



the gates. [DC. DY. i. 128.] The Gujars had been plundering the environs of the capital during the anarchy following the death of Najaf Khan and they had redoubled their disturbances after the murder of Afrāsiyāb. Ambaji subdued them by his rapid and ruthless blows. Surrounding a party of them in a village near Surajpurā, he slew 200 of the men and dragged the rest to Delhi to be executed by the police in public. Then he blockaded a hill near Kālikā, but most of its Gujar population escaped through the cordon at night. After four or five Gujar villages had been sacked and their male population slaughtered, the predatory tribe took to a more peaceful life.

Then Ambāji marched north on his main mission which was to make a settlement with the Sikhs. He halted at Bakhtāwarpur, 13 miles north of Delhi. Nine Sikh sardars of the Panipat region with whom he had already opened parleys, came and visited him here (27th March).

It was agreed that two of their leaders,—Dulcha Singh and Mohan Singh—should visit Sindhia and confirm the alliance. The terms of Najaf Khan's pact with them were that they would levy their blackmail (*rākhi*) from the villages where it had been customary before, but should not raid any imperial territory. [Ch. 31 § 5.] Mahadji demanded that they should give up levying *rākhi* on any Crownland, but must take possession of the jagirs that he offered them at the expense of the Jaipur Rajah, and that they should





serve with 5,000 horse in the wars of the Empire. [HP. 373, 381, *contra* DY. i. 111, 134, 135. Raj. xii. 41.] This arrangement did not touch the Doab, but provided for the safety of the district from Delhi northwards to Panipat. With these two sardars and a light escort Ambaji made a rapid march to Mathura and interviewed his master (on 10th April.) The Sikh chiefs lived in that camp for some time and were given their *congee* about the 10th of June. [PRC. i. 14, 15.]

§ 9. *Campaign against the Khichis  
of Rāghogarh.*

The whole of the year 1785 was a period of anxiety and distraction to Mahadji. As Hingané wrote on 15th October, "Our troops are entangled at four places: Rāmgarh (= Aligarh), Rāghogarh, Jaipur and the Pānipat district." Of these the Raghogarh business had to be immediately attended to for assuring a vital line of communications.

The great road from Agra to the South runs, about 150 miles south of Gwalior, through Sironj, the capital of the Ahir country. Forty miles north west of Sironj is Rāghogarh, where the Emperor Akbar had created a small State for a Khichi Chauhan prince. In the next century this family extended its sway from the Betwā river beyond Sironj in the east, to the Andheri (a tributary of the Pārvasi river) in the west, by subduing the numberless petty local chieftains.





With the coming of the Marathas into Malwa in the second quarter of the 18th century began a conflict between them which ended in the Khichis becoming tributaries to the new overlords of that province. The tribute, as usual, fell into arrears, and in 1760 we even find the Khichis rising in the rear of the Maratha army during Sadāshiv Bhāu's march to Pānipat. With the expansion of Maratha rule over Malwa, a shorter route to the Deccan was opened, leaving the royal highway at Shivapuri, 65 miles s.w. of Gwalior, and turning south-westwards to Ujjain and Indore. This road traversed the Khichi country, entering it near the Gunā railway station,—only a few miles south of which is Bajrang-garh, the later capital of Khichi-wada. The Marathas were bound to keep order there.

The Khichi Rajah (who had taken the title of Rānā) had ceded Chhabrā (30 miles west of Gunā) and Gugar in lieu of tribute to Holkar. But in 1784 he demanded the restoration of these lands, promising to pay the tribute in cash. Ahalyā Bāi, the regent of Holkar's State, asked for the full clearance of arrears before relinquishing the two districts. The Rānā then forcibly seized these two towns and some other Maratha posts there (March 1785). On hearing of this, Mahadji Sindhia detached Khandoji Ingle (the brother of Ambāji) and Muhammad Beg Hamadāni from Agra with a strong force against him (April.) They recovered Gugar, Chhabrā and some smaller



places, and reached Raghogarh, where they took the village (*peth*) and laid siege to the fort (early June.) The Rānā Balwant Singh (son of Balbhadra) sent his brother to negotiate with Sindhia directly; but near Mathura this agent was attacked and imprisoned by order of Mahadji (June. *HP.* 407.) Balwant resumed the offensive, defeated some Maratha bodies dispersed for plunder, and forced the invaders to fall back (early July.) The news of these reverses roused Mahadji, who pushed up reinforcements from all sides and raised the invaders' strength to 40,000 men. Balwant then left the open field and shut himself up in Raghogarh (August 1785); the inefficient siege of that fort by the Marathas dragged on for several months. At the end of next winter the Maratha generals, being eager to end the business and go elsewhere and also distracted by their mutual quarrels, clinched their long negotiations with the Rānā and agreed to let him go away from his fort with life and honour (Feb. 1786.) Mahadji was highly incensed on hearing of this poor result of an expedition on which he had spent lakhs of Rupees. He superseded the generals there, and sent Ambāji Ingle with orders to kill or imprison Balwant and confiscate his entire State. This was promptly done. Maratha rule was established in the Khichi country, Balwant was fettered and confined in Gwalior, while his wife and two of his sons were sent as captives to Bhilsā, and all his property confiscated.





The expeditionary force returned to Mahadji's side in April.

This attempt to extinguish a two hundred years old Rajput State produced bitter fruits in the end. Though Balwant Singh was kept in prison, one of his sons Jai Singh remained free, and by carrying on a ceaseless guerilla war in the company of local Robin Hoods and with the secret backing of the Muslim Nawab of Bhopal, he made the Deccan road more unsafe than before and covered Sindhia with humiliation by capturing one of his wives.\*

§ 10. *The Gosains Umrao-gir and Himmat Bahadur: their early history.*

By March 1786, Mahadji Sindhia had freed himself from most of the entanglements that had beset him in the first year of his regency ; but just at this time a perpetual thorn was planted on his eastern flank which defied all his efforts to remove it and long continued to embolden his enemies elsewhere. We have met with the Nāgā Gosāin (or Hindu fighting abbot) Rājendra-gir in Safdar Jang's wars with the Bangash (1750) and Imad-ul-mulk (1753.) This monk had adopted as his successors two Brahman boys who had been sold

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\* Raghogarh campaigns.—*MD.* ii. 94, 98, 101, 105, 114, 139, 124. *DY.* i. 134, 151, 182. *HP.* 412, 407. *Aitl. Tip.* vi. 41. *Satara* i. 101. *Selections from Asiatic Journal*, pp. 599-600.





to him by their widowed mother during a famine. These were Umrāo-gir and Anup-gir (the latter being entitled Himmat Bahadur.) They continued after his death to command the Nāgā force in the Oudh service. On behalf of Shujā-ud-daulah, Himmat Bahadur waged war against Hindupat, Rajah of Bundelkhand, but was signally defeated (1762.) He also fought on his master's side on the disastrous field of Buxar (1764), which turned Shujā into a landless fugitive. Then the Gosāins sought for their livelihood by joining Jawāhir Singh Jat (Ch. 23 § 16), but faithlessly deserted him for Raghunāth Dādā's side (at the end of Dec. 1766.) Next year, when the Marathas retired from their north Indian enterprises, the Gosāins came back to Shujā, who had been now restored and strengthened by his English alliance and was entering on a career of annexation. But after Shujā's death (1775) his son Asafuddaulah had to reduce his army in order to fill the gaping void of his debt to the English. The Gosains being again turned out of employment, joined Najaf Khan at the siege of Dig (1776) and continued to work under him and his successors till Mahadji's rise to the regency of Delhi. [*Imad.*, 64, 87, 102, 143.]

Himmat Bahadur lacked personal courage and bore a low character for his faithlessness and love of secret intrigue. He had risen very high in Najaf Khan's favour and become that regent's principal adviser and agent in dealing with the





Hindu princes. After Najaf's death, he took Afrāsiyāb's side in the struggle for the regency, and hence during Afrāsiyāb's period of power (Oct. 1783—Oct. 1784), Himmat Bahadur was all in all as the manager of the new regent's policy and foreign relations. Working hand in glove with Nārāyandās, the diwan of Afrāsiyāb's private estates and household, Himmat Bahadur became the real power behind the throne, without holding any office of State. He bore a deadly hostility to Mirzā Md. Shafi and also to Md. Beg Hamadāni, because these two blocked his patron's path, and so he contrived the conspiracy for the murder of Shafi (1783). Thereafter, with the object of suppressing the last remaining rival of Afrāsiyāb, he patiently wove his web and induced Mahadji Sindhia to come to Rupbās in support of the Khan.

