



have fled to places, which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares, and other places.”⁴⁶ The chief faults of the Hindus according to him are their complete isolation from the nations of the earth, their ignorance of the outside world, their want of sympathy and communication with other peoples whom they call *Mlechchhas*.

The whole country was divided into a number of states often at war among themselves. The leading kingdoms were Kashmir, Sindh, Malwa and Kanauj. Caste existed and distinctions between the various castes prevailed. Early marriage was common and women who lost their husbands were condemned to perpetual widowhood. Parents arranged marriages for their children and no gifts were settled, though the husband made a gift to his wife which became her *Stridhana*. The Hindus worshipped a multitude of gods, but this was confined to the vulgar and the ignorant. The educated Hindus believed God to be ‘one, eternal without beginning and end, acting by free will, almighty; all-wise, living, giving life, ruling, persevering.’ Speaking of the administration of justice he writes that written complaints were generally filed in which the case against the defendant or accused was stated. Oral complaints were also received. Oaths were administered and cases were decided according to the deposition of witnesses. The criminal law was extremely mild like the spirit of Christianity. The customs and manners of the Hindus were based upon the principles of virtue and abstinence from wickedness. Equality of man in the eye of the law was not known. The Brahmanas were exempt from capital punishment. If a Brahmana committed murder, the punishment for the crime was expiation which consisted in fasting, prayer and charity. Theft was punished according to the value of the stolen property and in certain cases mutilation of limbs was permitted.

⁴⁶ Sachau, India, p.



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The king took one-sixth of the produce of the fields, and labourers, artisans and the trading classes, all paid taxes on their incomes. Only Brahmanas were exempt from the payment of taxes. Image-worship was universally prevalent and there were numerous temples all over the country. The cruel practice of *Sati* was common and widow-remarriage was strictly forbidden.

Such was the India which Al Beruni saw in the tenth century. The heart had gone out of Hinduism, and superstition, greed and ignorance had taken the place of learning, piety and philanthropy. There was no political unity and often powerful princes sided with foreigners against their own kinsmen and jeopardised by their selfish action the common interests of their motherland. Society was far from compact, and the various component groups, dominated by the influence of caste, followed their own line of action and often acted in antagonism to one another, forgetful of the injury they did to the common cause. The disintegrating tendencies worked with full force and the disorganised princes and peoples of Hindustan had to surrender their lands and liberty to the foreign invaders, who swept across our plains with overwhelming might, and diverted the course of our ancient civilisation into a different channel.



CHAPTER IV

THE FALL OF THE GHAZNAVIDES

MUHAMMAD, who had proclaimed himself king, was set aside by Mas'ud, his younger brother, through the help of the army in 1031 A.D. He was seized by the king's own slaves and deprived of sight. Mas'ud then proceeded to Ghazni and with the help of the nobles seated himself upon the throne. Mas'ud was a true son of his father, full of ambition, courage, and warlike zeal. Brave and outspoken, this high-spirited prince had once offended his father by expressing his firm belief in the maxim that dominion belongs to the largest sword. He was generous to such a degree that he was described as Khalifa by his contemporaries. Of his physical accomplishments, Minhaj-us-Siraj, a later chronicler, writes that no man could lift his mace with one hand from the ground and no iron target could stay his arrow. The magnificence of the court of Ghazni was unrivalled in that age, and Baihaki relates in his memoirs how the Sultan used to display his wealth and splendour. At times he repaired to the Firuzi garden, one of the loveliest spots in Ghazni, where he sat under the green pavilion, surrounded by his courtiers and nobles, all waiting upon him in perfect obsequiousness, and held a review of the royal forces. When the review was over, the Sultan and his party sat down to a sumptuous feast, which was accompanied by a busy drinking bout and musical performance. Fifty goblets and flagons of wine were placed in the middle of a small tent and the party drank to its heart's content, when the Amir said: "Let us keep fair measure, and fill the cups evenly, in order that there may be no unfairness." One by one the tipsy courtiers rolled away in a state of unconsciousness from the royal presence, but the Amir continued to enjoy himself until he had drunk to the dregs 27



cup— a fair measure of the depravity of the court of Ghazni. He, then, sent for his carpet, and with the sobriety of a total abstainer, recited his prayers and came back to his palace. It was usual for a Muslim court to take delight in such orgies; even the great Mahmud was not free from such enjoyments, but Mas'ud carried them to excess and himself became the leader of a notorious party of sots and debauchees.

But Mas'ud had an able minister in Khwaja Ahmad Maimandi, whom he had liberated from prison and

Execution of
Hushak.

resorted to office.¹ The Khwaja at first hesitated, but when the Sultan pressed

him he yielded to his wish and accepted the ministerial portfolio. When he was formally admitted in the court the Sultan invested him with a dignity second to his own, and ordered those, who were present, to execute the orders of the Khwaja as if they were his own. Hajib Bilaktagin, the captain of the guards, was commanded to take the minister to the royal wardrobe, so that he might dress himself in official costume. Thus was the restored minister clad in a garment of scarlet cloth of Baghdad, embroidered with flowerets, and he wore a long turban of the finest muslin with delineated lace border and a large chain, and a girdle of one thousand *miskals* studded with turquoises.

When he was presented to the Sultan according to royal custom, he offered him a valuable bunch of pearls valued at ten thousand *dinars*, whereupon the Amir, to signify his favour, conferred upon him a ring studded with a turquoise, on which his name was inscribed. Most loyally the Khwaja accepted the proffered royal gift and swore allegiance to the throne. When he went home, high officials of the state as well as the common people of Ghazni waited upon him to offer their congratulations. Presents poured in on him from all sides, and precious articles of gold and silver, pieces

¹ The Khwaja had served Mahmud as minister for 18 years, but owing to the intrigues of the Amirs he was condemned. (Dastur-ul-Wuzra, Elliot, IV, p. 151.)



THE FALL OF THE GHAZANAVIDES

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of fine cloth, Turkish slaves, horses, and camels came in, which he gratefully sent to his master. The latter was so impressed by the Khwaja's unselfishness that he reciprocated his gratitude by conferring upon him a reward which consisted of ten thousand *dinars*, 500 thousand *dirhams*, ten Turkish slaves of great price, five horses from the royal stables and ten Abdus camels. Having gained the confidence of the Sultan, the Khwaja set himself to the task of organising his office which had become notorious for delay and lack of promptness under his predecessor. The business of the state had so far been practically treated as nobody's business. But the Khwaja addressed the civil and military officers in a stern tone and impressed upon them the necessity of promptness and regularity in the discharge of public business. Petitions were heard, and suits were disposed of to the entire satisfaction of the parties concerned; and the administration began to display a new vigour and activity.

While the Khwaja was thus honoured, his predecessor in office was put in chains and subjected to a most cruel treatment. Once so powerful and influential, Hasnak had fallen on evil days and evil tongues. He was accused of Qarmatian heresy, and the orthodox clamoured for his life. He denied the charge, but the judges and assessors, who tried him, found him guilty and pronounced the sentence of death upon him. Among those who thirsted for his life was Khwaja Bu' Suhail, who vehemently pleaded for a sentence of death and received a sharp rebuke from the exalted culprit. The ex-minister appealed to Maimandi for pity and begged him to take care of his family. With tears in his eyes, the Khwaja promised to grant his wish, but the verdict was irrevocable. The Khalifa of Baghdad had urged upon Mas'ud the desirability of executing Hasnak, the Qarmatian, who had offered fealty to the house of Egypt. On the appointed day, Hasnak was taken to the scaffold, and there he stood a victim of adverse fate, only with his turban and trousers on, his hands clasped together, and his body

"white as silver, and his face like hundreds and thousands of pictures." The spectators were filled with grief; they sympathised with him and execrated those who had resolved to take his life. The crowd made an uproar, but it was announced that he was to be stoned in accordance with the Khalifa's order, a mournful silence pervaded the beholders who had gathered to witness the fatal catastrophe. Hasnak was taken to the gibbet and mercilessly hanged. After the execution Hasnak's head was served up in a dish at a feast held by Bu' Suhal to the complete horror of the guests. Such were the fiendish cruelties in which the society of Ghazni delighted; and it appears that although good men felt grieved, public opinion never rose in revolt against such enormities. Hasnak's head was hung upon the gibbet where it remained suspended for seven years.² Baihaki writes that his feet dropped off, and his corpse was entirely dried up, so that not a remnant of him was left to be taken down and buried in the usual manner. His mother, when she came to know of her son's fatal end, wept aloud in terrible anguish and cried: "What a fortune was my son's a king like Mahmud gave him this world, and one like Mas'ud, the next." Such was the uncertainty of life and tenure of office under the demoralised Ghaznavides.

But Mas'ud was no *roi faineant*. He had inherited his father's warlike spirit, his power of command, and his capacity for dealing hard stroke when necessary. His contemporaries

² Khwandamir writes in his *Dastur-ul-Wuzra* that Hasnak, when he was minister, often spoke of Masud in disrespectful language to Sultan Mahmud. Masud satisfied the grudge he bore him when he became king. (Elliot, IV, p. 153)

A poet of Nishapur wrote an elegy upon Hasnak, which deserves to be quoted:

"They cut off the head of him who was the head of heads,
The ornament of his country, the crown of the age.
Whether he was Karmatian, Jew, or Infidel.
'T was hard to pass from the throne to the scaffold."



feared him both on the score of his physical prowess and kingly dignity. He now turned his attention to the affairs in India, which had been left in charge of Ariyarak.

