anaga, influenced the emperor's mind against him. At last in the year 1560 Akbar, now in his eighteenth year, assumed the reins of Government. Bairam was ordered to take a pilgrimage to Mecca; he revolted, was defeated and magnanimously pardoned, but on the eve of embarkation for Arabia was assassinated by an Afghan whose enmity he had provoked. During the next seven years Akbar was confronted with a number of rebellions raised by his own followers. But his forced marches and his crushing blows overcame all opposition, and by the end of 1566 peace was established throughout the empire, and the emperor was free to embark on schemes of wider domination. But before southern conquests were to be thought of it was necessary to obtain a firm hold of Rajputana. The turbulence of his Mohammedan followers had already stimulated the native statesmanship of Akbar towards a policy of conciliation with the Rajputs. In 1562 Raja Bihari Mal, the lord of Amber, had come to pay his homage to the new sovereign. He was received with great honour, and the new policy of conciliation was inaugurated by the marriage of Akbar to a daughter of the Rajput prince. Previous Sultans had taken Hindu women into their harems, but none had treated them with such marked consideration as Akbar. The Princess of Amber was allowed to retain her own faith, and her relations were given high positions in the imperial army. The Raja of Marwar (Jodhpur) also became a loyal servant of the emperor, but the proud head of the Rajput clans, the Rana of Chitor, held aloof and made no secret of his hostility. Where conciliation was useless, it was necessary to employ force. The storming of Chitor is one of the most picturesque episodes of the reign. This mighty fortress, standing on an isolated crag four hundred feet high, and with almost perpendicular sides, had been a thorn in the flesh of almost every Mohammedan emperor of Delhi for several centuries. It had been taken over and over again, but as constantly recaptured by the resolute Rajputs of Mewar. The present Rana, a feeble son of the great Sanga, whom Babar had overthrown, retired himself to the Aravalli hills leaving 8,000 troops under the famous Jai Mal in command of Chitor. The resolution of Akbar and the skill of his engineers were at length rewarded. Under cover of the *sabat*, a broad covered way in principle resembling the Roman *testudo*, the besiegers climbed the precipice and overtopped the walls. Sappers undermined the bastions with gunpowder, and a breach was made. Akbar himself picked off with his musket the Hindu leader, and the besiegers penetrated the town. The garrison having, according to the fashion, burned their families and goods in huge bonfires, rushed upon death. Every step was contested and the streets ran blood. The heroism of the defence survives in popular traditions to the present day, and practically all the garrison were annihilated in the deadly struggle. Rantanbhor and Kalinjar, two other famous fortresses, were captured a few months later, but though Rajputana as a whole acknowledged the conqueror's might and clemency, Udai Singh of Mewar never himself submitted. His family alone maintained their pride and independence, and never yielded to what they were pleased to call the indignity of a family alliance with the Mogul emperors of Delhi. This haughty independence, however, was of little profit, and the remaining Rajput princes chose the wiser part, for many of them gained distinction by their loyal services in the wars of Akbar and his successors, while Jehangir, the heir of Akbar, was himself the son of a Rajput princess.

After two years of peace, the anarchy of the Mohammedan kingdom of Gujerat compelled interference. The country was overrun and annexed to the Mogul empire after its two centuries of independence. Akbar's daring brought his life into danger during this campaign, but both his personal deliverance from a difficult position and his ultimate success were largely due to the exertions of the Raja of Amber and his warrior nephew, Man Singh. Gujerat revolted about two years later but never recovered its independence.

The next work of importance was the suppression of the adherents of the fallen Sur dynasty in Bengal. Had these Afghans kept quiet, they might have retained the eastern provinces, but they failed to realize the uselessness of struggling with the Mogul, and were constantly raiding the territory of the Empire. It was

Second Battle of Panipat, 1556.

Bairam's regency.

His death, 1560.

Revolts, 1560-1566.

Akbar conciliates the Rajputs.

And captures Chitor, 1568.

Conquest of Gujerat, 1572.

AKBAR'S NAURATNA DARBAR. From Painting in the Victoria Memorial Collection.

1. HAKIM HAMAN. 2. Raja TODA MULL. 3. Raja MAN SINGH. 4. Raja BIRBAL. 5. MOLLA DOPEAZA.
6. FAIZY. 7. ABUL FAZL. 8. MIRZA TANSHEN. 9. Nawab KHAN KHANAN, also known as BAIRAM KHAN.

not until 1575 that Akbar had thoroughly subdued and pacified the north of India. Then it was that he turned his arms against the debauched Afghan king of Bengal, Daud Khan. Akbar conducted the first portion of the war himself and then left Raja Todar Mal, the famous Hindu general and finance minister, to conclude it. Behar, of which only a part had formerly acknowledged Akbar, and Bengal were now annexed to the empire, but repeated revolts arose, for Daud Khan, who had been allowed to retire to Orissa, made fresh efforts to regain the sovereignty. Orissa was added to the empire in 1590, but the east was not thoroughly pacified until 1592, when the last Afghan rebellion was suppressed.

Conquest of Bengal, 1575.

And Orissa, 1590.

During the last twenty years of his reign, Akbar made several further conquests. Kabul, held as fief by a rebellious brother, came directly into Akbar's hands in 1585; the wild mountain tribes of the north-west were, not without misadventure, quieted in 1586; Kashmir, where anarchy reigned, was annexed in 1587; Sindh and Kandahar were incorporated in the empire in 1592 and 1594 respectively. Now that Hindustan was completely subject to Delhi, Akbar could begin to think of subjugating the Deccan. After the kingdom of Vijayanagar had fallen (1565), the Moslem Sultans amongst whom the Bahmani dominions were parcelled out resumed their strife, and the king of Ahmednagar had at length by the conquest of Berar in 1572 become the most powerful chief south of the Vindhyas. But faction and intrigue brought a deserved punishment. In 1595 there were no less than four parties and four rival claimants of the throne. As so often happens, party selfishness obliterated all patriotic sentiments. Akbar was invited to intercede in the dynastic quarrel. But when the Mogul army arrived, the danger of the intervention was at length realized, and the rivals combined to resist the invaders. Chand Sultana, a most distinguished and intrepid princess, was appointed regent, and herself directed the defence of the city with such success that the Mogul army withdrew on condition that Berar should be ceded to the Empire (1596). Further quarrels then ensued in the Deccan, the Sultana was murdered and a fresh intervention of the Moguls under Akbar in person took place. But he only succeeded in permanently annexing the small kingdom of Khandesh and a part of Berar: the final overthrow of the Moslem kingdoms of the Deccan was reserved for his descendants during the 17th century.

Fresh conquests in the North-West.

Beginning of Mogul conquests in the Deccan, 1595-1600.

The empire of Akbar was hardly larger than that governed two centuries before by the house of Khilji and the early Tughlaks. But it was incomparably more solid and more enduring. The units were more completely conquered, and more firmly knit together: elements, like the Afghan fief-holders, making for disunion and dismemberment, were reduced to impotence, and the whole was governed in its own interests according to sane and liberal principles. Akbar was the first of the Moslem emperors to place the Hindus on an equality with their conquerors, and to take them into partnership on a large scale. He married two princesses of Rajput blood, and one, the Princess of Amber, became the mother of Jehangir. Hindus were among his favourite courtiers and greatest administrators. Man Singh was one of his most successful generals. The revenue reforms of Akbar were chiefly due to the wisdom and sagacity of Raja Todar Mal, who adopted and improved upon the principles enunciated by Sher Shah. Absolute toleration was conceded to all religions, and the persecuting tendencies of the orthodox Moslems were rigorously repressed. Two taxes which fell heavily upon the Hindu population were abolished: the duty on pilgrimages, which brought in millions of rupees annually and which seriously interfered with what the Hindu regarded as a pious duty, and the *jiziya* or capitation tax imposed by Mohammedan sovereigns on those of another faith. "There was no tax which caused so much bitterness of feeling on the part of those who had to pay it: nor one which gave so much opportunity to the display and exercise of human tyranny. The reason why the sovereigns before Akbar failed entirely to gain the sympathies of the children of the soil, might be gathered from the history of the proceedings connected with this tax alone."* The *jiziya* was not only a tax of vicious character, but was especially liable to abuse in the collection. It was the revival by Aurangzeb of this oppressive measure which largely accounts for his ultimate failure. While endeavouring to avoid unnecessary interference with the religious opinions of his subjects, Akbar did not scruple to check abuses which seriously restricted their well-being. Thus he ordained that *sati* must be a purely voluntary sacrifice; he permitted widow re-marriage, and forbade marriage before the age of puberty. These abuses had, as we have seen, only crept into the Hindu system gradually in Post-Vedic times, and the reforms of Akbar in this connection anticipated the intelligent efforts of the most enlightened Hindus themselves at the present day.

Principles of Akbar's administration.

Enlightened policy towards Hindus.

The narrowness of the more bigoted and orthodox Mohammedans provoked his indignation no less than the abuses of orthodox Hinduism. The liberal tendencies of the emperor, formed by constant meditation, and encouraged by Faizi and Abul Fazl, the most enlightened of his courtiers, resulted in an attempt to found a universal religion, composed from a variety of different sources. Heated discussions took place in the royal palace at Fatehpur Sikri, and learned men of all religions were gathered together to exchange their views before the emperor. "To Akbar's open eyes there was truth in all faiths, but no one creed could hold the master-key of the infinite.... He listened eagerly to the words of the Christian Fathers, to the Vedanta philosophy of ascetic Yogis: he had Sanskrit classics translated for him, and ordered a translation of the Gospels: he must have known the Buddhist doctrine and the profound metaphysics of India.....Islam was too bounded for his expanding soul. The outward symbols went: the Moslem

Akbar's comprehensive religion.

* *Akbar*, 'Rulers of India' Series. Col. Malleson.

shibboleth vanished from the coinage, and the ambiguous formula, 'Allahu Akbar,' 'God is Great' (or as detractors construed it, 'Akbar is God'), took its place. .....He found that the rigid Moslems of the Court were always casting in his teeth some absolute authority, a book, a tradition, a decision of a canonical divine, and like Henry VIII he resolved to cut the ground from under them: he would himself be the head of the church, and there should be no pope in India but Akbar."* In accordance with this decision a decree was promulgated to the effect that on all matters of faith the emperor's decision should be binding on all Moslems in India. Opposition being crushed, the pantheism of 'the elect,' Faizi, Abul Fazl and others, became the court religion under the name of the *Din-i-Ilahi*, or 'divine faith.' It was essentially an eclectic pantheism, and the sun-worship of the Parsis was one of its most notable factors. The Mohammedans remained on the whole hostile, Akbar's heterodoxy formed the pretext of those family dissensions which embittered his last days, and the triumph of the pantheists was cut short by his death. But such an attempt at Catholic comprehension in an age when any real toleration was unknown alike in Asia and Europe is not the least of Akbar's titles to fame.

