

the last to a Rahtore Rajpoot, who had apostatized to save his land, and was now a Nawab ; to the north, it extended as far as Sooltanpore, on the Chumbul, across which was the small domain of Nandta. In this space were contained three hundred and sixty townships, and a rich soil fertilized by numerous large streams.

The favour and power Madhu Sing enjoyed, enabled him to increase the domain he held direct of the crown, and his authority at his death extended to the barrier between Malwa and Harouti. Madhu Sing died in S. 1687, leaving five sons, whose appanages became the chief fiefs of Kotah. To the holders and their descendants, in order to mark the separation between them and the elder Haras of Boondi, the patronymic of the founder was applied, and the epithet *Madhani* is sufficiently distinctive whenever two Haras, bearing the same name, appear together. These were,

1. Mokund Sing, who had Kotah.
2. Mohun Sing, who had Polaito.
3. Joojarh Sing, who had Kotra, and subsequently Ramgurh-Relawun.
4. Kuniram, who had Koelah.\*
5. Keshore Sing, who obtained Sangode.

Raja Mokund Sing succeeded. To this prince the chief pass in the barrier dividing Malwa from Harouti owes its name of *Mokundurra*, which gained an unfortunate celebrity on the defeat and flight of the British troops under Brigadier Monson, A.D. 1804. Mokund erected many places of strength and utility ; and the palace and *petta* of Antah are both attributable to him.

\* He held also the districts of Deh and Goorah in grant direct of the empire.

Raja Mokund gave one of those brilliant instances of Rajpoot devotion to the principle of legitimate rule, so many of which illustrate his national history. When Arungzeb formed his parricidal design to dethrone his father Shah Jehan, nearly every Rajpoot rallied round the throne of the aged monarch ; and the Rahtores and the Haras were most conspicuous. The sons of Madhu Sing, besides the usual ties of fidelity, forgot not that to Shah Jehan they owed their independence, and they determined to defend him to the death. In S. 1714, in the field near Oojein, afterwards named by the victor *Futtehabad*, the five brothers led their vassals, clad in the saffron-stained garment, with the bridal *mor* (coronet) on their head, denoting death or victory. The imprudent intrepidity of the Rahtore commander denied them the latter, but a glorious death no power could prevent, and all the five brothers fell in one field. The youngest, Kishore Sing, was afterwards dragged from amidst the slain, and, though pierced with wounds, recovered. He was afterwards one of the most conspicuous of the intrepid Rajpoots serving in the Dekhan and often attracted notice, especially in the capture of Beejapoor. But the imperial princes knew not how to appreciate or to manage such men, who, when united under one who could control them, were irresistible.

Juggut Sing, the son of Mokund, succeeded to the family estates, and to the *munsab* or dignity of a commander of two thousand, in the imperial army. He continued serving in the Dekhan until his death in S. 1726, leaving no issue.

Paim Sing, son of Kuniram of Koelah, succeeded; but was so invincibly stupid that the *panch* (council of chiefs) set him aside after six months' rule, and sent him back to Koelah, which is still held by his descendants.\*

Kishore Sing, who so miraculously recovered from his wounds, was placed upon the *godi*. When throne was at length obtained by Arungzeb, Kishore was again serving in the south, and shedding his own blood, with that of his kinsmen, in its subjugation. He greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Beejapoor, and was finally slain at the escalade of Arcatgurrh (Arcot), in S. 1742. He was a noble specimen of a Hara; and, it is said, counted fifty wounds on his person. He left three sons, Bishen Sing, Ram Sing, and Hurnat Sing. The eldest, Bishen Sing, was deprived of his birthright for refusing to accompany his father to the south; but had the appanage and royal palace of Antah conferred upon him. His issue was as follows: Pirthi Sing, chief of Antah, whose son, Ajit Sing, had three sons, Chuttersal, Goman Sing, and Raj Sing.

Ram Sing, who was with his father when he was killed, succeeded to all his dignities, and was inferior to none in the contests which fill the page of imperial history, and in opposing the rise of the Mahrattas. In

the war of succession, he embraced the cause of Prince Azim, the viceroy in the Dekhan, against the elder Modazim, and was slain in the battle of Jajow, in S. 1764. In this memorable conflict, which decided the succession to the throne, the Kotah prince espoused the opposite cause to the head of his house of Boondi, and Hara met Hara in that desperate encounter, when a cannon-shot terminated the life of Ram Sing in the very zenith of his career.

Bheem Sing succeeded; and with him Kotah no longer remained a *raj* of the third order. On the death of Buhadoor Shah, and the accession of Ferokser, Raja Bheem espoused the cause of the Syeds, when his *raumsab* was increased to 'five thousand,' a rank heretofore confined to princes of the blood and rajas of the first class. The elder branch of the Haras maintained its fealty to the throne against these usurping ministers, and thus the breach made at the battle of Jajow was widened by their taking opposite sides. The disgraceful attempt of Raja Bheem on the life of Rao Raja Boodh of Boondi has already been recorded. Having completely identified himself with the designs of the Syeds and Jey Sing of Amber, he aided all the schemes of the latter to annihilate Boondi, an object the more easy of accomplishment since the unmerited and sudden misfortunes of Rao Boodh had deprived him of his reason. Raja Bheem obtained the royal *sunnud* or grant for all the lands on the Pathar, from Kotah west, to the descent into Aheerwarra east; which comprehended much land of the Kheechies as well as of Boondi. He thus obtained the celebrated castle

\* A descendant of his covered Monson's retreat even before this general reached the Mokundurra Pass, and fell defending the ford of the Amjar, disdaining to retreat. His simple cenotaph marks the spot where in the gallant old style this chief "spread his carpet" to meet the Dekhani host, while a British commander, at the head of a force capable of sweeping one end of India to the other, fled! The author will say more of this in his Personal Narrative, having visited the spot.

of Gagrown, now the strongest in Harouti, and rendered memorable by its defence against Alla-o-din; likewise Mow Mydana, Shirgurh, Barah, Mangrole, and Barode, all to the eastward of the Chumbul, which was formally constituted the western boundary of the state. The aboriginal Bhils of *Oajla*, or 'pure' descent, had recovered much of their ancient inheritance in the intricate tracts on the southern frontier of Harouti. Of these, Munohur Thana, now the most southern garrison of Kotah, became their chief place, and here dwelt 'the king of the Bhils,' Raja Chukersen, whose person was attended by five hundred horse and eight hundred bowmen, and to whom all the various tribes of Bhils, from Mewar to the extremity of the plateau, owed obedience. This indigenous race, whose simple life secured their preservation amidst all the vicissitudes of fortune, from Raja Bhoj of Dhar to Raja Bheem of Kotah, were dispossessed and hunted down without mercy, and their possessions added to Kotah. On the occasion of the subjugation of Bhilwarra, the latter assigned tracts of land to the Omot chiefs of Nursingurh and Rajgurh Patun, with townships in *thali*,\* in Kotah proper, and hence arose the claim of Kotah on these independent states for the tribute termed *tunka*.\* At the same time, all the chieftains acknowledged the supremacy of Kotah, under articles of precisely the same nature as those which guaranteed the safety and

independence of Rajwarra by Britain; with this difference, that the Omuts could not be installed without the *khelat* of recognition of the princes of Kotah. Had Raja Bheem lived, he would further have extended the borders of Harouti, which were already carried beyond the mountains. Onarsi, Dig, Perawa, and the lands of the Chunderawuts, were brought under subjection, but were lost with his death, which, like that of his predecessors, was an untimely sacrifice to duty towards the throne.

When the celebrated Khilij Khan, afterwards better known to history as Nizam-ool-Moolk, fled from the court to maintain himself by force of arms in his government of the Dekhan, Raja Jey Sing of Amber, as the lieutenant of the king, commanded Bheem Sing of Kotah and Guj Sing of Nurwar to intercept him in his passage. The Nizam was the *Pugri buddul Bhae*, or 'turban-exchanged brother,' of the Hara prince, and he sent him a friendly epistle, entreating him "not to credit the reports to his disadvantage, telling him that he had abstracted no treasures of the empire, and that Jey Sing was a meddling knave, who desired the destruction of both; and urging him to heed him not, nor offer any molestation to his passage to the south." The brave Hara replied, that "he knew the line between friendship and duty; he was commanded to intercept him, and had advanced for that purpose; it was the king's order; fight him he must, and next morning would attack him." The courtesy of the Rajpoot, who mingled no resentment with his hostility, but, like a true cavalier, gave due warning of his intention, was not thrown away upon

\* This is one more of the numerous inexplicable claims which the British Government has had to decide upon, since it became the universal arbitrator. Neither party understanding their origin, the difficulty of a just decision must be obvious. This sets it at rest.

the wily Mooslem. The Nizam took post amidst the broken ground of the Sinde, near the town of Koorwey Bhorasso. There was but one approach to his position without a circuitous march, which suited not the impatient Rajpoot; and there his antagonist planted a battery, masked by some brushwood. At the *peela badul* (morning-dawn), Raja Bheem, having taken his *umlpani*, or opium-water, mounted his elephant, and uniting his vassals to those of the Cuchwaha, the combined clans moved on to the attack, in one of those dense masses, with couched lances, whose shock is irresistible. They were within musket-shot of the Nizam: had they reached him, Hyderabad would never have arisen on the ruins of Gowalcoond, the ancient Hara abode: but the battery opened, and in an instant the elephants with their riders, Raja Bheem and Raja Guj, were destroyed. Horse and foot became commingled, happy to emerge from the toils into which the blind confidence of their leaders had carried them; and Khilij Khan pursued the career that destiny had marked out for him.

On this occasion the Haras sustained a double loss: their leader, and their titular divinity, *Brij-nath*, the god of Brij. This *pulladium* of the Haras is a small golden image, which is borne on the saddle-bow of their princely leader in every conflict. When the *gole* is formed and the lances are couched, the signal of onset is the shout of "*Jy Brij-Nathji!*" "Victory to Brij-nath!" and many a glorious victory and many a glorious death has he witnessed. After being long missing, the representative of the god was recovered and sent to Kotah, to the great joy of every

Hara. It was in S. 1776 (A.D. 1720) that Bheem Sing perished, having ruled fifteen years, during which short period he established the affairs of his little dominion on a basis which has never been shaken.

The rivalry that commenced between the houses, when Hara encountered Hara on the plains of Dholpoor, and each princely leader sealed his fidelity to the cause he espoused with his blood, was brought to issue by Raja Bheem, whose attack upon Rao Bhood of Boondi, while defending the forlorn Ferochser, has already been related, though without its consequences. These were fatal to the supremacy of the elder branch; for, taking advantage of his position and the expulsion of Rao Boodh, in which he aided, Raja Bheem made an attempt upon Boondi, and despoiled that capital of all the insignia of sovereign rule, its *nakarras*, or kettle-drums, with the celebrated *rin-sankh*, or war-shell, an heir-loom descended from the heroes of antiquity. Even the military band, whose various discordant instruments are still in use, may be heard in *pseudo* concert from the guard-room over the chief gate of the citadel, at Kotah; while the "orange flag," the gift of Jehangir to Rao Ruttun, around which many a brave Hara has breathed his last, is now used by the junior house in all processions or battles.

To recover these ensigns of fallen dignity, many a stratagem has been tried. False keys of the city gates of Kotah and its citadel had been procured, and its guards won over by bribery to favour admission; but an unceasing vigilance defeated the plan when on the brink of execution: since which, the gates of Kotah are always closed

at sunset, and never opened even to the prince. This custom has been attended with great inconvenience; of which the following anecdote affords an instance. When Raja Doorjun after his defeat reached Kotah at midnight, with a few attendants, he called aloud to the sentinel for admittance; but the orders of the latter were peremptory, and allowed of no discretion. The soldier desired the Raja to be gone; upon which, expostulation being vain, he revealed himself as the prince. At this the soldier laughed; but, tired of importunity, bade his sovereign "go to hell," levelled his matchlock, and refused to call the officer on guard. The prince retired, and passed the night in a temple close at hand. At daybreak the gates were opened, and the soldiers were laughing at their comrade's story of the night, when the Raja appeared. All were surprised, but most of all the sentinel, who, taking his sword and shield, placed them at his sovereign's feet, and in a manly but respectful attitude awaited his decision. The prince raised him, and praising his fidelity, bestowed the dress he then wore upon him, besides a gift of money.

The Hara chronicler states, that Raja Bheem's person was seamed with scars, and so fastidious was he, through the fear of incurring the imputation of vanity, that he never undressed in presence of his attendants. Nor was it till his death-wound at Koorwee that this singularity was explained, on one of his confidential servants expressing his surprise at the numerous scars; which brought this characteristic reply: "He who is born to govern Haras, and desires to preserve his land, must

expect to get these: the proper post for a Rajpoot prince is ever at the head of his vassals."

Raja Bheem was the first prince of Kotah who had the dignity of *Punj-hazari*, or 'leader of five thousand,' conferred upon him. He was likewise the first of his dynasty who bore the title of *Maha-Rao*, or 'Great Prince;' a title confirmed though not conferred by the paramount sovereign, but by the head of their own princely tribes, the Rana of Mewar. Previous to Gopinath of Boondi, whose issue are the great feudal chiefs of Harouti, their titular appellation was *Apji*, which has the same import as *herself* (or rather himself), applied to highland chiefs of Scotland; but when Indur Sal went to Oodipoor, he procured the title of *Maharaja* for himself and his brothers; since which *Apji* has been applied to the holders of the secondary fiefs, the Madhani of Kotah. Raja Bheem left three sons, Arjoon Sing, Siam Sing, and Doorjun Sal.