Secure in the possession of a vast territory without any restraining influences, the Ghaznavides commander of Hind, who was an ambitious man by nature, had begun to behave as an autocrat and cared little for the commands of his sovereign. The gravamen of the charge against him was that he was contumacious and arrogant, and created disturbance when the royal authority was enforced. He had given proof of his ambitious designs, even in the time of Mahmud, but so great was the awe in which that mighty conqueror was held, that the plans of Ariyarak were never allowed to mature. Mas'ud, though a slave to drink and dissipation, possessed one redeeming quality; he knew how to assert his dignity when his own authority was flouted or disregarded. The separation of the Indian province, which had never been reconciled to Muslim domination from the empire of Ghazni, was not an impossibility at a time when the Saljuqs were pressing hard and seeking outlets for their expansion. Khwaja Ahmad Hasan, by his seductive wiles, induced Ariyarak to proceed to Ghazni, and promised to intercede with the Sultan on his behalf. The Khwaja's diplomacy succeeded; and the governor, moved by his "soft words and venerable looks," accompanied him to the capital altogether unmindful of the cruel fate that awaited him. Like other Muslim *condottieri* of the early middle ages, Ariyarak was also addicted to drink, and when he was invited to drinking feast, he readily accepted the invitation. But to his utter surprise he was arrested by Baktagin, the captain of the guards, and his feet were bound in fetters, and on the 19th Rabi-ul-Awwal, A.H. 422 (March, 1031 A.D.), he was thrown into prison, where he was probably poisoned sometime afterwards, and the immense wealth that he had accumulated was confiscated. Arrangements were forthwith made for a successor, and Ahmad Niyaltagin

was appointed to the command of the Indian province. The new governor was a tried officer; he had acted as treasurer to the late Sultan, Mahmud, and acquired considerable knowledge of public affairs. The Khwaja invested him with the official robes of honour, and advised him to carry out with fidelity the articles of the covenant into which he had entered with the Sultan. Then he addressed a warning—so useful to a man serving in a despotic state—to Niyaltagin in these words: "You must not say anything to any person respecting the political or revenue matters, so that no one's word may be heard against you, but you must perform all the duties of a commander, so that that fellow may not be able to put his hand upon your sinews and drag you down." He was asked not to encroach upon the jurisdiction of Qazi Shiraz, the civil administrator, who was a quarrelsome colleague, and to co-operate with the superintendent of the Intelligence Department, whose duty it was to send reports of all that happened in India. Some of the Dailami chiefs and refractory slaves, who had been guilty of sundry acts of disloyalty, were also sent with him to India to be kept away from the court; and Niyaltagin was asked by the Khwaja to keep a vigilant watch upon their movements and to disallow all sorts of convivial parties and social intercourse among them. With this advice and warning, Niyaltagin was sent to take charge of his new office, and the Khwaja, who was an adept in dealing with political men, required him to leave his son at Ghazni as a hostage under the pretext that he was anxious to prevent his association with the bodyguards and to give him an education befitting the rank of his father. A few days later, in the desert of Shahabar, when the governor waited upon the Sultan with all the paraphernalia of royalty, the latter addressed him in these words, "Ahmad, rejoice, and be happy; be careful to understand the value of this favour; keep my image ever before your eyes and do good service, so that you may attain to great honour." Little did Mas'ud know that his commands were to be more



honoured in the breach than in the observance by the new viceroy, who after a short time, in Gaihaki's words, "turned away from the path of rectitude and took a crooked course."

Ahmad Niyaltagin, on coming to India, found it difficult to get on with his colleague, Qazi Shiraz, a hot-tempered, pugnacious man, who wanted to impose his will upon others. The minister at Ghazni had clearly defined the jurisdictions of the Qazi and the royal governor, and had warned Niyaltagin against the spell which the civil functionary used to exercise over his colleagues in order to bring them completely under his thumb. The new governor did not consult the Qazi in the discharge of his duties; and soon a quarrel broke out between the two officers over the appointment to the command of an expedition. It was an act of improper interference on the part of the Qazi, and when the matter was referred to Ghazni, the home government endorsed the view of Ahmad Niyaltagin, and entrusted to him the command on the ground that he was a fitter person than Abdullah, the Qazi's protege. The Qazi received a strong rebuff from Ghazni, and was ordered to leave military affairs alone. This discomfiture of his rival and colleague gave much satisfaction to Niyaltagin, and he soon undertook an expedition to Benares, the sacred city of the Hindus on the Ganges in the East. No Muslim army had ever penetrated as far as Benares, and the prospect of plunder greatly stimulated the zeal of the faithful. The expedition was a success; the markets of the drapers, perfumers, and jewellers were plundered and an immense booty, consisting of gold, silver, perfumes, and jewels, was seized by the victorious army. The Qazi could not bear the success of his rival, and he despatched secret agents and spies to Ghazni to inform the Sultan that Niyaltagin, who gave himself out as the son of Sultan Mahmud to mislead the public mind, had made enormous private gains and had received a supply of seventy slaves from Turkistan who were all disaffected; and he maliciously insinuated that,

Niyaltagin aimed at independence. The tidings of Niyaltagin's victory also reached Ghazni that the conquest of Benares had resulted in the exaction of tribute from the Thakurs and the seizure of immense booty, including a number of elephants. The Sultan kept the Qazi's message hermetically sealed in his bosom, but letters poured in from India, all confirming the report that the army of Lahore and the Turkomans had entirely gone over to Niyaltagin, and that "numerous turbulent fellows" of all classes from Lahore had flocked to his banner. In every possible way, the enemies of Niyaltagin sedulously impressed upon the Sultan the seriousness of the situation, and urged immediate intervention. In the midst of these conflicting reports, the truth of which it was not easy to decide promptly, the Sultan did not know what to do. He convoked a council of his leading officials in the garden of Sudhazara and invited them to express their opinion on the subject. Indeed, the position was a difficult one; in the west there were rebellions in Khorasan, Khatlan, and Bukharistan, and the policy of appointing half-loyal and ambitious persons to the Indian command had produced disastrous consequences.

Official after official volunteered to go to Hindustan to restore order, but the choice at last fell upon Tilak,³ a Hindu of low birth, but of great ability and

³ Baihaki describes Tilak as Tilak the Hindu, while Firishta and Nizamuddin write him as Tilak bin Jaisen (or Husain in some MSS.) The Calcutta text of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* has Tilak bin Husain. From this it appears that Tilak was a Hindu convert. Briggs (I, p. 105) takes him to be a Hindu, but he cannot be accepted as an authority. Baihaki, who must have been in the know, is not very explicit on the subject, but a careful perusal of his narrative leads one to the conclusion that he was not a convert. Baihaki writes (Elliot, II, p. 128) later in his narrative that Tilak rendered valuable services to Sultan Mas'ud, that is, he brought all the Hindu *Kators* (Thakurs) and many outsiders under his rule. This would not have been possible, if he were not a Hindu.



courage. Tilak was the son of a barber, of handsome appearance and eloquent tongue, a calligraphist, who could write beautifully in Hindi and Persian. He was highly proficient in the art of dissimulation and amours, and witchcraft, which he had learnt in Kashmir. He soon gained the affection of Qazi Shiraz, Bu'l-Hasan, who became enamoured of him on account of his handsome features and his varied accomplishments. The Qazi kept a watch over him, but Tilak secretly escaped to Khwaja Ahmad Hasan, the Qazi's great rival, and complained to him of Qazi's conduct. The matter was brought to the notice of Sultan Mahmud who probably reprimanded the Qazi for his unseemly behaviour. Tilak's engaging manners charmed all those who came in contact with him, and he soon acquired a great influence with Sultan Mahmud. The Khwaja had a great influence with Sultan Mas'ud. He was so completely prepossessed in Tilak's favour that he made him his private secretary and the official interpreter between the Hindus and the state. As a mark of royal favour he was granted a gold-embroidered robe, a jewelled necklace of gold, a canopy and an umbrella; and kettle-drums were beaten, and ensigns with gilded tops were unfurled at his residence in accordance with Hindu fashion to proclaim his elevation to high official dignity. Thus was a Hindu entrusted with an important command, and the philosophical Baihaki rightly observes: "Wise men do not wonder at such facts because nobody is born great, men become such. But it is important that they should leave a good name behind." This elevation of men of humble birth to high rank on the ground of merit alone was a principle which was invariably followed by Muslim adminis-

If Tilak was a pure Hindu it is remarkable that the army of Ghazni at this early period should have contained Hindu troops. It is clear that demoralisation had taken such root in the Hindu society that Hindus could be hired to fight against their own countrymen under foreign colours.

trators in India and we shall see, as we proceed, what a vigour and stability its application imparted to the Islamic state in this country.

In the middle of Ramzan, 425 A.H. (July, 1033 A.D.), news came from Lahore that Niyaltagin had arrived there with a large force, and that perpetual fighting was going on between him and the Qazi which had thrown the whole neighbourhood into a state of turmoil and disorder. Tilak marched at the head of a large army towards Hindustan to chastise the rebel. When he reached Lahore, his presence struck terror into the hearts of the followers of Niyaltagin,⁴ who, frightened by the punishments that were inflicted upon disloyal persons, deserted his banner and implored forgiveness. Finding that resistance would be of no avail, the rebellious governor, deserted by his friends and partisans, fled for dear life, but he was hotly pursued by Tilak's party which consisted mostly of Hindus. In a sharp engagement that followed during the night, Ahmad was defeated, and the Turkomans who fought with him left him in a body and begged for mercy. But the vanquished rebel escaped from the field of battle and successfully eluded the grasp of his pursuers. At last, a price of 500,000 *dirhams* was set on his head by Tilak, and soon the Jats and other tribes of the Punjab joined in the pursuit, and tried diligently to trace the fugitive. The Jats, who were well familiar with the desert and the wilds, succeeded in their venture; they caught hold of Ahmad whom they assailed with arrow, spear, and sword. The Turkish blood was up, and Ahmad gallantly defended himself single-handed, only to perish in a fresh encounter. His head was cut off by the Jats, who, after considerable haggling, obtained from Tilak a reward of 100,000 *dirhams*.

⁴ Baihaki writes that in the extremity of peril Niyaltagin attempted to kill his son with his own hand, but he was prevented by the Jats who carried him off on an elephant to a place of safety.



Mas'ud was delighted at the news of victory, and he sent letters of congratulation to Tilak for the valour and skill which he had shown in restoring order in Hindustan. Encouraged by this success, the Sultan determined to fulfil his old vow of capturing the fort of Hansi⁵ and expressed his wish to lead an expedition to India. Either wilfully or by mistake, he described the political situation in the west in favourable colours and considerably minimised the dangers that threatened the empire in that quarter. In vain did the veteran Khwaja urge upon him the impolicy of such a step; he suggested that the acts of rapine, slaughter, and incendiarism of the Turks in a single province, if it were conquered by them, could not be compensated even by ten holy wars at Hansi. But to these remonstrances the obdurate Amir replied: "The vow is upon my own person." He bade them be of one hand, one heart, one opinion, so that the business of the state might not suffer during his absence. The ministers bowed their heads in profound submission and promised to carry out his command. Prince Maudud was appointed governor of Balkh, and the Khwaja was invested with plenary authority at Ghazni.

The Sultan started from Ghazni *via* Kabul in October 1037 A.D. But when he reached the river Jhelum,

Capture of Hansi

he fell ill and was confined to bed for 14 days. After the fashion of Babur, the first Mughal emperor at Khanua, he renounced wine in a fit of repentance, flung all the vessels into the river, and enjoined upon all his officers total abstention from any kind of liquor during the campaign. After a long march the town of Hansi was reached and the Muslims laid siege to the fortress, hitherto deemed impregnable by the Hindus. The beleaguered garrison heroically defended itself, and did not relax its vigour in the

⁵ Hansi is a city with a ruined castle, 11 miles to the east of Hisar. (Tieffenthaler, I, p. 134.) This fort was known as the "Virgin" for nobody had yet been able to capture it.

slightest degree. At last, the Muslims laid mines under the fortress in five places and took it by storm ten days before the close of Rabi-ul-Awwal. The Brahmanas and other men of dignity were slain, and the women and children were made captives, and the vast spoils seized in the fort were divided among the troops. Having placed the fortress in charge of a trustworthy officer, the Sultan marched towards Sonpat,⁶ a place not far from Delhi. The local chief offered no resistance and fled into the woods, leaving behind him all his treasure which was captured by the Muslims. The victorious Sultan now returned to Ghazni, where, on the 3rd of Jamad-ul-Awwal, he celebrated the festival of New Year's Day. A grand feast was held at which the Sultan drank wine to his heart's content, and made ample amends for that enforced abstinence, which he had imposed upon himself during his sojourn in India.