The 'Divine Faith.'

The administrative reforms of the reign demand separate treatment. Great efforts were made to purify justice, and Akbar insisted that the religious element was not to enter into the question before the magistrate or judge. In the eye of the law all men whether Mohammedans or Hindus, Shiahs or Sunnis, were to be treated alike.

Justice.

After the pacification of the north a census was ordered "of all the inhabitants, specifying their names and occupations. This regulation was the means of establishing tranquility and of providing security for the broad expanse of Hindustan." †

Census.

Abul Fazl in his great *Ain-i-Akbari*, which forms the third volume of his *Akbar-nama*, gives a complete account of the land-revenue system inaugurated by Todar Mal. It is well summarized by Keene in his "History of India." "There was to be an accurate record of each landholder's rights and liabilities. Easy means of complaint against undue exactions were provided, with due provision for the punishment of offenders. The number of petty officials was reduced by one-half. Advances of money and seed were available; arrears were remitted when remission was required. Collectors were called upon for yearly reports; and monthly returns were to be submitted to the exchequer, special narratives being required in case of special calamities, hail, flood or drought. The collections were made four times in the year; and care had to be taken that there should be no balances outstanding at the end of that period. It is hardly too much to say that the scheme contained the germs of the successful revenue-systems of modern India." Again, "at the same time attention was paid to the question of currency-reform. Local coinages were abolished, and imperial mints established at great centres, previous coins being called in. All establishments were paid in cash, the wasteful method of *jagirs* and territorial assignments being discontinued. Lastly, poor houses were opened for the relief of indigent wayfarers, and the emperor used to visit them in person."* The revenue survey seems to have been made every ten years, and by 1605 the revenue realized from the land amounted to nearly twenty million pounds. One-third of the gross produce was usually demanded by the Government. India north of the Vindhyas was divided into twelve subahs or provinces, each governed by a viceroy, who held office during good behaviour.

Revenue and currency reforms.

The versatility of Akbar was amazing. His great genius not merely asserted itself in statesmanship, in theology and war, but shone conspicuous in many a minor art. He had a taste for mechanical contrivance; invented a travelling carriage, a new method of making gun-barrels, and a machine for cleaning guns. His marksmanship was unerring. He distinguished himself in the chase and was zealous in hawking. He was a fine polo player, and by the use of fire-balls even enjoyed the sport at night. He frequently indulged in cards, and made some alterations in the rules for playing. He was exceedingly musical, and "possessed such a knowledge of the science of music as trained musicians do not possess." Finally, he was a great builder and showed fine taste in architecture, sculpture and painting. He built the majestic fort at Agra, but the city and palaces of Fatehpur Sikri are his greatest architectural monument. Here, twenty-two miles from Agra, he created a capital for himself, and crowned the slopes with a series of beautiful buildings, which still, in semi-ruin, attest the greatness of their author. In this Oriental Versailles the great ruler enjoyed to the full his love of meditation and discussion. The place is full of his memories: there stand the houses of his wives and of his ministers, the audience hall with its pillared throne and galleries, the court-yard where the emperor played living chess with slave-girls, and the simple bed-room where Akbar took his afternoon repose. At night he slept but little: the hours of darkness and of peace were devoted to discussion and meditation: the morning to work and sport, the afternoon alone to rest. Akbar ate as little as he slept. While Abul Fazl consumed of food and drink some twenty seers a day, his master was content with a single meal. For months at a time he abstained from meat, but he was much addicted to fruit, and made a careful study of its cultivation. Simple and austere in his personal habits, Akbar knew well when and how to be magnificent. The pomp and circumstance of his progresses and festivals impressed the eye of the beholder. He had 5,000 elephants, 12,000 riding horses, and a camp-equipage of the most splendid character. On the great days of ceremonials "Akbar seated himself on his throne, sparkling with diamonds, and surrounded by his chiefest nobles, all magnificently attired. Then there passed before him in review the

Akbar's versatility.

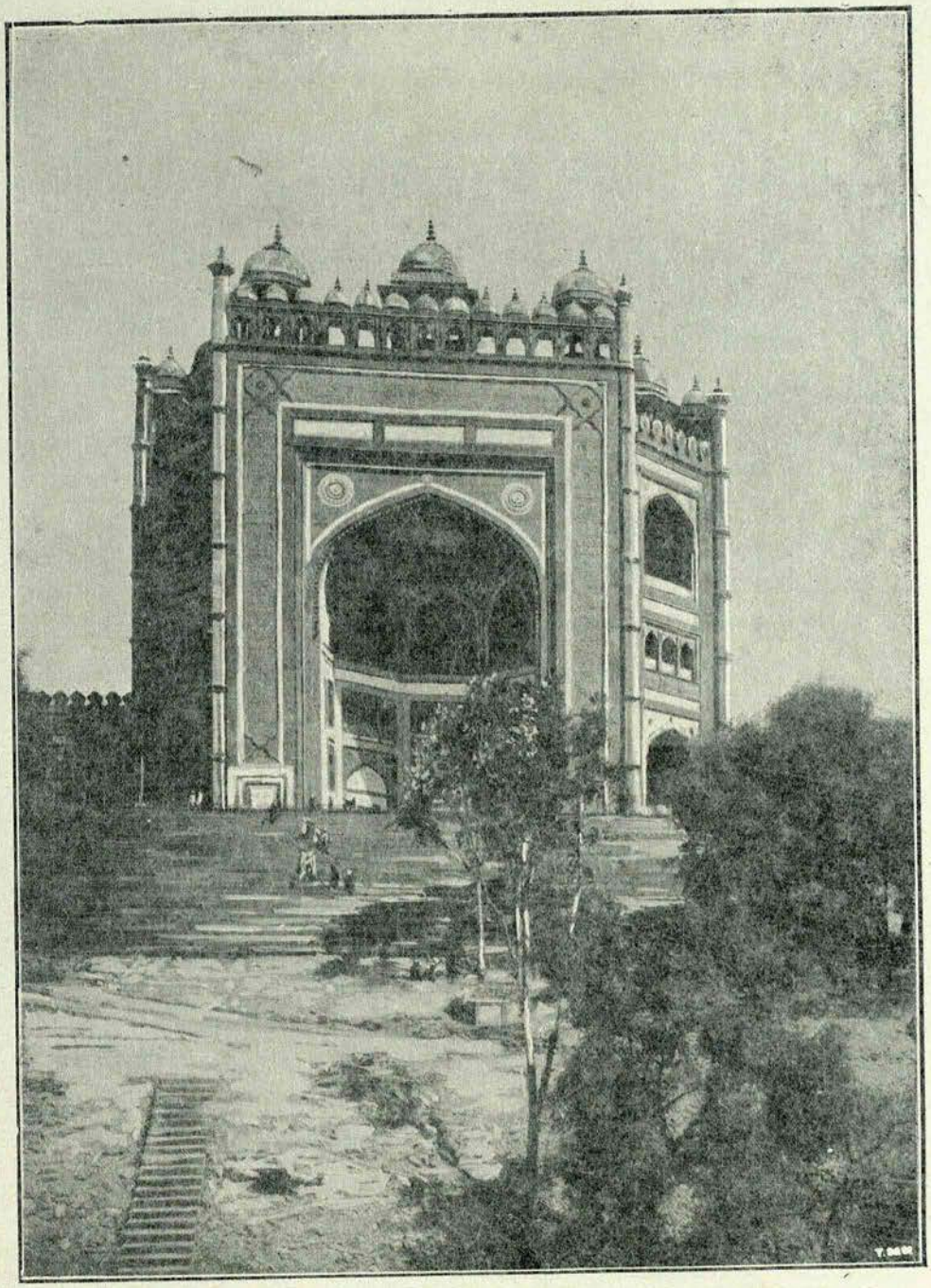
Fatehpur Sikri and Akbar's habits of life.

His magnificence.

* *India under Mohammedan Rule.* Lane Poole, Ch. XI.

† Abul Fazl, *Akbar-nama*, Elliot VI, 61.

* *History of India.* Keene, I, 139.



GREAT GATEWAY OF THE MOSQUE AT FATEHPORE SIKRI BUILT BY AKBAR.

elephants with their head and breast-plates adorned with rubies and other stones, the horses splendidly caparisoned, the rhinoceroses, the lions, the tigers, the panthers, the hunting-leopards, the hounds, the hawks, the procession concluding with the splendidly attired cavalry.''* Jehangir's portrait of his father in later life deserves mention. ''Though he was illiterate, yet from constantly conversing with learned and clever persons, his language was so polished, that no one could discover from his conversation that he was entirely uneducated. † He understood even the elegancies of poetry and prose so well, that it is impossible to conceive any one more proficient.'' The following is a description of his person: ''He was of middling stature, but with a tendency to be tall, of wheat-colour complexion, rather inclining to dark than fair, black eyes and eyebrows, stout body, open forehead and chest, long arms and hands. There was a fleshy wart, about the size of a small pea, on the left side of his nose, which appeared exceedingly beautiful.....He had a very loud voice, and a very elegant and pleasant way of speech. His manners and habits were quite different from those of other persons, and his visage was full of godly dignity.'' ‡ We may add that Akbar earned the repugnance of orthodox Moslems by shaving the beard, an example which the court were expected to follow. It is interesting to remember that Peter the Great of Russia provoked considerable opposition by a similar reform.

Personal appearance.

This sketch cannot be complete without some notice of the more important among Akbar's ministers and favourites. Beyond comparison the brothers Faizi and Abul Fazl left their stamp upon the emperor. Faizi the poet, Abul Fazl the historian, statistician and administrator, were liberals of the liberals, and encouraged Akbar in his religious speculations, while themselves earning the distrust and hatred of orthodox Islam. Faizi was one of the greatest Persian poets that India has produced. He it was that by means of Persian translations introduced Akbar to the study of Hindu poetry and philosophy. Abul Fazl was prime minister and was the author of many works of repute. The *Akbar nama* with its supplement, the *Ain-i-Akbari*, was by far his greatest production. The style is rhetorical and often abstruse, and the book has been unduly condemned on the score of flattery. But his praise, while it was generally deserved, is infinitely less nauseous and exaggerated than that of most Indian historians; moreover, it sprang from genuine adoration. He was treacherously murdered in 1602 at the instigation of Selim (Jehangir) who was jealous of his influence, and was probably urged to the deed by the orthodox party in the state. Akbar never recovered from the shock of this great sorrow, particularly as Faizi had already passed away (1595).