Maha-Rao Arjoon married the sister of Madhu Sing, ancestor of Zalim Sing Jhala; but died without issue, after four year's rule. On his death there arose a civil war respecting the succession, in which the vassals were divided. Clan encountered clan in the field of Oodipoora, when the fate of Siam Sing was sealed in his blood. It is said, the survivor would willingly have given up dominion to have restored his brother to life; that he cursed his ambitious rashness and wept bitterly over the dead body. By these contentions, the rich districts of Rampoor, Bhanpoora, and Kalapete, which the king had taken from the ancient family and bestowed on Raja Bheem, were

lost to the Haras, and regained by their ancient possessors.

Doorjun Sal assumed the rod in S. 1780 (A. D. 1724). His accession was acknowledged by Mahomed Shah, the last of the Timoorean kings who deserved the appellation, and at whose court the prince of Kotah received the *khelat* and obtained the boon of preventing the slaughter of kine in every part of the Jumna frequented by his nation. Doorjun Sal succeeded on the eve of an eventful period in the annals of his country. It was in his reign that the Mahrattas under Bajrao first invaded Hindustan. On this memorable occasion, they passed by the Taruj Pass, and skirting Harouti on its eastern frontier, performed a service to Doorjun Sal, by attacking and presenting to him the castle of Nahrgurh, then held by a Mussulman chief. It was in S. 1795\* (A. D. 1739), that the first connexion between the Haras and the 'Southrons' took place; and this service of the Peshwa leader was a return for stores and ammunition necessary for his enterprize. But a few years only elapsed before this friendly act and the good understanding it induced were forgotten.

We have recorded, in the annals of Boondi, the attempts of the princes of Amber, who were armed with the power of the monarchy, to reduce the chiefs of Harouti to the condition of vassals. This policy, originating with Jey Sing, was pursued by his successor, who drove the gallant Boodh

Sing into exile, to madness and death, though the means by which he effected it ultimately recoiled upon him, to his humiliation and destruction. Having, however, driven Boodh Sing from Boondi, and imposed the condition of homage and tribute upon the creature of his installation, he desired to inflict supermacy on Kotah. In this cause, in S. 1800, he invited the three great Mahratta leaders, with the Jats under Sooruj Mul, when, after a severe conflict at Kotree, the city was invested. During three months, every effort was made, but in vain; and after cutting down the trees and destroying the gardens in the environs, they were compelled to decamp, the leader, Jey Appa Sindia, leaving one of his hands, which was carried off by a cannon-shot.

Doorjun Sal was nobly seconded by the courage and counsel of the *Foujdar*, or 'commandant of the garrison,' Himmut Sing, a Rajpoot of the Jhala tribe. It was through Himmut Sing that the negotiations were carried on, which added Nahrgurh to Kotah; and to him were confided those in which Kotah was compelled to follow the general denationalization, and become subservient to the Mahrattas. Between these two events, S. 1795 and S. 1800, Zalim Sing was born, a name of such celebrity, that his biography would embrace all that remains to be told of the history of the Haras.

When Esuri Sing was foiled, the brave Doorjun Sal lent his assistance to replace the exiled Omeda on the throne which his father had lost. But without Holcar's aid, this would have been vain; and, in S. 1805 (A. D. 1749), the year of Omeda's resto-

\* In this year, when Bajirao invaded Hindostan, passing through Harouti, Himmut Sing Jhala was *foujdar* of Kotah. In that year Seo Sing, and in the succeeding, the celebrated Zalim Sing was born.



ration, Kotah was compelled to become tributary to the Mahrattas.

Doorjun Sal added several places to his dominions. He took Phool-Burrode from the Kheechies, and attempted the fortress of Googore, which was bravely defended by Balbudur in person, who created a league against the Hara composed of the chiefs of Rampoor, Sheopoor, and Boondi. The standard of Kotah was preserved from falling into the hands of the Kheechies by the gallantry of Omeda Sing of Boondi. The battle between the rival clans, both of Chohan blood, was in S. 1810; and in three years more, Doorjun Sal departed this life. He was a valiant prince, and possessed all the qualities of which the Rajpoot is enamoured; affability, generosity, and bravery. He was devoted to field-sports, especially the royal one of tiger-hunting; and had *runnas* or preserves in every corner of his dominions (some of immense extent, with ditches and palisades, and sometimes circumvallations), in all of which he erected hunting-seats.

In these expeditions, which resembled preparations for war, he invariably carried the queens. These Amazonian ladies were taught the use of the matchlock, and being placed upon the terraced-roofs of the hunting-seats, sent their shots at the forest-lord, when driven past their stand by the hunters. On one of these occasions, the *Jhala Foujdar* was at the foot of the scaffolding; the tiger, infuriated with the uproar, approached him open-mouthed; but the prince had not yet given the word, and none dared to fire without this signal. The animal eyed his victim, and was on the point of springing, when the *Jhala* advanced his

shield, sprung upon him, and with one blow of his sword laid him dead at his feet. The act was applauded by the prince and his court, and contributed not a little to the character he had already attained.

Doorjun Sal left no issue. He was married to a daughter of the Rana of Mewar. Being often disappointed, and at length despairing of an heir, about three years before his death, he told the Rani it was time to think of adopting an heir to fill the *gadi*, "for it was evident that the Almighty disapproved of the usurpation which changed the order of succession." It will be remembered that Bishen Sing, son of Ram Sing, was set aside for refusing, in compliance with maternal fears, to accompany his father in the wars of the Dekhan. When dispossessed of his birth-right, he was established in the fief of Antah on the Chumbul. At the death of Doorjun Sal, Ajit Sing, grandson of the disinherited prince, was lord of Antah, but he was in extreme old age. He had three sons, and the eldest, whose name of Chutter Sal revived ancient associations, was formally "placed in the lap of the Rani Mewari; the *asees* (blessing) was given; he was taught the names of his ancestors (being no longer regarded as the Ajit of Antah), Chutter Sing, son of Doorjun Sal, Bheem-singote, Ram Sing, Kishore Sing, &c. &c.," and so on, to the fountain-head, Dewa Bango, and thence to Manik Rae, of Ajmer. Though the adoption was proclaimed and all looked to Chutter Sal as the future lord of the Haras of Kotah, yet on the death of Doorjun, the *Jhala Foujdar* took upon him to make an alteration in this important act, and he had power enough to effect it. The

old chief of Antah was yet alive, and the Foujdar said, "it was contrary to nature that the son should rule and the father obey ; but doubtless other motives mingled with his piety, in which, besides self-interest, may have been a consciousness of the dangers inseparable from a minority. The only difficulty was to obtain the consent of the chief himself, then "fourscore years and upwards," to abandon his peaceful castle on the Cali Sinda for the cares of government. But the Foujdar prevailed ; old Ajit was crowned, and survived his exaltation two years and a half. Ajit left three sons, Chutter Sal, Goman Sing, and Raj Sing.

Chutter Sal was proclaimed the Maha Rao of the Haras. The celebrated Himmuto Sing Jhala died before his accession, and his office of *Foujdar* was conferred upon his nephew, Zalim Sing.

At this epoch, Madhu Sing, who had acceded to the throne of Amber on the suicide of his predecessor, Esuri, instead of taking warning by example, prepared to put forth all his strength for the revival of these tributary claims upon the Haras, which had cost his brother his life. The contest was between Rajpoot and Rajpoot ; the question at issue was supremacy on the one hand, and subserviency on the other, the sole plea for which was that the Kotah contingent had acted under the princes of Amber, when lieutenants of the empire. But the Haras held in utter scorn the attempt to compel this service in their individual capacity, in which they only recognized them as equals.

It was in S. 1817 (A.D. 1761), that the prince of Amber assembled all his clans to force the Haras to acknowledge themselves

tributaries. The invasion of the Abdalli, which was humbled the Mahrattas and put a stop to their pretensions to universal sovereignty, left the Rajpoots to themselves. Madhu Sing, in his march to Harouti, assaulted Ooniara, and added it to his territory. Thence he proceeded to Lakhairi, which he took, driving out the crest-fallen Southrons. Emboldened by this success, he crossed at the Pally Ghat, the point of confluence of the Par and the Chumbul. The Hara chieftain of Sooltanpore, whose duty was the defence of the ford, was taken by surprise ; but, like a true Hara, he gathered his kinsmen outside his castle, and gave battle to the host. He made amends for his supineness, and bartered his life for his honour. It was remarked by the invaders, that, as he fell, his clenched hand grasped the earth, which afforded merriment to some, but serious reflection to those who knew the tribe, and who converted it into an omen "that even in death the Hara would cling to his land." The victors, flushed with this fresh success, proceeded through the heart of Kotah, until they reached Butwarro, where they found five thousand Haras, *ek baup ca beta*, all 'children of one father,' drawn up to oppose them. The numerical odds were fearful against Kotah ; but the latter were defending their altars and their honour. The battle commenced with a desperate charge of the whole Cuchwaha horse, far more numerous than the brave legion of Kotah ; but, too confident of success, they had tired their horses ere they joined. It was met by a dense mass, with perfect coolness, and the Haras remained unbroken by the shock. Fresh numbers came up ; the



infantry joined the cavalry, and the battle became desperate and bloody. It was at this moment that Zalim Sing made his *debut*. He was then twenty-one years of age, and had already, as the adopted son of Himmut Sing, "tied his turban on his head," and succeeded to his post of Foujdar. While the battle was raging, Zalim dismounted, and at the head of his quota, fought on foot, and at the most critical moment obtained the merit of the victory, by the first display of that sagacity for which he has been so remarkable throughout his life.

Mulhar Rao Holcar was encamped in their vicinity, with the remnant of his horde, but so crest-fallen since the fatal day of Panniput,\* that he feared to side with either. At this moment, young Zalim, mounting his steed, galloped to the Mahratta, and implored him, if he would not fight, to move round and plunder the Jeipoor camp; a hint which needed no repetition.

The little impression yet made on the Kotah band only required the report that "the camp was assaulted," to convert the lukewarm courage of their antagonists into panic and flight: "the host of Jeipoor fled, while the sword of the Hara performed *teerut* (pilgrimage) in rivers of blood."

The chiefs of Macherri, of Esurdeh, Watko, Barrole, Atchrole, with all the *otes* and *awuts* of Amber, turned their backs on

five thousand Haras of Kotah; for the Boondi troops, though assembled, did not join, and lost the golden opportunity to free its *kotreets*, or fiefs, from the tribute. Many prisoners were taken, and the *five-coloured banner* of Amber fell into the hands of the Haras, whose bard was not slow to turn the incident to account in the stanza, still repeated whenever he celebrates the victory of Butwarro, and in which the star (*tarra*) of Zalim prevailed:

"Jung Butwarro jeet

"Tarra Zalim Jhala

"Ring ek rung churra

"Rung Panch-rung ca.

"In the battle of Butwarro, the star of Zalim was triumphant. In that field of strife (*ringa*), but one colour (*rung*) covered that of the five-coloured (*panch-runga*) banner:" meaning that the Amber standard was dyed in blood.

The battle of Butwarro decided the question of tribute, nor has the Cuchwaha since this day dared to advance the question of supremacy, which, as lieutenant of the empire, he desired to transfer to himself. In derision of this claim, ever since the day of Butwarro, when the Haras assemble at their *Champ de Mars* to celebrate the annual military festival, they make a mock castle of Amber, which is demolished amidst shouts of applause.

Chutter Sal survived his elevation and this success but a few years; and as he died without offspring, he was succeeded by his brother.

\* It is singular enough, that Zalim Sing was born in the year of Nadir Shah's invasion, and made his political *entree* in that of the Abdalli.



## CHAPTER VII.

*Maha Rao Goman Sing.—Zalim Sing.—His birth, ancestry, and progress to power.—Office of Foujdar becomes hereditary in his family.—His office and estate resumed by Goman Sing.—He abandons Kotah.—Proceeds to Mewar.—Performs services to the Rana, and receives the title of Raj Rinna, and estates.—Serves against the Mahrattas.—Is wounded and made prisoner.—Returns to Kotah.—Mahratta invasion.—Storm of Bukuenie. Its glorious defence.—Sacrifice of a clan.—Garrison of Sukeit destroyed.—Zalim Sing employed.—His successful negotiation.—Restoration to power.—Rao Goman constitutes Zalim guardian of his son Omed Sing, who is proclaimed.—The Tika-dour, or 'raid of accession.'—Capture of Kailwarra.—Difficulties of the protector's situation.—Cabal against his power.—Destruction of the conspirators.—Exile of the Hara nobles. Curtailment of the feudal interests.—Conspiracy of Mosain.—Plan for the destruction of the regent and family.—Mosain chief takes sanctuary in the temple.—Is dragged forth and slain.—Maharao's brothers implicated in the plot.—Their incarceration and death.—Numerous projects against the life of the regent.—Female conspiracy.—How defeated.—The regent's precautions.*

GOMAN SING, in S. 1822 (A. D. 1766), ascended the *gadi* of his ancestors. He was in the prime of manhood, full of vigour and intellect, and well calculated to contend with the tempests collecting from the south, ready to pour on the devoted lands of Rajpootana. But one short *lustrum* of rule was all that fate had ordained for him, when he was compelled to resign his rod of power into the hands of an infant. But ere we reach this period, we must retrace our steps, and introduce more prominently the individual whose biography is the future history of this state; for Zalim Sing is Kotah, his name being not only indissolubly linked with her's in every page of her existence, but incorporated with that of every state of Rajpootana for more than half a century. He

was the *primum mobile* of the region he inhabited, a sphere far too confined for his genius, which required a wider field for its display, and might have controlled the destinies of nations.