The expedition to India turned out a blunder. Taking advantage of the Sultan's absence the Saljuq Turks pressed hard on the territories of Ghazni.⁷ The peace made with them in 1032 A.D., after the defeat of the Ghaznavide general Iltutmish at the hands of Alaptagin, the commander of the Turkish host, proved only a temporary truce. They continued to harry the provinces of the empire, and when the people of Balkh complained of their aggressions, Mas'ud resolved to advance against the intruders. Meanwhile Tughril Beg, the Saljuq, raided Ghazni and sacked a portion of

⁶ This city is situated north of Delhi. (Tieffenthaler, I, p. 133.)

⁷ The founder of their power was Tukak, the father of Saljuq who migrated from Turkistan to Transoxiana and embraced Islam. He and his successors often gave trouble to Mahmud and after his death they captured Khorasan, but were turned back. No sooner was Mas'ud seated upon the throne than the Ghuzz attacked Khorasan, and rebellions broke out in several parts of his empire, yet he faced the situation with courage, and with the help of a large army brought from India he repelled the Ghuzz from Tus and Nishapur and reconquered Tabaristan. But in 1037 A.D. Tughril Beg seized Khorasan and laid the foundations of the Saljuq dynasty.



the town; he seized Nishapur in 1037 A.D., brought Khorasan under his sway, and laid the foundations of the Saljuq dynasty. A year later, when the Turkish general invaded Badwird and Tedzen, Mas'ud, fully realising the magnitude of the danger, marched against the invaders at the head of a large army, but at Dandankan⁸ near Merv, he was overpowered by the Turks on March 23, 1040 A.D. This crushing defeat had a serious effect upon the fortunes of the empire of the Ghaznavides. Three years later Mas'ud's son Maudud attempted to check the tide of the Saljuq invasions, but he was defeated and the power of the Saljuqs was firmly established in Khorasan. The western possession of the Ghaznavides gradually slipped away and they were obliged to concentrate their attention upon India.

The Sultan, who was terribly frightened, ordered preparations to be made for a journey towards Hindustan. The ladies of the *haram* were asked to pack up all their precious belongings, and the treasures in the palace were collected to be conveyed to Hindustan. The aged minister pleaded with the Sultan to remain at Ghazni for his hasty departure was fraught with danger to the state, but Mas'ud obstinately refused to listen to counsels of prudence. In vain did the minister venture to remind him of the fatal results of his obstinacy in the past, but he was snubbed as a dotard whose senility had impaired his judgment. The royal party marched towards Hindustan, but when it reached Marigalah.⁹

Mas'ud's flight
to India.

⁸ Dandankan is described by Abul Feda as a small town of Khorasan famous for its cotton manufactures. Authorities differ as to the date of this battle. Three dates are generally given—430, 431 and 432 A.H. The *Habib-us-Siyar* seems to support the year 1040 A.D. (Elliot, IV, p. 198. Briggs, I, p. 110. Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasri*, I, p. 92.)

⁹ A pass situated between Rawalpindi and Attock, a few miles east of Hassan Abdal. The hills in its vicinity used to be infested with robbers, who generally chose this pass for attacking travellers and caravans of traders.

the Turkish and Hindu slaves of the Sultan mutinied. They seized his person, and placed upon the throne his brother Muhammad, whom he had blinded at the time of his own accession. The exalted captive was afterwards taken to the fortress of Giri, where he was put to death in 433 A.H. (1041 A.D.)¹⁰ Thus perished by the cruel hand of the assassin, a king whom Firishta describes as a "prince of uncommon personal strength and courage, affable and of easy access, generous to prodigality particularly to learned men, whose company he was so extremely fond of that many were induced to come from all parts to his court." Mas'ud, like his father, extended his patronage to men of letters, built mosques, and endowed schools and colleges in the various cities of his wide dominions.¹¹ He possessed princely dignity in an abundant measure; he possessed a strong will, countless armies, able ministers, and all the trappings of royalty. But what could they avail against the inexorable decrees of fate? Baihaki, who had seen the Ghazni monarchy in its palmyest days as well as in the days of its decadence, observes in a characteristically fatalistic vein: "man has no power to strive against fate."

Subsequent events proved Mas'ud's fears to have

¹⁰ The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* gives 432 A.H. as the year of Mas'ud's death. But it appears that he was not murdered until the 11th of Jamad-ul-Awwal of 433 A.H., when his nephew Ahmad, son of the blind Muhammad, put him to death. Muhammad, who was unaware of this act, is reported to have reproached the perpetrators of the crime.

Khwandamir gives 433 A.H. (1041-43 A.D.) as the date of this incident (Habib-us-Siyar, Elliot, IV, p. 198.)

¹¹ Khwandamir describes Mas'ud as the "protector of the learned." He mentions several learned men who dedicated their works to him. Among the works of the time mentioned are "*Tafhim-ut-tanjim*," a work on astrology by Abu-Rihān and "*Qanun-i-Mas'udi*" by the same author, and "*Kitab-i-Mas'udi*" a work on Islamic jurisprudence by Abu Muhammad Naishi.

been groundless, and his flight to India an act of thoughtless unwisdom. The Turks were pre-occupied with the conquest of Persia and other adjoining lands, and had scarcely time to meddle in the affairs of Ghazni. After Mas'ud's death, his son

The weak successors of Mas'ud and the pressure of the Saljuq Turks.

Maudud ascended the throne, but he had to fight his uncle Muhammad whom he defeated in an engagement, and avenged the death of his father. All the accomplices of Muhammad, who had participated in that heinous crime, were cruelly put to death, and thus the young prince discharged his filial obligations to his deceased father. He was followed by a series of weak rulers, whose uneventful careers deserve little mention. The Saljuq encroachments continued, and the empire lost much of its territory. But matters considerably improved, when Ibrahim assumed the reins of government in the year 451 A.H. (1059 A.D.) He infused a fresh vigour into the administration and fully established the authority of the crown over the recalcitrant tribes. In 1079 he captured Ajodhan, the present Pak Patan of Shaikh Farid of Shakarganj and thence proceeded to the fort of Rupal which was conquered. Qazi Minhaj writes: "The troubles and disorders which had befallen upon that empire, through the vicissitudes of the times and continual warfare, were all, during his reign, remedies rectified, and the affairs of the empire of the great Mahmud assumed fresh vigour." After his death in 492 A.H. (1098 A.D.), he was succeeded by Ala-uddin Mas'ud, who owing to the dread of the Saljuqs espoused a Turkish princess, a sister of Sultan Sanjar, a sure indication of the waning power of the Ghaznavides. The only important events of his reign were an expedition to the Gangetic region and the appointment of Husain, son of Sam, to the principality of Ghor, a fact which shows that Ghor was still subject to Ghazni. He was followed, a few years later, by Malik Arslan who waded to the throne through the blood of his brothers, only one of whom, Bahram, was suffered to exist. Arslan treated his step-mother with

indignity,¹² and this imprudent conduct drew down upon him the wrath of her brother, Sanjar, who supported the claims of Bahram, a rival candidate for the throne of Ghazni. Sanjar advanced upon Ghazni at the head of a large force, and in an encounter that followed, he inflicted a crushing defeat upon Arslam. To escape disgrace and death, he fled towards Hindustan, where he died in a state of misery in the year 511 A.H. (1117 A.D.).¹³ Thus the Saljuqs acquired influence in the affairs of Ghazni, and as Bahram, the new ruler, owed his crown to Sanjar, the latter naturally came to occupy the position of king-maker and lord-protector of the realm. Bahram was a capable and energetic ruler; he undertook several expeditions to Hindustan to chastise the rebellious chief Muhammad Bahlim, who was defeated, and all his sons and adherents were made prisoners.¹⁴

The Saljuqs established their influence at Ghazni, but they never intended permanently to stay in the lands of the Hindukush. The pasture lands and verdant meadows of Khorasan appealed to them more than the valleys of the Afghan hills, and they always yearned to get back to the regions of the west. The Indian province, though never definitely incorporated with the kingdom of Ghazni, was tranquil, and Bahram had recently vindicated his authority by quelling the revolt of Bahlim. The country of the Punjab and Multan was thoroughly subdued, and the suzerainty of Ghazni was fully established. Time and again the Hindus raised

¹² It is said that he requested her to dance before him. This was an insult which Sanjar could not brook, and he espoused the cause of his nephew Bahram.

¹³ Muhammad Bahlim was appointed governor of the Punjab by Arslan.

¹⁴ Minhaj and Firishta say that Sanjar stayed at Ghazni for 40 days, but no sooner was his back turned than Arslan once again tried to recover his capital. Sanjar again took the field in person and expelled Arslan from Ghazni.



their heads, as they had done in 1043 A.D., when they organized a confederacy against the Muslims and laid siege of Lahore. But all their efforts had proved abortive and each time the Muslim arms had triumphed against them. There was no fear of a recrudescence of Hindu rebellion, and the Ghaznavides felt no difficulty for the time being in retaining their hold over the province of the Punjab.

Bahram's reign would have ended gloriously, had it not been for the quarrels that arose between him and the Shansabani of Ghor, a small mountain principality between Ghazni and Herat. These high-spirited and warlike people had settled in this mountainous region and accepted the leadership of the Suri chieftains. They had felt the spell of Mahmud's personality, and actuated by devotion to a great leader, they had fought under his banner in far-off, inhospitable regions. But when the sceptre of Ghazni passed into the feeble hands of Mahmud's successors, they treated them with scant respect. Military campaigns, boldly conceived and mightily achieved, were the only things that could keep these highlanders occupied, and qualities of successful generalship were constantly needed to tame the fierce spirit of men, who ever longed for the glories of war and conquest. Matters came to a crisis, when a Suri prince was put to death by Bahram's order. This cruel murder produced a feeling of consternation among them. They at once flew to arms to avenge the death of their chief. Saif-ud-din Suri, a brother of the deceased, led an attack upon Ghazni and captured it in 1148 A.D. Bahram was expelled from his dominions, but he soon recovered his power by means of a conspiracy. He re-entered the capital in triumph and defeated Saif-ud-din who was paraded through the city and then decapitated.