Akbar's ministers and favourites.

Faizi and Abul Fazl.

No subject served Akbar so zealously and with such important consequences as the Hindu financier, Raja Todar Mal. ''Careful to keep himself from selfish ambition,'' writes Abul Fazl, ''he devoted himself to the service of the state, and earned everlasting fame.'' As his reforms (*supra*, p. 18) touched the people so deeply, it is not surprising that his name was long cherished in the popular memory. British administrators cannot afford to slight the name of the man whose principles of land revenue they have so largely followed.

Raja Todar Mal.

Another Hindu favourite was Raja Birbal, whose house at Fatehpur is still one of the chief attractions to the tourist. He was a Brahman, a poet, and a musician. He was noted for his wit and his liberality, but was no feeble general in the field. Birbal was one of the elect who professed Akbar's ''Divine Faith.''

Raja Birbal.

The Rajputs Bhagwan Das, Raja of Amber, and his adopted son Man Singh, were, as we have seen, related by marriage to the emperor and did him good service in the field.

Amongst the orthodox Moslems at Akbar's Court two men have gained immortal fame by their works. Nizam-ud-din Ahmed wrote one of the most celebrated histories of India, extending from the time of the Ghaznavides to the 38th year of Akbar's reign, and Abdul Kadr Badauni wrote an abridgment of the same work. Badauni figures more largely in the court history of the reign. He lived in apparent amity with the philosophic brothers, but being a zealous Moslem, he detested them and the emperor in secret. His history was not published until the following reign, and it is in places a valuable corrective to the eulogies of Abul Fazl.*

Ahmed and Badauni.

III.—Jehangir and Shah Jahan.

Akbar's last years were soured by the rebellion of his favourite son Selim, who succeeded his father on the throne in 1605 under the title of Jehangir, 'World Grasper.' ''Born under a superstitious spell, named after a wonder-working saint, petted and spoilt, the boy grew up wilful, indolent, and self-indulgent, too lazy and indifferent to be either actively good or powerfully evil.'' He was possessed of a violent and arbitrary temper, and was a notorious and habitual drunkard, though he could control himself when necessary. ''His image may be seen on his coins, wine-cup in hand, with unblushing effrontery; it is of a piece with the astonishingly simple candour of his own memoirs.'' As he grew older, he toned down somewhat, partly, he says, from a conviction that he was injuring his health, but chiefly, no doubt, under the influence of his beautiful and talented wife Nur Jehan, the 'Light of the World.' Besides the Memoirs of the emperor and the writings of contemporary Indian historians we are fortunate in possessing the accounts of several Europeans who visited India and the court of the great Mogul. Up to the end of the sixteenth century Europe had little first-hand knowledge of India. The Portuguese had settled on the

Jehangir, 1605-1627.

Contemporary records.

* Malleson's *Akbar*, 'Rulers of India' Series.

† But he was only such in the sense of having been deprived of a fitting education in youth: his warlike pre-occupations had left him little time for mental culture. After his accession, he educated himself persistently, possessed a considerable library and read largely. This we learn from Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari*.

‡ Jehangir's *Memoirs*. Elliot, VI, 290.

* Elliot, Vol. V, contains translations of both these histories.

coast at various places from about 1500 onwards, but they seldom penetrated inland, and no writer of note has described his Indian travels and experiences during the 16th century. When at last Englishmen and Frenchmen visited Delhi and Agra, the stories they told of the gorgeous Indian court took the western world by storm, and people began to realize that a splendid and striking civilization existed in the east, as remarkable and as worthy of study as any that contemporary Europe could show. After about a century of settlements the Portuguese began to decline. The prospects of extended empire which such heroes as Albuquerque and Almeida may have encouraged were destined to remain unrealized. Goa was indeed the most splendid city in the East, but the Portuguese contented themselves with fortified coast stations and a commerce which brought them unrivalled wealth. Portugal had succeeded to the commercial monopoly of the Arabs in the Indian seas, and this monopoly depended entirely upon the command of the seas. But the Portuguese began to degenerate under the moist heat of the Malabar Coast, while they stirred up the hostility of the natives by their greed and their intolerant religious policy.

European travellers.

The Portuguese commercial supremacy overthrown by the Dutch and English.

The annexation of Portugal by Spain in 1580 was the death-blow to Portuguese enterprise in the Indies, and it was swiftly followed by the appearance of European rivals in the eastern seas. The Dutch appeared in 1597, but no sooner had they undermined the Portuguese commercial monopoly than the English, whose first East India Company had received its charter in 1600, came to claim their share. An English factory was founded at Surat, and a couple of naval victories early in the century transferred the command of the seas from Portugal to England. The claim now for the first time brought forward by Englishmen to a right of trade and settlement in India required the approval of the emperor at Delhi. The ambassadors of King James therefore visited Jehangir: William Hawkins in 1609, and Sir Thomas Roe in 1615. Hawkins, a blunt sea-captain, "was the first Englishman ever received by the Emperor of Hindustan as the official representative of the King of England, and he obtained from the Great Mogul the first distinct acknowledgment of the rights of British commerce in India." Hawkins suffered much maltreatment at the hands of the Portuguese, who claimed that "these seas belonged to the King of Portugal," and had his goods pillaged by the Mohammedan governor of Gujerat.

William Hawkins at Agra, 1609-1611.

Having arrived at the royal court, then being held at Agra, Hawkins was heartily welcomed by the emperor. The two had long conversations together in Turkish, and drank as boon-companions in the evening. For more than two years he maintained a very intimate position at the court, but the intrigues of the Portuguese were so persistent that he obtained from Jehangir little more than a general recognition of the English trading rights. His powers of observation were not deeply penetrative, but his narrative is not without its value.* The revenue he estimates at the absurdly high figure of fifty millions sterling, and the daily expenses of the court at £8,000. The court jewels and the military establishment, the nobility, and the emperor's domestic life are all described with considerable minuteness. Jehangir spent a great proportion of the day and night in sleeping and drinking. Owing to the imbibing of wine and the eating of opium, the emperor was not able to feed himself at supper, "but it is thrust into his mouth by others."

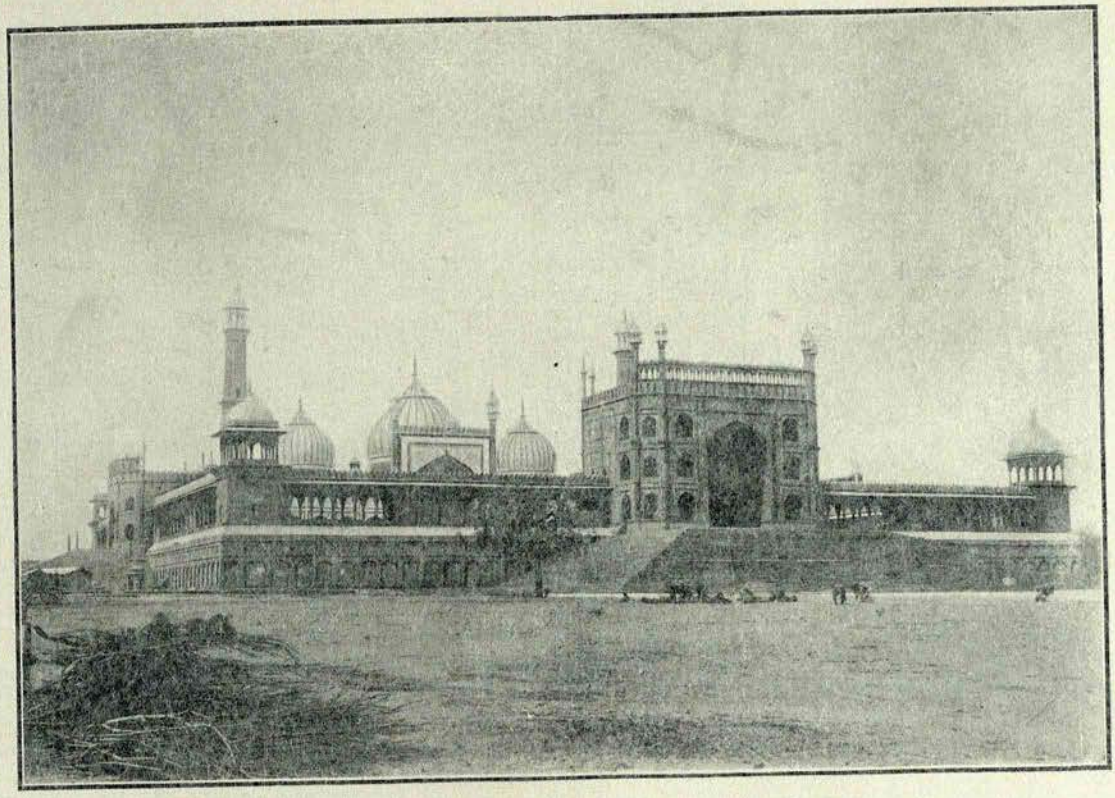
Sir Thomas Roe came in 1615 to complete Hawkins' work. An aristocrat of the best Elizabethan model, he did much to inspire respect for his countrymen in the hearts of the emperor and his servants. When he arrived, the influence of the Portuguese at court had almost succeeded in driving the English out of Surat; Englishmen were flouted and humiliated every day, and it was only Roe's own spirited demeanour that protected him from insult. Roe's embassy soon changed all this. "Despite of the opposition of the Prince Shahjehan, of the intrigues of the empress, the prime minister and the Jesuits—mostly Portuguese—Roe not merely asserted his countrymen's rights to fair treatment, but won a series of important diplomatic victories." All bribes and extortions previously taken from his countrymen were recovered, and the English trade at Surat was sanctioned in firmans issued to the local authorities. Jehangir conceded privileges equal to those possessed by other foreigners, and the English factory at Surat was established on a stable basis. As the Portuguese monopoly had already been broken through, the Dutch remained the only serious European rivals in the Eastern trade. But, as Roe remarks, they frittered away their strength in seeking 'plantations' by the sword. "Lett this bee received as a rule that if you will profit, seeke it at sea, and in quiett trade, for without controversy it is an error to affect garrisons and land wars in India." Roe's journal† gives a picture of contemporary India of exceptional value and interest, and as a record of court life it is an admirable complement to the narrative of Hawkins. Roe had an excellent talent for observation and a natural gift for literary expression. We have a graphic description of the royal durbar, and the magnificent jewellery of the court; but the vices of the emperor made this show seem somewhat hollow, The following picture is typical: "The good king fell to dispute of the Lawes of Moses, Jesus and Mahomet, and in drinke was so kinde, that he turned to me and said: 'I am a king, you shall be welcome.' Christians, Moors, Jewes, he medled not with their faith; they came all in love, and he would protect them from wrong; they lived under his safety, and none should oppresse them; and this often repeated, but in extreame drunkennesse, he fell to weeping and to divers passions, and so kept us till midnight." Several other Europeans have left accounts of their Indian experiences in this reign, but none cast such light upon the court, the per-

Sir Thomas Roe at Agra, 1615-1618.