Afrāsiyāb's unexpected murder merely forced a change of direction on the Gosāin's selfish plans: he now moved heaven and earth to get Afrāsiyāb's infant son created Mir Bakhshi, hoping thus to rule the Delhi empire himself as the minor's *de facto* guardian and pack Mahadji off to the Deccan by paying a small hire for his help! Sindhia who had the greatest contempt for the character of the entire official class of Delhi, and particularly for the Gosāin,—at first professed with masterly tact and diplomacy, to be entirely guided by Himmat Bahadur, because he





1785]

was as yet without any personal knowledge of the men and affairs of the imperial Government and had to rely on some old officer of it. The Gosāin had hoped that even under Sindhia as regent, he would be all in all in the actual administration and in the southern stranger's relations with the Emperor.

But his eyes began to be opened when he was firmly prevented from having pre-audience of the Emperor on the day of Mahadji's first conference with his Sovereign (17 Nov. 1784.) He had fondly hoped to convert the pliant Emperor to his own policy by anticipating Sindhia at his ears. On the contrary, the Emperor privately urged Mahadji to dismiss Himmat Bahādur and his ally Nārāyandās as a pair of rogues. Himmat Bahādur's credit with Sindhia, and therefore his position in Delhi politics, sank lower still when he failed to secure the peaceful surrender of Agra fort by his boasted influence with its commandant. And when he saw himself being more and more ignored by the new regent and place after place coming under Mahadji's control without his assistance, the Gosāin felt that Sindhia had made himself independent of the remnant of the Najaf Khan party. He began to spit venom in his rage and vexation and tried his sole weapon of treachery and intrigue for regaining his ascendancy in the State by spiting Sindhia. He wrote secretly to the qiladar of Aligarh to stiffen his opposition. Last of all, when Afrāsiyāb's





family reported that all the dead Khan's fabled wealth had been in the keeping of Narayandas and Himmat Bahadur and yet no part of it could be recovered from these two agents, their downfall became inevitable. Himmat Bahadur's treasonable letters to Jahangir Khan were discovered among the escheated property of the latter and they proved beyond a doubt what Mahadji had long suspected. [*Ibr.* ii. 153. *DY.* i. 147. *HP.* 365, 408.]

But Sindhia at first shrank from striking at a Brahman. He called upon Himmat Bahadur to give up all the jagirs he held (worth about 20 lakhs a year for the two brothers together) and leave his camp. For one month after this order, Himmat Bahadur whined before Sindhia, pointing out that he had no place to live in. So, in February 1786 he was assigned the Mot taluq (30 m. north-east of Jhānsi) and another jagir at Vrindāvan for his maintenance, but on condition that he must bear the cost of his contingent (Rs. five lakhs annually) and this force must serve under Sindhia's banners, while Himmat himself would live in monastic retreat at Vrindāvan. [*HP.* 351, 432, *DY.* i. 149.]

§ 11. *The two Gosāins rise against Sindhia in the Doab.*

After the arrest of Nārāyandās (c. 16 January 1786), Himmat Bahadur grew alarmed about his own safety and gave up attending Sindhia's darbar



lest he should share his late colleague's fate. But Mahadji paid him Rs. 20,000 as his subsistence allowance for two months and bade him remove from the camp at Dig to his estate in Vrindāvan alone, leaving all his troops, horses etc. behind, who would be paid by Sindhia after taking their muster. But the Gosāin would not agree to part with his army, his sole defence against attack. So, when Mahadji marched away from Dig towards Jaipur (16th February), he gave Himmat Bahadur leave for Vrindāvan with his contingent, on his promising to go and smooth the transfer of his jagirs to Sindhia's agents. [*Ibr.* ii. 154. *HP.* 432.]

Kesho Pant, an officer of Ābā Chitnis, had been deputed with letters of authorisation from Himmat Bahadur to take over charge of the Gosains' Doab possessions. He at first gained undisputed delivery of a number of villages, but none of the forts and larger towns. Then Himmat's elder brother Umrao-gir, who had so long been administering the family jagirs there, began to attack the new Maratha posts, in concert with the local zamindars (esp. the Jat owners of Hathras and Mursan); Sindhia's collectors were imprisoned or expelled, and Keso Pant himself was slain and his war equipment plundered. [*Ibr.* ii. *ASB.* 474, *HP.* 415.]

Seizing the opportunity of this collapse of the Maratha power in the Doab, Himmat Bahadur crossed over from Vrindāvan (c. 8 March) and joined his brother's rising. They seized the





thanah of Firuzabad and applied to the Nawab of Oudh for re-entering his service. From Makanpur, Umraogir went over to Khwājah Almas Ali Khan, the Oudh governor of Etawa. An English brigade which happened to advance from Cawnpur at this time, was rumoured to have made this movement for supporting the rebel brothers in case Mahadji marched against them.

This was a most treacherous stab in Sindhia's back, while he was engaged in front with the recalcitrant Rajah of Jaipur in the distant west. The whole of the Doab threatened to be up in arms against the Marathas, with the Nawab Wazir and the English standing behind the rising. Even the newly planted Maratha garrison in Aligarh quaked with fear. Mahadji acted promptly; his scattered detachments in the Doab were hurriedly united under Abhaji (a son of Jaswant Bahlé) to strengthen Aligarh. But this force was too small; and Umraogir, after driving out the Maratha collectors of Atrauli, Chharra Bhamauri and other mahals, attacked Abhaji and routed two of his sepoy battalions, capturing their guns. [*Ibr.* ii. 151 and ASB., 474. *HP.* 373.]

On receiving this alarming news, Mahadji ordered Ambaji Ingle, then returning from the Rāghogarh expedition with the large force set free by the conquest of that State, to reinforce Abhaji. This general sent a detachment of 3,000 horse, two sepoy battalions, and 12 guns under Devji Golé, to attack the Gosāins, but to be careful not



to cross the Oudh frontier lest they should provoke a clash with the British troops. At his approach Umrao-gir fled away to Kāsganj on the Ganges, wishing to take refuge in Rohilkhand which was now Oudh territory. Devji gave up the pursuit (end of April) and turned aside to lay siege to the fort near Khurja (in Bulandshahar) which had been usurped by Yaqub Khan.

We may here conclude this narrative by saying that the two Gosains remained quiet in their Oudh asylum for a year after, in consequence of Lord Cornwallis's warning to the Nawab Wazir to observe strict neutrality towards Mahadji. But the convulsion of Maratha authority after his retreat from Lalsot in August, 1787, emboldened them to lead forces for disturbing Sindhia's possessions again and adding to his troubles. [*PRC.* i. 29, 39, and (after Lalsot) 140, 143-176, 210—234. *DY.* i. 170, 184, *Ibr. ASB.* ii. 474-476.]

§ 12. *Bundelkhand adventure, 1785-86.*

Chhatra Sal, the son of Champat Rai Bundela, had carved out for himself a large kingdom in eastern Bundelkhand during a long life of strenuous warfare. His crowning success was the final expulsion of the imperial viceroy, in alliance with the Marathas in 1729. As the price of this decisive aid, he ceded to his patron, the Peshwa, one-third of his realm with a revenue of 30 lakhs of Rupees. The aged and war-worn chief died on 14th December 1731, leaving the





remaining two-thirds of his dominions to his two elder sons, Harde Sah of Panna (revenue 38 lakhs) and Jagat-raj of Banda (revenue 30 lakhs). The younger sons among his numerous progeny (27 sons according to one account, and 52 according to another) received small appanages for their support. The next Peshwa, Balaji Rao, made further acquisitions in western Bundelkhand, yielding 16½ lakhs of Rupees per annum (covering much of the Jhansi district and parts of the Urchha and Datia States),—the whole of which was placed under a Maratha viceroy. Raghunath Hari filled this almost royal post from 1770 to 1794. But with this region we are not concerned here.

