



imperial governor sent to take possession, but Jey Sing entered his states, sword in hand, drove out the king's garrisons, and formed a league with Ajit Sing of Marwar for their mutual preservation.

It would be tedious to pursue this celebrated Rajpoot through his desultory military career during the forty-four years he occupied the *gadi* of Amber; enough is already known of it from its combination with the Annals of Mewar and Boondi, of which house he was the implacable foe. Although Jey Sing mixed all the troubles and warfare of this long period of anarchy, when the throne of Timoor was rapidly crumbling into dust, his reputation as a soldier would never have handed down his name with honour to posterity; on the contrary, his courage had none of the fire which is requisite to make a Rajpoot hero; though his talents for civil government and court intrigue, in which he was the Machiavelli of his day, were at that period far more notable auxiliaries.

As a statesman, legislator, and man of science, the character of Sowas Jey Sing is worthy of an ample delineation,* which would correct our opinion of the genius and

* For such a sketch, the materials of the Amber court are abundant; to instance only the *Calpadreema*, a miscellaneous diary, in which every thing of note was written, and a collection entitled *Ek sah noh goon Jey Sing* or 'the one hundred and nine actions of Jey Sing,' of which I have heard several narrated and noted. His voluminous correspondence with the princes and chiefs of his time would alone repay the trouble of translation, and would throw a more perfect light on the manners and feelings of his countrymen than the most labourious lucubrations of any European. I possess an autograph letter of this prince, on one of the most important events of Indian history at this period, the deposition of Feroohser. It was addressed to the Rana.

capacity of the princes of Rajpootana, of whom we are apt to form too low an estimate. He was the founder of the new capital, named after him Jeipoor, or Jeinuggur, which became the seat of science and art, and eclipsed the more ancient Amber, with which the fortifications of the modern city unite, although the extremity of the one is six miles from the other. Jeipoor is the only city in India built upon a regular plan, with streets bisecting each other at right angles. The merit of the design and execution is assigned to Vedyadhar, a native of Bengal, one of the most eminent coadjutor of the prince in all his scientific pursuits, both astronomical and historical. Almost all the Rajpoot princes have a smattering of astronomy, or rather of its spurious relation, astrology; but Jey Sing went deep, not only into the theory, but the practice of the science, and was so esteemed for his knowledge, that he was entrusted by the emperor Mahomed Shah with the reformation of the calendar. He had erected observatories with instruments of his own invention at Dehli, Jeipoor, Oojein, Benares, and Mathura, upon a scale of Asiatic grandeur; and their results were so correct as to astonish the most learned. He had previously used such instruments as those of Ulug Beg (the royal astronomer of Samarcand), which failed to answer his expectations. From the observations of seven years at the various observatories, he constructed a set of tables. While thus engaged, he learned through a Portuguese missionary, Padre Manuel, the progress which his favourite pursuit was making in Portugal, and he sent "several skilful persons along



with him"* to the court of Emanuel. The king of Portugal despatched Xavier de Silva, who communicated to the Rajpoot prince the tables of De la Hire.† "On examining and comparing the calculations of these tables (says the Rajpoot prince) with actual observation, it appeared there was an error in the former, in assigning the moon's place, of half a degree; although the error in the other planets was not so great, yet the times of solar and lunar eclipses he‡ found to come out later or earlier than the truth by the fourth part of a *ghurry*, fifteen *puls* (six minutes of time)." In like manner, as he found fault with instruments of brass used by the Toorki astronomer, and which he conjectures must have been such as were used by Hipparchus and Ptolemy, so he attributes the inaccuracies of De la Hire's tables to instruments of "inferior diameters." The Rajpoot prince might justly boast of his instruments. With that at Dehli, he, in A. D. 1729, determined the obliquity of the ecliptic to be $23^{\circ} 28'$; within $28''$ of what it was determined to be, the year following, by Godin. His general accuracy was further put to the test in A. D. 1793 by our scientific countryman, Dr. W. Hunter, who compared a series of observations on the latitude of Oojein with that established by the Rajpoot prince. The difference was $24''$; and Dr. H. does not depend on his own observations within $13''$. Jey Sing made the latitude $23^{\circ} 10' N.$; Dr. Hunter, $23^{\circ} 10' 24'' N.$

* It would be worth ascertaining whether the archives of Lisbon refer to this circumstance.

† Second edition, published in A. D. 1702. Jey Sing finished his in A. D. 1728.

‡ Jey Sing always speaks of himself in the third person.

From the results of his varied observations, Jey Sing drew up a set of tables, which he entitled *Zej Mahomedshahi*, dedicated to that monarch; by these, all astronomical computations are yet made, and almanacs constructed. It would be wrong, while considering these labours of a prince who caused Euclid's Elements, the treatises on plain and spherical trigonometry, 'Don Juan' Napier on the construction and use of logarithms, to be translated into Sanscrit,—to omit noticing the high strain of devotion with which he views the wonders of the "Supreme Artificer;" recalling the line of one of our own best poets:

"An undevout astronomer is mad."

The Rajpoot prince thus opens his preface: "Praise be to God, such that the minutely discerning genius of the most profound geometers, in uttering the smallest particle of it, may open the mouth in confession of inability; and such adoration, that the study and accuracy of astronomers, who measure the heavens may acknowledge their astonishment, and utter insufficiency! Let us devote ourselves at the altar of the King of Kings, hallowed be his name! in the book of the register of whose power the lofty orbs of heaven are only a few leaves; and the stars, and that heavenly courser the sun, small pieces of money, in the treasury of the empire of the Most High.