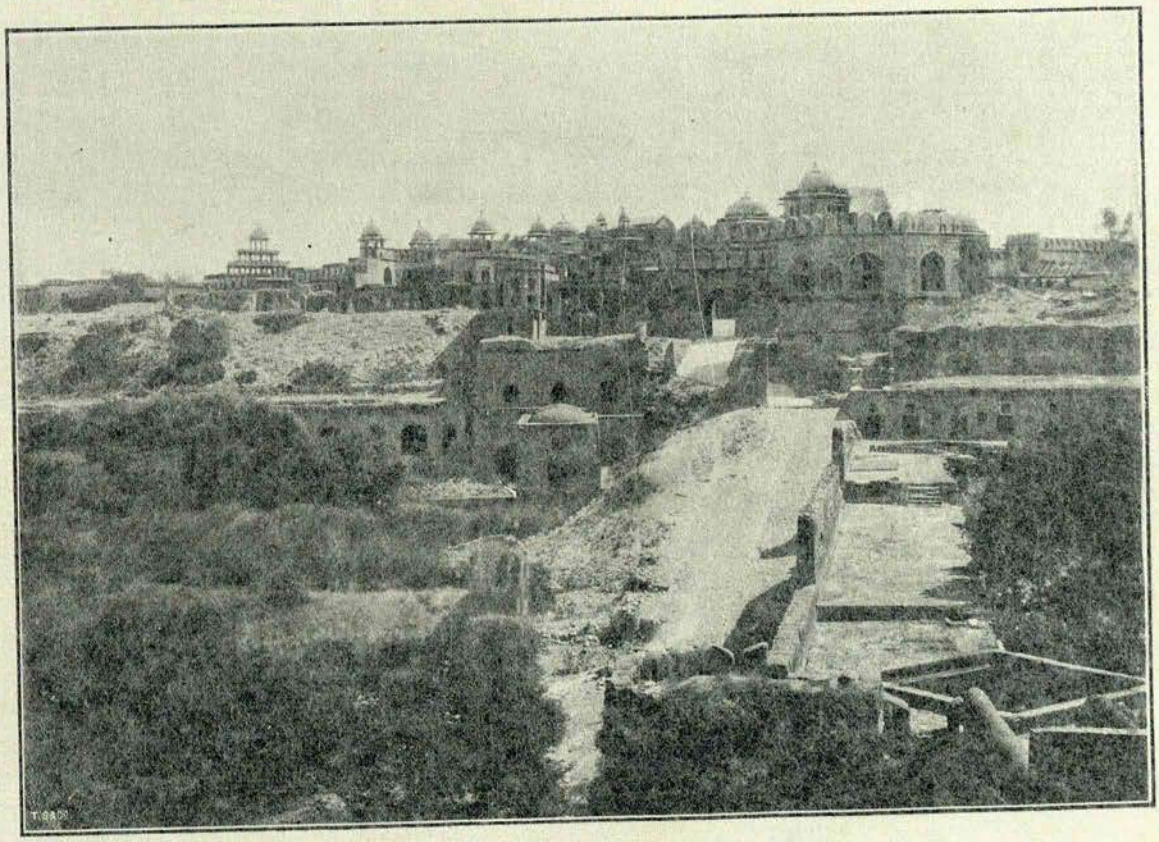
English trade now settled on a firm foundation.

* *The Hawkins Voyages, Part III* (Hakluyt Society), Sir Clements Markham.

† *Sir Thomas Roe's Journal and Letters*, Foster (Hakluyt Society).



FRONT OR EAST VIEW OF THE JAMA MASJID AT DELHI.
Showing the Royal Gateway. Built by the Emperor Shah Jahan, 1644-1658.



VIEW OF FATEHPUR SIKRI FROM THE HIRAN MINAR.
Built by the Emperor Akbar, 1569-1574.

sonality of the emperor, and the methods of government as the journals of Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe.

Character of Jehangir.

Jehangir was certainly a strong contrast to his father. But he was shrewd enough to maintain his father's fundamental principle of toleration and the conciliation of Hindus. At the same time, while really less devout than Akbar, he professed orthodoxy and destroyed all traces of the pantheism which had flourished at his father's court. The great thing he lacked was the strong hand, the masterfulness of Akbar. His governors and officials became corrupt as of yore, robbery and brigandage reappeared even in the civilized provinces of the empire. Granted the authenticity of his *Memoirs*, he seems to have possessed plenty of ability; it was a moral weakness from which he suffered. He was fond of jewels and a connoisseur of pictures and statues. He was a mighty hunter like all his ancestors, and like Babar, an intelligent lover and observer of nature, both animate and inanimate. Some of the Twelve Institutes, included in the *Memoirs*, are worthy of notice.

His Government.

They display the best intentions and a knowledge of the principles of good government, but at the same time they are modelled on the legislation of his predecessors, and they were not persistently carried into practice. Thus he abolishes all unlawful exactions, but there is ample testimony to prove that the order was not observed. He asserts the indefeasible rights of private property, and forbids the customary right of search. Both orders were contravened by his officers. He distinguished himself, as Ala-ud-din had done before, by a temperance enactment, but he himself was notorious for inebriety. He forbade brutal mutilations, but a catalogue of his own cruel deeds could be cited against him.*

Nur Jehan.

Doubtless things would have been worse but for the influence of the gifted empress, Nur Jahan. Her life is a veritable oriental romance, and the ascendancy she gained at the court was remarkable and enduring. She weaned the emperor from excessive drunkenness to moderate drinking, but the intrigues and rebellions which clouded the end of the reign were largely the result of her unscrupulous favouritism. Of these rebellions and of the wars which took place under Jehangir not much need be said. Soon after the accession the Emperor's eldest son, Prince Khusru, rebelled, and on being defeated was condemned to a life-long captivity. The war opened by Akbar in the Deccan continued with intermissions. The great Malik Amber, an Abyssinian general in the service of the ruler of Ahmednagar, resisted all the emperor's expeditions, and although driven back, he was never altogether subdued. The southern boundaries of the empire thus remained almost as they were at the death of Akbar. Malik Amber is famous for his foundation of Aurangabad, and for his introduction of a new revenue system into the Deccan. He was the last great figure in the declining state of Ahmednagar.

Rebellion of Khusru, 1606.

Wars in the Deccan.

* See especially appendix on Jehangir's *Institutes*, Elliot, Vol. VI.

Another war took place with the Rana of Udaipur but it was terminated by the military genius of the future Shah Jahan. The Rana received back his principality and no longer remained a cause of trouble to the Imperial Government.

Submission of the Rana of Udaipur, 1614.

It has been said that Nur Jahan was largely responsible for the troubles which darkened the end of an otherwise fairly peaceful reign. The elder son of Jehangir, Prince Khusru, was made away with probably at his brother Khurram's instigation in 1621. Prince Khurram, who received the title from his father of Shah Jahan, 'Lord of the World,' thus became the obvious heir to the empire, for which his talents as well as his seniority marked him out. But he was too grave and reserved for his frank outspoken father, and he somehow or other incurred the displeasure of his all-powerful mother. Meanwhile he was in favour with the prime minister Asaf Khan, a brother of Nur Jahan. Shah Jahan, on discovering the intrigues which aimed at depriving him of his heritage, raised the standard of rebellion. He was, however, reduced to submission by Mahabat Khan, a general who had fought under Akbar, and the most eminent man in the empire. But Mahabat and his army looked with no favourable eye on the sinister designs of the empress. Failing to win him over, Nur Jahan resolved on his overthrow. But the general cleverly anticipated his fate by a bold seizure of the emperor's person, when Jehangir was on the way to put down a rising in Kabul (1626). The empress thereupon marshalled the imperial guard and rode fully armed on an elephant at the head of her troops to release her lord. Failing, however, in open attack, she boldly entered the camp, shared her husband's captivity and at length effected his release by stratagem (1627). Mahabat Khan fled to the Deccan and joined Shah Jahan who was once more in revolt. But the release of the emperor came too late. Before he was in a position to suppress the growing rebellion, he became violently ill from asthma and died in October 1627, being then in the sixtieth year of his age.

Rebellion of Shah Jahan, 1623-1625.

Mahabat Khan takes Jehangir prisoner, 1626.

Death of Jehangir, 1627.

There was little use in opposing Shah Jahan who had Mahabat and the whole army on his side. After a stop-gap had been provided by Asaf Khan in the person of a son of the dead Khusru—a measure obviously taken to foil the attempts of another claimant who was in the field—Shah Jahan appeared at Agra and was proclaimed emperor. His intriguing mother retired into seclusion and lived outside the course of history until her death nearly twenty years later.

Shah Jahan, 1628-1658.

The new emperor was the most popular of the Moguls, and the most magnificent. His ability had been tested during his father's lifetime, but the haughty gravity and reserve which had gained him many enemies at court seem to have been entirely cast off when he assumed the crown. Shah Jahan proved to be frank and accessible, kindly and benevolent. Himself the son of a Hindu mother, as Jehangir had been before him,

Character and government.