This atrocious murder was followed by disastrous consequences. Ala-ud-din Husain, surnamed *Jahan-soz* or World-incendiary, the murdered chief's third brother, burnt with rage when he heard of this crime and swore to wreak vengeance upon the house of Ghazni. A?



the head of a large army he marched upon Ghazni. Bahram Shah gathered together his forces, but he was defeated and his son Daulat Shah was slain in battle. Ala-ud-din followed up his victory and took the city of Ghazni by storm. The finest buildings of the city, exquisite memorials of the greatness and splendour of Mahmud, were demolished, and during the seven days the Ghorî chieftain remained in occupation of the town, 'the air, from the blackness of the smoke, continued as black as night; and those nights, from the flames raging in the browning city, were lighted up as bright as day.' Rapine and massacre were carried on with the greatest pertinacity and vindictiveness and men, women and children were either killed or made slaves. The dead bodies of all the Sultans of Ghazni except those of Mahmud, Mas'ud I and Ibrahim were dug out from their graves and treated with indignity and burnt. After this retribution Ala-ud-din returned to Ghor where he devoted himself to the pursuit of pleasure. He began also to show open hostility towards Sultan Sanjar who advanced upon Ghor at the head of a large army and defeated and captured Ala-ud-din. He was afterwards allowed to go to Ghor and was restored to his former dignity. The Ghuzz Turkomans ravaged Afghanistan and the Ghorid and Ghaznavide governments were abolished for a while. It was during this period of turmoil that Ala-ud-din died in 1161 A.D.

During Ala-ud-din's invasion of Ghazni, Bahram had fled to Hindustan and died on the way. He was succeeded by his son Khusrau Malik who ascended the throne at Lahore. He was a pleasure-loving youth, without capacity for the work of government or strength of will, and under him the elements of disorder began to assert themselves with a redoubled force. The administration fell into disorder, and the Amirs as well as the lesser officials of the state became ungovernable. The Sultan failed to deal with the temper of the times properly, and in the provinces as in the capital the authority of the central power

began to be disregarded. Immersed in the pursuit of pleasure, Khusrau Malik did nothing to shield himself against the Ghorian attack. The power of Ghazni rapidly declined, and the house of Ghor rose into prominence. When Ala-ud-din Jahan-soz's son died in 1163 A.D., his nephew Ghiyas-ud-din bin Sam succeeded to the principality of Ghor. He fought against the Ghuzz, brought Ghazni under his control, and entrusted it to the charge of his brother Muiz-ud-din, better known in history as Muhammad Ghorī, while Ghiyas was content to rule at his native castle of Firuzkoh. Muiz-ud-din, who had an inborn aptitude for war and adventure, raided Ghazni and led repeated attacks upon Hindustan. In 577 A.H. (1181 A.D.), he appeared before the gates of Lahore, and compelled Khusrau Malik to make peace and surrender his son, a stripling of four years, as security for the fulfilment of treaty obligations. But even this did not satisfy his ambition. He appeared again and laid siege to Lahore. The whole country was overrun, and the fort of Sialkot was captured and garrisoned. Another raid was attempted in 1186 A.D., and Lahore was reduced. The noble sentiments of honour and chivalry were unknown to these barbarians, and the Ghorī chief had recourse to foul play in order to get rid of his enemy. By stratagems and false promises, Khusrau Malik was induced to come out of the fortress.¹⁵ He was at once taken prisoner and sent to Ghazni, from where he was removed to Firuzkoh. There the elder Ghorī confined him in the fortress of Balarwan in

¹⁵ Firishta describes the strategem thus:—

Muiz-ud-din informed Khusrau Malik that he wanted to be on terms of peace with him. As a proof of his sincerity, he sent back his son with a splendid escort to his father. Khusrau advanced a part of the way to meet his son, when all of a sudden he was surrounded by Ghorī's horsemen in the night. In the morning when the Sultan awoke, he found himself a prisoner. Muiz-ud-din demanded the cession of Lahore. This demand was at once complied with, and he marched into the city in triumph. (Briggs, I, pp. 158-59.)



Ghurjistan, where after a few years, probably in 598 A.H. (1201 A.D.), he was put to death. A similar catastrophe befell his son Bahram Shah, and the line of Subuktagin came to an inglorious end. A great dynastic revolution was brought about at Ghazni and the 'sovereignty of Iran, the throne of Hindustan, and the territory of Khorasan came under sway of the Malik and Sultans of the house of Shansabani.'

Thus, after nearly two centuries, the empire of Ghazni disappeared from history. An empire, which ^{Fall of the} rested purely upon a military basis could ^{empire.} not last long without capable and war-like rulers. Mahmud, though a great captain of war, had established no institutions, devised no laws for the orderly governance of his extensive dominions. There was no principle of cohesion or unity in the empire. Even outward security of life and property was not provided in the remoter parts, as is illustrated by the anecdote of the outspoken old woman, who reproached Mahmud for conquering lands that he could not manage. The untold wealth that he had brought from the lands of Hind fostered luxury, and his successors rapidly degenerated in character. For such weaklings, it was impossible to keep in check the turbulent tribes over whom Mahmud had exercised sway. The gallant chiefs, who had followed him through deserts and mountains into distant lands, ceased to pay homage to men in whom a degrading sensuality had killed all martial spirit. The Saljuq Turks pressed on; the Amirs and officials of the empire flouted the authority of the crown; and once the rotten character of the political system became known, disorders began on all sides. The Turks continued to grab large slices of Ghazni territory, and their pressure proved too great for the rulers of Ghazni. To men like Tughril and Sanjar, the profligate Ghaznavides could offer no resistance. They came like a whirlwind and by sheer audacity and vigour defeated and overawed their opponents. As disorder increased in the regions beyond the Hindu-kush, India also began to seethe with discontent. As



a matter of fact, it was impossible at that time to hold India successfully from Ghazni. The Indian problem engaged the most serious attention of the rulers of Ghazni, but their multifarious troubles made it difficult for them to deal properly with it. The chiefs of Ghor, who had supplanted them, were men of a different stamp. Better equipped for the arduous duties of the battle-field, they possessed qualities which were necessary to lead and command the unruly Turks. They knew how to employ their valour and energy for purposes of self aggrandisement. Head and shoulders above his kinsmen, stood Muhammad Ghorī, who, having got rid of all rivals in his native land, attempted the conquest of Hindustan and brought her princes and peoples under his sway.



CHAPTER V

THE CONQUEST OF HINDUSTAN AND THE
RISE OF THE SLAVES

Muhammad Ghori's attempt to seize the Muslim provinces of Hindustan was a remarkable success. His expedition against the Bhatti Rajputs of Uchha had succeeded owing to the baseness and infidelity of the Rani who had her own husband assassinated in order to make way for the foreigner.¹ Multan was taken from the Karmatian heretics in 570 A.H. Muhammad had marched by way of Uchha and Multan against the Raja of Nehrwala, who, though an inexperienced youth, defeated the Sultan and compelled him to retreat. This was followed by an attack upon Peshawar which was captured, and the whole of Sindh down to Debal and the sea-coast was subdued, and immense wealth came into the hands of the victors. Lahore was the next object of attack; the forces of Khusrau Malik offered a desperate resistance and baffled the attempts of the besiegers to capture the fortress. Muhammad concluded a peace with

¹ The Raja was besieged in his fort, but Muhammad Ghori finding it difficult to take the place sent a word to the Rani promising to marry her if she would deliver up her husband. She replied that she was too old for marriage but she had a daughter whom she would give to the Sultan and in a few days remove the Raja, if he left her in free possession of her wealth. The Sultan accepted the proposal and the Rani in a few days brought about the death of her husband and opened the gates to the enemy. Muhammad did not abide by his promise. He married the daughter but sent the mother to Ghazni where she died afterwards in sorrow and disappointment. The daughter too did not long survive this grief and died in the space of two years.

This is Firishta's story. It is difficult to vouch for its accuracy. (Briggs, I, pp. 169-70).

Khusrau, and, having garrisoned the fort of Sialkot,² returned to Ghazni. After the Sultan's departure Khusrau Malik gathered some forces and laid siege to the fortress, assisted by the Khokhar tribes, but he was unable to capture it.³ When the news reached Sultan Muhammad, he again undertook an expedition against Lahore, and by a stratagem, which has already been alluded to, he captured Khusrau Malik in 1186 A.D., and put an end to the rule of the dynasty of Subuktagin. Lahore passed into the hands of the victorious chieftain; it was entrusted to Ali-i-Karmakh, governor of Multan, and the father of the author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* was appointed to the office of Chief Judge.

Although Muhammad had conquered the Muslim province, he was far from being master of Hindustan. In the heart of the country lay Rajput kingdoms, wealthy and powerful, which were always ready to give battle to the foreigner who dared to invade their territory. The Rajputs, famous for their gallantry and heroism, were a warlike race, proud of their pedigree and jealous of their honour. The hillmen of Ghazni and Ghor had so far successfully fought against the Saljuqs and other Turks of Transoxiana, but they had never encountered such dauntless fighters as the Rajputs. War was the element in which the Rajput lived, moved, and had his being, and never even in the thickest peril did he think of an abject surrender or flight. But the feudal organisation of the Rajput society was the

² The fort of Sialkot was restored and garrisoned. Major Raverty (*Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 453, note 4) says that Firishta has made a great error in asserting that Muiz-ud-din *founded* the fortress of Sialkot. I do not find it in Firishta. Firishta simply says that the fort of Sialkot was repaired and garrisoned.

³ The Khokhars are totally distinct from the Gakkars. Abul-Fazl always distinguishes them in his *Ain-i-Akbari*.—See Raverty's note 4 in the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 455.

Firishta says (Briggs, I, p. 171) that the fortress was recovered by Khusrau Malik, but this is in conflict with other historians. The author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* says clearly that Khusrau again retired without being able to accomplish his object.

principal cause of its weakness. The sovereign was the mainspring of the system, and the whole country was divided into small districts, each held by a petty chief or jagirdar who rendered military service to his liege-lord in the hour of need. These chiefs or fief-holders were divided into grades, and the relation of lord and vassal was maintained through the various social ranks by the process of sub-infeudation. The rivalries and feuds of the various clans hampered unity of action, and the invidious caste distinction among the Rajputs themselves prevented the inferior classes from being amalgamated with the proud noblesse, thus depriving the community of the chance of recruiting its strength by the elevation of capable men of humble birth to higher rank and dignity. Only the well-born could hold fiefs, and this exclusive spirit brought into existence an aristocracy which tended to become hereditary and therefore selfish. Offices passed from father to son, and thus the state had to depend upon a class of men, who insisted on privileges, and who lacked both merit and efficiency. It was impossible for these Rajput governments, based as they were upon a system of feuds, to last long, and, no wonder, if the first shock of the Muslim invasion shook Rajput India to its foundations.