Zalim Sing is a Rajpoot of the Jhala tribe. He was born in S. 1796 (A. D. 1740), an ever memorable epoch (as already observed) in the history of India, when the victorious Nadir Shah led his hordes into her fertile soil, and gave the finishing blow to the dynasty of Timour. But for this event, its existence might have been protracted, though its recovery was hopeless: the principle of decay had been generated by the policy of Arungzeb. Mahomed Shah was at this time emperor of India, and the valiant Doorjun Sal sat on the throne of

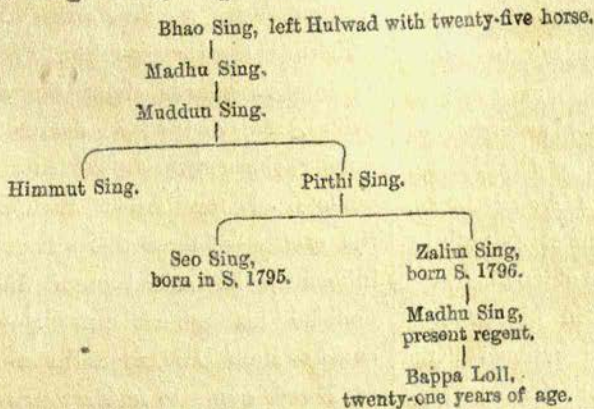
Kotah. From this period (A.D. 1740), five princes have passed away and a sixth has been enthroned ; and, albeit one of these reigns endured for half a century, Zalim Sing has outlived them all,\* and though blind, his moral perceptions are as acute as on the day of Butwarro. What a chain of events does not this protracted life embrace ! An empire then dazzling in glory, and now mouldering in the dust. At its opening, the highest noble of Britain would have stood at a reverential distance from the throne of Timour, in the attitude of a suppliant, and now,

"None so poor  
 "As do him reverence."

To do any thing like justice to the biography of one who for so long a period was a prominent actor in the scene, is utterly impossible ; this consideration, however, need not prevent our attempting a sketch of this consummate politician, who can scarcely find a parallel in the varied page of history.

The ancestors of Zalim Sing were petty chieftains of Hulwad, in the district of Jhalawar, a subdivision of the Saurashtra peninsula. Bhao Sing was a younger son of this

family, who with a few adherents, left the paternal roof to seek fortune amongst the numerous conflicting armies that ranged India during the contests for supremacy amongst the sons of Arungzeb. His son, Madhu Sing, came to Kotah when Raja Bheem was in the zenith of his power. Although he had only twenty-five horse in his train, it is a proof of the respectability of the Jhala, that the prince disdained not his alliance, and even married his son, Urjun, to the young adventurer's sister. Not long after, the estate of Nandta was entailed upon him, with the confidential post of *Foujdar*, which includes not only the command of the troops, but that of the castle, the residence of the sovereign. This family connexion gave an interest to his authority, and procured him the respectful title of *Mamah*,† from the younger branches of the prince's family, an epithet which habit has continued to his successors, who are always addressed *Mamah Sahab*, 'Sir, Uncle !' Muddun Sing succeeded his father in the office of *Foujdar*. He had two sons, Himmud Sing, and Pirthi Sing.



\* This was written in A.D. 1821, when Maha Rao Kishore Sing succeeded.  
 † *Mamah* is 'maternal uncle ; *Kaka*, 'paternal uncle.'

The office of *Faujdar* which, like all those of the east, had become hereditary, was advantageously filled by Himmud Sing, whose bravery and skill were conspicuous on many trying emergencies. He directed, or at least seconded, the defence of Kotah, when first assailed by the combined Mahratta and Jeipoor troops, and conducted the treaty which made her tributary to the former, till at length so identified was his influence with that of the Haras, that with their concurrence he restored the ancient line of succession. Though neither the prince, Doorjun Sal, nor his *Major Domo*, had much merit in this act, it was made available by Zalim Sing in support of his pretension to power, and in proof of the ingratitude of his sovereign, "whose ancestors recovered their rights at the instigation of his own." But Zalim Sing had no occasion to go back to the virtues of his ancestors for an argument on which to base his own claims to authority. He could point to the field of Butwarro, where his bravery and skill mainly aided to vanquish the enemies of Kotah, and to crush for ever those arrogant pretensions to supremacy which the Jeipoor state strained every nerve to establish.

It was not long after the accession of Goman Sing to the sceptre of the Haras, that the brave and handsome *Major Domo*, having dared to cross his master's path in love, lost his favour, and the office of *Faujdar*, which he had attained in his twenty-first year. It is probable he evinced little contrition for his offence, for the confiscation of Nandta soon followed. This estate, on the west bank of the Chumbul, still

enjoyed as a fief in perpetuity by the Jhala family, was the original appanage of the Kotah state when a younger branch of Boondi. From hence may be inferred the consideration in which the Jhala ancestor of our subject was held, which conferred upon him the heir-loom of the house. Both the office and the estate thereto attached, thus resumed, were bestowed upon the maternal uncle of the prince, Bhoput Sing, of the Bankrote tribe. By this step, the door of reconciliation being closed against the young Jhala, he determined to abandon the scene of his disgrace, and court fortune elsewhere. He was not long in determining the path he should pursue: Amber was shut against him, and Marwar held out no field for his ambition. Mewar was at hand, and a chief of his own tribe and nation then ruled the councils of Rana Ursi, who had lately succeeded to power, but a power paralyzed by faction and by a pretender to the throne. The Jhala chieftain of Dailwarra, one of the sixteen great barons of Mewar, had headed the party which placed his sovereign on the throne; and he felt no desire to dart with the influence which this service gave him. He entertained foreign guards about the person of his prince, and distributed estates at pleasure among those who supported his measures; while from the crown domain, or from the estates of those who were hostile to his influence, he seized upon lands, which doubled his possessions. Such was the court of Rana Ursi, when the *ex-Major Domo* of Kotah came to seek a new master. His reputation at once secured him a reception, and his latents for *finesse*, already develo-



ped, made the Rana confide to him the subjection in which he was held by his own vassal-subject. It was then that Zalim, a youth and a stranger, shewed that rare union of intrepidity and caution, which has made him the wonder of the age. By a most daring plan, which cost the Dailwarra chief his life, in open day and surrounded by attendants, the Rana was released from this odious tutelage. For this service the title of *Raj Rinna*,\* and the estate of Cheeturkhaira on the southern frontier were conferred upon Zalim, who was now a noble of the second rank in Mewar. The rebellion still continued, however, and the pretender and his faction sought the aid of the Mahrattas; but under the vigorous councils of Zalim, seconded by the spirit of the Rana, an army was collected which gave battle to the combined rebels and Mahrattas. The result of this day has already been related.† The Rana was discomfited and lost the flower of his nobles when victory was almost assured to them, and Zalim was left wounded and a prisoner in the field. He fell into the hands of Trimbuck Rao, the father of the celebrated Umbaji Inglia, and the friendship then formed materially governed the future actions of his life.

The loss of this battle left the Rana and Mewar at the mercy of the conqueror. Oodipoor was invested, and capitulated, after a noble defence, upon terms which perpetuated her thralldom. Zalim, too wise to cling to the fortunes of a falling house, instead of returning to Oodipoor, bent his

steps to Kotah, in company with the Pundit Lallaji Bellal, the faithful partaker of his future fortunes. Zalim foresaw the storm about to spread over Rajwarra, and deemed himself equal to guide and avert it from Kotah, while the political levity of Mewar gave him little hopes of success at that court.

Raja Goman, however, had neither forgotten nor forgiven his competitor, and refused to receive him: but in no wise daunted, he trusted to his address, and thrust himself unbidden on the prince. The moment he chose proved favourable; and he was not only pardoned, but employed.

The Mahrattas had now reached the southern frontier, and invested the castle of Bukaenie, which was defended by four hundred Haras of the Sawant clan,\* under its chief, Madhu Sing. The enemy had been foiled in repeated attempts to escalate, and it furnishes a good idea of the inadequate means of the 'Southrons' for the operations of a siege, when their besieging apparatus was confined to an elephant, whose head was the substitute for a *petard*, to burst open the gate. Repeated instances, however, prove that this noble animal is fully equal to the task, and would have succeeded on this occasion, had not the intrepidity of the Hara chieftain prompted one of those desperate exploits which fill the pages of their annals. Armed with his dagger, Madhu Sing leaped from the walls upon the back of the elephant, stabbed the rider, and with repeated blows felled the animal to the earth. That he should escape could not be expected; but

\* Not *Rana*, which he puts upon his seal.

† See Vol. I. P. 335.

\* The reader is requested to refer to page 411, for evidence of the loyalty and heroism of Sawant Hara, the founder of this clan.

his death and the noble deed kindled such enthusiasm, that his clan threw wide the gate, and rushing sword in hand amidst the multitude, perished to a man. But they died not unavenged: thirteen hundred of the bravest of the Mahrattas accompanied them to *Suraloca*, the warriors' heaven. The invaders continued their inroad, and invested Sukeit: but the prince sent his commands to the garrison to preserve their lives for Kotah, and not again sacrifice them, as the point of honour had been nobly maintained. Accordingly, at midnight, they evacuated the place; but whether from accident or treachery, the grass jungle which covered their retreat was set fire to, and cast so resplendent a light, that the brave garrison had to fight their way against desperate odds, and many were slain. Mulhar Holcar, who has been greatly disheartened at the loss sustained at Bukaenie, was revived at this success, and prepared to follow it up. Raja Goman deemed it advisable to try negotiation, and the Bankrote Foudar was sent with full powers to treat with the Mahratta commander; but he failed and returned.

Such was the moment chosen by young Zalim to force himself into the presence of his offended prince. In all probability he mentioned the day at Butwarro, where by his courage, and still more by his tact, he released Kotah from the degradation of being subordinated to Amber; and that it was by his influence with the same Mulhar Holcar, who now threatened Kotah, he was enabled to succeed. He was invested with full powers; the negotiation was renewed, and terminated successfully: for the sum of six lakhs of rupees, the Mahratta leader withdrew

his horde from the territory of Kotah. His prince's favour was regained, his estate restored, and the unsuccessful negotiator lost the office of Foudar, into which young Zalim was re-inducted. But scarcely had he recovered his rights, before Goman Sing was taken grievously ill, and all hopes of his life were relinquished. To whom could the dying prince look at such a moment, as guardian of his infant son, but the person whose skill had twice saved the state from peril? He accordingly proclaimed his will to his chiefs, and with all due solemnity placed Omed Sing, then ten years of age, "in the lap" of Zalim Sing.

Omed Sing was proclaimed in S. 1827 (A.D. 1771). On the day of inauguration, the ancient Rajpoot custom of the *tika-dour* revived, and the conquest of Kailwarra from the house of Nurwar marked with *eclat* the accession of the Maha-Rao of the Haras of Kotah, and gave early indication that the genius of the regent would not sleep in his office of protector. More than half a century of rule, amidst the most appalling vicissitudes, has amply confirmed the prognostication.

The retention of a power thus acquired, it may be concluded, could never be effected without severity, nor the vigorous authority, wielded throughout a period beyond the ordinary limits of mortality, be sustained without something more potent than persuasion. Still when we consider Zalim's perilous predicament, and the motives to perpetual re-action, his acts of severity are fewer than might have been expected, or than occur in the course of usurpation under similar circumstances. Mature reflection initiated all his measures, and the saga-



city of their conception was only equalled by the rapidity of their execution. Whether the end in view was good or evil, nothing was ever half-done; no spark was left to excite future conflagration. Even this excess of severity was an advantage; it restrained the repetition of what, whether morally right or wrong, he was determined not to tolerate. To pass a correct judgment on these acts is most difficult. What in one case was a measure of barbarous severity, appears in another to have been one indispensable to the welfare of the state. But this is not the place to discuss the character or principles of the Regent; let us endeavour to unfold both in the exhibition of those acts which have carried him through the most tempestuous sea of political convulsion in the whole history of India. When nought but revolution and rapine stalked through the land, when state after state was crumbling into dust, or sinking into the abyss of ruin, he guided the vessel entrusted to his care safely through all dangers, adding yearly to her riches, until he placed her in security under the protection of Britain.