he carried on the tolerant traditions of his predecessors, both from policy and because he had no very strong religious convictions himself. He was free from the cruelty and drunkenness which tarnished the reputation of Jehangir, but instead he abandoned himself to the genial pleasures of the harem, and remained a voluptuary even to the end of his days. He was extravagant and avaricious to a fault, but the management of the finances was in such able hands—the emperor was fortunate in his counsellors—that so far from there being a deficit, an enormous surplus was left in the treasury at the end of the reign. Despite the millions lavished by Shah Jahan on building operations, jewellery and display, we hear of no unusual extortion. On the other hand, the European travellers are at one in lauding the wealth of the country. The soil produced abundantly, and manufactures flourished in all parts. Bengal was a great cotton-producing centre, and Dacca was the magnificent emporium of the Bengal commerce. Silk and leather were manufactured in Sindh. Broach was a great weaving centre; the magnificence and wealth of Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujerat, greatly impressed the German traveller, Mandelslo. Cambay was another wealthy town: it was larger than Surat, and carried on an extensive trade. Indeed, the wealth of Cambay was attested fifty years before by the Dutch traveller Linschoten, who visited the Indies to report on the possibility of founding a Dutch East India Company. Mandelslo has provided us with a graphic picture of Agra, the early capital of Shah Jahan. Some of the streets were vaulted like our modern arcades. There were seventy great mosques and eight hundred public baths. Every nation which traded with the east had an establishment at Agra, the English amongst them. Christians were tolerated there, and the Jesuits had a fine church of their own. The imperial palace now being reared by Shah Jahan within the fort of Akbar was resplendent with jewelled mosaics, and the emperor was credited with having a stored treasure equivalent to 300 millions of our money. Manrique, another traveller, says that Agra in 1640 stretched for six miles along the Jumna, and contained a population of 600,000. The sumptuousness of the banquets greatly impressed the Italian, and it is noteworthy that ladies attended unveiled. The beautiful Diwan-i-Khas and the Pearl Mosque built by Shah Jahan are amongst the glories of Agra which still attract tourists from all over the world. But more glorious still is the Taj Mahal, the world-famous mausoleum of the Emperor's beloved wife, Mumtaz-i-Mahal, 'The Elect of the Palace.'* Tavernier, a French traveller, who spent a great part of his life in the east, asserts that 20,000 workmen were employed for nearly twenty years in the construction of the Taj. The labour and time devoted to this masterpiece in marble suggests comparison with the greatest undertaking of the ancient world, the mammoth pyramid of Kheops at Gizeh. But the cost of the Taj must have been incomparably greater, while it is not merely a great engineering enterprise but a supreme work of art. About 1638 the emperor caused a new capital to be erected at Delhi along the Jumna, under the name of Shahjahanabad. When completed ten years later, it was the most magnificient royal residence in the world. The fort is mightier and more extensive than the fort at Agra: similarly the palace apartments were far grander. In the Hall of Public Audience stood the famous peacock throne, which cost the Emperor £6,000,000. It was carried away to Persia by the conqueror Nadir Shah in the 18th century and is now at Teheran. The Jama Masjid at Delhi, the greatest mosque in India, was another of the foundations of this imperial builder. Shah Jahan spent the earlier years of his reign at Agra, but after the completion of the new city at Delhi he mostly resided there, taking, however, summer trips to the beautiful vale of Kashmir "with a set of travelling tents so numerous and complete that they took two months to pitch at the successive stages of the royal route."

Wealth of India.

New Delhi.

The emperor a great builder.

It is obvious that the wealth of the court reflects the wealth of the country. That many provinces were prosperous we have seen from the accounts of European travellers, whose impartiality it is reasonable to assume. That the national wealth had increased during the last fifty years is natural, seeing that the greater part of the empire had been fairly free from war since the days of Akbar. The revenue system inaugurated in his day had had time to bear fruit, and Shah Jahan received an average annual land revenue of twenty crores of rupees (£20,000,000), about twice as much as was paid to Akbar. In the absence of testimony it is unfair to assume that a higher rate was exacted: probably more land was cultivated, the administrative machine had with time become more perfect, and above all the area of the empire had been enlarged by the middle of the seventeenth century. Much of the emperor's treasure was derived from the costly presents given by his noblemen, and it is constantly asserted by contemporaries that the estates of the jagirs escheated to the crown on the death of their holders. This picture of wealth and fair government where the emperor "reigned not so much as a king over his subjects, but rather as a father over his family and children," was however undoubtedly stained by several of the vices incidental to Oriental despotism. While Shah Jahan tolerated enormously wealthy subjects, the governors of provinces did not always show themselves so nice. Tavernier says that in certain places the peasants were reduced to great poverty, "because if the governors become aware that they possess any property they seize it straightway by right of force. You may see in India whole provinces like deserts, from whence the peasants have fled on account of the oppression of the governors."* But this can rarely have applied to any but the outlying provinces, perhaps Gujerat and Bengal. Again, the roads were not uniformly safe; an escort of twenty or thirty men was necessary to travel across the empire in security. Thirdly, the harem was a great centre of intrigue. Not only did Shah Jahan waste much time among his women and latterly entrust all serious work of government to

The land revenue.

Certain vices of despotism apparent.

* 'Taj Mahal' is a vulgarization of this title of the Queen.

* Tavernier's *Travels in India*, translated by Ball I, 391.

his eldest son Dara, but the ladies of the court obtained undue influence over appointments, so that favour was often more powerful than merit. The position of governors and officials lacked stability : they were changed too frequently.

The foreign history of the reign is concerned chiefly with the Deccan and Afghanistan. Shah Jahan had as Prince Khurram carried on in Jehangir's reign the work that Akbar had begun in the Deccan. He had reduced Ahmednagar to the rank of a tributary State. Berar had previously been conquered by Ahmednagar and the northern part of it had, like Khandesh, been brought within the empire of Akbar. Bidar had become extinct. There remained therefore besides the new tributary state of Ahmednagar the two other Mussalman kingdoms of the Deccan, Bijapur and Golconda. Throughout Shah Jahan's reign the Deccan was disturbed by wars and rebellions. The Nizam Shahs of Ahmednagar were at last overcome by the emperor in person (1636) and their kingdom incorporated in the empire. Bijapur, which had assisted Ahmednagar in its struggles against the Moguls, was now for the first time rendered tributary. Twenty years later Aurangzeb, who was given complete command in the Deccan, would have added Golconda to the empire, but for the pacific commands of his father (1656), and was on the point of conquering Bijapur (1657) when the question of the succession summoned him to the north. Aurangzeb, however, after he had inherited the throne, did round off the Mogul dominions by overthrowing the last of the independent Mohammedan kingdoms of the Deccan. Their resistance in the reign of Shah Jahan is rendered noteworthy by the fact that it was strengthened by a new Hindu element, the Mahrattas. The weakening of the Mohammedan rulers in the Deccan strengthened the power and influence of the native Mahratta chiefs. One of these, Shahji Bhonsla, who held land at Poona, now assisted the kings of Bijapur in checking the aggressions of the Moguls. The emperor of Delhi doubtless seemed to such as he a more dangerous foe than the enfeebled local king. But the Moguls would have done well to regard the Mohammedan kingdoms of the south as the bulwark of Islam against the rising Hindu power. Shahji Bhonsla was the progenitor of the great Sivaji who with his descendents was largely responsible for the downfall of the Delhi empire.

Wars in the Deccan.

Annexation of Ahmednagar, 1636.

In Afghanistan, Kandahar, previously lost, was surrendered to the Moguls in 1637. But in 1648 it was reoccupied by Persia, and despite three attempts at re-capture was not again subdued, being finally lost to the empire. Kabul, however, remained a part of the Mogul empire until its conquest by Nadir Shah in 1738. In this reign an invasion of Balkh was attempted, but it ended in disaster : it was impossible to conduct successful warfare beyond the Hindu Kush.

Kandahar and Balkh.

During the present reign, the European settlements continued to increase in number and importance. The Portuguese power indeed declined, and in 1631 they were driven out from Hugli with great slaughter, the pretext being that they had assisted in the marauding and slave-raiding expeditions which at this time disgraced the Sunderbunds. The imperial army besieged the town for fourteen weeks, and after the Portuguese were once driven out, they never regained their position in Bengal.* The Dutch and English were the rising commercial powers in the east. The foundation of English commerce in the east has already been noticed in dealing with the reign of Jehangir. Under Shah Jahan the East India Company greatly extended its operations. Fort St. George was founded in 1639 on a piece of land granted by a native poligar who was descended from the kings of Vijayanagar.† A factory was opened in Orissa, and the English replaced the Portuguese at Hugli in Bengal. These projects were liberally favoured by the emperor, for the English traders made themselves less hated than the Portuguese in their dealings with the natives. They did not aspire as yet to empire ; were less greedy and tyrannical, and above all, had no inquisition. The Dutch meanwhile had established factories on the Malabar Coast (*e. g.*, at Surat) and did almost more than the English to break down the commercial monopoly of the Portuguese. But they were destined not to reap the fruits of their victories, and after a long period of obstinate rivalry with the English (about 1605-1689) they were reduced to a very secondary position on the mainland and devoted their energies to the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, where they succeeded in building up a glorious colonial empire. It is to be remembered that the French did not appear in India as traders until the reign of Aurangzeb. The travellers Tavernier and Bernier brought India to the notice of the French government by the accounts of their journeys in the middle of the seventeenth century, and thus paved the way for French commercial undertakings, as Linschoten had done in the case of the Dutch.

Growth of European settlements and commerce.

Decay of the Portuguese.

Rivalry of English and Dutch.

The interest of Shah Jahan's latter years centres round the struggle for the succession. Like Akbar and Jehangir the old emperor was troubled by the rebellious ambitions of his sons. But in his case the succession question was more complicated. He had four sons, Dara, Shuja, Aurangzeb, 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." To stop their quarrels and intrigues and perhaps also to ease his own shoulders of the now distasteful burden of sovereignty, the emperor appointed his sons governors of four distant provinces. This, however, gave them opportunity to raise armies for the execution of their designs. When in 1657 Shah Jahan was believed to be dying, each of the four sons prepared to fight for the throne. Dara had left his viceroyalty in the north-west and was acting as regent at Delhi. Shuja was in Bengal, Murad in Gujerat, and Aurangzeb in the Deccan. Shuja

Struggle for the Succession, 1657-8.

* For a graphic account of these transactions see the *Badshah-nama* of Abdul Hamid Lahori, Elliot, VII, pp 31-5. Some of the Moslem grievances against the Portuguese in general are cited by Khafi Khan, *ibid*, pp. 344-5.

† See p. 10 *supra*.

was the first in the field, but was defeated near Benares and driven back into Bengal. Aurangzeb craftily offered his services to Murad and the two joined forces with the result that the royal army, despite the bravery of its Rajput general, was destroyed on the banks of the Narbada (1658). Dara, whose succession was secure if he crushed the forces of the coalition, then marched out at the head of a magnificent army of 100,000 horse, 20,000 foot, and 80 guns. The two armies met at Samugarh, afterwards known as Fatehabad, 'the City of Victory,' on the Chambal. In sweltering heat the battle swayed to and fro, until the cool courage of Aurangzeb gained the day. Many of Dara's men were half-hearted, and he himself was indiscreet. All the world tendered their homage to Aurangzeb, who saluted Murad as emperor, until he found opportunity to seize him in a moment of drunkenness. Shah Jahan was kept a tight prisoner in the palace at Agra, loaded with presents and beguiled with amusements until he died in 1666 at the age of seventy-six. His popularity must have sadly waned, otherwise more effort would have been made to save him from such disgrace. Aurangzeb successfully disposed of his rivals and overcame all their efforts to dispute the throne. Within three years Dara and Shuja suffered fresh defeats. Dara was betrayed into Aurangzeb's hands and executed. Shuja came to an unknown end in his wanderings, and Murad was put to death in prison. Aurangzeb had triumphed by his duplicity and cunning no less than by his qualities as a leader and a general. His puritanical method of life and his bigoted orthodoxy were also responsible for gaining over to his side that large body of Mohammedans who felt that conciliation and free thinking had gone too far, and who saw in Dara a sceptic, in Shuja a debauchee, in Murad a wine-bibber.