Having organised his forces, Muhammad marched towards the frontier town of Sarhind,⁴ which occupied an important strategic position, and captured it. The approach of Muhammad Ghori alarmed the Rajput princes who stirred themselves betimes to check the

⁴ Sarhind is an important town. It had a great strategic importance in the middle ages. Renell, *Memoir of a Map of Hindustan*, pp. 67-68. Firishta writes it Bhatinda. The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* has Tabahindah (Raverty, *Tabqat*, I, pp. 172-457) but all other writers have Sarhind.

Sarhind is correct; Bhatinda is some hundred miles west of Thanesar. A look at Renell's map in his 'Memoir of a Map of Hindustan' opposite to page 65 will show that it was Sarhind that was occupied. Sarhind was also called Tabarhindah.

advance of the Muslims. The most powerful Rajput clans that exercised authority in northern India were (1) the Gaharwars, afterwards known as the Rathors of Kanauj, (2) the Chauhans of Delhi⁵ and Ajmer, (3) the Palas and Senas of Bihar and Bengal, (4) the Baghelas of Gujarat, and (5) the Chandelas of Jaijakhukti or modern Bundelkhand. Mention has already been made in the first chapter of the rise and growth of the power of these clans. The most powerful of these were the rulers of Delhi and Kanauj, whose rivalry was bruited all over India, and whose feuds and dissensions made it impossible for either to stem the tide of foreign invasion. Being the most powerful and influential princes of the Doab, they were the first to feel the force of Muslim arms and had to bear the brunt of the attack.

Prithviraja, who had succeeded to the kingdoms of Delhi and Ajmer and who had established a great reputation for chivalry and heroic exploits, marched against the Ghori chief at the head of a large army, which, according to Firishta, included 200,000 horse and 3,000 elephants, assisted by his fellow Rajput princes, and encountered the Muslim host at Tarain,⁶ a village fourteen miles from Thanesar in 1191 A.D. Jayachandra, the Rathor Raja of Kanauj, was the only prince who kept aloof from this war; for Prithviraja had insulted him by carrying off his daughter by force.⁷

⁵ Delhi was founded some time in 993-94 A.D.

⁶ In most histories it is written as Narain, which is incorrect.

The name of the village is Tarain. It is situated between Thanesar and Karnal. Probably this mistake is due to the Persian script. Briggs writes Narain which is now called Tirauri (I, p. 172).

Lane-Poole incorrectly writes Narain (*Mediaeval India*, p. 51).

Tod positively asserts that when Prithviraja ascended the throne Jayachandra not only refused to acknowledge his supremacy, but set forth his own claims to this distinction. He was supported by the prince of Patan, Anhilwad, and also by the Parihars of Mandor. Kanauj and Patan, writes the same

The Rathor chieftain regarded this as an intolerable affront, and watched with secret satisfaction the result of the battle between Muhammad and the Chauhan warrior of Delhi. The Sultan followed the time honoured tactics of the right, left, and centre, and himself occupied a position in the middle of his army. The Rajputs charged both wings of the Muslim army with tremendous vigour and scattered them in all directions. Cut off from his troops and surrounded by his relentless enemies on all sides, the Sultan found himself in a highly perilous situation.

But he retained his presence of mind and with a wonderful courage struck the Raja's brother, Govind Rai, on the mouth with his sword and knocked out his teeth.⁸ The gallant Rajput at once returned the blow, struck his formidable antagonist in the arm, and inflicted a severe wound. Stunned by this blow, the Sultan forthwith turned back and began to bleed fearfully. His strength was exhausted, and he was about to fall down from his horse, but a high-spirited Khilji warrior sprang up from behind, supported the Sultan in his arms, and carried him off the field of battle.⁹ The disaster which befell the Sultan caused

authority, had recourse to the dangerous expedient of entertaining bands of Tartars, through whom the sovereign of Ghazni was enabled to take advantage of their internal broils.

This is quite different from saying that Jayachandra invited Ghori to invade Hindustan. It is quite probable Jayachandra might have aspired to the position of the paramount sovereign of all Hindustan and might have challenged Prithviraja's claim to that distinction.

Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, edited by Crooke, I, p. 299.

⁸ Firishta writes Chand Ray and the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* writes Khand Rai. But the oldest copies of the *Tabqat* have Govind. The Hindu bard Chand, calls him Rai Govind, which is the correct name.

⁹ There are conflicting accounts of this battle in different histories. It is needless to enter into a discussion of the discrepancies in these accounts. The narrative given above repre-



a panic in the army which immediately dispersed in all directions. The Muslims were pursued for 40 miles by the enemy, but a place of safety was soon reached, where the Sultan also arrived after a short time. The soldiers gathered round their leader, and once again the dispirited troops were full of life and vigour. The Sultan hastened to cross the Indus and returned to his own country. Never before the Muslims had experienced such a terrible rout at the hands of the infidels. The Rajputs pushed on the siege of Sarhind; the beleaguered garrison stubbornly defended itself for 13 months, and at last tired the besiegers into granting favourable terms. When the Sultan reached Ghor, he punished all those Armies and officers who had fled from the field of battle. They were publicly disgraced and paraded round the city with every mark of indignity and humiliation.

This defeat at the hands of Rai Pithaura ever rankled in the mind of Muhammad Ghor, and he determined

The defeat of Prithviraja. to wreak vengeance upon the Hindu princes.¹⁰ With a large army, well organised and accoutred, consisting of 120,000 men,

sents the actual state of things on the field of battle. It is in agreement with Hindu histories also.

Minhaj-us-Siraj writes in his *Tabqat* (I, p. 460):—

"The Sultan turned his charger's head round and receded, and from the agony of the wound he was unable to continue on horseback any longer. Defeat befell the army of Islam so that it was irretrievably routed, and the Sultan was very nearly falling from his horse; seeing which, a lion (hearted) warrior, a *Khai*, a stripling, recognised the Sultan, and sprang up behind him, and, supporting him in his arms, urged the horse with his voice, and brought him out of the field of battle."

¹⁰ Major Raverty quotes from 'The History of Jammun' which says, Jayachandra of Kanauj, whom Prithviraja had mortally offended, was in communication with Ghor, but it is a matter of regret that his references can never be verified. Tod also says, 'the princes of Kanauj and Putun invited Shihab-ud-din to aid their designs of humiliating the Chohan.'

See Raverty's note I in the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, pp. 466-67.

Turks, Afghans and others, the Sultan marched from Ghazni towards Hindustan in 1192 A.D. It was during this march that an old sage of Ghor waited upon him and entreated him to set free the officers who had been disgraced by the Sultan after his defeat at Tarain. The forces of the Sultan encamped near Tarain, where he divided them into four sections and distributed them for battle. The prospect of a bloody contest with the Muslims put Prithviraja on his mettle. Alarmed for the safety of Hindu India, he called upon his fellow Rajput princes to rally round his banner to fight the Turks. His appeal met with an enthusiastic response, and in a short time he succeeded in collecting a huge army, consisting of a large number of infantry, 300,000 horse and nearly 3,000 elephants. As many as 150 Rajput princes joined the colours of Prithviraja and solemnly swore to stand by their leader whatever the consequences of the battle might be. Chand relates in his *Rasau* that Samarst of Chittor, brother-in-law of Prithviraja, also joined the host. This is improbable, for his period is from 1273 to 1301 A.D., and the battle was fought in 1192 A.D. This mistake was pointed out by Prof. Keil-horn long ago.

When the battle commenced, the Hindu cavalry checked the advance of the Muslims. At this the Sultan, leaving the central portion of the army in the rear, divided the rest into five divisions, four of which, each of 10,000 light-armed horse, were to attack the enemy from all sides and then retire under pretext that they were fleeing from the field of battle. From morning till sunset the battle raged fiercely and the Ghorian generals used these tactics. While the enemy was tired, the Sultan, at the head of 12,000 horse, made a desperate charge and "carried death and des-

This account has been borrowed from Chand Bardai who in his *Rasau* says that Jayachandra had invited Ghori to attack the Chauhan. But there is no corroboration of this by any of the Muslim historians. If this had been a fact, the Muslim historians would have certainly mentioned it. See Chapter I.



truction throughout the Hindu camp."¹¹ The Rajput valour proved of no avail against these mounted archers and a fearful carnage ensued on all sides. The Hindu generals had profited little by their past experience and did not understand the efficacy of a mobile cavalry in dealing with their enemies. The result of the battle was a foregone conclusion. The Hindus in spite of their incredible numbers were defeated by the Muslims. Prithviraj fled from the field but he was captured near Sirsuti¹² and finally "despatched to hell."¹³ Govind

¹¹ Firishta describes the manœuvre which was adopted by Muhammad Ghori in order to harass and break the Hindu army. As was expected, it succeeded well enough. (Briggs, I, pp. 176-77.)

Raverty *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 468.

The author of the *Tabqat* is not very clear on this point.

Badaoni (I, p. 70) and the author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* (Biblioth, Ind., p. 19) simply say that the army was divided into four sections.

Firishta's account is certainly more complete than that of any of these writers.

¹² It was a city on the banks of the ancient Saraswati. In Akbar's time Sirsuti was one of the mahals of Sarkar Sambhal. Ibn Batuta speaks of it as a large city in the year 1334 A.D. (Paris ed., III, p. 143).

¹³ Chand's statement in his *Rasau* that Prithviraja was taken to Ghazni, where he was kept in prison and afterwards blinded, is wrong. Tod says, Prithviraja was defeated, taken prisoner, and killed in 1192 A.D.

Tod writes: "Six invasions by Shihab-ud-din occurred ere he succeeded. He had been often defeated and twice taken prisoner by the Hindu sovereign of Delhi, who with a lofty and blind arrogance of the Rajput character set him at liberty." This is obviously incorrect.

Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, I, pp. 147-48.

The author of the *Taj-ul-Maasir* says that Prithviraja fled from the battle-field, but he was captured near Sirsuti and beheaded. (*Taj-ul-Maasir*, Elliot II, pp. 296-97.)

Also see V. N. Rau's *Ancient Hindu Dynasties* (Hindi), pt. I, pp. 259-60.

Rai was slain in battle and the Sultan recognised him by his two teeth which had been broken. The defeat of Prithviraja was an irreparable blow to Rajput power. Perhaps, Jayachandra rejoiced in the fall of his formidable rival, but little did he know that two years later the same tragic fate was to overtake him. The demoralisation caused by this defeat pervaded all grades of Indian society, and there was now left no one among the Rajputs who could draw to his banner his fellow princes to withstand the attacks of the Muslims. They found their task easy, and Sirsuti, Samana, Kuhram and Hansi were reduced without much difficulty. The Sultan proceeded towards Ajmer, which was given up to plunder, and some thousands of the inhabitants were put to the sword.