A war for the throne broke out in Panna at the time of Mahadji's elevation to the regency. On the death of Hindupat, the grandson of Harde Sah (in 1778), his minor son Anurudh had been enthroned by his powerful ministers Beni Chaube (*Huzuri* and *Diwan*) and Khemrāj Chaube (Treasurer and commandant of the stronghold of Kalinjar.) The boy-prince died (in 1780) and the ministers placed on the throne Dhokal Singh the youngest son of Hindupat, setting aside the rights of his elder brother Sarnet Singh. But the two Chaube King-makers, who were brothers, soon quarrelled over the division of power and profit: Khemrāj took up the cause of Sarnet Singh and sheltered him in Kalinjar. Beni, calling Bijai Bahadur of Charkhari to his aid,



advanced in force and laid siege to Kalinjar. Sarnet and his patron appealed to Noné Arjun Singh, the Banda regent, and also to Mahadji Sindhia. The Maratha leader seized this chance of enriching himself and sent his general Khanderao Hari (popularly called Apa Khanderao) towards Kalinjar (April 1785.)

In Banda, too, there was a minority with disputed succession and ministerial domination. The heritage of Jagat-rāj (who died in 1758) was now divided among his numerous grandsons, two of whom named Guman and Khuman held Banda and Charkhari respectively. There was constant fighting between them as indeed among all the brood of Chhatra Sal, due to earth-hunger. When Guman died childless, his ministers Noné Arjun Singh Pawar, Sardul Singh and Hakim Bu Ali gave the succession to Madhukar Sah, an infant adopted by the late Rajah. Khuman Singh immediately declared the adoption as spurious and claimed the throne on behalf of his own son as next of kin to his dead brother. The ministerial party, paying Mahadji Sindhia Rs. 1,20,000\* induced him to undertake the

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\* *Ibr.* ii. 121. "Noné Arjun and others sent Md. Taqi to Sindhia to beg his aid. He presented a *hundi* for Rs. 1,20,000 on condition of his defending Madhukar Sah." The Poona agent in Mahadji's camp wrote in Aug. 1785: "Khuman S. sent a wakil to Mahadji asking him to punish the minister of the recently deceased Guman and offered a *nazar*. The Banda Rajah, on hearing of it, sent his wakil and won Sindhia over by promising four lakhs, a





defence of their puppet against his uncle. Thus two dynastic quarrels among near cousins became closely mingled together and drew into their vortex all the other Bundela princelings, whose sole occupation was internecine war for grabbing their kinsmen's lands.

Apa Khanderao was Mahadji's viceroy (*sar subahdar*) of Gwalior and Panch Mahal. He was deputed to the Bundela expedition as the scene adjoined his charge. He knew the difficulty of his task and augmented his contingent by new enlistment, especially five trained battalions of sepoys under De Boigne, Taylor, Lesteneau and Rāmru. [*Ibr.* ii. 122-123.] But Khuman Singh forestalled the Maratha general by promptly attacking Arjun near Pandori. He was killed by the second shot fired from the Banda artillery, and the two sides separated after waging a most

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portion of which was assessed on Khuman. The latter did not pay it, but the Banda Rajah paid his share. Hence Khanderao Hari has been sent there" [*HP.* 411.] Next July the same agent wrote: "Guman Singh's diwan was a strong and masterful man. He sought Mahadji's aid, promising to pay Rs. 50,000 as *nazar* for the *tika* [of his nominee] and bankers' bills for five lakhs for the territory of the Jetpur Rajah Gaj Singh, which Guman and Khuman had conquered, besides *douceurs* to his ministers (*darbar kharch*.) And so he obtained the *tika* [=recognition of succession] in the name of Madhukar. But Khuman would not pay his share of the money. Sindhia therefore sent a clerk with 100 troopers to realise the amount. Khuman befooled his man for one year without paying anything." [*HP.* 478.]





ruthless battle till nightfall. Next day Apa arrived on the scene; Bijay Bahadur, the son of Khuman, retreated to his capital at Charkhari and appealed to the regent of Panna for aid.

As soon as Apa crossed the Betwa river and entered Banda territory, most of the Bundela chiefs saw him and offered their adhesion. Beni Huzuri alone kept aloof. Abandoning the siege of Kalinjar, the Panna regent retired to his capital and put it in a posture of defence, blocking the passes by which the invaders must come. By this time it was August, and the monsoon that year was unusually heavy, with floods everywhere. The campaign was therefore stopped by Nature. During the interval, Beni Huzuri continued to negotiate for peace in return for an indemnity, but his offers were insincere and meant only for gaining time. When the rains ceased, Apa laid siege to Panna, heavily defeated a sortie in full force led by Beni, and coming closer to the walls bombarded the fort for five days. The assault was fixed for the 8th of December 1785, but the night before Beni evacuated the fort with Dhokal Singh and all his men under cover of the darkness. [HP. 422.]

It was a grand victory but barren of results. Mahadji boasted of this success to his arms, but here his success ended, and indeed the Maratha position grew steadily worse as the campaign was prolonged, Apa's funds were exhausted and his soldiers mutinied for their long unpaid salary,



while the Bundelas recovered spirit and unity in the face of a common foe. The Maratha general had much ado to save himself. Even at the time of this conquest, his position is thus described by the British Resident with Sindhia: "Apa had before been involved in such distress that Sindhia had lately sent him the most positive order to conclude a treaty upon any terms he could procure and return with his detachment to Gwalior, as it was utterly impossible for him to afford him any reinforcement." [PRC. i. 21.] But Apa clung to Kalinjar in the hope of getting more tribute and seizing the treasure reputed to be hoarded in that fort. The result was that in six months his position became untenable. As De Boigne wrote from his camp before Kalinjar on 3rd July 1786: "The tributes are not finished with any of the Rajahs. The troops are very much tired of Apa, as no pay is to be got from him,.....the troops are starving. Mr. Taylor's troops have been, for eight or ten days, very mutinous for their pay.....Good God! What a kind of man [is Apa],.....a miser and mean to excess." [PRC. i. 53.]

At last Apa Khanderao was so hemmed round by increasing enemy forces that he found it hard to extricate himself and proposed to retreat northwards across the Jamuna into Oudh territory, as his westward path to Gwalior was blocked. "He had, in confidence, dispatched the greatest part of his troops towards Jhansi, whilst he himself



remained near Panna, with a small body of horse, not exceeding 2,000, to wait the final execution of the treaty [with the Bundela princes.] The Rajahs had taken advantage of this circumstance by suddenly assembling all their forces (20,000 men) and demanding the restitution of the hostages they had given him as a security for the fulfilment of their engagements." (Anderson, 18 Nov. 1786.) But with great difficulty he effected his escape with the Bundela hostages to Gwalior shortly after, though the enemy captured several of his captains, including his own brother. [PRC. i. 61, 62.] Thus this huge military expenditure for nineteen months brought nothing in return. [HP. 489.]\*

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\* Bundelkhand. Narrative constructed from the contemporary reports from Sindhia's camp, HP. 373, 407, 411, 422, 478, 489. PRC. i. 21, 53, 61-62. *Ibr.* ii. 121-125. But N. W. P. Gaz., i. 28, 129, 567, has been used cautiously with many corrections; a good deal of it is taken from Pogson's *Boondelas* verbatim and embodies incorrect later tradition.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE JAIPUR STATE AND THE IMPERIAL  
GOVERNMENT, 1778—1787.§ 1. *Jaipur history under Rajah Prithvi Singh,*  
*1768—1778.*

The reign of Sawāi Mādho Singh of Jaipur which had commenced in December 1750 with the tragic death of his predecessor and the national humiliation at the hands of the Marathas, ended eighteen year later (6th March 1768) amidst a blaze of glory caused by his defeat of the all-dreaded Jat Rajah Jawāhir Singh. His throne passed on to his elder son, Prithvi Singh, a boy of five, and the regency was held by his widowed queen, a daughter of Jaswant Singh Chundāwat, the baron of Deogarh in Mewar.

During his reign Mādho Singh had raised three low-born favourites to the highest offices in the State: Khush-hālī Rām Bohrā, a Brahmin who had long been the porter of Ganges water to the king, was made prime minister and justified his elevation by his ability and devotion; Raj Singh Kachhwa, a common trooper who owned no horse of his own but was mounted at the cost of the State (i.e., a *Ghor-charā* or *bārgir*, as he is called), was made army chief (*Senāni*); and a Musalman elephant driver named Firuz





was appointed receiver-general of the State revenue. Immediately after Madho Singh's death, his father-in-law Jaswant came over to Jaipur and began to wield the regency on behalf of his grandson in concert with these three ministers.