Battle of Samugarh, 1658.

Aurangzeb triumphant.

IV.—Aurangzeb, the Puritan Emperor.

Aurangzeb's long reign of nearly half a century witnessed events which were fraught with grave importance for the destinies of India and the history of the world. Under him the Mogul power reached its apogee and began to decline. The rise of the Mahrattas threatened the very existence of the empire, and the growth of the English settlements marked the advent of a power destined to contest with the Mahrattas for the Mohammedan inheritance. Aurangzeb mounted the throne in the very year that Cromwell died and outlived three successive monarchs of the British Isles. Before he died, England had passed safely through the revolution, and with the establishment of a national foreign policy had entered upon that career of colonial and maritime enterprise which resulted in the overthrow of all European rivals in the east during the 18th century and in the foundation of a glorious Indian empire. But during the present reign Britain's ultimate supremacy remained concealed in the womb of the future, while France under *Le Grand Monarque* enjoyed an unrivalled ascendency in Europe, and laid the foundation of a power in India which for a long time seemed likely to exceed all rival efforts.* From this time forward Europe and India were more closely bound up together: the east was no longer isolated from the currents of European activity, and mercantile ambition led gradually to territorial domination. Notwithstanding under Aurangzeb, as under his father and grandfather, we only see the small beginnings of these great events.

Aurangzeb, 1658-1707.

Growing connection between India and Europe.

Aurangzeb took for his title the Persian word Alamgir, 'world-compeller,' but to Europeans he has been always known by his own name. His character was a striking mixture of greatness and littleness. A capable general and organizer, unusually brave, even for a Mogul, a conscientious ruler and a religious man, he gave himself to the work of government with rare wholeheartedness, nor spared himself from the minutest details of administration either in sickness or in age. He superintended the whole work of government with the perseverance of Philip II, and controlled every wheel of administration with the unvarying patience of Frederick the Great, yet his reign was a failure because of his great defects. He was a puritan more bigoted than Cromwell, and he sacrificed the welfare of the state to religious orthodoxy with the recklessness of Louis XIV. His conscience dictated persistent warfare against all Shias, and persecution of all 'infidel' Hindus. He was perverse in mind and short-sighted in policy, malicious and sometimes treacherous towards foes, suspicious towards all, including his sons and friends. He suffered from a deficiency of heart: intellect and will-power alone do not qualify a sovereign to rule a composite and extensive empire. But, in spite of all failures and mistakes, the indomitable resolution and dogged perseverance of the man compel our admiration. He was a grand solitary figure fighting against tremendous odds, certainly misguided, but as undeniably great.

His character.

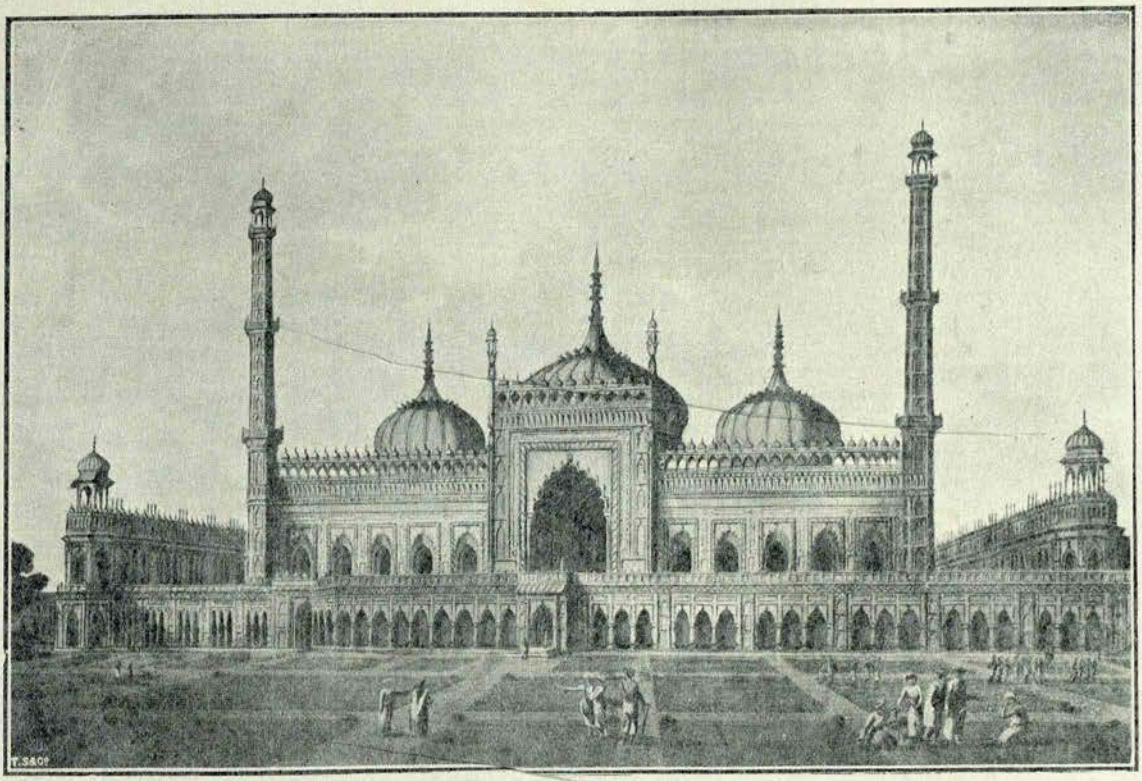
Unfortunately our sources for the history of the reign are more limited than in the case of the last two emperors. Aurangzeb distrusted historians, and forbade the writing of history during his reign. But Khafi Khan, one of the best of Indian historians, took notes in secret, and some years after the emperor's death published his great history of the House of Timur. The part dealing with Aurangzeb has the advantage of being largely the result of personal observation: it is the best connected account of the reign that we possess.† There is unluckily a comparative dearth of European travellers. But we have Bernier, a French physician of acute observation, whose extended sojourn in India during the earlier part of the reign impelled him to write a 'History of the States of the Great Mogul' and several lengthy letters to Colbert and others on the conditions of trade, society‡ and government. The other European travellers who visited different parts of India during the last part of the 17th century stayed a shorter time and saw less, so that they hardly call for mention in this place. The European mercantile communities in their coast settlements supplied as yet no literary genius, nor did their members travel extensively through India.

Authorities.

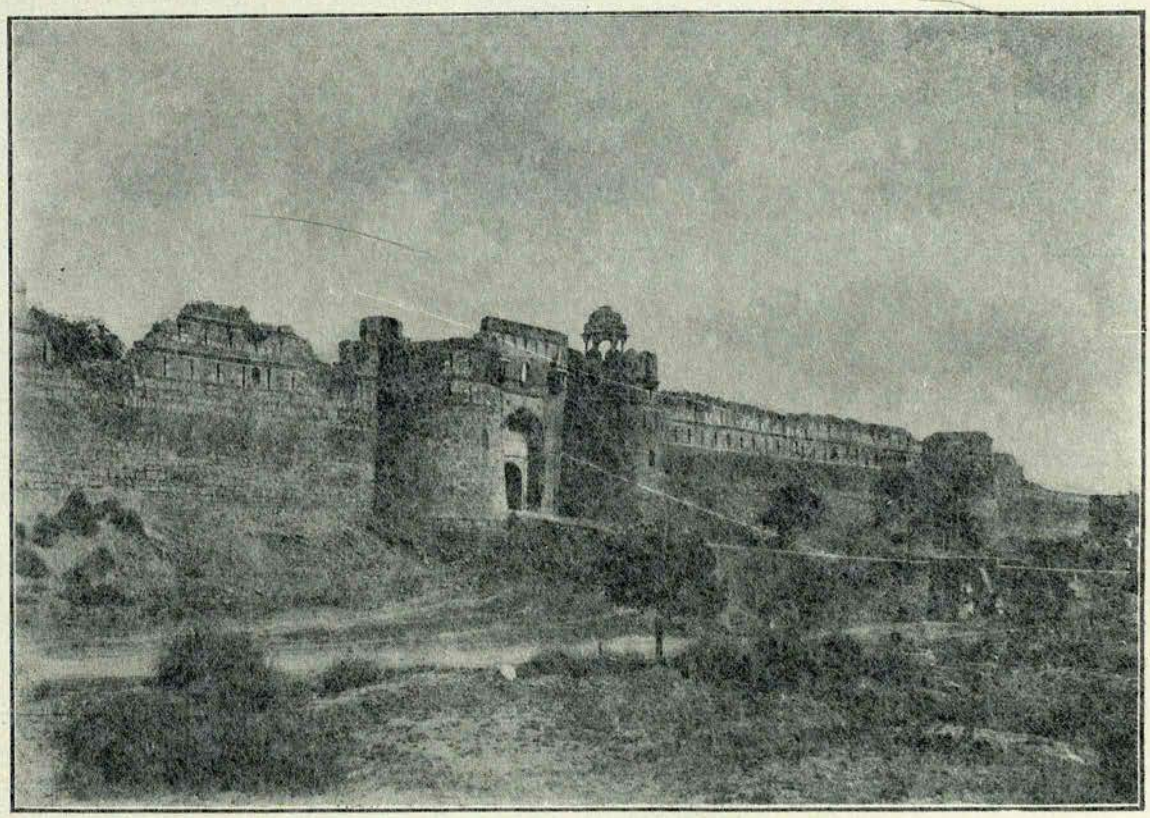
* See Vol. III. (ii.) in this Historical Summary.

† For an abridged translation of that part of the work dealing with Aurangzeb and his immediate successors, see Elliot, Vol. VII.

‡ See Bernier's *Travels*, translation, A. Constable.



MOSQUE AT LUCKNOW. (From a painting by Henry Salt, about 1809.)



Front or West View of Purana Kila near Delhi, standing on the site of the citadel of Indraprastha, founded by Yudhisthira in 1450 B. C.

Known also as Indrapat, Dinpana, and Shergarh or Shahgarh.

The reign may be divided into two easily defined periods, the year 1676 being the dividing line between them. In the first period, which comprises eighteen years, the magnificence and power of the Mogul empire reaches its culmination, while in the second the principle of toleration by which alone it had become so great, is violated, and consequent decline begins. But with what was perhaps the most formidable problem of the reign no dividing line is possible. The rise of the Mahrattas to the position of a great national state was well nigh continuous throughout the reign of Aurangzeb. In respect of this great question, 1680, the date of Sivaji's death, is the most notable landmark. Thenceforward Aurangzeb devoted himself to stamp out the Mahratta power, and the war in the Deccan occupied his best energies for the remainder of his days. It will be necessary to deal with the Mahratta question separately after the other noteworthy events of the reign have been outlined.