While the Sultan was at Ajmer, he "destroyed the pillars and foundations of idol temples, and built in their stead mosques and colleges, and the precepts of Islam, and the customs of the law were divulged and established." Ajmer was made over to a son of Prithviraja¹⁴ on promise of punctual payment of

¹⁴ Ajmer was given to Gola or Kola, a natural son of Prithviraja, Firishta (Briggs, I, p. 178) says: "Afterwards on a promise of a punctual payment of a large tribute, he delivered over the country of Ajmer to Gola, a natural son of Prithviraja."

The *Taj-ul-Maasir* praises Rai Pithaura's son "in whose qualities and habits the proof of courage and the indexes of wisdom were apparent, and who both abroad and at home, exhibited familiarity with rectitude and prognostication of goodness." Elliot, II, p. 216.

The *Taj-ul-Maasir* (Elliot, II, p. 214) speaks of the Kola (natural son) of the Rai of Ajmer. It says, the Rai was taken prisoner but was afterwards released. He was again detected in some intrigue and was put to death (p. 215.)

Again the same authority says (page 219) that Hiraj (the correct form is Hari Raj), the brother of the Rai of Ajmer, had gone into rebellion and had turned his face towards the siege of the fort of Ranthambhor, and that the son of Pithaura, who had been advanced under the protection of the sublime court, was in a state of extreme danger.

tribute. Having left his faithful lieutenant Qutb-ud-din Aibek in charge of his Indian possessions, the Sultan returned to Ghazni. Qutb-ud-din, in a short time conquered Mirat (Meerut), Kol¹⁵ and Delhi, the last of which he made the seat of his government.

This is a reference to the same son of the Rai, and Firishta's statement is corroborated. The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* (I, p. 458) has Rai Kola.

Raverty in his note (No. 6, I, p. 458) writes Kola. Speaking of Prithviraja he says, Rai Kola Pithaura had arrived near at hand (pp. 458-59). This is incorrect.

¹⁵ Kol is a place near Aligarh. It has an old fortress which still exists.

Elliot, II, 219—22.

Ibn Batuta misreading the inscription on the Jam-i-Masjid has given 584 A.H. (1188 A.D.) as the year of the conquest of Delhi. But he is incorrect. The author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* says that Aibek died 20 years after the conquest of Delhi, and the date of his death is given as 607 A.H. (1210 A.D.). Edward Thomas says that according to the *Taj-ul-Masir* the date of the conquest of Delhi is 587 A.H. (1191-92 A.D.) but it is given nowhere in the text. It is clear from the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* that Delhi was conquered by Qutb-ud-din after the defeat of Rai Pithaura which took place in 588 A.H. (1192-93 A.D.) the correct date is near 589 A.H. Firishta says that in the year 588 A.H. Muhammad Ghori appointed Aibek to the chief command of the army to protect his conquests in Hindustan. He reduced the fort of Meerut and laid siege to Delhi which was captured after a keenly contested battle. From Firishta's account it appears that this event took place towards the end of the year 588 A.H.

Ibn Batuta, Paris ed., II, p. 161.

Major Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, i, pp. 469, 528.

Edward Thomas, *The Chronicles of Pathan Kings*, p. 33.

Carr Stephen, *Archæology of Delhi*, p. 36.

Firishta, Lucknow text, p. 61.



Delhi and Ajmer had been conquered and the power of the Chauhans broken, but the Muslims were far from being masters of Hindustan. Beyond Delhi, in the heart of the Doab, lay the principality of the Rathor clan, whose ruler, Jayachandra, famous alike in legend and history, was reputed as a most powerful prince of the time. His dominion extended as far as Benares in the east, and his capital, Kanauj, was a place of considerable political and strategic importance. Jayachandra had, perhaps, hoped that after the death of Prithviraja he would be left undisputed master of Hindustan, but all his expectations were doomed to disappointment. To establish Muslim sovereignty in Hindustan, the Rathors must be reduced, and in 1194 Sultan Muhammad marched from Ghazni against the Raja of Kanauj. At the head of a numerous army, which contained more than 300 elephants, the redoubtable Rathor took the field in person. No confederacy seems to have been organised by him to withstand the Muslim forces; probably the defeat of Prithviraja had cooled the enthusiasm and crushed the spirit of the Rajputs who might have otherwise rallied round his banner. Our authorities give a brief account of this campaign. The *Taj-ul-Maasir* says, the Sultan started from Ghazni at the head of fifty thousand 'mounted men clad in armour and coats of mail' against the Rai of Benares "the chief of idolatry and perdition" who was proud of his enormous forces and his war elephants. He was defeated and killed and immense booty was obtained which included three hundred elephants. This is supported by the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, which says that in the year 590 A.H. (1193 A.D.) the Sultan marched from Ghazni and advanced towards Kanauj and Benares, and in the vicinity of Chandwar¹⁶ he defeated Rai Jayachandra and obtained three

¹⁶ Chandwar is a village near Firuzabad in the Agra District. It is stated in the Cambridge History of India (III, p. 43), that Chandwar is the modern Firozabad which is not correct.

hundred and odd elephants. Briefly told the facts are as follows: The Rajput army was encamped in the plain between Chandwar and Etawah, and in an engagement that ensued, the vanguard of the Muslim army inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Hindus. Jayachandra who was proud of his troops and war elephants received a mortal wound from an arrow and fell down on the earth. His head was carried on the point of a spear to the commander and his body "was thrown to the dust of contempt." The royal army then proceeded to the fort of Asni¹⁷ where the Rai had deposited his treasure. It was captured and much booty came into the hands of the Sultan. Benares was attacked next and here the army of Islam 'destroyed nearly one thousand temples, and raised mosques on their foundations; and the knowledge of the law became promulgated, and the foundations of religion were established'. Such acts of vandalism were in moments of victory powerfully swayed by a "remorseless feeling which sanctified murder, legalised spoliation, and defied destruction." The Hindu chiefs came forward to pay their homage and coins were struck in the Sultan's name. It appears, no resistance worth the name was offered to the Muslims and they easily acquired possession of the whole country. The Gaharwars after this discomfiture migrated to Rajputana where they founded the Rathor principality of Jodhpur. The Sultan marched towards Kol and leaving Qutb-ud-din

¹⁷ Asni cannot be identified. Asi is mentioned by Utbi (Elliot, II, p. 47) as a place having a fort surrounded by an impenetrable and dense jungle, full of snakes which no enchanters could tame, and so dark that even rays of the full moon could not be discerned in it. The author of the Etawah District Gazetteer says (p. 127) that Asi lay further to the east than Kanauj and it is difficult to fix the locality of the fort of Asi with any approach to certainty. We learn, however, from the *Jam-ut-Tawarikh-i-Rashidi* (Elliot's *Historians*, I pp. 37-38) that Asi lay to the south west of Kanauj at a distance of 18 *farsangs*.

MEDIEVAL INDIA

in charge of the country returned to Ghazni, laden with the spoils of war.

Qutb-ud-din's career in Hindustan was one of unbroken triumphs. The Rai of Ajmer who was a vassal of Ghazni had been expelled by Hari Raj called Hiraj in the *Taj-ul-Maasir* who had usurped the kingdom. The Rai solicited the aid of Qutb-ud-din who marched against him at the head of a large army. The usurper risked an engagement in which he was slain, and the country was restored to the Rai; but a Muslim governor was appointed to exercise control over him. From Ajmer in the month of Safar 593 H. (Jan., 1197) Aibek marched his forces against Bhima Deva, the Raja of Nehrwalla, whom he defeated and exacted from him full reparation for the defeat which his master had sustained previously at his hands. Hasan Nizami writes: 'Most of their leaders were taken prisoners, and nearly fifty thousand infidels were despatched to hell by the sword, and from the heaps of the slain, the hills and the plains became of one level'. A large booty consisting of 20 thousand slaves, 20 elephants, cattle and arms beyond all calculation fell into the hands of the victors. Gwalior, Biyana, and other places were quickly subdued by Qutb-ud-din and were compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ghazni.

The conquest of Bihar was accomplished with astonishing ease by Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji,¹⁸

Conquest of an "intrepid, bold and sagacious" general, whose military reputation had gained him from Qutb-ud-din a robe of honour. Having undertaken several predatory expeditions into the

¹⁸ The Khiljis were Turks, a number of whom had settled in Garmsir, from where they came into Hindustan and entered the service of Sultan Muiz-ud-din. Much futile speculation has been indulged in with regard to the origin of the Khiljis, but for practical purposes it will suffice to say that they were Turko-Afghans who had come to seek employment in India.

See Chapter VIII for a full discussion of the subject.



territories of Bihar, he led an organised attack against the province, probably in 1197 A.D., at the head of a small detachment of 200 horsemen. By an intrepid move Muhammad captured the fortress, and immense booty fell into his hands. Bihar was the only province in India where Buddhism was still seen in a living form, its preservation there being due to the patronage of the kings of the Pala dynasty who were all staunch Buddhists. There is no doubt that it was that latter-day Buddhism, which had lost sight of the great ideals of its founder, and had accepted image-worship and a number of rites which were in conflict with the true spirit of the faith. The Muslim historian, who based his account upon the information supplied by two eye-witnesses, makes no distinction between the different classes of infidels, and records that the inhabitants, who were all clean-shaven Brahmanas, were put to death. These were Buddhist monks who lived in monastery or *vihara* which was demolished, and a large number of books were seized from the library which was scattered by the invaders.¹⁹ It was the idolatry of mediæval Buddhism which stimulated the zeal of the Muslims, and the *debris* of the Buddhist *viharas* and *stupas* that exist to this day bear testimony to their iconoclastic zeal. The Muslim raid on Bihar gave a death-blow to Buddhism; but it appears from an inscription of Vidyadhara dated Samvat 1276 (1219 A.D.) that it did not wholly disappear from Northern India.²⁰ Having gained possession of Bihar, and taking the spoils of war with him, Muhammad waited upon Qutb-ud-din, who was highly pleased with his exploits, and as a mark of confidence conferred upon him a robe of honour from his own special wardrobe.

¹⁹ The author of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* says that there was no Hindu alive to explain the contents of these books. But in the next sentence he says that when these books were read, it was found that the fortress was a college which was called *vihara* by the Buddhists. Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 522.

²⁰ Fuhrer, *The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur*, pp. 70-73.