A minority is a perilous time among a proud and intractable race like the Rajputs, who cannot tolerate woman's rule. The Kachhwa nobles chafed under the new administration of their country in which none of them had any lot or part. They conspired to overthrow it and establish their own control over the boy king and his State. These nobles formed two clan-groups; one was that of the Nāthāwats, ranged round the barons of Chomu (the premier peer of the realm) and Sāmod; while the second was formed by the Rājāwats under the barons or Jhalāi and some other places, these being the king's blood relations and therefore standing nearest in the line of succession to the throne. But these two groups could not always unite even in a common hostility to the interloper from Deogarh and his Brahman ally. Further complication was introduced into the faction-struggle in Jaipur by the rebellion of the ever unruly Shekhāwats (especially the chief of Manoharpur) and the unbridled ambition and selfish treachery of Pratāp Singh Narukā, the baron of Mācheri. During the ten years of Prithvi Singh's reign (7th March 1768—16th April 1778), the Kachhwa





kingdom was free from Maratha incursions and Mughal interference alike, as these two enemies were kept busy by their own troubles ; but for all that this decade was a period of tumult and disruption in the mournful annals of that land.

§ 2. *Rise of Pratap Singh Naruka ; his doings at Jaipur.*

Rāo Pratāp Singh, of the Narukā branch of the Kachhwas, was originally a petty vassal of the Jaipur State, owning only two and a half villages, from one of which he was known as the Mācheri-wālā. But his sleepless ambition and unscrupulous opportunism succeeded so well that before his death (in November 1790) he was recognized by the imperial Government as a Rajah fully independent of his tribal overlord, and he built up a kingdom which to-day embraces 3,158 square miles of territory. This Pratāp Singh early attracted notice by his intelligence and energy, which were in such striking contrast with the other Rajput nobles' opium-bemused stupor, occasionally varied by fits of blind animal fury in the field, that his envious rivals set Mādho Singh against him as a potential aspirant to his throne. The Narukā's life was attempted on the hunting field and he had to leave Jaipur and take refuge with the Jat Rajah. But he regained Mādho Singh's favour by returning to his side and fighting patriotically against Jawāhir in the Jat invasion of 1767-1768. The regency that followed im-





mediately after was his first opportunity; he rapidly seized territories round the nucleus of his poor ancestral acres and built a number of forts, in the undefined borderland between Shekhāwati, Mewāt and the Jat-land. Next he allied himself, now to the Jat Rajah, now to Najaf Khan, as suited his interest for the time being, but was shrewd enough to always take the winning side. The result was that the grateful imperial generalissimo secured for him a confirmation of all his usurpations, the title of Rāo Rājah, a high imperial *mansab*, and a formal recognition of independence of his overlord of Jaipur. The other Narukās now accepted him as the head of their sept. Meantime he had not cut off his connection with Jaipur. Using the Bohrā's party as his tool, he controlled the administration and gained everything that he desired without bearing the responsibility of any office in the State. His smooth tongue and ready power of deception beguiled every one at the capital, while he went on filching the border lands of the State.

We shall pass over the humiliating history of Jaipur and its bloody faction fights during the nominal reign of Prithvi Singh and the changes in the Narukā's position and policy at the capital; he was in the end left in supreme control, as the helpless people realised that he alone could save the royal house from Mughal greed and baronial anarchy alike. Pratāp Singh Narukā used his power to oust the dowager queen's father and





brother from the administration, got Firuz arrested, squeezed Rupees seven lakhs out of him as the price of his liberation, and confined Khush-hālī Rām Bohrā with the consent of the bewildered and helpless queen-mother. But these acts set every one at the capital against him, and the Narukā, in danger of assassination, one night secretly fled away from Jaipur (the second half of 1777).

Next year Rāo Pratāp Singh was called upon to meet an invasion of his eastern frontier by Najaf Khan, who was bent on recovering the places in Mewāt lately usurped by the Narukā. His relations with Najaf, alternating between war submission and war again throughout the year 1778, have been described in Ch. 30 § 1-2. In 1779 the Mir Bakhshi, with a Jaipur army assisting him, pressed the Rāo Rājah so hard as to compel him to pay a visit of submission and to promise tribute. After Najaf Khan's withdrawal to Delhi in November 1779, the Narukā chief secured the patronage of Najaf's local agent, Muhammad Beg Hamadāni, and made him his intercessor with the imperial Government.

The Jaipur Rajah Prithvi Singh died on 16th April 1778, being succeeded by his brother Sawāi Pratāp Singh, a boy of thirteen, and the affairs of that kingdom fell into worse confusion than before. When at the close of the year 1778 the Emperor marched into Jaipur in person, the Kachhwa Court sent Firuz with rich presents and



some tribute to Najaf Khan's camp to make peace. The faithless Narukā chief, then in attendance on the Mir Bakhshi, volunteered to promote his overlord's interests and introduced Firuz to Najaf Khan, but afterwards lured the envoy to Agra and there got him murdered,\* after which he seized all the wealth and other belongings of his victim.

§ 3. *Minority of Sawai Pratap Singh: rivalry of the Bohra and Haldia ministers.*

The history of the Kachhwa kingdom under Sawāi Pratāp Singh is a sickening tale. Even during the ten years' rule of his predecessor a rapid decay had set in in that Government. As an eminent Rājasthani historian writes, "This Rajah was a minor, and hence the ladies sitting within the harem dominated the State affairs, with the result that mismanagement prevailed in the public administration" [*Vir Vinod*, p. 1306.] Matters became even worse at the accession of Pratāp Singh. His father Mādho Singh had, on

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\* Neither the Persian and Marathi records, nor the Rājasthani sources (so far as these last are known to me), give any support to Tod's allegation that this elephant-driver Firuz played the Mazarin to the queen-mother of Jaipur, the Chundāwatni Rani. The British historian's second statement that she was poisoned by the Narukā, is similarly without evidence. The *Vamsha Bhāskar* (p. 3886) merely states that she fell ill of an incurable malady and died some days after her two sons had arrived at her bed-side (probably in 1777). This does not look like poisoning.





his death-bed, advised his queen not to dismiss Khush-hālī Rām Bohrā as he was well versed in affairs and loyal to his master. But this minister had made many enemies among the hereditary nobles as he did not care to flatter fools. Their intrigues brought about his arrest and confinement in Amber fort. But in the hour of the country's danger from the treacherous attacks of the Narukā and the open threats of the Delhi Government, Khush-hālī Rām was felt to be the only man who could save it, and he was therefore released and restored to the head of the administration. Thus, we find him prime minister again at the accession of Pratāp Singh in April 1778 and then going on an embassy to the camp of Najaf Khan and to the Emperor's Court in order to make terms both for his own Rājah and the Narukā chief. Soon afterwards, he had to take the aid of an imperial force for punishing the ungrateful Narukā, as we have seen in Ch. 30, § 2.

This expedition had a curious after-effect on the internal politics of Jaipur. Three Baniās of Khandelā in the Kachhwa State, named Daulat Rām, Khush-hālī Rām II, and Nand Ram, with their father Chhajju Rām, of the Haldiā family had migrated from the Jaipur Court and gone to Mācheri, where they had risen to the head of the administration and the charge of important forts. But by reason of their having spitefully counselled their new master not pay his debt to the





Jaipur State and thus provoked the recent joint invasion, he in his hour of defeat threatened to imprison and plunder them. So the entire Haldiā family took shelter in Najaf's camp (c. January 1779). Here Khush-hāli Rām Bohra took them under his protection, appointed Daulat Rām as his deputy at his master's Court during his frequent absences on diplomatic missions, and posted his namesake, Khush-hāli Rām the Haldiā, as his agent in Najaf's camp (c. March 1779).

In a few months' time Daulat Rām contrived to win the Rajah's confidence and caused his patron the Bohrā to be thrown into prison (end of July. *CPC*. v. 1573.) But before the year was over, there was another turn in Fortune's wheel at Jaipur: the Haldiā brothers fell into disfavour and had to flee to Najaf Khan to save their lives. From April 1780 to February 1781, Daulat Rām accompanied Mahbub Ali Khan in his invasion of Jaipur [Ch. 31, § 4], while his brother Khush-hāli Rām II attended at Delhi. This led to the release of the Bohrā, as he was found to be the only faithful and able diplomat left to the Kachhwas. On 8th March 1780, the Bohrā was deputed by the Jaipur Court as their *wakil* to negotiate with Najaf Khan for the tribute due and to stop the encroachments of the Narukā. But evidently he could do nothing with his limited powers and in the face of constant obstruction behind his back by his rivals at Court. Therefore, as Mahbub Ali's invasion developed





and he began to hammer at the gates of Jaipur, the Rajah bowed to necessity and on 18th October created the Bohrā the supreme regent of Jaipur with full authority over all the sardars, great and small. [Br. Mus. Or. 25,020 f. 50a, 25,021 f. 313b.]