Chronology of the reign.

Aurangzeb does not seem to have been fully sure of his position until the death of his captive father in 1666. Thenceforward his position was undisputed, and except in the Deccan prosperity for a time attended his government. Amir Jumla, a capable but dangerous favourite, and a renegade servant of the king of Bijapur, had been in 1662 entrusted with an expedition against the mountain kingdom of Assam. Owing to the difficulties encountered and a violent outbreak of cholera, the attempt failed. But in the provinces of Hindustan there was peace and prosperity. A successful war was waged in 1666 against the king of Arakan on the Bay of Bengal, and the troublesome pirates of Chittagong, who had received protection from this monarch, were dispersed. In the west also, there was peace, and embassies were received from the kings of Persia and Ethiopia (Abyssinia), as well as the Sherif of Mecca. In the early seventies, however, a troublesome war broke out with the Afghan tribesmen, and although the Emperor appeared on the frontier in person, his hold on Kabul was weak, and the settlement he arrived at (1675) was unsatisfactory. South of the Narbada the Mahrattas under their chief Sivaji were gradually extending their power, and the Moslem kings of Bijapur and Golconda were still unconquered. Still the greater portion of the provinces of the empire remained at peace and enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity, and it is not until 1676 that we reach the turning point of the reign.

First period, 1658-1676.

The bulk of the empire peaceful and prosperous.

Henceforward the intolerant orthodoxy of Aurangzeb asserted itself more disastrously. The loyalty of the Hindu element, and particularly of the Rajput, was undermined, and disaffection at home crowned with success the efforts of the enemy without. In the early years of his rule Aurangzeb had wisely maintained the conciliatory policy of his predecessors. He had pardoned Jaswant Singh, the Raja of Marwar, for espousing the cause of Dara, and he had married his eldest son to a Hindu princess. But certain measures taken in the first period of the reign anticipated the persecution which was to come. Astrology was forbidden and poets were discouraged. Gambling houses were shut up; an edict was issued against music and dancing; the great fairs which accompanied Hindu festivals were prohibited. This puritanical system must have caused no little discontent, although it is doubtful whether it can have been enforced outside the larger towns. In 1676 the emperor's temper was soured by a formidable insurrection of the Satnamaris, a sect of Hindu devotees. The trouble arose in a police affray and extended so rapidly that it caused considerable difficulty to the government. The bigotry of Aurangzeb was now thoroughly aroused. He destroyed Hindu temples at the sacred cities of Muttra and Benares, and dismissed from the revenue service all Hindu officers, with the result that the revenue system fell into confusion. Partly as a means of replenishing his coffers, partly to satisfy his religious fervour, he in 1677 revived the hated *jiziya* or poll-tax on non-Moslems. This made more complete the estrangement between him and his Hindu subjects, and when crowds of expostulating Hindus blocked his way to the mosque, he forced his elephants forward over their bodies.* Such a policy was as foreign to the course pursued by Akbar and Shah Jahan as Aurangzeb's indeterminate policy in the Deccan. The wisdom which built up the Mogul empire could never have been guilty of such mistakes. To stir up opposition in the home provinces of the empire was doubly dangerous now that the Mahrattas were waging a national war in the Deccan. The emperor's dealings with the Rajput princes kindled the sparks of discontent into a flame. Jaswant Singh died at Kabul in the same year and Aurangzeb attempted to seize his sons in order, it is credibly asserted, to bring them up as Moslems. The young princes were successfully spirited away out of the emperor's reach, but the outrage provoked a combined Rajput rebellion. The Rajas of Marwar and Mewar (Jodhpur and Udaipur) commanded bodies of splendid horsemen, and were protected by a belt of sandy desert. The emperor's fourth son, Prince Akbar, deserted to the enemy, and the Rajputs seemed to be on the eve of a splendid success. But the cunning of the emperor prevailed: Akbar and his new allies were separated, the country was ravaged with fire and sword, three hundred shrines were cast down, and Rajputana sullenly submitted. The severity of the conqueror's measures of retaliation, which spared neither women nor children, resulted in the permanent alienation of the Rajputs. The sore was never healed and instead of having the Hindu chivalry as his allies in the Mahratta war, Aurangzeb was constantly troubled during his later Deccan campaigns with the mutterings of rebellion in the north. The proud and haughty Rajputs, who had so long been the bulwark of the empire, became a source of weakness and anxiety. For more than the last twenty years of his life Aurangzeb was campaigning in the Deccan, and the longer he remained absent from the north, the more the empire fell into disorder. The treasury was drained for the endless expenses of an unsuccessful war, and the gradually diminishing

Second period, 1676-1707.

Rebellion and disaffection.

Decline of the empire begins.

Revival of the Jiziya, 1677.

Rajput revolt, 1679-1680.

Rebellions and disorder in the north during later part of his reign.

* See *Khafi Khan*, Elliot, VII, 296.

prestige of the emperor made itself felt far and wide. The later years of the old ruler were complicated by a rebellion of the Jats near Agra, and a Sikh insurrection in the Punjab, as well as continued Rajput hostility. The monarchy was now frankly Mohammedan and alien. Hindus were all excluded from office, Hindu merchants were taxed double on their commercial transactions; the Hindu religion was as far as possible repressed in its public manifestations at least. This policy sounded the death-knell of the Mogul empire as surely as Philip II ruined the prosperity of Spain and Louis XIV that of France by intolerance of religious beliefs other than their own. The curtain of Aurangzeb's life-drama falls upon a scene of no good omen for his house—three great Hindu nations, Mahrattas, Rajputs, Sikhs, all in arms against the Moslem. These peoples shattered the Mogul empire before the British appeared upon the field: it was from them therefore rather than from the house of Timur that the British conquered India.

Wars in the Deccan.

In the Deccan Aurangzeb's policy was to complete the work which had all but been completed during his viceroyalty —the subjugation of the remaining Mohammedan kingdoms, Bijapur and Golconda. But whether this was the correct policy to pursue is a different matter. The Moguls were anxious to extend their empire to the south, and did not readily tolerate a Mohammedan domination other than their own. Still the question was now complicated by the rise of a new power, the Hindu Mahrattas. Shahji's* son Sivaji led the national movement, which gave a new and powerful enemy to the Mogul. The independent Mohammedan kingdoms were daily growing more enfeebled, whilst the Mahrattas were a growing power. Sivaji was really the enemy to be feared, not the sham kings of Bijapur and Golconda. Had Aurangzeb supported these kingdoms rather than overthrown them, they might have remained a powerful bulwark of Islam against the Mahrattas. But the emperor was a bigoted Sunni and the kings of Bijapur and Golconda were Shias. Hence he wasted much precious time and energy in overthrowing what had to a great extent been a guarantee of order in the Deccan. Before, however, the final extinction of these independent kingdoms took place, a number of important events had occurred in the Deccan. The Mahrattas were a peaceful agricultural community of low caste inhabiting the Konkan and the Western Ghats. Since the times of Pulikesin the energies of Maharashtra had lain dormant. But now the Mahrattas, who formed the main portion of the King of Bijapur's subjects, began to distinguish themselves again in arms, more particularly as light cavalry men. They acted also as officials, and *Mahrathi* was adopted for the revenue work of the kingdom. Shahji Bonsla was, as previously noticed, a Mahratta chieftain, who had obtained land and influence in his native country during the reign of Shah Jahan. His son Sivaji, born in 1627, was educated at Poona, but his education was physical and military rather than intellectual. The youth early caught a taste for adventure, and the weakness of Bijapur soon provided scope for enterprise and daring. Sivaji began as early as 1646 to seize upon the hill forts in the neighbourhood of Poona. These he fortified and garrisoned so that they became almost impregnable. In 1648 he threw off the mask and openly revolted against Bijapur. His adherents were now numerous enough for more extensive undertakings. The northern Konkan was seized and all the Western Ghats above this coast district were dominated by the daring rebel. The details of his career are beyond our province in this place; suffice it to say that this course of insurrection was continued with slight intermissions until in 1655 Sivaji felt himself strong enough to plunder the Mogul provinces round about Ahmednagar. His attacks upon Bijapur were followed up by the treacherous assassination of a Bijapur general, Afzal Khan, in 1659. Eventually the King took the field in person, and recovered many of Sivaji's conquests, but the Mahratta was left with a considerable territory extending from Kalyan to Goa on the coast and from Poona to the Krishna on the plateau (1662). In this year took place his final rupture with the Moguls. The uncle of Aurangzeb, Shaista Khan, was all but taken in a daring night attack on Poona: Surat, which was indirectly under Mogul government, was plundered in 1664, and in the following year Sivaji assumed the title of Raja. His father, who had ruled a territory to the south of Bijapur, conquered by himself, died in this year. At this juncture the Emperor despatched such a powerful army into the Deccan under the command of Jai Singh, Raja of Amber, that Sivaji despairing of success, submitted, lent his sword to the Moguls against Bijapur, and agreed to hold certain possessions as a jagir from the Emperor. Flattered by fair promises, he attended the Court of Delhi, but finding himself coldly received and imprisonment contemplated, he escaped by a stratagem (1666) and recommenced his adventurous career in the Deccan. He speedily regained more than his former possessions, levied tribute from Bijapur and Golconda, again plundered Surat, ravaged the Khandesh (1670) and for the first time defeated a Mogul army in a field-action (1672).

Aurangzeb's short-sighted policy.

Rise of the Mahrattas.

Sivaji, 1627-1680.

Rebels against Bijapur.

First wars with the Moguls.

Sivaji at Delhi, 1666.

Successes against Mogul armies.

During the next few years Aurangzeb's attention was taken up with Afghan affairs and the Rajput rebellion in the north, so that Sivaji continued his course almost unimpeded. The Mahrattas crossed the Narbada for the first time in 1675, and then reconquered for Sivaji his father's jagir in Mysore. He was assisting the King of Bijapur to resist a determined Mogul attack when he died, in 1680. Sivaji was more than a robber chief: he was the leader in a great national movement, and he built up with exceeding rapidity a considerable kingdom which he governed as ably as he defended it. Aurangzeb spoke of him as "a great captain," and said: "My armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, and nevertheless his state has always been increasing."

Death of Sivaji.

His greatness.

* See p. 23 *supra*.