The conquest of Bihar was followed probably two years later by the conquest of Bengal. Minhaj-us-Siraj, who derived his knowledge of the Bengal expedition from one Shams-ud-din, soldier of Farghanah in the service of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar writes:—"Muhammad Bakhtiyar caused a force to be prepared, pressed on from Bihar, and suddenly appeared before the city of Nudiah in such wise that no more than eighteen horsemen could keep up with him, and the other troops followed after him. On reaching the gate of the city, Muhammad-i-Bakhtiyar did not molest any one, and proceeded onwards steadily and sedately, in such manner that the people of the place imagined that mayhap his party were merchants and had brought horses for sale, and did not imagine that it was Muhammad-i-Bakhtiyar until he reached the entrance to the place of Rai Lakhmaniah, when he drew his sword and commenced his onslaught on the unbelievers." ²¹ The same authority adds that the Raja was at his dinner; and when the shrieks and lamentations of the victims outside reached him, he lost his nerves and fled bare-footed by a back-door of his palace. The treasures in the palace were rifled, and the women, servants, and dependants of the Rai were seized. Rai Lakhmaniah (Lakshmanasena) fled towards Dacca, ²² where his descendants continued to rule as petty chieftains for many years. This is an exaggerated account of what actually happened and the error about the name of the 'aged Rai' of Bengal

²¹ Tabqat-i-Nasiri, I, pp. 557-58. Minhaj writes (I, pp. 551-52) that there were two brothers, Nizam-ud-din and Shams-ud-din, natives of Farghana in the service of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar. He met Sams-ud-din at Lakhnauti in 1243 A.D. and his account of the conquest of Bengal is based upon the information supplied by him. That Bengal was conquered is indubitable, but there is serious disagreement about the manner of the conquest.

²² The Raja fled towards Vikramapur near Sonargaon which was a place of refuge for all those who were discontented at Gaur. He died some time after 1205 A.D.



has been exploded by modern research. Muhammad destroyed the city of Nudiah and made Lakhnauti or Gaur his capital. He brought the whole country under his sway and introduced the elements of Muslim administration. The Khutba was read, and coins were struck probably in the name of Sultan Muiz-ud-din²³ for whom the general felt a great reverence, and colleges and monasteries were founded for pious men. Of the enormous booty seized at Nudiah Muhammad sent a large portion to his master Qutb-ud-din.

The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* gives a fairly long account of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar's Tibetan expedition which is confused in its details. Desirous of conquering the country of Turkestan and Tibet, he collected an army of 10,000 horse, and marching through defiles and passes reached the country of Tibet after 15 days' arduous journey. The people of the country fought with great courage and a 'great number of the Musalman army were killed and wounded.' The Musalmans finding themselves in an inhospitable country, surrounded by enemies, decided to retreat. Many were drowned in the attempt to cross the river Bagmati (probably a branch of the Brahmaputra) which was fordable only up to a short distance and Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar succeeded with great difficulty in effecting his escape.²⁴

²³ The original passage in the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* has been translated in Elliot, II, p. 309, to the effect that he caused the Khutba to be read in his own name, but in Major Raverty's translation there is nothing to convey this impression. He states clearly in a foot note (I, p. 559) that there is nothing in the text to this effect.

Also see Thomas, *Chronicles*, p. 110.

²⁴ Major Raverty's Translation, pp. 560—72. Muhammad was so overcome with grief at this disaster that he could not show his face in the streets of Lakhnauti. Some say he died of grief in 1206 but in fact he was murdered by Ali Mardan, a chief of the Khilji tribe.

In 1202 A.D. Qutb-ud-din advanced against Parmardi or Parmala, the Chandela prince of Bundelkhand. The latter could hardly resist the Muslims, when such mighty warriors of the age as Prithviraja and Jayachandra had succumbed to their attacks.

The Raja was defeated and the fort of Kalinjar, which was famous all over Hindustan for its strength, fell into the hands of the victors. His gallant minister Ajai Deva offered resistance to the invaders but in vain. The temples were destroyed, and "fifty thousand men came under the collar of slavery, and the plain became black as pitch with Hindus."²⁵ After this victory Aibek marched towards Mahoba which was easily conquered. The forts of Kalpi and Badaon were subdued next, and in this way all the important places in Northern India were brought under the sway of Ghazni by Kutb-ud-din. Well did the viceroy justify the confidence which his master reposed in him.

The rulers of Ghazni were not satisfied with their Indian possessions. They fondly looked towards the west, and the lands of the Oxus had a fascination for them which they could not resist. Ever since the days of Mahmud, the rulers of Ghazni had tried in vain to annex these lands permanently to their empire, but the venture had resulted only in loss and disappointment. Muhammad who had larger territories to manage in India than any of his predecessors followed the same practice and inva-

Tide Turns.

²⁵ *Taj-ul-Maasir*, Elliot, II, p. 231.

The order in which these conquests were accomplished is as follows:—

(1) Ajmer, (2) Thangar or Biyana, (3) Gwalior, (4) Nehrwala, (5) Kalinjar, (6) Mahoba Kalpi, (7) Badaon

Firishta and the author of the *Taj-ul-Maasir* more or less agree in their order of events. Briggs, I, pp. 179-80. Elliot, II, pp. 225-32.

The *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* also agrees with a slight variation, I, p. 470.

ded Khwarizm at the head of a large army in the year 601 A.H. (1204 A.D.). The Shah of Khwarizm obtained assistance from Khorasan, and Sur Khan of Karakhita, and the combined forces marched to encounter the enemy. The troops of Ghori were pressed so hard by the Shah and his allies that he was compelled to give battle. The result of this unequal struggle was a foregone conclusion. The forces of Ghori were completely routed, and the Sultan hardly escaped with his life.²⁶ Such a disaster leads to confusion in a state where everything depends upon the personality of the ruler, and as soon as the news of Muhammad's discomfiture was circulated abroad, and forces of disorder began to work. A Ghazni officer hastily went to India and declared himself governor of Multan by producing a forged royal order, and he was accepted by the army. Ghazni, where Taj-ud-din Yaldoz had established himself as ruler, shut its gates against the Sultan and refused admittance. The turbulent Khokhars stirred up strife and harried the districts of the Punjab. Thus, in all parts of the empire there were revolts and conspiracies to overthrow the authority of the Sultan. But he was not unnerved by this gloomy prospect. He recovered Multan and Ghazni and then marched to Hindustan to chastise the Khokhars. Pressed hard by the Sultan's forces from the west and Qutb-ud-din's forces from the east the Khokhars found it difficult to maintain their position. Nevertheless, they fought an action near a ford of the Jhelum, in which they suffered a crushing defeat. Having obtained this victory, the Sultan, accompanied by Qutb-ud-din, returned to Lahore.

The Khokhar snake was scotched but not killed. Having failed in an open engagement, the Khokhars had recourse to treachery. They burnt with rage to avenge the deaths of their kinsmen who had been killed in the late war. Blood for blood was the simple principle of

²⁶ The *Taj-ul-Maasir* says that the Sultan sustained a slight misfortune and reverse, which is not correct.

justice that appealed to these barbarians. Some of them formed a conspiracy to take the life of the Sultan. On his way from Lahore to Ghazni, the Sultan halted at Dhamyak in the Jhelum district, where he was stabbed to death by a fanatic of the *Mulahidah* sect in March, 1206 A.D.²⁷ How true were the words of Imam Fakhr-ud-din Razi addressed to the Sultan, when the former grew tired of waiting upon him: "Oh! Sultan Muiz-ud-din, sometime hence neither will this

²⁷ The *Taj-ul-Maasir* says that the Sultan halted in a tent within the precincts of Dhamyak on the bank of a pure stream. Here, while he was saying his evening prayer, some impious men came running and killed three armed attendants and two chamber-sweepers. They, then, surrounded the Sultan's tent and one or two men out of these three or four ran up to him and inflicted five or six wounds upon him. (Elliot, II, pp. 235-36).

Firishta more or less agrees. Briggs, I, pp. 105-06.

Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, pp. 484-85.

It says in the year 601, A.H. at the halting place of Dhamyak, he attained martyrdom at the hand of a disciple of the *Mulahidah* sect and died.

The *Mulahidas* are Shias of the heretical Ismaili sect.

A learned man of the time wrote the following eulogy upon the Sultan's death:—

"The martyrdom of the sovereign of sea and land,
Muiz-ud-din,

From the beginning of the world like of whom no monarch
arose,

Oh! the third of the month Shaban in the year six hundred
and two,

Happened on the road to Ghazni at the halting place of
Dhamyak.

Lane-Poole's statement that he was no patron of letters
is not correct.

Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 487.

Ranking, *Al-Badaoni*, I, p. 79.

Firishta, Lucknow text, p. 60.

Lane-Poole, *Mediaeval India*, I, p. 55.



greatness and glory of yours remain nor the flattery and hypocrisy of Razi."

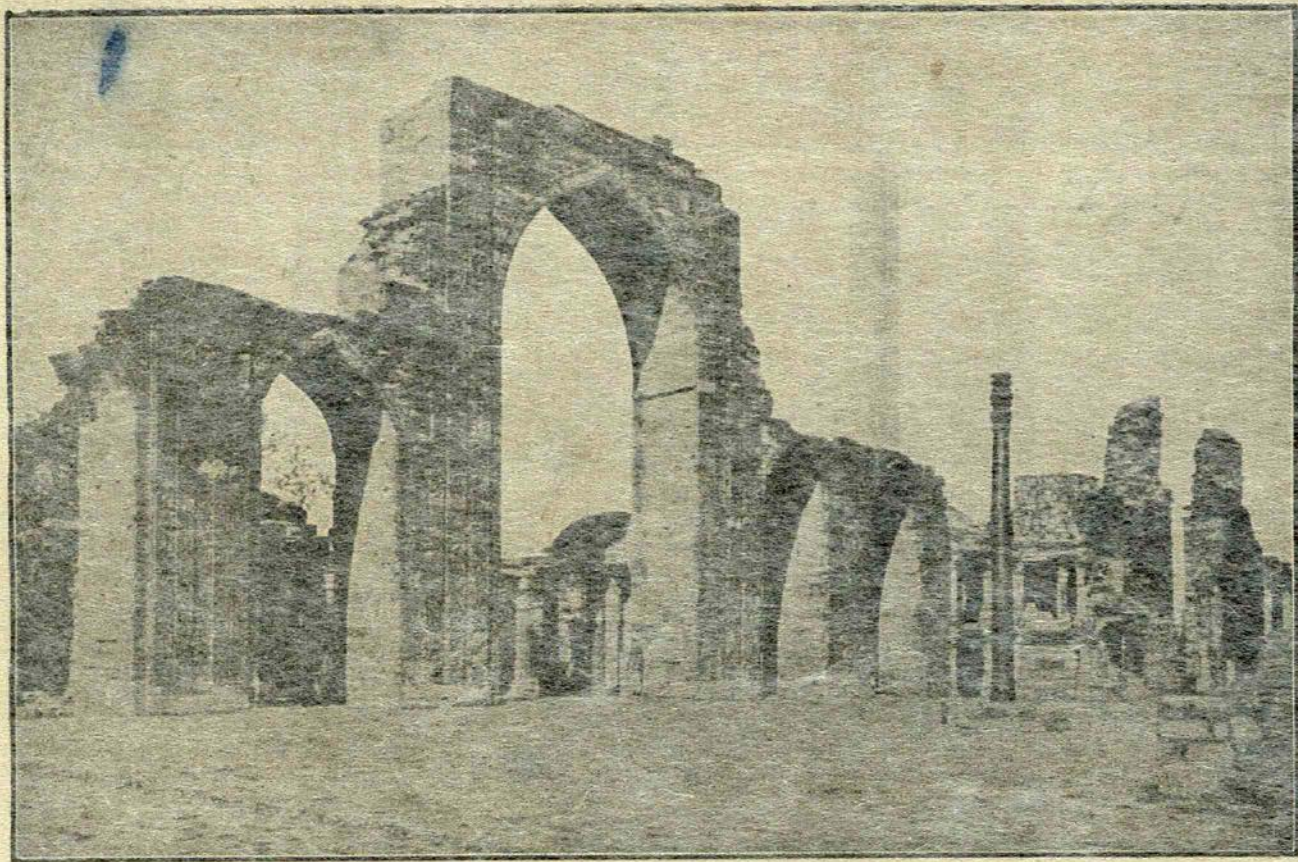
Minhaj-us-Siraj bestows lavish praise upon Muhammad for his munificence and patronage of learned men. Firishta who is less fulsome in his adulations also commends his generosity towards the literati and says that "he bore the character of a just monarch, fearing God, and ever having the good of his subjects at heart." Not so fanatical as Mahmud, Muhammad was certainly more *political* than his great predecessor. He saw clearly the rotten political condition of India and made up his mind to found a permanent dominion. Mahmud's love of wealth had blinded him to the gains of far-reaching importance, which the Indian conquest was bound to bring to the conqueror. Muhammad Ghorī, from the outset, took a different course; he tried to consolidate his conquests, and in this work he had the valued assistance and co-operation of his able lieutenant Qutb-ud-din who afterwards founded a dynasty of the kings of Delhi.