Scarcely had Zalim assumed the protectorate, when he was compelled to make trial of those Machiavelian powers which have never deserted him, in order to baffle the schemes devised to oppose him. The duties of *Faujdar*, to which he had hitherto been restricted, were entirely of a military nature; though, as it involved the charge of the castle, in which the sovereign resided, it brought him in contact with his councils. This, however, afforded no plea for interference in the *dewani*, or civil duties of the

government, in which, ever since his own accession to power, he had a co-adjutor in Rae Akiram, a man of splendid talents, and who had been Dewan or prime minister throughout the reign of Chutter-sal and the greater part of that of his successor. To his counsel is mainly ascribed the advantages gained by Kotah throughout these reigns; yet did he fall a sacrifice to jealousies a short time before the death of his prince, Goman Sing. It is not affirmed that they were the suggestions of young Zalim; but Akiram's death left him fewer competitors to dispute the junction in his own person of the civil as well as military authority of the state. Still he had no slight opposition to overcome, in the very opening of his career. The party which opposed the pretensions of Zalim Sing to act as regent of the state, asserting that no such power had been bequeathed by the dying prince, consisted of his cousin, the Mahraja Suroop Sing, and the Bankrote chief, whose disgrace brought Zalim into power. There was, besides, the *Dhabhae* Juskurn, foster-brother to the prince, a man of talent and credit, whose post, being immediately about his person, afforded opportunities for carrying their schemes into effect. Such was the powerful opposition arrayed against the protector in the very commencement of his career. The conspiracy was hardly formed, however, before it was extinguished by the murder of the Mahraja by the hands of the *Dhabhae*, the banishment of the assassin, and the flight of the Bankrote. The rapidity with which this drama was enacted struck terror into all. The gaining over the foster-brother, the making him the instrument of punishment, and

banishing him for the crime, acted like a spell, and appeared such a masterpiece of daring and subtilty combined, that no one thought himself secure. There had been no cause of discontent between the Mahraja and the Dhabhae, to prompt revenge; yet did the latter, in the glare of open day, rush upon him in the garden of Vrij-Vulas, and with a blow of his scimitar end his days. The regent was the loudest in execrating the author of the crime, whom he instantly seized and confined, and soon after expelled from Harouti. But however well acted, this dissimulation passed not with the world; and, whether innocent or guilty, they lay to Zalim's charge the plot for the murder of the Mahraja. The Dhabhae died in exile and contempt at Jeipoor; and in abandoning him to his fate without provision, Zalim, if guilty of the deed, shewed at once his knowledge and contempt of mankind. Had he added another murder to the first, and in the fury of an affected indignation become the sole depository of his secret, he would only have increased the suspicion of the world; but in turning the culprit loose on society to proclaim his participation in the crime, he neutralized the reproach by destroying the credibility of one who was a self-convicted assassin when he had it in his power to check its circulation. In order to unravel this tortuous policy, it is necessary to state that the Dhabhae was seduced from the league by the persuasion of the regent, who insinuated that the Mahraja formed plans inimical to the safety of the young prince, and that his own elevation was the true object of his hostility to the person entrusted with the charge of the minor so-

vereign. Whatever truth there might be in this, which might be pleaded in justification of the foul crime, it was attended with the consequences he expected. Immediately after, the remaining member of the adverse *junta* withdrew, and at the same time many of the nobles abandoned their estates and their country. Zalim evinced his contempt of their means of resistance by granting them free egress from the kingdom, and determined to turn their retreat to account. They went to Jeipoor and to Jodpoor; but troubles prevailed every where; the princes could with difficulty keep the prowling Mahratta from their own doors, and possessed neither funds nor inclination to enter into foreign quarrels for objects which would only increase their already superabundant difficulties. The event turned out as Zalim anticipated; and the princes, to whom the refugees were suitors, had a legitimate excuse in the representations of the regent, who described them as rebels to their sovereign and parties to designs hostile to his rule. Some died abroad, and some, sick of wandering in a foreign land dependant on its bounty, solicited as a boon that "their ashes might be burned with their fathers." In granting this request, Zalim evinced that reliance on himself, which is the leading feature of his character. He permitted their return, but received them as traitors who had abandoned their prince and their country, and it was announced to them, as an act of clemency, that they were permitted to live upon a part of their estates; which, as they had been voluntarily abandoned, were sequestered and belonged to the crown.

Such was Zalim Sing's triumph over the



first faction formed against his assumption of the full powers of regent of Kotah. Not only did the aristocracy feel humiliated, but were subjugated by the rod of iron held over them; and no opportunity was ever thrown away of crushing this formidable body, which in these states too often exerts its pernicious influence to the ruin of society. The thoughtlessness of character so peculiar to Rajpoots, furnished abundant opportunities for the march of an exterminating policy, and, at the same time, afforded reasons which justified it.

The next combination was more formidable; it was headed by Deo Sing of Athoon, who enjoyed an estate of sixty thousand rupees rent. He strongly fortified his castle, and was joined by all the discontented nobles, determined to get rid of the authority which crushed them. The regent well knew the spirits he had to cope with, and that the power of the state was insufficient. By means of "the help of Moses" (such is the interpretation of *Moosa Mudut*, his auxiliary on this occasion), this struggle against his authority also only served to confirm it; and their measures recoiled on the heads of the feudality. The condition of society since the dissolution of the imperial power was most adverse to the institutions of Rajwarra, the unsupported valour of whose nobles was no match for the mercenary force which their rules could now always command from those hands, belonging to no government, but roaming whither they listed over this vast region, in search of pay or plunder. The "help of Moses" was the leader of one of these associations,—a name well known in the history of that agitated period; and he not

only led a well-appointed infantry brigade, but had an efficient park attached to it, which was brought to play against Athoon. It held out several months, the garrison meanwhile making many sallies, which it required the constant vigilance of Moses to repress. At length, reduced to extremity, they demanded and obtained an honourable capitulation, being allowed to retire unmolested whither they pleased. Such was the termination of this ill-organized insurrection, which involved almost all the feudal chiefs of Kotah in exile and ruin, and strengthened the regent, or as he would say, the state, by the escheat of the sequestered property. Deo Sing of Athoon, the head of this league, died in exile. After several years of lamentation in a foreign soil for the *junum bhom*, the 'land of their birth,' the son pleaded for pardon, though his heart denied all crime, and was fortunate enough to obtain his recall, and the estate of Bamolia, of fifteen thousand rupees rent. The inferior members of the opposition were treated with the same contemptuous clemency; they were admitted into Kotah, but deprived of the power of doing mischief. What stronger proof of the political courage of the Regent can be adduced, than his shutting up such combustible materials within the social edifice, and even living amongst and with them, as if he deserved their friendship rather than their hatred.

In combating such associations, and thus cementing his power, time passed away. His marriage with one of the distant branches of the royal house of Mewar, by whom he had his son and successor Madhu Sing, gave Zali an additional interest in the affair

of that disturbed state, of which he never lost sight amidst the troubles which more immediately concerned him. The motives which, in S. 1847 (A. D. 1791), made him consider for a time the interests of Kotah as secondary to those of Mewar, are related at length in the annals of that state;\* and the effect of this policy on the prosperity of Kotah, drained of its wealth in the prosecution of his views, will appear on considering the details of his system. Referring the reader, therefore, to the Annals of Mewar, we shall pass from S. 1847 to S. 1856 (A. D. 1800), when another attempt was made by the chieftains to throw off the iron yoke of the protector.

Many attempts at assassination had been tried, but his vigilance baffled them all; though no bold enterprize was hazarded since the failure of that (in S. 1833) which ended in the death and exile of its contriver, the chieftain of Athoon, until the conspiracy of Mohsain, in S. 1856, just twenty years ago.\* Bahadoor Sing, of Mohsain, a chieftain of ten thousand rupees annual rent, was the head of this plot, which included every chief and family whose fortunes had been annihilated by the exterminating policy of the regent. It was conducted with admirable secrecy; if known at all, it was to Zalim alone, and not till on the eve of accomplishment. The proscription-list was long; the regent, his family, his friend and counsellor the Pandit Lallaji, were amongst the victims marked for sacrifice. The moment for execution was that of his proceeding to hold his court, in open day; and the mode

was by a *coup de main* whose very audacity would guarantee success. It is said that he was actually in progress to *darbar*, when the danger was revealed. The *pæga*, or 'select troop of horse' belonging to his friend and always at hand, was immediately called in and added to the guards about his person; thus the conspirators were assailed when they deemed the prey rushing into the snare they had laid. The surprise was complete; many were slain; some were taken, others fled. Amongst the latter was the head of the conspiracy, Bahadoor Sing, who gained the Chumbul, and took refuge in the temple of the tutelary deity of the Haras at Patun. But he mistook the character of the regent when he supposed that either the sanctuary (*sirna*) of *Keshorae*, or the respect due to the prince in whose dominions (Boondi) it lay, could shield him from his fate. He was dragged forth, and expiated his crime or folly with his life.

According to the apologists of the regent, this act was one of just retribution, since it was less to defend himself and his immediate interests than those of the prince whose power and existence were threatened by the insurrection, which had for its object his deposal and the elevation of one of his brothers. The members of the Maha-Rao's family at this period were his uncle Raj Sing, and his two brothers, Gordhun and Gopal Sing. Since the rebellion of Athoon, these princes had been under strict *surveillance*; but after this instance of re-action, in which their names were implicated as having aspired to supplant their brother, a more rigorous seclusion was adopted; and the rest of their days was passed in solitary

\* Vol. I. p. 336.

† This was written at Kotah, in S. 1876 (A. D. 1820)

confinement. Gordhun, the elder, died about ten years after his incarceration; the younger, Gopal, lived many years longer; but neither from that day quitted the walls of their prison, until death released them from this dreadful bondage. Kaka Raj Sing lived to extreme old age; but, as he took no part in these turmoils, he remained unmolested, having the range of the temples in the city, beyond which limits he had no wish to stray.

We may in this place introduce a slip from the genealogical tree of the forfeited branch of Bishen Sing, but which in the person of his grandson Ajeet, regained its rights and the *gadi*. The fate of this family will serve as a specimen of the policy pursued by the regent towards the feudal interest of Kotah. It is appalling, when thus marshalled, to view the sacrifices which the maintenance of power will demand in these feudal states, where individual will is law.

The plots against the existence and authority of the Protector were of every description, and no less than eighteen are enumerated, which his never-slambering vigilance detected and baffled. The means were force, open and concealed, poison, the dagger,—until at length he became sick of precaution. "I could not always be on my guard," he would say. But the most dangerous of all was a female conspiracy, got up in the place, and which discovers an amusing mixture of tragedy and farce, although his habitual wariness would not have saved him from being its victim, had he not been aided by the boldness of a female champion, from a regard for the personal

attractions of the handsome regent. He was suddenly sent for by the queen-mother of one of the younger princes, and while waiting in an antichamber, expecting every instant "*the voice behind the curtain*," he found himself encircled by band of Amazonian Rajpootnis, armed with sword and dagger, from whom, acquainted as he was with the nerve, physical and moral, of his countrywomen, he saw no hope of salvation. Fortunately, they were determined not to be satisfied merely with his death; they put him upon his trial; and the train of interrogation into all the acts of his life was going on, when his preserving angel, in the shape of the chief attendant of the dowager queen, a woman of masculine strength and courage, rushed in, and with strong dissembled anger, drove him forth amidst a torrent of abuse for presuming to be found in such a predicament.

While bathing, and during the heat of the chase, his favourite pursuit, similar attempts have been made, but they always recoiled on the heads of his enemies. Yet, notwithstanding the multitude of these plots, which would have unsettled the reason of many, he never allowed a blind suspicion to add to the victims of his policy; and although, for his personal security, he was compelled to sleep in an iron cage, he never harboured unnecessary alarm, that parent of crime and blood in all usurpations. His lynx-like eye saw at once who was likely to invade his authority, and these knew their peril from the vigilance of a system which never relaxed: Entire self-reliance, a police such as perhaps no country in the world could equal, establishments well paid, services

liberally rewarded, character and talent in each department of the state, himself keeping a strict watch over all, and trusting implicitly to none, with a daily personal supervision of all this complicated state-machinery—such was the system which surmounted every

peril, and not only maintained, but increased the power and political reputation of Zalim Sing, amidst the storms of war, rapine, treason, and political convulsions of more than half a century's duration.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Zalim regarded as a legislator.—His political views on Mewar.—Kotah sacrificed thereto.—His tyranny.—His superstition.—Makes a tour of his dominions.—Establishes a permanent camp.—Trains an army.—Adopts European arms and discipline.—Revises the revenue system of Harouti.—The Patel system described.—Council of Four.—Extent of jurisdiction.—The Bohoras described.—Their utility in the old farming system of India.—Patels usurp their influence.—Depression of the peasantry.—Patels circumvented, imprisoned, and fined.—Patel system destroyed.—Return to the old system.—Moral estimation of the peasant of Rajpootana.—Modes of realizing the land-revenue described.—Advantages and disadvantages.*

WE are now to examine the Protector in another point of view, as the legislator and manager of the state whose concerns he was thus determined to rule. For a series of years, Kotah was but the wet-nurse to the child of his ambition, a design upon Mewar, which engulfed as in a vortex all that oppression could extort from the industry of the people confided to his charge. From his first acquaintance with the court of the Rana, in S. 1827, to the year 1856, he never relinquished the hope of extending the same measure of authority over that state which he exerted in his own. To the prosecution of this policy Harouti was sacrificed, and

the cultivator lowered to the condition of a serf. In the year 1840, oppression was at its height; the impoverished ryot, no longer able to pay the extra calls upon his industry, his cattle and the implements of his labour distrained, was reduced to despair. Many died from distress; some fled, but where could they find refuge in the chaos around them? The greater part were compelled to plough for hire, with the cattle and implements once their own, the very fields, their freehold, which had been torn from them. From this system of universal improverishment, displayed at length in unthatched villages and untilled lands, the

Regent was compelled to become farmer-general of Kotah.

Fortunately for his subjects, and for his own reputation, his sense of gratitude and friendship for the family of Ingliā,—whose head, Balla Rao, was then a prisoner in Mewar,—involved him, in the attempt to obtain his release, in personal conflict with the Rana, and he was compelled to abandon for ever that long-cherished object of his ambition. It was then he perceived he had sacrificed the welfare of all classes to a phantom, and his vigorous understanding suggested a remedy, which was instantly adopted.

Until the conspiracy of Mohsain in 1856, the Regent had resided in the castle, acting the part of the *maire du palais* of the old French monarchy; but on his return from the release of Balla Rao, in S. 1860 (A.D. 1803-4), when the successes of the British arms disturbed the combination of the Mahrattas, and obliged them to send forth their disunited bands to seek by rapine what they had lost by our conquests, the Regent perceived the impolicy of such permanent residence, and determined to come nearer to the point of danger. He had a double motive, each of itself sufficiently powerful to justify the change: the first was a revision of the revenue system; the other, to seek a more central position for a disposable camp, which he might move to any point threatened by these predatory bodies. Though these were doubtless the real incentives to the project, according to those who ought to have known the secret impulse of his mind, the change from the castle on the Chumbul

to the tented field proceeded from no more potent cause than an ominous owl, telling his tale to the moon from the pinnacle of his mansion. A meeting of the astrologers, and those versed in prodigies, was convened, and it was decided that it would be tempting *honhar* (fate) to abide longer in that dwelling. If this were the true motive, Zalim Sing's mind only shared the grovelling superstition of the most illustrious and most courageous of his nation, to whom there was no presage more appalling than a *googo* on the house-top. But, in all likelihood, this was a political owl conjured up for the occasion; one seen only in the mind's eye of the Regent, and serving to cloak his plans.