The spirit Sivaji had created was not crushed with his death. Aurangzeb arrived in the Deccan in 1683 and took personal command of the Mogul armies. Until his death in 1707 he was almost uninterruptedly occupied in attempting to overthrow the Mahrattas, but the end was total failure. His short-sighted policy led to the final extinction of the kingdom of Bijapur (1686) and of Golconda after a stirring siege (1687). The social and political organization of those kingdoms being broken up, the Deccan sank into a state of anarchy. The armies of the defeated kings flocked to the standards of Sambhaji, Sivaji's son, and the Moguls were not strong enough to conquer them. The degenerate and undisciplined condition of the Mogul army was unequal to the task before it. A military occupation of the Deccan was accomplished, and Sambhaji, when he fell into the hands of his enemy, was cruelly executed (1689). But the Mahrattas distinguished themselves under the regency of Raja Ram in a predatory guerilla warfare which wore out the forces of Aurangzeb. Hardy swordsmen and daring riders, they were adepts in the art of laying ambuscades, seizing forts by stealth and cutting off convoys of provisions. Under this system Mogul victories were of no value, and few opportunites were given them of gaining victories in the open field. On the other hand, defeats made no impression on the Mahrattas. Aurangzeb might capture the important fortress of Satara and might disperse their forces: they would promptly appear in another part of their mountainous country and raid an unsuspecting Mogul camp. They plundered even as far north as Malwa and Gujerat and began to be a terror to the empire. In these years of strenuous conflict against unequal odds the endurance and bravery of the old emperor is the most remarkable feature. He planned and controlled every movement in person at the same time as he superintended the minutest affairs of his extended empire. An octogenarian, he suffered storm and flood, privations and fatigue, and when in his eighty-ninth year the worn-out veteran withdrew his dejected remnant into Ahmednagar, it was time for him to die and confess his failure. The empire was in a state of anarchy beyond example. Disaffection was rife beyond the Vindhyas: the Mahrattas had been formed by resistance and trained by warfare into a powerful nation; no future emperor could hold undisputed sway south of the Narbada. Aurangzeb died in 1707 in the fort of Ahmednagar, telling his beads, repentant of his sins, and morbidly afraid of death. His is beyond dispute a grand figure, in spite of all his narrowness and folly. He was throughout true to the colours of his faith, such as he understood them. His life was tragedy, and a vast failure, but he failed grandly.

Aurangzeb's campaigns in the Deccan, 1683-1707.

Annexation of Bijapur and Golconda, 1686-7.

Guerilla warfare. Impossibility of subduing Mahrattas.

Indomitable resolution of Aurangzeb.

His death, 1707.

Bernier, in a letter to the great French minister Colbert, has some interesting remarks upon the condition of India in the early part of Aurangzeb's reign. He dwells on the extreme fertility of certain provinces, such as Bengal, and notices the prosperous condition of manufactures in various parts of the empire. At the same time there were vast tracts of sandy and barren country, badly cultivated and thinly peopled. "Even a considerable portion of the good land remains untilled from want of labourers; many of whom perish in consequence of the bad treatment they experience from the governors. These poor people, when incapable of discharging the demands of their rapacious lords, are not only often deprived of the means of subsistence, but are bereft of their children, who are carried away as slaves. Thus it happens that many of the peasantry, driven to despair by so execrable a tyranny, abandon the country, and seek a more tolerable mode of existence either in the towns or camps, as bearers of burdens, carriers of water, or servants to horsemen. Sometimes they fly to the territories of a raja, because there they find less oppression, and are allowed a greater degree of comfort."* The men who held the high positions at court, in the army and in the provinces, were known to Bernier and other Europeans as *Omrahs*, that is, Amirs. Many of these were Persians of high birth, but Aurangzeb attempted to clear his court of Persian Shiahs. The Omrahs who, it must be noticed, were not a hereditary nobility, drew immense salaries calculated on the number of horse which they nominally commanded. Some were paid in cash, others by jagirs, but despite their wealth they were constantly in debt owing to the huge presents etiquette required the emperor to receive. It is not improbable, therefore, that they fleeced the peasantry. Land not alienated as jagirs was known as the king's domain land: there the revenue collection was handed over to contractors, who like the Roman tax farmers lined their own pockets at the expense of the provincials. Thus the well-considered financial methods inaugurated in the reign of Akbar seem to have been discontinued by his great-grandson. The upkeep of the royal court must have cost fabulous sums. The thousands of slaves and attendants, the stables, the luxurious travelling equipages, and above all the seraglio, were a tremendous drain upon the resources of the kingdom. No doubt Shah Jahan spent more in these ways than his son, but on the other hand his war expenses were unusually light. Bernier and other contemporary observers lay great stress upon the fact that the emperor was sole land-owner in the state. Jagirs were only held during office, or for life at most, nor was there the same security of occupancy amongst the peasantry as at the present day. The governors were therefore tyrannical and bent on enriching themselves as speedily as possible; while the peasantry had little incentive to work and render the land more productive. Slavery and universal ignorance are two further blots upon the page of Mogul civilization in India. Bernier's conclusion is worth quoting: "The country is ruined by the necessity of defraying the enormous charges required to maintain the splendour of a numerous court, and to pay a large army maintained for the purpose of keeping the people in subjection. No adequate idea can be conveyed of the sufferings of that people. The cudgel

Aurangzeb's government.

Oppression of the peasantry.

The Omrahs.

Defective revenue system.

Expense of the court, etc.

* Constable's *Bernier*, p. 205.

and the whip compel them to incessant labour for the benefit of others, and driven to despair by every kind of cruel treatment, their revolt or their flight is only prevented by the presence of a military force. The misery of this ill-fated country is increased by the practice which prevails too much at all times, but especially on the breaking out of an important war, of selling the different governments for an immense sum of hard cash. Hence it naturally becomes the principal object of the individual thus appointed governor, to obtain repayment of the purchase-money, which he borrowed as he could at a ruinous rate of interest."* He had also to find the means of making valuable presents, not merely to the emperor, but to a "vazir, a eunuch, a lady of the seraglio, and to any other person whose influence at court he considers indispensable." The emperor, indeed, kept news-writers in every province to report on the conduct of officials, and Aurangzeb adopted a wholesale system of espionage; but the watcher and the watched often entered into collusion to the great detriment of the public. The government of India seemed to Bernier less venal than that of Turkey, but the main errors of government which, as he says, naturally bring about tyranny, ruin and misery, were common to all the three great oriental monarchies,—India, Persia, Turkey. These characteristics must to some extent be regarded as the natural tendencies of despotic government in a country where a large proportion of the people are unwarlike and where the institutions of the harem and slavery flourish. With exceptions and qualifications, therefore, Bernier's picture will stand as a presentation of the state of India during the Mogul period. Akbar was too strong a man to tolerate such abuses, and the traditions of good government fashioned by him to a large extent survived under Jehangir. With the latter years of Shah Jahan, however, the government underwent a change for the worse, and Aurangzeb, despite his high ideal of kingship and his indefatigable exertions, failed to remodel the administration. Native historians say that he was too weak and lenient. Corrupt officials were unafraid of punishment: and hence, though the emperor was himself the model of equity in his court, injustice flourished in the provinces. Aurangzeb enquired into all abuses and often rectified them. He even remitted various items of taxation, but the governors seem to have gone on collecting the abolished cesses. Thus were the best intentions of a conscientious ruler defeated by the defects inherent in the system. Things might however easily have been worse, and the colouring of Bernier's picture is perhaps slightly heightened by the contrast between eastern conditions and those of Europe,—a contrast which must have greatly impressed any European traveller. Moreover, he had acquaintance with only a few of the provinces of the empire.† But even if Aurangzeb's early government be allowed a fair meed of praise, the conditions of the empire during the last period of his reign must be admitted to have been awful. Suspicion and intolerance alienated able servants and counsellors, whole tribes and nations. The central authority became weak and shadowy, there was no restraint on the oppression of the magnates. India seemed once again on the eve of disintegration into a number of separate kingdoms. In the words of Khafi Khan, a friendly historian, "from reverence for the injunctions of the law (the law of Islam) he did not make use of punishment, and without punishment the administration of a country cannot be maintained. Dissensions had arisen among his nobles through rivalry. *So every plan and project that he formed came to little good; and every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution, and failed of its object.*" The explanation of this failure is incomplete if it does not lay stress on Aurangzeb's religious intolerance and his unsympathetic mind, but the fact of failure is patent to all.

A lurid picture of Mogul civilization.

Aurangzeb's early government not radically bad.

But his later measures reduce the empire to anarchy.

During the reign of Aurangzeb the European settlements in India had been increasing both in number and importance. The Dutch continued and completed the overthrow of the Portuguese power in India and Ceylon. Portugal lost her possessions and her trade: Goa, Diu and Damaun alone remained. But the commercial inheritance of the Portuguese was hotly contested between the Dutch and the English. For a short time at the close of the 17th century the Dutch were the greatest European power in Asia, but their most successful efforts, as noticed above,* lay in the Islands of the Eastern Archipelago. From about 1700 Holland began to decline in Europe, with the result that her power in the east declined also. England and France were now the rising commercial forces in India.

The European settlements in India.

Dutch complete overthrow of Portuguese.

The foundation of English trade in the Indies and the increase of their settlements have been adverted to under the reigns of Jehangir and Shah Jahan. Further progress is to be noted during Aurangzeb's long reign. The island of Bombay passed to Charles II from Portugal, as the dowry of his Portuguese wife. It was in 1669 transferred to the East India Company who made it their western capital. A prosperous town soon sprang up where lately a meagre fishing village had existed. Here the English factors governed and administered their own land, erected their own mint, and strengthened their position by a fort. When Surat had been the western centre of the Company, English, Dutch and Portuguese settlements had all existed defencelessly side by side under the eye and control of a Mohammedan governor. The change to a position of independence and territorial jurisdiction was not the result of any ambition for empire, for the directors of the Company still had no thought but for trade. But the growing anarchy and the lawless depredation of the Mahrattas necessitated a change of policy. Aurangzeb's mismanagement of his empire therefore was responsible for the beginnings of English territorial rule in India. The Company during this time maintained and added to its factories on the Coromandel Coast, and also obtained a firmer foothold in Bengal. In 1686 the English moved from Hugli to Calcutta, so that the seventeenth century witnessed the foundation of the three Presidency towns of the British Empire.

But Dutch greatness shortlived.

Growth of English settlements.

Important change of policy.

* Bernier, *ibid*, 230.

† It must also be remembered that the village communities of India were better calculated to protect the poor from the rapacity of the great than the feudal system which in the seventeenth century still survived in the greater part of Europe. In spite of all, arts and industries flourished in India. The condition of the French peasant before the revolution was, if anything, worse.

*See p. 23 *supra*.