We may here briefly narrate the course of Khush-hāli Rām's diplomacy towards the imperial Government at this time. He failed to avert the invasion of his country planned by Najaf Khan, because his master was neither willing nor able to pay the enormous arrears of tribute that had accumulated. As Mahbub Ali Khan advanced conquering, the Jaipur regent offered only Rs. 1,70,000 in cash and the rest in promises (17th Sept.),—an offer which Najaf Khan at once declined as utterly insufficient. Unable to stem the Muslim invasion, the Jaipur Court ordered Rodā Ram (originally a tailor and now the Rajah's *khawās*) to go forth and oppose Mahbub Ali; but he did nothing. War is not a tailor's business. Their next step was to solicit the Narukā to come to the rescue of his tribal head (30th Oct.). But the Rāo Rājah declined, saying that he had no faith in the Jaipur Government, as his life had been once attempted in that capital and at another time his lands had been wrested by Najaf Khan at their instance. Then Khush-hāli Rām Bohrā changed his policy, and tried to make terms with Mahbub, even offering to hire his force if he would help the Kachhwa State to



recover the lands unlawfully seized by the Rāo Rājāh. All this time the Narukā continued to raid and ravage Jaipur territory on the Shekhāwati border, and Khush-hāli Rām I was unable to check him with his weak contingent (March 1781.) Finally Mahbub Ali's army broke up for want of money and Mirzā Najaf transferred the collection of the Jaipur tribute to Gosāin Himmat Bahadur once again. On 27th April 1781 the Gosāin interviewed the Jaipur Rajah through Khush-hāli Rām I and the following settlement was made: "Himmat Bahadur swore on Ganges water that he would never act against the Rajah of Jaipur. The Rajah made over to Himmat Bahadur *mahals* calculated to yield 12 lakhs of Rupees a year, one half of which was to be remitted to Najaf Khan and the other half spent in maintaining the troops kept there for the work of collection; the imperialists were to set up their military posts there."\* Next month the Gosāin realised Rs. 75,000 and sent the amount to his master in Delhi, [f. 335b.] Daulat Rām Haldiā now returned to Jaipur and was appointed army chief (*bakhshi*.)

At this time Himmat Bahadur helped the Jaipur State with his own contingent in defeating and capturing the Maratha mercenary Jaswant Rao Bāble, who had long served the

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\* Najaf Khan, on receiving the report of this, angrily cried out, "Always mere words and evasive tricks! No money ever paid." [Br. Mus. Or. 25,020, f. 221b.]





Jaipur State, but being unpaid had tried to make himself forcibly master of Mālpurā and Todā on the ground that these were Solanki colonies and he was a Deccani Solanki (*i.e.*, Chālukya, in Marathi Sulké): Bāblé's son Shambhuji was killed and all his war equipment and other property plundered. [*Vamsha Bhās.* 3889.] Jaipur hostility to the Rāo Rājah continued and the latter made Muhammad Beg Hamadāni his patron for a money consideration.

This brings us to the middle of the year 1781. Immediately afterwards another palace revolution took place at Jaipur; Khush-hāli Rām Bohrā was thrown into prison and Daulat Rām Haldiā was re-appointed prime minister at the end of July 1781 [*DY.* i. 31.] The Haldiās governed the State for the next five years. But on 15th November, 1784, Khush-hāli Rām II (*i.e.*, Haldiā) was murdered in Afrāsiyāb Khan's camp by an agent of the Mācheri Rājah. Daulat Rām fell from favour and his high office in April 1786 and migrated with his family to Lucknow. The Bohrā now became prime minister again. But his resurrection was short: in January next Daulat Rām returned and became the Rājah's favourite again by pursuing a bold foreign policy. Khush-hāli Rām was staying with Rāyāji Pātīl, the tribute-collector left behind by Sindhia, when a murderous assault was made on him by his Rājah's order during a pretended parley. So,



when Mahadji arrived at the end of March, the Bohrā sought refuge with him to save his life. [DY. i. 173, 200. HP. 476, 468.]

§ 4. *Character of Sawāi Pratāp Singh: disorder, maladministration and national weakness.*

This eternal seesaw in the choice of the first servant of the State, with its consequent suffering of the people, can be explained only by the character of the Kachhwa Rajah.\* Sawāi Pratāp Singh had no brains, but was not harmless and quiescent like most other imbeciles; his folly burst out in capricious violence. Anticipating the decadent Nawabs of Oudh, he used to dress himself like a female, tie bells to his ankles and dance within the harem. His time was mostly devoted to drinking and attending songs and dances. When he issued from his palace, it was only for galloping through the streets or for visiting the temples out of idle curiosity rather than piety. Sometimes he would sally forth at night with the ruffianly companions of his wine-cup, raid the houses of the bankers and jewellers, beat them and snatch away their money! In addition to his unkingly and unmanly vices, his reckless speech and violent temper alienated the proud Rajput nobility and they left his capital for their seats in shame and disgust.

\* G. Ali, iii. 231. Br. Mus. Or. 25,020 f. 306, 25,021 f. 8. DY. i. 165. Jodhpur, Letter no. 2. HP. 411, 476.





The public administration was utterly neglected. The State was ruled by officers who were their own masters and selfishly quarrelled among themselves. The young Rajah gave his personal favour with supreme power over his Government to a tailor named Rodā Rām (popularly called Rodoji,) because this man was in charge of the Rajah's food and drink and thus guarded him against poisoning. The second office in the State, though the first in theory, alternated between the old Brahman diwān Khush-hālī Rām Bohra (whom the Rajah disliked) and Daulat Rām Haldiā, a trader by caste. As a Maratha envoy truly reported, "I hear that the Jaipur Government has no money and no *man* in its royal family. The regent is a tailor, the second minister is a Brahman, the ex-purveyor of Ganges water. The rest are *baniās*. Thus is the Rajah's administration conducted! He has no troops." [DY. i. 165.]

As early as June 1781 the nobles of the State had warned Sawāi Pratāp Singh, "Our kingdom is going out of our hands. You should apply some remedy to set it right." The Rajah's reply was, "You are the pillars of my State. Carry out any plan that you consider best." The diwan asked the leading barons to be always in attendance at the capital, pay their due revenue, carry out the orders of the Government and serve the State. The nobles, who were mostly their prince's clansmen and had fought loyally for his ancestors,



could not bear the disgrace of taking their orders from the low men who now dominated the Court, and yet the Rajah refused to dismiss the tailor. So, the nobles kept away from the capital, even as late as April 1786, leaving the Rajah to his fate. The Shekhāwat vassals took to a more aggressive course and seized his territory near their estates.

While thus abandoned by the warriors of his land, Sawāi Pratāp Singh also made Khush-hālī Bohrā his enemy. This old minister had a real affection for his former masters, Mādho Singh and Prithvi Singh. The last-named Rajah had left behind him a son Mān Singh, only six months old at the time of his death. But the little orphan's rights were set at nought by the late king's younger brother Pratāp Singh. To save the child from possible murder, Khush-hālī Rām contrived to send him away to his maternal grandfather's house in Kishangarh. This roused Sawāi Pratāp Singh to fury ; he put Khush-hālī Rām in prison and declared Mān Singh a spurious child. But Mān Singh remained a pawn in the hands of those who wanted to save the Kachhwa kingdom by removing a sovereign who only disgraced his throne. Plans were constantly formed and appeals were made to Mahādji Sindhia in the name of the lawful heir of Jaipur to replace Pratāp Singh by Mān Singh with his armed help. The prime mover in these conspiracies was the Narukā Rāo Rājah who aspired to rule the State as guardian of the boy Mān Singh. Khush-hālī Rām Bohra





inclined to these plots only when Sawāi Pratāp Singh made his life intolerable, i.e., after 1786. Mahādji, however, never seriously contemplated such a change, and he kept Mān Singh for the rest of his life at Vrindāvan on a jagir given by him.

§ 5. *Jaipur Rajah's tribute to Emperor unpaid.*

Mahādji Sindhia, as Mir Bakhshi, found himself burdened with the duty of collecting from the Jaipur Rajah the enormous dues of two different masters. The Jaipur State had, at different times in the past, bound itself to pay the Marathas large contributions, besides which quite recently (in 1779) the Rajah had promised to the Emperor 20 lakhs of Rupees as succession fine and tribute, payable through the medium of the Mir Bakhshi. Mahādji had to take this claim up among the first tasks of his new office. But the habitual conduct of the Kachhwa Government proved that nothing short of armed coercion and seizure of territory would secure any money from it.