Mahmud never aimed at permanent conquest. The Arabs, before him, had occupied a province which was by no means a highly productive one. Mahmud had come sweeping across the country like a whirlwind, but he had returned to his native land after the acquisition of vast booty. Wealth and not territory, the extirpation of idolatry and not conquest, were the objects of his raids; and when these were accomplished, he cared nothing for the myriad peoples of India. He had no wish to found an empire on Indian soil. Muhammad was a real conqueror. He conquered the country and aimed at permanent settlement. A complete conquest of India was impossible as long as warrior-blood throbbed within the veins of the Rajput race. But for the first time the Muslims had brought extensive territory under their direct sway. Qutb-ud-din was appointed Viceroy of Hindustan and charged with the duty of extending further the dominion of Islam—a fact which clearly shows the object which

Muhammad had in mind. It is true, he did not stay in India; but like other ambitious men of his age, he yearned for the conquest of the lands of Persia and the Oxus. Every ruler of Ghazni turned his eyes westwards for territorial expansion, and it would be wrong to blame Muhammad for following a traditional policy. His work in India was more solid. The empire of Ghazni broke up after his death; indeed it was impossible for it to flourish without a great man at the helm of affairs but the Muslim power which he founded in India increased as time passed, and from humble beginnings the kingdom of Delhi gradually developed into one of the greatest empires of the East. It was no mean contribution to the greatness of Islam.

Sultan Muiz-ud-din Muhammad bin Sam died without a male heir. Minhaj-us-Siraj writes that on one occasion when a favourite courtier spoke to the Sultan about the default of male heirs, he replied with absolute indifference: "Other monarchs may have one son, or two sons: I have so many thousand sons, namely, my Turki slaves, who will be the heirs of my dominions, and who, after me will take care to preserve my name in the Khutba throughout those territories." After the death of his master, Qutb-ud-din Aibek naturally came to the fore-front. He was elected Sultan by the Turkish Amirs and generals and his assumption of royalty was acquiesced in by the chief of Ghor. He became the ruler of Hindustan and founded a dynasty of kings, which is called after his name. Originally Aibek²⁸ was a slave. He was purchased by the chief

²⁸ Major Raverty says *Ibak* means *weak-fingered* and in a long explanatory note he tries to show that it was a nickname. Firishta clearly states that he was called Aibek because his little finger was broken. The passage in the text of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* does not bear the interpretation which Major Raverty puts upon it. Besides, it does not appear that in Turki the word *Ibak* means finger. It seems to me that Aibek was the real name of the slave. There were many slaves at that time who bore the name Aibek.



View of Qutb-ud-din's Great Screen



Qazi of Nishapur, through whose favour, along with his sons, he read the Quran, became an adept in horsemanship and archery and acquired a reputation for courage and manly bearing. After the Qazi's death he was sold by his sons to a merchant who took him to Ghazni and sold him to Sultan Muiz-ud-din. Though ugly in external appearance, Aibek was endowed with "laudable qualities and admirable impressions"; and by sheer dint of merit he rose gradually to the position of *Amir Akhur* (master of the stables), and acted as the leader of the escort of the foragers of the stable, when the Sultan marched against the Shah of Khwarizm. During the Sultan's expeditions in Hindustan, Aibek loyally served him, and as a reward for his signal services he was left in charge of the Indian possessions. As Viceroy of Hindustan, he found ample scope for the exercise of his military qualities, and in a short time secured and extended the conquests made by his master. He strengthened himself by matrimonial connections; he married the daughter of Taj-ud-din Yaldoz, gave his sister in marriage to Qubaicha, and bestowed his daughter upon Iltutmish, one of his own slaves.

Aibek captured Hansi, Meerut, Delhi, Ranthambhor and Kol, and when Muhammad marched against the Raja of Kanauj he proceeded as far as Peshawar to meet him, and was entrusted with the command of the vanguard of the royal army. After the Sultan's return to Ghazni, he conquered the country as far as Benares, and

His career of conquest.

Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica, 1911-12, p. 20.

Major Raverty, *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, pp. 513-14.

Thomas, *The Chronicles of Pathan Kings*, p. 32.

Ranking, *Al-Badaoni*, I, p. 77.

See footnote 2 in which the translator says, *ai* in Turki means moon and *bek* means lord. He holds that it was the connection with the moon which was the cause of the name and not the broken finger.

took the field against Hariraja, brother of Prithviraja, who had expelled Kola from Ajmer and defeated him. Soon afterwards Gwalior was reduced, and in 1197 A.D. Qutb-ud-din led his forces against Nehrwalla, whose chief was worsted in a hotly-contested engagement, and the whole country was ravaged by the Muslims. For six years, i.e., from 593 A.H. to 599 A.H. (1196—1202 A.D.) there was cessation of warfare in India, which was probably due to the fact that Ghiyas-ud-din and Muiz-ud-din, both, were occupied with the affairs of Khorasan, and were busy making plans to check the growing power of their formidable rival, the Khwarizm Shah. In 599 A.H. (1202 A.D.) Qutb-ud-din marched against the fort of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand, hitherto deemed impregnable by the Hindus.²⁹ The fort was besieged; and the Hindus determined to offer resistance but they were overpowered. Vast booty fell into the hands of the Muslims and 50,000 persons, male and female, were made prisoners, and according to Hasan Nizami "the temples were converted into mosques and abodes of goodness, and the ejaculations of the bead-counters and the voices of the summoners to prayer ascended to the highest heaven, and the very name of idolatry was annihilated."³⁰ Mahoba was occupied next; and the victorious general returned to Delhi by way of Badaon which was also subdued. Bengal and Bihar had already been occupied by Muhammad Khilji, son of Bakhtiyar, who had acknowledged the suzerainty of Qutb-ud-din. All Hindustan, from Delhi to Kalinjar and Gujarat and from Lakhnauti to Lahore, was brought under the sway of the Turks. Although Qutb-ud-din effectively wielded the powers of a despot, the distant lands comprised in the empire of Delhi were not thoroughly subdued, and the teeming millions of Hindus in the country had not yet completely acquiesced in the establishment of Muslim rule in Hindustan.

Qutb-ud-din was a high-spirited and open-handed

²⁹ This has been mentioned before.

³⁰ *Taj-ul-Maasir*, Elliot, II, p. 231.

monarch. Hasan Nizami, the author of the *Taj-ul-Qutb-ud-din* as ruler, *Maasir*, who was well acquainted with him, bestows lavish praise upon him and says that he administered the country well, dispensed even-handed justice to the people, and exerted himself to promote the peace and prosperity of the realm. The metaphorical assertion of the same chronicler that, during his reign, the wolf and the sheep drank water out of the same pond, points to the Sultan's solicitude for justice and impartiality. The roads were freed from robbers, and the Hindus were treated with kindness, though the Sultan, like 'a mighty fighter in the way of God,' captured thousands as slaves during his wars. His generosity is praised by all writers who style him as *lakhkhakhsha* or giver of lakhs. Minhaj-us-Siraj writes that his gifts were bestowed by hundreds of thousands, and his slaughters likewise were by hundreds of thousands so that by his liberality and enterprise the region of Hindustan became full of friends and empty of enemies.

Aibek was a powerful and capable ruler who always maintained a high character. Only once in his life did he give himself up to debauchery and indulgence, when he found himself in possession of Ghazni after the defeat of his rival Yaldoz, but his laxity alienated the sympathies of the people of Ghazni with the result that Yaldoz recovered his power with astonishing promptness. Brave and energetic, sagacious and just, according to Muslim ideas, Aibek was devoted to the faith, and as the founder of a large kingdom on foreign soil among races whose martial prowess was well-known, he ranks among the great pioneers of Muslim conquest in India. He gave proof of his religious zeal by building two mosques, one at Delhi and another at Ajmer, both of which were constructed out of the materials of the demolished temples. Qutb-ud-din died in 1210 A.D. from a fall from his horse, while he was playing *chaugan*³¹ leaving a large kingdom to his successor.

³¹ *Chaugan* was something like modern polo. In the early middle ages it was a favourite game in Persia and India.



After the sudden death of Qutb-ud din the *Amirs* and *Maliks* of Hindustan placed upon the throne Aram

Confusion after
Aibek's death.

Shah described as Aibek's son 'for the sake of restraining tumult, for the tranquillity of the commonalty and the content of the hearts of the soldiery'. Malik Nasir-ud-din Qubaicha, one of the sons-in-law of the late Sultan, marched to Ucca and Multan and seized those places. As confusion began to spread in the country, the need for a strong and capable ruler was keenly felt by the nobles who invited Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, the governor of Badaon, to assume charge of the empire of Delhi. Aram made a feeble resistance but he was overpowered and probably put to death by his rival. At the time of his death Hindustan was parcelled out into four principalities—Sindh was held by Nasir-ud-din Qubaicha; Delhi and its contiguous territory were in the possession of Shams-ud-din Iltutmish; Lakhnauti was held by the Khilji Maliks, Ali Mardan Khilji having ceased to pay homage to Delhi after the death of Qutb-ud-din; Lahore was held alternately by Nasir-ud-din Qubaicha, Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, and Yaldoz who was supreme at Ghazni.

Qutb-ud-din Iltutmish
Malik of Delhi