The soothsayers having in due form desecrated the dwelling of the Protector, he commenced a perambulation and survey of the long-neglected territory, within which he determined henceforth to limit his ambition. He then saw, and perhaps felt for, the miseries his mistaken policy had occasioned; but the moral evil was consummated; he had ruined the fortunes of one-third of the agriculturists, and the rest were depressed and heart-broken. The deficiency in his revenues spoke a truth no longer to be misinterpreted; for his credit was so low in the mercantile world at this period, that his word and his bond were in equal disesteem. Hitherto he had shut his ears against complaint; but funds were necessary to forward his views, and all pleas of inability were met by confiscation. It was evident that this evil, if not checked, must ultimately denude the state of the means of defence, and the fertility of his genius

presented various modes of remedy. He began by fixing upon a spot near the strong fortress of Gagrown, for a permanent camp, where he continued to reside, with merely a shed over his tent : and although the officers and men of rank had also thrown up sheds, he would admit of nothing more. All the despatches and newspapers were dated 'from the *Chaoni*,' or camp.

The situation selected was most judicious, being nearly equi-distant from the two principal entrances to Harouti from the south, and touching the most insubordinate part of the Bhil population ; while he was close to the strong castles of Shirgurb and Gagrown, which he strengthened with the utmost care, making the latter the depot of his treasures and his arsenal. He formed an army ; adopted the European arms and discipline ; appointed officers with the title of captain to his battalions, which had a regular nomenclature, and his 'royals' (*Raj Pultun*) have done as gallant service as any that ever bore the name. These were ready at a moment's warning to move to any point, against any foe. Moreover, by this change he was extricated from many perplexities and delays which a residence in a capital necessarily engenders.

Up to this period of his life, having been immersed in the troubled sea of political intrigue, the Protector had no better knowledge of the systems of revenue and landed economy than other *Rangra* chieftains : and he followed the immemorial usage termed *latho* and *buttaie*, or rent in kind by weight or measure, in proportion to the value of the soil or of the product. The regent soon found the disadvantages of this system,

which afforded opportunity for oppression on the part of the collectors, and fraud on that of the tenant, both detrimental to the government, and serving only to enrich that vulture, the *Patel*. When this rapacious, yet indispensable medium between the peasant and ruler, leagued with the collector—and there was no control to exaction beyond the conscience of this constituted attorney of each township, either for the assessment or collection—and when, as we have so often stated, the regent cared not for the means so that the supplies were abundant, nothing but ruin could ensue to the ryot.

Having made himself master of the complicated details of the *buttaie*, and sifted every act of chicanery by the most inquisitorial process, he convoked all the *Patels* of the country, and took their depositions as to the extent of each *pateli*, their modes of collection, their credit, character, and individual means ; and being thus enabled to from a rough computation of the size and revenues of each, he recommenced his tour, made a *chakbundi*, or measurment of the lands of each township, and classified them, according to soil and fertility, as *peewal*, or irrigated ; *gorma*, of good soil, but dependant on the heavens ; and *morni*, including pasturage and mountain-tracts. He then, having formed an average from the accounts of many years, instituted a fixed money-rent, and declared that the *buttaie* system, or that of payment in kind, was at an end. But even in this he shewed severity ; for he reduced the *jureeb*, or standard measure, by a third, and added a fourth to his averages. Doubtless he argued that



the profit which the Patels looked forward to would admit of this increase, and determined that his vigilance should be more than a match for their ingenuity.

Having thus adjusted the rents of the fisc, the dues of the Patel were fixed at one and a half annas per beega on all the lands constituting a *pateli*; and as his personal lands were on a favoured footing and paid a much smaller rate than the ryot's, he was led to understand that any exaction beyond what was authorized would subject him to confiscation. Thus the dues on collection would realize to the Patel from five to fifteen thousand rupees annually. The anxiety of these men to be reinstated in their trusts was evinced by the immense offers they made, of ten, twenty, and even fifty thousand rupees. At one stroke he put ten lakhs, or £100,000 sterling, into his exhausted treasury, by the amount of *muzzeranas*, or fines of relief on their re-induction into office. The ryot hoped for better days; for notwithstanding the assessment was heavy, he saw the limit of exaction, and that the door was closed to all subordinate oppression. Besides the spur of hope, he had that of fear, to quicken his exertion; for with the promulgation of the edict substituting money-rent for *buttaie*, the ryot was given to understand that 'no account of the seasons' would alter or lessen the established dues of the state, and that uncultivated lands would be made over by the Patel to those who would cultivate them; or if none would take them they would be incorporated with the *khas* or personal farms of the regent. In all cases, the Patels were declared responsible for deficiencies of revenue.

Hitherto this body of men had an incentive, if not a license, to plunder, being subject to an annual or triennial tax termed *patel-burrar*. This was annulled; and it was added, that if they fulfilled their contract with the state without oppressing the subject, they should be protected and honoured. Thus these Patels, the elected representatives of the village and the shields of the ryot, became the direct officers of the crown. It was the regent's interest to conciliate a body of men, on whose exertions the prosperity of the state mainly depended; and they gladly and unanimously entered into his views. Golden bracelets and turbans, the signs of inauguration, were given, with a "grant of office," to each Patel, and they departed to their several trusts.

A few reflections obtrude themselves on the contemplation of such a picture. It will hardly fail to strike the reader, how perfect are the elements for the formation of a representative government in these regions; for every state of Rajwarra is similarly constituted; *ex uno disce omnes*. The Patels would only require to be joined by the representatives of the commercial body, and these are already formed, of Rajpoot blood, deficient neither in nerve nor political sagacity, compared with any class on earth; often composing the ministry or heading the armies in battle. It is needless to push the parallel farther; but if it is the desire of Britain to promote this system in the east, to en throne liberty on the ruins of bondage, and call forth the energies of a grand national *punchaet*, the materials are ample without the risk of innovation.

beyond the mere extent of members. We should have the aristocratic *Thakoors* (the Rajpoot barons), the men of wealth, and the representatives of agriculture, to settle the limits and maintain the principles of their ancient patriarchal system. A code of criminal and civil law, perfectly adequate, could be compiled from their sacred books, their records on stone, or traditional customs, and sufficient might be deducted from the revenues of the state to maintain municipal forces, which could unite if public safety were endangered, while the equestrian order would furnish all state parade, and act as a moveable army.

But to return to our subject. Out of this numerous body of Patels, Zalim selected four of the most intelligent and experienced, of whom he formed a council attached to the Presence. At first their duties were confined to matters of revenue; soon those of police were superadded, and at length no matter of internal regulation was transacted without their advice. In all cases of doubtful decision, they were the court of appeal from provincial punchaets, and even from those of the cities and the capital itself. Thus they performed the three fold duties of a board of revenue, of justice, and of police, and perhaps throughout the world, there never was a police like that of Zalim Sing: there was not one *Fouche*, but four; and a net of *espionnage* was spread over the country, out of whose meshes nothing could escape.

Such was the patel system of Kotah. A system so rigid had its alloy of evil; the veil of secrecy, so essential to commercial pursuits, was rudely drawn aside; every

transaction was exposed to the regent, and no man felt safe from the inquisitorial visits of the spies of this council. A lucky speculation was immediately reported, and the regent hastened to share in the success of the speculator. Alarm and disgust were the consequence; the spirit of trade was damped; none were assured of the just returns of their industry; but there was no security elsewhere, and at Kotah only the protector dared to injure them.

The council of Venice was not more arbitrary than the patel board of Kotah; even the ministers saw the sword suspended over their heads, while they were hated as much as feared by all but the individual who recognized their utility.

It would be imagined that with a council so vigilant the regent would feel perfectly secure. Not so: he had spies over them. In short, to use the phrase of one of his ministers,—a man of acute perception and powerful understanding, when talking of the vigour of his mental vision,—when his physical organs had failed, *pani pia, aur moot tola*, which we will not translate.

The Patel, now the virtual master of the peasantry, was aware that fine and confiscation would follow the discovery of direct oppression of the ryots; but there were many indirect modes by which he could attain his object, and he took the most secure, the medium of their necessities. Hitherto, the impoverished husbandman had his wants supplied by the *Bohora*, the sanctioned usurer of each village; now, the privileged Patel usurped his functions, and bound him by a double chain to his purposes. But we must explain the functions



of the *Bohora*, in order to show the extent of subordination in which the ryot was placed.

The *Bohora* of Rajpootana is the *Metayer* of the ancient system of France. He furnishes the cultivator with whatever he requires for his pursuits, whether cattle, implements, or seed; and supports him and his family throughout the season until the crop is ready for the sickle, when a settlement of accounts takes place. This is done in two ways; either by a cash payment, with stipulated interest according to the risk previously agreed upon; or, more commonly, by a specified share of the crop, in which the *Bohora* takes the risk of bad seasons with the husbandman. The utility of such a person under an oppressive government, where the ryot can store up nothing for the future, may readily be conceived; he is, in fact, indispensable. Mutual honesty is required; for extortion on the part of the *Bohora* would lose him his clients, and dishonesty on that of the peasant would deprive him of his only resource against the sequestration of his patrimony. Accordingly, this monied middleman enjoyed great consideration, being regarded as the patron of the husbandman. Every peasant had his particular *Bohora*, and not unfrequently from the adjacent village in preference to his own.

Such was the state of things when the old system of *latha bhuttaie* was commuted for *beegoti*, a specific money-rent apportioned to the area of the land. The Patel, now tied down to the simple duties of collection, could touch nothing but his dues, unless he leagued with or overturned the

*Bohora*; and in either case there was risk from the lynx-eyed scrutiny of the Regent. They, accordingly, adopted the middle course of alarming his cupidity, which the following expedient effected. When the crop was ripe, the peasant would demand permission to cut it. "Pay your rent first," was the reply. The *Bohora* was applied to: but his fears had been awakened by a caution not to lend money to one on whom the government had claims. There was no alternative but to mortgage to the harpy Patel a portion of the produce of his fields. This was the precise point at which he aimed; he took the crop at his own valuation, and gave his receipt that the dues of government were satisfied; demanding a certificate to the effect "that having no funds forthcoming when the rent was required, and being unable to raise it, the mortgager voluntarily assigned, at a fair valuation, a share of the produce." In this manner did the Patels hoard immense quantities of grain, and as Kotah became the granary of Rajpootana, they accumulated great wealth, while the peasant, never able to reckon on the fruits of his industry, was depressed and impoverished. The Regent could not long be kept in ignorance of these extortions; but the treasury overflowed, and he did not sufficiently heed the miseries occasioned by a system which added fresh lands by sequestration to the home farms, now the object of his especial solicitude.

Matters proceeded thus until the year 1867 (A. D. 1811), when, like a clap of thunder, mandates of arrest were issued, and every Patel in Kotah was placed in fet-

ters, and his property under the seal of the state ; the ill-gotten wealth, as usual, flowing into the exchequer of the Protector. Few escaped heavy fines ; one only was enabled altogether to evade the vigilance of the police, and he had wisely remitted his wealth, to the amount of seven lakhs, or £70,000, to a foreign country ; and from this individual case, a judgment may be formed of the prey these cormorants were compelled to disgorge.

It is to be inferred that the Regent must have well weighed the present good against the evil he incurred, in destroying in one moment the credit and efficacy of such an engine of power as the *pateli* system he had established. The Council of Four maintained their post, notwithstanding the humiliated condition of their compeers ; though their influence could not fail to be weakened by the discredit attached to the body. The system Zalim had so artfully introduced being thus entirely disorganized, he was induced to push still further the resources of his energetic mind, by the extension of his personal farms. In describing the formation and management of these, we shall better pourtray the character of the Regent than by the most laboured summary : the acts will paint the man.

Before, however, we enter upon this singular part of his history, it is necessary to develop the ancient agricultural system of Harouti, to which he returned when the *pateli* was broken up. In the execution of this design, we must speak both of the soil and the occupants, whose moral estimation in the minds of their rulers must materially influence their legislative conduct.

The ryot of India, like the progenitor of all tillers of the earth, bears the brand of vengeance on his forehead ; for as Cain was cursed by the Almighty, so were the cultivators of India by Ramachund, as a class whom no lenity could render honest or contented. When the hero of Ayodia left his kingdom for Lanka, he enjoined his minister to foster the ryots, that he might hear no complaints on his return. Aware of the fruitlessness of the attempt, yet determined to guard against all just cause of complaint, the minister reversed the *mauna*, or grain measure taking the share of the crown from the smaller end, exactly one half of what was sanctioned by immemorial usage. When Rama returned, the cultivators assembled in bodies at each stage of his journey, and complained of the innovations of the minister. "What had he done ?" "Reversed the *mauna*." The monarch dismissed them with his curse, as "a race whom no favour could conciliate, and who belonged to no one ;" a phrase which to this hour is proverbial, '*ryot kessica nuhyn hyn* ;' and the sentence is confirmed by the historians of Alexander, who tell us that they lived unmolested amidst all intestine wars ; that "they only till the ground and pay tribute to the king," enjoying an amnesty from danger when the commonwealth suffered, which must tend to engender a love of soil more than patriotism. It would appear as if the Regent of Kotah had availed himself of the anathema of Rama in his estimation of the moral virtues of his subjects, who were Helots in condition if not in name.