We have seen in Chapter 18, § 1 that the total contribution promised by the Jaipur Rajah to the Marathas in 1748-51 was 12 lakhs, and that in July 1757 Raghunath Dada and Holkar realised six lakhs out of it. In September 1758 Mādho Singh was coerced into promising 36 lakhs *plus* 3 lakhs more. Malhar Rao Holkar was unable to collect any portion of these dues either by his expedition of 1759 or by his viceroy at Mangrol in



1761. [§ 7-10.] But in 1765 the Jaipur Rajah made terms with Holkar and paid five lakhs down with bankers' bills for another four lakhs. [Ch. 24, § 12.]

During the Emperor's march to Rajputana early in 1779, the Jaipur Rajah paid him two lakhs and promised a further sum of 20 lakhs by instalments [Ch. 30, § 3.] When these fell into arrears, Najaf sent Mahbub Ali to enforce payment, 1780-81, but without any success. Hence in March 1781 he sent Himmat Bahadur to Jaipur to try persuasion. The Gosāin secured one instalment of Rs. 75,000 and probably one more. But throughout the three years 1782-'84 nothing was paid by the Kachhwa king, who took advantage of the internal quarrels and weakness of the Delhi Government to defy it.

Therefore, after crushing Muhammad Beg Hamadāni and making terms with the Rajahs of Bharatpur and Mācheri, Mahādji attacked the Jaipur frontier at Mahewa-Ramgarh. But Khush-hāli Rām Bohrā, now met him with peace offers, taking the place of his murdered namesake the Haldiā, as the agent of Jaipur in the imperial camp. The tribute was settled at 21 lakhs\* and the envoy took his leave to raise the money, a

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\* Two lakhs in cash and two lakhs in jewels, payable immediately. Ten lakhs by cession of territory, and seven lakhs ordered on the vassal nobles. The *sebandi* troops stationed for collecting the last item were to be chargeable on these nobles. [HP. 406. DY. i. 133.]





Muslim officer of Afrāsiyāb's service being sent with him (c. 25 Dec. 1784.) But throughout the year 1785 the Jaipur Rajah paid only three lakhs, when he saw the new imperial regent fully absorbed in a struggle with the refractory officers of Afrāsiyāb Khan and not yet firmly in the saddle as the executive head of the Delhi Government.

§ 6. *Mahādji Sindhia's first invasion of Jaipur 1786. Settlement of the tribute.*

Aligarh capitulated on 20th November, and thus freed from his anxiety, Sindhia began (on 3rd January 1786) his march towards Jaipur, taking the Emperor with himself. Arrived near Dig he halted for over a month (10 Jan.—15 Feb.) trying to secure a peaceful payment through the mediation of the Narukā and the Bohrā. But the hope faded away, and at last the entire camp resumed its advance (on 15 Feb.), arriving near Lalsot on the first of the next month. The Rao Rajah of Mācheri had been sent on to Jaipur in advance. He returned with the Jaipur envoys, Bālāji Mahant (the spiritual guide of the late Rajah Mādho Singh) and the Bohrā minister on 6th March. Mahādji himself paid the first visit to Bālāji and prostrated himself before him. The Brahman in pontifical pride did not rise to welcome him, but graciously stretched his leg forward and the supreme lord of legions rubbed his forehead on the monk's holy toes (8th March.)



On the 10th discussions were opened. Last year, out of the tribute settled (21 lakhs), only three lakhs had been paid and certain parganahs (Hindaun &c.) with an estimated revenue of 10 lakhs ceded; these had been occupied on behalf of Sindhia by the Narukā and Najaf Quli Khan. The Jaipur envoy now begged Sindhia to release these lands and also to deduct from the tribute due an estimated compensation for the damage to the crops caused by the imperial army of occupation. [DY. i. 162.] The higgling was long protracted, and at times threatened to end in a rupture because of the double-dealing of the selfish Narukā. If Mahādji had agreed to the moderate sum offered by the Jaipur envoy, it would in all probability have been actually realised through the wise Khush-hāli Rām's influence and exertions. But the Narukā Pratāp Singh, unwilling to promote a peace which would make him disgorge Narnaul and other parganahs, cunningly set Mahādji against any reasonable settlement by advising him to rise absurdly high in his demands (to 60 lakhs), and told him that if he accepted any smaller sum after personally coming all the way from Dig to Jaipur and bringing the Emperor himself in his train, it would lower his prestige! He even suggested that, if the reigning king of Jaipur failed to find such a large sum, he should be deposed and Mān Singh set up on the throne, with the Narukā Pratāp as his guardian and regent, in return for which post he would pay





Sindhia 50 lakhs. This selfish man's one aim was to perpetuate his hold on the Kachhwa kingdom by becoming the all-powerful Maratha's agent and representative there. In the course of time Mahādji realised that the Mācheri chief was a deceiver and mischief-maker, saying one thing to him and another to the Jaipur Rajah. [*Ibr.* ii. 156.]

During the parleys, the Jaipur side offered ten lakhs in full clearance of all the arrears and including the present year's instalment of the tribute. But Mahādji said that the arrears had now reached a total of three krores and forty lakhs ;—to which Khush-hāli Rām replied, "We have not even so many pebbles. Where can we find that number of rupees?" After much talk it was at last agreed by both sides that the Kachhwa kingdom should pay 63 lakhs (60 lakhs as *peshkash* and three lakhs as *darbar* charges), and out of this amount eleven lakhs were to be paid immediately (cash 7 lakhs, jewels 3 lakhs, elephants and horses 1 lakh),—ten lakhs were to be paid in six months' time, and twenty lakhs were to be provided by the cession of land ; and the remaining 22 lakhs were covered by assignments on the revenue of the fiefs of the feudal barons. But the collections already made by the imperialists during their recent occupation were to be set off against the last item. [*DY.* i. 163. *Satara* ii. 254. *Ibr.* ii. 155.]



These terms being settled, the Jaipur envoys paid three lakhs in cash and kind, and Khush-hālī Rām took his leave (on 20th April, 1786) to collect the balance of eight lakhs and thus liquidate the first instalment. At Jaipur, the Bohrā squeezed some money out of Rodā Rām khawās,—who had made hay while enjoying the sunshine of royal favour—and assessed the richer citizens individually for forced contributions. Payment was enforced by confinement. His dismissed rival, Daulat Rām Haldiā, then migrated to Oudh with his family. “Khush-hālī Rām, on becoming regent again, restored all the former officials to their posts and imprisoned the new ones [of the Haldiā party], released the bankers and other rich people then in confinement, reassured the citizens and made them reopen their shops.” [HP. 476. *Aiti. Tip.* vi. 41.]

The first quota of eleven lakhs having been fully discharged by the end of May, Sindhia left Rāyāji Pātil with a strong force, as well as Najaf Quli and the Mācheri Rajah, in that kingdom for collecting the second instalment of ten lakhs and the assignment for 22 lakhs on the baronial estates, and also for holding the ceded districts. Then he started on his return journey on 4th June, reaching Dig on the 20th. Two days later the Emperor set out for Delhi, and four days after him Mahādji moved to Mathura, where and at Vrindāvan a few miles north of it, he passed the next five months.





§ 7. *Sindhia's anxieties and money difficulties during 1786. His movements in January and February 1787.*

Throughout the year 1785 Mahadji had been worn out by harassing anxiety and opposition, and he had to make his position as Regent of the Empire good by capturing Dig, Agra and Aligarh, and to reopen the Deccan road by suppressing the troublesome Khichis of Rāghogarh. No doubt, at the beginning of 1786 the political sky in the north had cleared and he felt himself free to march to Jaipur and press the Rajah for the tribute due. But this year was a period of no less anxiety to the Maratha nation than the preceding one: their chief in Puna was engaged, with very inferior armed resources of his own and the lukewarm aid of a Haidarabad contingent, in a deadly contest with Tipu Sultan at the head of a superb cavalry and a matchless artillery worked by Frenchmen. And it was only on 26 February 1787, that this war was ended by the treaty of Gajendragarh. In addition to this long and serious entanglement which killed all hopes of his getting any support from his Central Government, Mahadji was involved in difficulties of his own,—a rupture with the British resident James Anderson over Faqir Khair-ud-din (March-May 1786), the revolt of Gosain Himmat Bahadur, and the encirclement of his general Khande Rao Hari in Bundelkhand (Oct.-Nov.) But towards the close of the year the situation had greatly eased, except





1786]

for his money difficulties which became more and more hopeless.

The portion of the Mughal Empire that still belonged to the Padishah was yielding no revenue: it had now shrunk into half the middle Doab and the Delhi-Agra districts. But even here much of the land had been alienated by Mirzā Najaf Khan as military fiefs. What little remained under the Crown had not yet recovered from the ravages of fifteen years' anarchy and civil war and the continuous drought of the last three years. Sindhia tried one chancellor after another in his attempt to raise a revenue from Hindustan; but he could as soon have drawn blood out of stone. This failure, which he wrongly ascribed to the negligence or peculation of his *diwans*, almost drove him mad and he wanted to see if more money would flow from his doing the diwan's work himself! Such an attempt meant in effect that he threw himself into the arms of irresponsible and incompetent low class officials or smooth-spoken cheats. Old men sadly noted this infatuation of the supreme executive head of an empire, but could do nothing to avert his ruin. By the end of 1786, the Emperor's monthly allowance of Rs. 1,30,000 was already five months due, the pay of the troops had fallen still more heavily into arrears. And during his long halt at Vrindavan Mahadji had lavished large sums on the temples and priests—in prayers for the gift of a son and heir.





Finally leaving Vrindavan on 17th November, he arrived on the bank of the Jamuna at Chirghat, 15 miles northwards, close to the fortalice of Shergarh. As the Mewatis were disturbing the country to his west, he made a march in that direction and reached Nandgāon (15 miles south-west of Shergarh) about the 10th of December next. Here James Anderson took leave of him (13th Dec.) on retirement to England. Shortly afterwards Mahadji marched north-westwards into Mewat in order to overawe the rebels there, especially Murād Beg, a Mughal officer of the Najaf Khani service, whom Sindhia wanted to remove from the possession of Kishangarh fort (13 miles west of Firuzpur-Jhirka) and the governorship of Mewat. This having been peacefully effected, he turned north to Pinjor, 8 m. north of Hodal (c. 30th Dec.) so as to be nearer to Delhi and more speedily conclude his negotiations for bringing the Emperor to his camp, and also to check the Sikh raids into the north Delhi tract. An expedition against Ghulam Qadir, the successor of Zābita Khan, for the purpose of wresting the Saharanpur district from him, was also contemplated. In fact, Mahadji's mind was not yet made up: he meant to shape his policy according to the actual conduct of the Jaipur Government. In the neighbourhood of Hodal he lay encamped for the next two months. And here he received his two Delhi agents—Shah Nizāmuddin and Ladoji Deshmukh, whom the Emperor had sent



(on 6th February 1787) to dun him for his outstanding allowances, now amounting to Rs. 8,40,000. It was no easy matter for Sindhia to find such a sum, and he detained the envoys for three weeks, after which he sent them back (27th Feb.) with bankers' bills for two lakhs payable at sight, assignments for five lakhs on the revenue of Mirat and other mahals, and a promise to pay up the balance of Rs. 1,40,000 in two months. The next day Sindhia set his face southwards for Dig, where he celebrated the Spring Carnival on 4th March, and then on the 16th of that month began the invasion of Jaipur in person.

§ 8. *How the Jaipur Government provoked invasion in 1787.*

When in June of the previous year Mahadji had retired from the Jaipur kingdom, he had left behind him Najaf Quli Khan and the Rao Rajah of Macheri to collect the promised tribute. Both of these agents were lukewarm in his cause, the first through habitual indolence and self-indulgence, and the second through the selfish design of enlarging his own State at the expense of Jaipur. Of his own men Sindhia had quartered a contingent under the faithful Rāyāji Pātil there, to collect the sums assigned upon the vassals of the Kachhwa kingdom. This force, a little over 5,000 Deccani horse, could do nothing decisive when matters came to a fight.





The fact was, the Jaipur Rajah had no wish to pay anything. "Every time after great effort and the assembling of an army against him, a little money could be collected from him." [G. Ali, iii. 231, *Ibr.* 162.] Experience had also taught Sindhia that he could not put the necessary pressure upon the Rajah by means of his agents and that if he expected any substantial result he must go there in person.

In addition to this persistent default, Rajah Sawai Pratap Singh had sent his ex-diwan Daulat Ram Haldia to Lucknow (May 1786) to intrigue for the hiring of an English force against the Marathas. This agent spent eight months there, and though the new Governor-General Lord Cornwallis definitely forbade any English intervention in the quarrels of the Indian States, some local British officials (like Kirkpatrick), out of alarm at Sindhia's designs in the Doab, encouraged Daulat Ram's hopes of armed aid from their Government. In January 1787, Haldia returned to Jaipur and was installed as prime minister once more, while Khush-hāli Rām Bohrā, who stood for friendly relations with the Marathas, fell out of favour. The Bohra's greatest crime in his master's eyes was his kindness to Mān Singh, the dispossessed legitimate heir, whom he was accused of trying to instal on the throne by the aid of Mahadji. [*DY.* i. 173, 220. *PRC.* 86.]

Meantime Sindhia had proposed to the Jaipur Court a marriage between his little daughter and



their young Rajah, but it was declined on account of the difference in caste between them. The Rajputs refused to recognise the Maratés as Kshatriyas of equal purity.

With the return of Daulat Ram to power and on the strength of the rumours which he brought that the English were concentrating their forces in the Doab against Mahadji's eastern frontier, the Jaipur Government took up a vigorous policy of resistance. A close defensive alliance was formed with the neighbouring Rajah of Jodhpur, and the Kachhwa vassals everywhere were ordered to refuse payment of the sums assigned on them to Mahadji by last year's treaty and to resist the Marathas by force. The Rajah shut himself up in his capital and prepared to stand a siege, abandoning the idea of fighting the invaders in the open. The tortoise drew his head into his impenetrable shell and lay in motionless security there, shutting his eyes to his realm outside which lay bare to the invader's fury.

Rayaji Patil and his colleagues had at first gained some successes and occupied some of the outlying parts of the Kachhwa kingdom. Then came the Rajput reaction. Towards the end of December 1786, he lost 700 men in an abortive assault on a local mud-fort. The situation became steadily worse after the return of Haldia, and at the end of February Mahadji had to send up a strong force under his Bakhshi Jivā Dādā to





support Rāyājī. [*DY.* 173, 216, 199. *Ibr.* ii. 163. *PRC.* i. 80.]

This brings us to March 1787. In the middle of that month Mahādji definitely set out on the invasion of Jaipur, for he had at last become convinced that nothing short of annexation of a portion of Jaipur territory would enable him to secure payment of the enormous contributions which the Kachhwa Rajah owed to the Emperor and to the Peshwa. We see repeated here the intolerable position of Dalhousie when confronted with the eternal default of the Nizām in paying for his subsidiary force.

It was, however, after long hesitation that Mahadji chose to draw the sword. The Emperor, fearful of his own safety, wrote again and again urging his Regent not to advance beyond Dig with the bulk of his army, lest the English should swoop down upon defenceless Delhi and enthrone some princely puppet of their own, as they had already done in Bengal and Oudh. Such a suspicion was strengthened by the recent massing of English troops on the Doab frontier of Oudh, as far as Farrukhabad where no European infantry had been seen before this. [*DY.* i. 213, 220. *G. Ali* iii. 231. *ML.* 301. *PRC.* i. 99.]

At first, so long as Sindhia did not lose all hope of getting any money from Jaipur through his agents, his chief concern was to protect the north Delhi region from the Sikhs by sending a strong force there under Ambaji Ingle and also to



hire the Sikh leaders for an invasion of Saharanpur in order to exact tribute from Ghulam Qadir Khan. But Ambaji totally failed in the second part of his mission, and the fear of British intervention from the Fathgarh camp made Mahadji finally give up his ambitions in the upper Doab. [PRC. i. 77, 78.]