We proceed to the modes of realizing the dues of the state in which the character and

condition of the peasant will be further developed. There are four modes of levying the land-tax, three of which are common throughout Rajwarra; the fourth is more peculiar to Harouti and Mewar. The first and most ancient is that of *buttaie*, or 'payment in kind,' practised before metallic currency was invented. The system of *buttaie* extends, however, only to corn; for sugar-cane, cotton, hemp, poppy, al, kosoomba, gingers, turmeric, and other dyes and drugs, and all garden stuffs, pay a rent in money. This rent was arbitrary and variable, according to the necessities or justice of the ruler. In both countries five to ten rupees per beega are demanded for sugarcane; three to five for cotton, poppy, hemp, and oil-plant; and two to four for the rest. But when heaven was bounteous, avarice and oppression rose in their demands, and seventy rupees per beega were exacted for the sugar-cane, thus paralyzing the industry of the cultivator, and rendering abortive the beneficence of the Almighty.

*Buttaie* or 'division in kind,' varies with the seasons and their products:

1st. The *unalu*, or 'summer harvest,' when wheat, barley, and a variety of pulses, as gram, moth, moong, til, are raised. The share of the state in these varies with the fertility of the soil, from one-fourth, one-third, and two-fifths, to one-half—the extreme fractions being the maximum and minimum; those of one-third and two-fifths are the most universally admitted as the share of the crown. But besides this, there are dues to the artificers and mechanics, whose labour to the village is compensated by a share of the harvest from each cultivator; which allowances reduce the portion of the latter

to one-half of the gross produce of his industry, which if he realize, he is contented and thrives.

The second harvest is the *sialoo*, or 'autumnal, and consists of *mukhi* or *boota*, (Indian corn,) of joar, bajri, the two chief kinds of maize, and *til* or sesamum, with other small seeds, such as *kangni*,\* with many of the pulses. Of all these, one-half is exacted by the state.

Such is the system of *buttaie*; let us describe that of *koont*.† *Koont* is the conjectural estimate of the quantity of the standing crop on a measured surface, by the officers of the government in conjunction with the proprietors, when the share of the state is converted into cash at the average rate of the day, and the peasant is debited the amount. So exactly can those habitually exercised in this method estimate the quantity of grain produced on a given surface, that they seldom err beyond one-twentieth part of the crop. Should, however, the cultivator deem his crop over-estimated, he has the power to cut and weigh it; and this is termed *latha*.

The third is a tax in money, according to admeasurement of the field, assessed previously to cultivation.

The fourth is a mixed tax, of both money and produce.

\* *Panicum Italicum* produced abundantly in the valley of the Rhine, as well as *mukhi*, there called *Velsh* corn; doubtless the maizes would alike grow in perfection.

† It would be more correct to say that *buttaie*, or 'payment in kind,' divided into two branches *vis.* *koont* and *latha*; the first being a portion of the standing crop by conjectural estimate; the other by actual measure, after reaping and thrashing.

Neither of these modes is free from objection. That of *koont*, or conjectural estimate of the standing crop, is however, liable to much greater abuse than *latha*, or measurement of the grain. In the first case, it is well known that by a bribe to the officer, he will *koont* a field at ten maunds, which may realize twice the quantity ; for the chief guarantees to honesty are fear of detection, and instinctive morality ; feeble safeguards, even in more civilized states than Rajwarra. If he be so closely watched that he must make a fair *koont*, or estimate, he will still find means to extort money from the ryot, one of which is, by procrastinating the estimate when the ear is ripe, and when every day's delay is a certain loss. In short, a celebrated superintendent of a district, of great credit both for zeal and honesty, confessed, "we are like tailors ; we can cheat you to your face, and you cannot perceive it." The ryot prefers the *koont* ; the process is soon over, and he has done with the government ; but in *latha*, the means are varied to perplex and cheat it ; beginning with the reaping, when, with a liberal hand, they leave something for the gleaner ; then, a "tithe for the *koorpi*, or 'sickle ;' " then, the thrashing ; and though they muzzle the ox who treads out on the

corn, they do not their own mouths, or those of their family. Again, if not convertible into coin, they are debited and allowed to store it up, and "the rats are sure to get into the pits." In both cases, the *shanahs*, or village-watchmen, are appointed to watch the crops, as soon as the ear begins to fill ; yet all is insufficient to check the system of pillage ; for the ryot and his family begin to feed upon the heads of Indian corn and maize the moment they afford the least nourishment. The *shanah*, receiving his emoluments from the husbandman as well as from the crown, inclines more to his fellow-citizen ; and it is asserted that *one-fourth of the crop*, and even *a third*, is frequently made away with before the share of the government can be fixed.

Yet the system of *latha* was pursued by the Regent before he commenced that of *pateli*, which has no slight analogy to the permanent system of Bengal,\* and was attended with similar results,—distress, confiscation, and sale, to the utter exclusion of the hereditary principle, the very cornerstone of Hindu society.

\* The patel of Harouti like the zemindar of Bengal, was answerable for the revenues ; the one, however, was hereditary only during pleasure ; the other perpetually so. The extent of their authorities was equal.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Farming system of Zalim Singh.—Extent to which it has been carried.—Its prosperity fallacious and transitory.—Details of the system.—Soil of Kotah.—The regent introduces foreign ploughs.—Area cultivated.—Net produce.—Value.—Grain pits.—Prices in plenty and famine.—Zalim sells in one year grain to the amount of a million sterling.—Monopoly.—The tithe, or new tax on exported grain.—The jugati, or tax-gatherer.—Impolicy of this tax.—Gross revenue of Kotah.—Opium monopoly.—Tax on widows.—On the mendicant.—Gaurd-tax.—Broom-tax.—The regent detested by the bards.—Province of Kotah at this period, and at assumption of the government, contrasted.—Question as to the moral result of his improvements.*

LET us proceed with the most prominent feature of the Regent's internal administration—his farming monopoly—to which he is mainly indebted for the reputation he enjoys throughout Rajpootana. The superficial observer, who can with difficulty find a path through the corn-fields which cover the face of Harouti, will dwell with rapture upon the effects of a system in which he discovers nothing but energy and efficiency: he cannot trace the remote causes of this deceptive prosperity, which originated in moral and political injustice. It was because his own tyranny had produced unploughed fields and deserted villages, starving husbandmen and a diminishing population; it was with the distrained implements and cattle of his subjects, and in order to prevent the injurious effects of so much waste land upon the revenue, that Zalim commenced a system which had made him *farmer-general* of Harouti; and he has carried it to an astonishing extent. There is not a nook or a patch in Harouti,

where grain can be produced, which his ploughs do not visit. Forests have disappeared; even the barren rocks have been covered with exotic soil, and the mountain's side, inaccessible to the plough, is turned up with a spud, and compelled to yield a crop.

In S. 1840 (A. D. 1784), Zalim possessed only two or three hundred ploughs, which in a few years increased to eight hundred. At the commencement of what they term the new era (*nya samvat*) in the history of landed property of Kotah, the introduction of the *pateli* system, the number was doubled; and at the present time\* no less than *four thousand ploughs*, of double yoke, employing *sixteen thousand oxen*, are used in the farming system of this extraordinary man; to which may be added one thousand more ploughs and four thousand oxen employed on the estates of the prince, and the different members of his family.

\* This was drawn up in 1820-21.

This is the secret of the Raj Rana's power and reputation; and to the wealth extracted from her soil. Kotah owes her preservation from the ruin which befel the states around her during the convulsions of the last half century, when one after another sank into decay. But although sagacity marks the plan, and unexampled energy superintends its details, we must, on examining the foundations of the system either morally or politically, pronounce its effects a mere paroxysm of prosperity, arising from stimulating causes which present no guarantee of permanence. Despotism has wrought this magic effect: there is not one, from the noble to the peasant, who has not felt, and who does not still feel, its presence. When the arm of the octagenarian Protector shall be withdrawn, and the authority transferred to his son, who possesses none of the father's energies, then will the impolicy of the system become apparent. It was from the sequestrated estates of the valiant Hara chieftain, and that grinding oppression which thinned Harouti of its agricultural population, and left the lands waste, that the Regent found scope for his genius. The fields, which had descended from father to son through the lapse of ages, the unalienable right of the peasant, were seized, in spite of law, custom, or tradition, on every defalcation; and it is even affirmed that he sought pretexts to obtain such lands as from their contiguity or fertility he coveted, and that hundreds were thus deprived of their inheritance. In vain we look for the peaceful hamlets which once studded Harouti: we discern instead the *orie*, or farm-house of the Regent, which

would be beautiful were it not erected on the property of the subject; but when we enquire the ratio which the cultivators bear to the cultivation, and the means of enjoyment this artificial system has left them, and find that the once independent proprietor, who claimed a sacred right of inheritance,\* now ploughs like a serf the fields formerly his own, all our perceptions of moral justice are shocked.

The love of country and the passion for possessing land are strong throughout Rajpootana: while there is a hope of existence, the cultivator clings to the '*bapota*,' and in Harouti this *amor patriæ* is no invincible, that, to use their homely phrase, "he would rather fill his *pait* in slavery there, than live in luxury abroad." But where could they fly to escape oppression? All around was desolation; armies perambulated the country, with rapid strides, in each other's train, "one to another still succeeding." To this evil Kotah was comparatively a stranger; the Protector was the only plunderer within his domains. Indeed, the inhabitants of the

\* Throughout the Boondi territory, where no regent has innovated on the established laws of inheritance, by far the greater part of the land is the absolute property of the cultivating *ryot*, who can sell or mortgage it. There is a curious tradition that this right was obtained by one of the ancient princes making a general sale of the crown land, reserving only the tax. In Boondi, if a *ryot* becomes unable, from pecuniary wants or otherwise, to cultivate his lands, he lets them; and custom has established *four anas per beega* of irrigated land, and *two anas* for *gorma*, that dependant on the heavens, or a share of the produce in a similar proportion as his right. If in exile, from whatever cause, he can assign this share to trustees; and, the more strongly to mark his inalienable right in such a case, the trustees reserve on his own account *two seers on every maund of produce*, which emphatically termed "*huk bapata ca bhom*," the "dues of the patrimonial soil."

surrounding states, from the year 1865, when rapine was at its height, flocked into Kotah, and filled up the chasm which oppression had produced in the population. But with the banishment of predatory war, and the return of industry to its own field of exertion, this *panacea* for the wounds which the ruler has inflicted will disappear ; and although the vast resources of the Regent's mind may check the appearance of decay, while his faculties survive to superintend this vast and complicated system, it must ultimately, from the want of a principle of permanence, fall into rapid disorganization. We proceed to the details of the system, which will afford fresh proofs of the talent, industry, and vigilance of this singular character.

The soil of Kotah is a rich tenacious mould, resembling the best parts of lower Malwa. The single plough is unequal to breaking it up, and the Regent has introduced the plough of double yoke from the Concan. His cattle are of the first quality, and equally fit for the park or the plough. He purchases at all the adjacent fairs, chiefly in his own dominions, and at the annual *mela* (fair) of his favourite city *Jhalra-Patun*. He has tried those of Marwar and of the desert, famed for a superior race of cattle ; but he found that the transition from their sandy regions to the deep loam of Harouti soon disabled them.

Each plough or team is equal to the culture of one hundred beegas ; consequently 4,000 ploughs will cultivate 400,000 during each harvest, and for both 800,000, nearly 300,000 English acres. The soil is deemed poor which does not yield seven to ten

maunds\* of wheat per beega, and five to seven of millet and Indian corn. But to take a very low estimate, and allowing for bad seasons, we may assume four maunds per beega as the average produce, (though double would not be deemed an exaggerated average) : this will give 3,200,000 maunds of both products, wheat and millet, and the proportion of the former to the latter is as three to two. Let us estimate the value of this. In seasons of abundance, twelve rupees per *mauni*†, in equal quantities of both grains, is the average ; at this time (July 1820), notwithstanding the preceding season has been a failure throughout Rajwarra, (though there was a prospect of an excellent one), and grain a dead weight, eighteen rupees per *mauni* is the current price, and may be quoted as the average standard of Harouti : above is approximating to dearness, and below to the reverse. But if we take the average of the year of actual plenty, or *twelve* rupees† per *mauni* of equal quantities of wheat and joar, or one rupee per maund, the result is thirty-two lakhs of rupees annual income.

Let us endeavour to calculate how much of this becomes net produce towards the expenses of the government, and it will be seen that the charges are about one-third gross amount.

\* A maund is seventy-five pounds.

† Grain Measure of

<i>Rajpootana</i> .—	75 pounds	=	1 seer.
	43 seers	=	1 maund.
	12 maunds	=	1 <i>mauni</i> .
	100 <i>maunis</i>	=	1 <i>manassa</i> .

† It does descend as low as eight rupees per *mauni* for wheat and barley, and four for the millets, in seasons of excessive abundance.

*Expenses.*

Establishments—viz. feeding cattle and servants, tear and wear of gear, and clearing the fields—one-eighth of the gross amount,* or.....	4,00,000
Seed.....	6 00,000
Replacing 4,000 oxen annually, at 20s.....	80,000
Extras.....	20,000
	<hr/> 11,00,000 <hr/>

We do not presume to give this, or even the gross amount, as more than an approximation to the truth; but the Regent himself has mentioned that in one year the casualties in oxen amounted to five thousand! We have allowed one-fourth, for an ox will work well seven years, if taken care of. Thus, on the lowest scale, supposing the necessities of the government required the grain to be sold in the year it was raised, twenty lakhs will be the net profit of the Regent's farms. But he has abundant resources without being forced into the market before the favourable moment; until when, the produce is hoarded up in subterranean granaries. Every thing in these regions is simple, yet efficient: we will describe the grain-pits.

These pits or trenches are fixed on elevated dry spots; their size being according

\* It is not uncommon in Rajwarra, when the means of individuals prevent them cultivating their own lands, to hire out the whole with men and implements; for the use of which *one-eighth* of the produce is the established consideration. We have applied this in the rough estimate of the expenses of the Regent's farming system.

to the nature of the soil. All the preparation they undergo is the incineration of certain vegetable substances, and lining the sides and bottom with wheat or barley stubble. The grain is then deposited in the pit, covered over with straw, and a terrace of earth, about eighteen inches in height, and projecting in front beyond the orifice of the pit, is raised over it. This is secured with a coating of clay and cow-dung, which resists even the monsoon, and is renewed as the torrents injure it. Thus the grain may remain for years without injury, while the heat which is extricated checks germination, and deters rats and white ants. Thus the Regent has seldom less than fifty lakhs of maunds in various parts of the country, and it is on emergencies, or in bad seasons, that these stores see the light; when, instead of twelve rupees, the *mauni* runs as high as forty, or the famine price of sixty. Then these pits are mines of gold; the Regent having frequently sold in one year sixty lakhs of maunds. In S. 1860, (or A.D. 1804), during the Mahratta when Holcar was in the Bhurtpoor state, and predatory armies were moving in every direction, and when famine and war conjoined to disolate the country, Kotah fed the whole population of Rajwarra, and supplied all these roving hordes. In that season, grain being fifty-five rupees per *mauni*, he sold to the enormous amount of *one crore of rupees, or a million sterling!*

Reputable merchants of the Mahajin tribe refrain from speculating in grain, from the most liberal feelings, esteeming it *dherm nuhyn lyn*, 'a want of charity.' The humane Jain merchant says, "to hoard up

grain, for the purpose of taking advantage of human misery, may bring riches, but never profit."

According to the only accessible documents, the whole crown-revenue of Kotah from the tax in kind, amounted, under bad management, to twenty-five lakhs of rupees. This is all the Regent admits he collects from (to use his own phrase) his handful (*puchewara*) of soil: of course he does not include his own farming system, but only the amount raised from the cultivator. He confesses that two-thirds of the superficial area of Kotah were waste; but that this is now reversed, there being two-thirds cultivated, and only one-third waste, and this comprises mountain, forest, common, &c.

In S. 1865 (A. D. 1809), as if industry were not already sufficiently shackled, the Regent established a new tax on all corn exported from his dominions. It was termed *lut'ho*, and amounted to a rupee and a half per *mauni*. This tax—not less unjust in origin than vexatious in operation—worse than even the infamous *gabelle*, or the *droit d'aubaine* of France—was another fruit of monopoly. It was at first confined to the grower, though of course it fell indirectly on the consumer; but the *Jagati*, or chief collector of the custom, a man after the Regent's own heart, was so pleased with its efficiency on the very first trial, that he advised his master to push it farther, and it was accordingly levied as well on the farmer as the purchaser. An item of ten lakhs was at once added to the budget; and as if this were insufficient to stop all competition between the regent-farmer-general and his subjects, three, four, nay even five *lut'hos*,

have been levied from the same grain before it was retailed for consumption. Kotah exhibited the picture of a people, if not absolutely starving, yet living in penury in the midst of plenty. Neither the lands of his chiefs nor those of his ministers were exempt from the operation this tax, and all were at the mercy of the *Jagati*, from whose arbitrary will there was no appeal. It had reached the very height of oppression about the period of the alliance with the British government. This collector had become a part of his system; and if the Regent required a few lakhs of ready money, *Jo hookum*, 'your commands,' was the reply. A list was made out of 'arrears of *lut'ho*,' and friend and foe, minister banker, trader, and farmer, had a circular. Remonstrance was not only vain but dangerous: even his ancient friend, the Pundit Bellal, had twenty-five thousand rupees to pay in one of these schedules; the *homme d'affaires* of one of his confidential chiefs, five thousand; his own foreign minister a share, and many bankers of the town, four thousand, five thousand, and ten thousand each. The term *lut'ho* was an abuse of language for a forced contribution: in fact the obnoxious and well-known *dind* of Rajwarra. It alienated the minds of all men, and nearly occasioned the Regent's ruin; for scarcely was their individual sympathy expressed, when the Hara princes conspired to emancipate themselves from his interminable and galling protection.

When the English government came in contact with Rajwarra, it was a primary principal of the universal protective alliance to proclaim that it was for the benefit of the governed as well as the governors, since

it availed little to destroy the wolves without, if they were consigned to the lion within. But there are and must be absurd inconsistencies, even in the policy of western legislators, where one set of principles is applied to all. Zalim soon discovered that the fashion of the day was to *purvourush*, 'foster the ryot.' The odious character of the tax was diminished, and an edict limited its operation to the farmer, the seller, and the purchaser; and so anxious was he to conceal this weapon of oppression, that the very name of *lut'ho* was abolished, and *sowae hasil*, or 'extraordinaries,' substituted. This item is said still to amount to five lakhs of rupees.

Thus did the skill and rigid system of the regent exact from his *puchewara* of soil, full fifty lakhs of rupees. We must also recollect that nearly five more are to be added on account of the household lands of the members of his own and the prince's family, which is almost sufficient to cover their expenses.

What will the European practical farmer, of enlarged means and experience, think of the man who arranged this complicated system, and who during forty years, had superintended its details? What opinion will he form of his vigour of mind, who, at the age of fourscore years, although blind and palsied, still superintends and maintains this system? What will he think of the tenacity of memory, which bears graven thereon, as on a table, an account of all these vast depositories of grain, with their varied contents, many of them the store of years past; and the power to check the slightest errors of the intendant of this

vast accumulation; while, at the same time he regulates the succession of crops throughout this extensive range? Such is the minute topographical knowledge which the Regent possesses of his country, that every field in every farm is familiar to him: and woe to the superintendent *havelदार* if he discovers a fallow nook that ought to bear a crop.

Yet vast as this system is, overwhelming as it would seem to most minds, it formed but a part of the political engine conducted and kept in action by his single powers. The details of his administration, internal as well as external, demanded unremitted vigilance. The formation, the maintenance, and discipline of an army of twenty thousand men, his fortresses, arsenals, and their complicated minutiae, were amply sufficient for one mind. The daily account from his police, consisting of several hundred emissaries, besides the equally numerous reports from the head of each district, would have distracted an ordinary head, "for the winds could not enter and leave Harouti without being reported." But when, in addition to all this, it is known that the Regent was a practical merchant, a speculator in exchanges, that he encouraged the mechanical arts, fostered foreign industry, pursued even horticulture, and, to use his own words, "considered no trouble thrown away which made the rupee return sixteen and a half anas, with whom can he be compared?"\* Literature, philosophy, and *excerpts* from the grand historical epics, were the amusements of his hours of relaxation; but here we anticipate, for we have

\* There are sixteen *anas* to a rupee.

not yet finished the review of his economical character. His monopolies, especially that of grain, not only influenced his own market, but affected all the adjacent countries; and when speculation in opium ran to such a demoralizing excess in consequence of the British government monopolizing the entire produce of the poppy cultivated throughout Malwa, he took advantage of the *mania*, and by his sales or purchases raised or depressed the market at pleasure. His gardens, scattered throughout the country, still supply the markets of the towns and capital with vegetables, and his forests furnish them with fuel.

So rigid was his system of taxation, that nothing escaped it. There was a heavy tax on widows who remarried. Even the *gourd* of the mendicant paid a tythe, and the ascetic in his cell had a domiciliary visit to ascertain the gains of mendicancy, in order that a portion should go to the exigencies of the state. The *toomba burrar*, or 'gourd-tax,' was abolished after forming for a twelvemonth part of the fiscal code of Harouti, and then not through any scruples of the Regent, but to satisfy his friends. Akin to this, and even of a lower grade, was the *jahroo-burrar*, or 'broom-tax,' which continued for ten years; but the many lampoons it provoked from the satirical *Bhat* operated on the more sensitive feelings of his son, Madhu Sing, who obtained its repeal.

Zalim was no favourite with the bards; and that he had little claim to their consideration may be inferred from the following anecdote. A celebrated rhymers was reciting some laudatory stanzas, which the

Regent received rather coldly, observing with a sneer, that "they told nothing but lies, though he should be happy to listen to their effusions when truth was the foundation." The poet replied, that "he found truth a most unmarketable commodity; nevertheless, he had some of that at his service;" and stipulating for forgiveness if they offended, he gave the protector his picture in a string of *improvised* stanzas, so full of *vis* (poison), that the lands of the whole fraternity were resumed, and none of the order have ever since been admitted to his presence.

Though rigid in his observance of the ceremonies of religion, and sharing in the prevailing superstitions of his country, he never allows the accidental circumstance of birth or caste to affect his policy. Offences against the state admit of no indemnity, be the offender a Brahmin or a bard; and if these classes engage in trade, they experience no exemption from imposts.

Such is an outline of the territorial arrangements of the Regent Zalim Sing. When power was assigned to him, he found the state limited to Kailwarra on the east; he has extended it to the verge of the Plateau, and the fortress which guards its ascent, at first rented from the Mahrattas, is now by treaty his own. He took possession of the reins of power with an empty treasury and *thirty-two lakhs* of accumulating debt. He found the means of defence a few dilapidated fortresses, and a brave but unmanageable feudal army. He has, at an immense cost, put the fortresses into the most complete state of defence, and covered their ramparts with many hun-

dred pieces of cannon ; and he has raised and maintains, in lieu of about four thousand Hara cavaliers, an army,—regular we may term it,—of twenty thousand men, distributed into battalions, a park of one hundred pieces of cannon, with about one thousand good horse, besides the feudal contingents.

But is this prosperity ? Is this the greatness which the Raja Goman intended should be entailed upon his successors, his chiefs, and his subjects ? Was it to entertain twenty thousand mercenary soldiers from the sequestered fields of the illustrious Hara, the indigenous proprietor ? Is this government, is it good government according to the ideas of more civilized nations, to extend taxation to its limit, in order to maintain this cumbrous machinery ? We may admit that, for a time,

such a system may have been requisite, not only for the maintenance of his delegated power, but to preserve the state from predatory spoliation ; and now, could we see the noble restored to his forfeited estates, and the ryot to his hereditary rood of land, we should say that Zalim Sing had been an instrument in the hand of Providence for the preservation of the rights of the Haras. But, as it is, whilst the corn which waves upon the fertile surface of Kotah presents not the symbol of prosperity, neither is his well-paid and well-disciplined army a sure mean of defence : moral propriety has been violated ; rights are in abeyance, and until they be restored, even the apparent consistency of the social fabric is obtained by means which endanger its security.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Political system of the Regent.—His foreign policy.—His pre-eminent influence in Rajwarra. His first connexion with the English government.—Monson's retreat.—Gallant conduct and death of the Hara chief of Coelah.—Aid given by the Regent involves him with Holcar.—Holcar comes to Kotah.—Preparations to attack the capital.—Singular interview with Zalim.—Zalim's agents at foreign courts.—Alliance with Ameer Khan, and the Pindarri chiefs.—Characteristic anecdotes.—Zalim's offensive policy.—His domestic policy.—Character of Maharao Omed Sing.—Zalim's conduct towards him.—Choice of ministers.—Bishen Sing Fowjdar.—Dulleel Khan Pathan.—Circumvallation of Kotah.—Foundation of the city Jhalra-patun.—Mehrab Khan, commander of the forces.*

THE foregoing reflections bring us back to political considerations, and these we must separate into two branches, the foreign and domestic. We purposely invert the

discussion of these topics, for the sake of convenience.

Zalim's policy was to create, as regarded himself, a kind of balance of power ; to overawe one leader by his influence with another, yet by the maintenance of a good understanding with all, to prevent individual umbrage, while his own strength was at all times sufficient to make the scale preponderate in his favour.

Placed in the very heart of India, Kotah was for years the centre around which revolved the desultory armies, or ambulant governments, ever strangers to repose ; and though its wealth could not fail to attract the cupidity of these vagabond powers, yet, by the imposing attitude which he assumed, Zalim Sing maintained during more than half a century, the respect, the fear, and even the esteem of all ; and Kotah alone, throughout this lengthened period, so full of catastrophes, never saw an enemy at her gates. Although an epoch of perpetual change and political convulsion,—armies destroyed, states overturned, famine and pestilence often aiding moral causes in desolating the land—yet did the Regent, from the age of twenty-five to eighty-two,\* by his sagacity, his energy, his moderation, his prudence, conduct the bark intrusted to his care through all the shoals and dangers which beset her course. It may not excite surprise that he was unwilling to relinquish the helm when the vessel was moored in calm waters ; or, when the unskilful owner, forgetting these tempests,

and deeming his own science equal to the task, demanded the surrender, that he should hoist the flag of defiance.

There was not a court in Rajwarra, not even the predatory governments, which was not in some way influenced by his opinions, and often guided by his councils. At each he had envoys, and when there was a point to gain, there were irresistible arguments in reserve to secure it. The necessities, the vanities, and weaknesses of man, he could enlist on his side, and he was alternately, by adoption, the father, uncle, or brother, of every person in power during this eventful period, from the prince upon the throne, to the brat of a Pindarri. He frequently observed, that "none knew the shifts he had been put to ;" and when entreated not to use expressions of humility, which were alike unsuited to his age and station, and the reverence he compelled, he would reply, "God grant you long life, but it is become a habit." For the last ten years, he not only made his connexion with Meer Khan subservient to avoiding a collision with Holcar, but converted the Khan into the make-weight of his balance of power: "he thanked God the time was past, when he had to congratulate even the slave of a Toork on a safe *accouchement*, and to pay for this happiness."