At Jaipur, too, his earlier hopes faded away as completely, and this enforced on him a policy of active aggression. In December 1786 the power of that kingdom had reached its low ebb from the lack of a policy and a leader to enforce it, dissensions among the nobles in the capital, and a temporary coolness with its only ally the Jodhpur Rajah whom Sindhia's agents had approached with success. Matters came to such a pass that in the middle of January next the discontented and long unpaid generals of the Kachhwa State agreed to open the gates of the capital and admit the Maratha troops for a bribe of Rs. 80,000. But the plot did not mature. Daulat Ram Haldiā returned from Lucknow a few days afterwards, the pro-Maratha faction among the Rajah's nobles was crushed and Haldiā became prime minister once more, bent on pursuing an open anti-Maratha policy (*c.* 20 January.) The quarrel with Jodhpur was quickly made up and armed preparations for defence were pushed on. Rāyāji Pātil's position was rendered still weaker by the enemy's busy seduction of his faithless Mughalia contingent with promises to pay their arrears of salary. He, there-





fore, wrote "daily urging his master to advance speedily to his support." [Ibr. ii. 163. PRC. i. 71, 82.]

§ 9. *Sindhia's march into Jaipur ; attempts at compromise.*

Mahadji took prompt action. Leaving Dig on 16th March and making daily marches without a halt, he reached Dāosā on the 24th. This place lies 32 miles east of Jaipur ; the advanced division of the Maratha army under Rāyāji, stood near Sangāner, seven miles south of the Kachhwā capital. But seemingly diplomacy had not yet been exhausted. Peace envoys from Jaipur attended Mahadji's camp discussing the amount of their tribute. But there was a conflict of counsel in his inner circle: the ever-sober Rānā Khan and the practical Rāyāji Pātil pressed him to accept a moderate tribute by way of compromise and retire immediately from Rajputana so as to avoid the increasing summer heat and to overawe his many secret enemies by occupying a more central position like Mathura. But the Rao Rajah and Khush-hali Ram appealed to his vanity by pointing out that after coming to the gates of Jaipur in person he could not, consistently with his dignity, retire with only the small tribute which had been offered to his servants before. The Macheri chief knew that if Sindhia got only a trifle from Jaipur he would try to recoup himself for the heavy expenses of this expedition by seizing Macheri





territory. And Khush-hali Ram Bohra knew that with the coming back of his Haldia rival he had lost all his posts and property in Jaipur and could not return there and remain alive. These two therefore fed Mahadji's ambition and pride by assuring him that at his mere appearance before the gates of Jaipur that city would fall in terror of his arms and that he would be able to annex the whole Kachhwa kingdom to his own dominions which would then stretch in unbroken extent from Ujjain to Delhi and from the Ganges to Ajmir. Faced by these two rival policies, Mahadji Sindhia seemed to have lost for a time his political vision and sense of reality. "He came under unlucky stars and his eyes were clouded by sloth," as his admirer Khair-ud-din admits. He cried out in exasperation at the Jaipur Rajahs persistent breach of faith that he would "empty the Jaipur capital of its defenders and seize it, as he had done Gwalior and Gohad." [*Ibr.* iii. 3, *DY.* i. 210.] The Rao Rajah and Khush-hali Ram and the other Jaipur refugees, having wormed their way into Mahadji's confidence, proposed to him to make Mān Singh Rajah of half the Kachhwa kingdom as a Maratha *protegee* and rival to Sawai Pratap Singh. They themselves would act as his regents and recompense Sindhia for his armed aid by giving him bonds for the regular payment of the fixed tribute in future. [*DY.* i. 201.]





In another way, too, a peaceful settlement was rendered impossible by the stiffening of the Jaipur attitude, as allies began to gather for the defence of that State. Pratap Singh, through his favourite Rodā Rām (ex-tailor), informed Sindhia, "The arrears of past tribute amount to 12 lakhs. Out of this, take four lakhs down, two lakhs more will be paid in July, and the remaining moiety of six lakhs will be discharged by the assignment of land." But he did not really mean to keep his word; on 7th April his envoys abruptly left the Maratha camp without coming to any settlement or even taking formal leave. [DY. 201, 211. PRC. i. p. 169.] Mahadji in anger expelled every Jaipur agent and news-writer from his camp and next day made a rapid march westwards to Bhānkri, which is only 13 miles from Jaipur, in order to increase his pressure on the Rajah. His vanguard, under Rayaji, now advanced from his post at Sanganer seven miles south of Jaipur to the gates of that city.

But this distant demonstration of force produced no result. The tortoise would not move nor even stretch its neck out of its shell. So, Mahadji stooped to invite the Jaipur envoys back to his camp at Bhānkri. They returned on 14th April, but the terms they offered were even more unsatisfactory than before and no Regent of the Empire could accept them with honour: "The Jaipur Rajah offered four lakhs immediately and demanded the surrender of Khush-hali Ram





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Bohra to him, after which he would clear the balance of the tribute. Mahadji refused to set off against his claims anything on the ground of damage to crops (*pāi-māli*) by his troops, or to surrender the Bohra. Hence a rupture took place." [Hingane's despatch, *DY.* i. 220. *PRC.* i. p. 169.]

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## CHAPTER XXXV

## THE LALSOT CAMPAIGN, 1787.

§ 1. *Second stage of campaign: Mahadji retires from before Jaipur, May 1787.*

Nothing was now left to Sindhia but to throw his sword into the scale. But even for a trial of arms his relative superiority had vanished during this delay. Thanks to Daulat Ram's vigorous action, the Jaipur Rajah had had time to assemble his feudal levies, numbering about 20,000. His ally of Jodhpur sent to him 5,000 of the wild Rathor horse, and 5000 mercenary Naga musketeers under his general Bhim Singh. [DY. 201, 200.] Worst of all, the Jaipur diwan was meeting with success in seducing the old Najaf Khani troops, both Mughalia horse and Hindustani sepoys, now under Sindhia's banners. The allied Rajputs now put a bold face on, and issuing from the capital (1st May) encamped some miles south of it, in order to bar any further Maratha advance. Their Rajah himself joined this camp on the 2nd. "Sindhia became at length convinced that he had grasped at too many objects together, and he *secretly* acknowledged his indiscretion in having underrated the strength of the Rajput confederacy and overvalued . . . the fame and dread of his power." [Kirkpatrick in PRC. i. p. 180.] So, he judged it unsafe to remain near Jaipur, and adopted the plan of seizing the forts



of the Kachhwa Rajah's vassals and annexing their baronies. [DY. 201, 200, 220.]

Recalling Rāyāji Pātil from his advanced position near Sangāner, Mahadji (on 5-7 May) fell back from Bhānkri to Sawlia twenty miles southwards. This place is only 20 miles to the west of Lalsot. He publicly declared that in thus falling back his object was to draw the Rajputs into the open country where he would be able to engage them with greater advantage. But the Rajputs were rightly exultant at this movement of their enemy. The strategic march to the rear had exposed the weakness of Mahadji; with all his vast forces and artillery and European-led battalions, he had been forced to retreat without obtaining a single Rupee from their Rajah. The enemy army had by this time swollen to 40,000 men. All the country was up in tumult; outside the Maratha camp the roads could not be traversed in safety; all caravans were being looted on the way. [DY. i. 200. PRC. i. pp. 180-186.]

By this move Sindhia had interposed himself between the main Jaipur army (now at Sangāner) and the southern districts of that kingdom. He next marched through the latter region, raiding and levying contribution, and seizing forts like Jhālāi, Navai &c., till he reached the Banās river near Sārsop, close to the Bundi frontier. Meantime, his Hindustani and Mughalia troops continued to desert him everyday, though in small numbers. On the 6th of May, two eminent





captains, Zulfiqār Ali Khan and Mansur Ali Khan, secretly went over to the enemy with their forces. The climax came on the 25th of that month when the greatest Mughalia general, Muhammad Beg Hamadāni joined the Rajah of Jaipur, to the intense terror and despair of the Maratha army. He was promised Rs. 3000 a day and given a royal welcome by his new master who made him the leader of the defence, as his unquestionable ability and fame deserved. [DY. i. 220, 221. DC.]

§ 2. *Third stage of campaign: Muhammad Beg Hamadani's desertion; Sindhia retreats eastwards.*

Muhammad Beg's defection enforced a total change of plan on Mahadji. He could not trust a single Hindustani soldier after this. It now became a question with him how to save his life and the honour of his women who had come with him. Even more painful was the blow to his prestige; a retreat into safety was still possible, but such a confession of failure would make him the laughing stock of Hindustan and of the Puna Court alike and dissolve his newly created power over the imperial Government. He therefore sent off urgent orders to Khande Rao Hari and Ambaji Ingle to hasten to his aid with their divisions and appealed to the Emperor to issue from Delhi and join his camp in order to lend the prestige of his name to his Regent's acts. He fell back from the neighbourhood of Sārsop to Piplāi,