Though by nature irascible, impetuous, and proud, he could bend to the extreme of submission. But while he would, by letter or conversation, say to a marauding Pindarri or Pathan, "let me petition to your notice." or "if my clodpole understanding (*bhomia bood'h*) is worth consulting;" or reply to a demand for a contribution, coupled

\* I may once more repeat, this was written in A. D. 1280-21, when Zalim Sing had reached the age of fourscore and two.

with a threat of inroad, "that the *friendly epistle* had been received; that he lamented the writer's distresses, &c., &c.;" with a few thousand more than was demanded, and a present to the messenger, he would excite a feeling which at least obtained a respite; on the other hand, he was always prepared to repel aggression; and if a single action would have decided his quarrel, he would not have hesitated to engage any power in the circle. But he knew even success, in such a case, to be ruin, and the general feature of his external policy was accordingly of a temporizing and very mixed nature. Situated as he was, amidst, conflicting elements, he had frequently a double game to play. Thus, in the coalition of 1806-7, against Jodpoor, he had three parties to please, each requesting his aid, which made neutrality almost impossible. He sent envoys to all; and while appearing as the universal mediator, he gave assistance to none.

It would be vain as well as useless to attempt the details of his foreign policy; we shall merely allude to the circumstance which first brought him in contact with the British government, in A. D. 1803-4, and then proceed to his domestic administration.

When the ill-fated expedition under Monson traversed Central India to the attack of Holcar, the regent of Kotah, trusting to the invincibility of the British arms, did not hesitate, upon their appearance within his territory, to co-operate both with supplies and men. But when the British army retreated, and its commander demanded admission within the walls of Kotah, he

met a decided and very proper refusal. "You shall not bring anarchy and a disorganized army to mix with my peaceable citizens; but draw up your battalions under my walls; I will furnish provisions, and I will march the whole of my force between you and the enemy, and bear the brunt of his attack." Such were Zalim's own expressions: whether it would have been wise to accede to his proposal is not the point of discussion. Monson continued his Disastrous flight through the Boondi and Jeipoor dominions, and carried almost alone the news of his disgrace to the illustrious Lake. It was natural he should seek to palliate his error by an attempt to involve others; and amongst those thus calumniated, first and foremost was the regent of Kotah, "the head and front of whose offending,"—non-admission to a panic-struck, beef-eating army within his walls,—was translated into treachery, and a connivance with the enemy; a calumny which long subsisted to the prejudice of the veteran politician. But never was there a greater wrong inflicted, or a more unjust return for services and sacrifices, both in men and money, in a cause which little concerned him; and it nearly operated hurtfully, at a period (1817) when the British government could not have dispensed with his aid. It was never told, it is hardly yet known at this distant period, what devotion he evinced in that memorable *retreat*, as it is misnamed, when the troops of Kotah and the corps of the devoted Lucan were sacrificed to ensure the safety of the army until it left the Mokundurra Pass in its rear. If there be any incredulous supporter of the commander

in that era of our shame, let him repair to the altar of the Coelah chief, who, like a true Hara, "spread his carpet" at the ford of the Ajmar, and there awaited the myrmidons of the Mahrattas, and fell protecting the flight of an army which might have passed from one end of India to the other. Well might the veteran allude to our ingratitude in 1804, when in A.D. 1817 he was called upon to co-operate in the destruction of that predatory system, in withstanding which he had passed a life of feverish anxiety. If there was a doubt of the part he acted, if the monuments of the slain will not be admitted as evidence, let us appeal to the opinion of the enemy, whose testimony adds another feature to the portrait of this extraordinary man.

Besides the Coelah chief, and many brave Haras, slain on the retreat of Monson, the Bukshee, or commander of the force, was made prisoner. As the price of his liberation, and as a punishment for the aid thus given to the British, the Mahratta leader exacted a bond of ten lakhs of rupees from the Bukshee, threatening on refusal to lay waste with fire and sword the whole line of pursuit. But when the discomfited Bukshee appeared before the Regent, he spurned him from his presence, disavowed his act, and sent him back to Holcar to pay the forfeiture as he might.\* Holcar satisfied himself then with threatening vengeance, and when opportunity permitted, he marched into Harouti and encamped near the capital. The walls were manned to receive him; the signal had been pre-

pared which would not have left a single house inhabited in the plains, while the Bhils would simultaneously pour down from the hills on Holcar's supplies or followers. The bond was again presented, and without hesitation disavowed: hostilities appeared inevitable, when the friends of both parties concerted an interview. But Zalim, aware of the perfidy of his foe, declined this except on his own conditions. These were singular, and will recall to mind another and yet more celebrated meeting. He demanded that they should discuss the terms of peace or war upon the Chumbul, to which Holcar acceded. For this purpose Zalim prepared two boats, each capable of containing about twenty armed men. Having moored his own little bark in the middle of the stream, under the cannon of the city, Holcar, accompanied by his cavalcade, embarked in his boat and rowed to meet him. Carpets were spread, and there these extraordinary men, with only one eye† between them, settled the conditions of peace, and the endearing epithets of 'uncle' and 'nephew' were bandied, with abundant mirth on the peculiarity of their situation; while,—for the fact is beyond a doubt,—each boat was plugged, and men were at hand on the first appearance of treachery to have sent them all to the bottom of the river. But Holcar's necessities were urgent, and a gift of three lakhs of rupees averted such a catastrophe, though he never relinquished the threat of exacting the ten lakhs; and when at length madness overtook him, "the bond of Kaka Zalim

\* If my memory betrays me not, this unfortunate commander, unable to bear his shame, took poison.

† It should be remembered that Zalim was quite blind, and that Holcar had lost the use of one eye.

"Sing" was one of the most frequently-repeated ravings of this soldier of fortune, whose whole life was one scene of insanity.

It will readily be conceived, that the labours of his administration were quite sufficient to occupy his attention without intermeddling with his neighbours; yet, in order to give a direct interest in the welfare of Kotah, he became a competitor for the farming of the extensive districts which joined his southern frontier, belonging to Sindia and Holcar. From the former he rented the *punj-mohals*, and from the latter the four important districts of Dig, Perawa, &c., which, when by right of conquest they became British, were given in sovereignty to the Regent. Not satisfied with this hold of self-interest on the two great predatory powers, he had emissaries in the persons of their confidential ministers, who reported every movement; and to "make assurance doubly sure," he had Mahratta pundits of the first talent in his own administration, through whose connexions no political measure of their nation escaped his knowledge. As for Meer Khan, he and the Regent were essential to each other. From Kotah the Khan was provided with military stores and supplies of every kind; and when his legions mutinied (a matter of daily occurrence) and threatened him with the *bastinado*, or fastening to a piece of ordnance under a scorching sun, Kotah afforded a place of refuge during a temporary retreat, or ways and means to allay the tumult by paying the arrears. Zalim allotted the castle of Shirgurb for the Khan's family, so that this leader had no anxiety on their

account, while he was pursuing his career of rapine in more distant scenes.

Even the Pindarris were conciliated with all the respect and courtesy paid to better men. Many of their leaders held grants of land in Kotah: so essential, indeed, was a good understanding with this body, that when Sindia, in A.D. 1807, entrapped and imprisoned in the dungeons of Gwalior the celebrated Kureem, Zalim not only advanced the large sum required for his ransom, but had the temerity to pledge himself for his future good conduct: an act which somewhat tarnished his reputation for sagacity, but eventually operated as a just punishment on Sindia for his avarice.

The scale of munificence on which the Regent exercised the rites of sanctuary (*sirna*) towards the chiefs of other countries claiming his protection, was disproportioned to the means of the state. The exiled nobles of Marwar and Mewar have held estates in Kotah greater than their sequestered patrimonies. These dazzling acts of beneficence were not lost on a community amongst whom hospitality ranks at the head of the virtues. In these regions, where the strangest anomalies and the most striking contradictions present themselves in politics, such conduct begets no astonishment, and rarely provokes a remonstrance from the state whence the suppliant fled. The Regent not only received the refugees, but often reconciled them to their sovereigns. He gloried in the title of 'peace-maker,' and whether his conduct proceeded from motives of benevolence or policy, he was rewarded with the epithet, sufficiently exalted in itself. "They all come to old

Zalim with their troubles," he remarked, "as if he could find food for them all from 'his handful of soil.'"

To conclude: his defensive was, in its results, the reverse of his offensive policy. Invariable and brilliant success accompanied the one; defeat, disappointment, and great pecuniary sacrifices, were the constant fruits of the other. Mewar eluded all his arts, and involved Kotah in embarrassments from which she will never recover, while his attempt to take Sheepoor, the capital of the Gores, by a *coup de main*, was signally defeated. Had he succeeded in either attempt, and added the resources of these acquisitions to Kotah, doubtless his views would have been still more enlarged. At an early period of his career, an offer was made to him, by the celebrated Pertap Sing of Jeepoor, to undertake the duties of chief minister of that state: it is vain to speculate on what might have been the result to the state or himself, had he been able to wield her resources, at that time so little impaired.

Let us now view the domestic policy of the Regent; for which purpose we must again bring forward the pageant prince of Kotah, the Raja Omed Sing, who was destined never to be extricated from the trammels of a guardianship which, like most offices in the East, was designed to be hereditary: and at the age of threescore and ten, Omed Sing found himself as much a minor as when his dying father "placed him in the lap" of the Protector Zalim Sing. The line of conduct he pursued towards his sovereign, through half a century's duration, was singularly consistent. The age, the character,

the very title of *nanah*, or 'grandsire,' added weight to his authority, and the disposition of the prince seemed little inclined to throw it off. In short, his temperament appeared exactly suited to the views of the Regent, who, while he consulted his wishes in every step, acted entirely from himself. The Maha-Rao was a prince of excellent understanding, and possessed many of those qualities inherent in a Rajpoot. He was fond of the chase, and was the best horseman and marksman in the country; and the Regent gained such entire ascendancy over him, that it is doubtful whether he was solicitous of change. Besides, there was no appearance of constraint; and his religious occupations, which increased with his age, went far to wean him from a wish to take a more active share in the duties of government. His penetration, in fact, discovered the inutility of such a desire, and he soon ceased to entertain it; while in proportion as he yielded, the attentions of the minister increased. If an envoy came from a foreign state, he was introduced to the Prince, delivered his credentials to him; and from him received a reply, but that reply was his minister's. If a foreign noble claimed protection, he received it from the Prince: he was the dispenser of the favours, though he could neither change their nature or amount. Nay, if the Regent's own sons required an addition to their estates, it could only be at the express desire of the Maha-Rao; and to such a length did the minister carry this deference, that an increase to his personal income required being pressed upon him by the Prince. If horses arrived from foreign countries for sale, the best were set aside

for the Maha-Rao and his sons. The archives, the seal, and all the emblems of sovereignty, remained as in times past in the custody of the personal servants of the Prince, at the castle, though none durst use them without consent of the Regent. He banished his only son, Madhu Sing, during three years, to the family estate at Nandta, for disrespect to the heir-apparent, Kishore Sing, when training their horses together; and it was with difficulty that even the entreaty of the Maha-Rao could procure his recall. There are many anecdotes related to evince that habitual deference to every thing attached to his sovereign, which, originating in good feeling, greatly aided his policy. The Regent was one day at prayer, in the family temple in the castle, when the younger sons of the Maha-Rao not knowing he was there, entered to perform their devotions. It was the cold season, and the pavement was damp; he took the quilt which he wore from his shoulders, and spread it for them to stand upon. On their retiring, a servant, deeming the quilt no longer fit to be applied to the Regent's person, was putting it aside; but, guessing his intention, Zalim eagerly snatched it from him, and re-covering himself, observed it was now of some value, since it was marked with the dust of the feet of his sovereign's children. These are curious anomalies in the mind of a man who had determined on unlimited authority. No usurpation was ever more meek, or yet more absolute; and it might be affirmed that the Prince and the Regent were made for each other and the times in which they lived.

It was to be expected that a man, whose

name was long synonymous with wisdom, should shew discernment in the choice of his servants. He had the art of attaching them to his interests, of uniting their regard with a submissive respect, and no kindness, no familiarity, ever made them forget the bounds prescribed. But while he generously provided for all their wants and granted them every indulgence, he knew too well the caprice of human nature to make them independent of himself. He would provide for them, for their relations and their dependents; his hand was ever bestowing gratuities on festivals, births, marriages; or deaths; but he never allowed them to accumulate wealth. It is to be remarked that his most confidential servants were either Pathans or Mahratta Pundits: the first he employed in military posts, the other in the more complicated machinery of politics. He rarely employed his own countrymen; and the post of Foujdar, now held by Bishen Sing, a Rajpoot of the Suktawut clan, is the exception to the rule. Dulleel Khan and Mehrab Khan were his most faithful and devoted servants and friends. The stupendous fortifications of the capital, with which there is nothing in India to compete, save the walls of Agra, were all executed by the former. By him, also was raised that pride of the Regent, the city called after him, Jhalra-patun; \* while all the other forts were put into a state which makes Kotah the most defensible territory in India. Such was the affectionate esteem in which Dulleel was held by the Regent, that he used often to say, "he hoped he

\* *Jhala-ra-Patun*, 'the city of the Jhala,' the Regent's tribe.