"From inability to comprehend the all-encompassing beneficence of his power, HIPPARCHUS is an ignorant clown, who wrings the hands of vexation; and in the contemplation of his exalted majesty, PROBLEMY is a bat, who can never arrive at the sun of truth: the demonstrations of EUCLID



are an imperfect sketch of the forms of his contrivance.

"But since the well-wisher of the works of creation, and the admiring spectator of the works of infinite wisdom, SEVAI JEY SING, from the first dawning of reason in his mind, and during its progress towards maturity, was entirely devoted to the study of mathematical science, and the bent of his mind was constantly directed to the solution of its most difficult problems; by the aid of the Supreme Artificer, he obtained a thorough knowledge of its principles and rules," &c.*

Besides the construction of these objects of science, he erected, at his own expense, *caravanserais* for the free use of travellers in many of the provinces. How far vanity may have mingled with benevolence in this act (by no means uncommon in India), it were uncharitable to enquire: for the Hindu not only prays for all those "who travel by land or by water," but aids the traveller

by *sevais*, or inns, and wells dug at his own expense, and in most capitals and cities, under the ancient princes, there were public charities for necessitous travellers, at which they had their meals, and then passed on.

When we consider that Jey Sing carried on his favourite pursuits in the midst of perpetual wars and court intrigues, from whose debasing influence he escaped not untainted; when amidst revolution, the destruction of the empire, and the meteoric rise of the Mahrattas, he not only steered through the dangers, but elevated Amber above all the principalities around, we must admit that he was an extraordinary man. Aware of the approaching downfall of the Mogul empire, and determined to aggrandize Amber from the wreck, he was, nevertheless, not unfaithful to his lord paramount; for, on the conspiracy which deprived Ferochser of empire and of life, Jey Sing was one of the few princes who retained their fidelity, and would have stood by him to the last, if he had possessed a particle of the valour which belonged to the descendants of Timoor.*

Enough has been said of his public life, in that portion of the *Annals of Mewar* with which he was so closely connected, both by political and family ties. The Syeds, who succeeded to power on the murder of their sovereign Ferochser, were too wise to raise enemies unnecessarily; and Jey Sing, when he left the unhappy monarch to his fate, retired to his hereditary dominions, devoting himself to his favourite pursuits.

* See "Account of the astronomical labours of Jya Sing, Raja of Amber," by Dr. W. Hunter; (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. v. p. 177), to whom I refer the reader for the description of the instruments used by the Raja. The author has seen those at Delhi and Mathura. There is also an equinoctial dial constructed on the terrace of the palace of Oodipoor, and various instruments at Kotah and Boondi, especially an armillary sphere, at the former, of about five feet diameter, all in brass, got up under the scholars of Jey Sing.

Dr. Hunter gives a most interesting account of a young pundit, whom he found at Oojien, the grandson of one of the coadjutors of Jey Sing, who held the office of *Syotish Rae*, or Astronomer-Royal, and an estate of five thousand rupees, annual rent, both of which (title and estate) descended to this young man: but science fled with Jey Sing, and the barbarian Mahrattas had rendered his estate desolate and unproductive. He possessed, says Dr. H., a thorough acquaintance with the Hindu astronomical science contained in the various *Sidhantas*, and that not confined to the mechanical practice of rules, but founded on a geometrical knowledge of their demonstration. This inheritor of the mantle of Jey Sing died at Jeipoor, soon after Dr. Hunter left Oojien, in A. D. 1793.

* Scott, in his excellent history of the successors of Arungzeb, gives a full account of this tragical event, on which I have already touched in vol. I. of this work; where I have given a literal translation of the autograph letter of Raja Jey Sing on the occasion.



astronomy and history. He appears to have enjoyed three years of uninterrupted quiet, taking no part in the struggles, which terminated, in A. D. 1721, with Mahomed Shah's defeat of his rivals, and the destruction of the Syeds. At this period, Jey Sing was called from his philosophical pursuits, and appointed the king's lieutenant for the provinces of Agra and Malwa in succession: and it was during this interval of comparative repose, that he erected those monuments which irradiate this dark epoch of the history of India*. Nor was he blind to the interests of his nation or the honour of Amber, and his important office was made subservient to obtaining the repeal of that disgraceful edict, the *jezeva*, and authority to repress the infant power of the Jats, long a thorn in the side of Amber. But when, in A.D. 1732, the Raja once more lieutenant for Malwa, saw that it was in vain to attempt to check the Mahratta invasion, or to prevent the partition of the empire, he deemed himself justified in consulting the welfare of his own house. We know not what terms Jey Sing entered into with the Mahratta leader, Bajiraw, who, by his influence was appointed Soobadar of Malwa; we may, however, imagine it was from some more powerful stimulant than the native historian of this period assigns, namely, "a similarity of religion." By this conduct, Jey Sing is said emphatically, by his own countrymen, to have given the key of Hindustan to the Southron. The influence his character

obtained, however, with the Mahrattas was even useful to his sovereign, for by it he retarded their excesses, which at length reached the capital. In a few years more (A.D. 1739), Nadir Shah's invasion took place, and the Rajpoots, wisely alive to their own interests, remained aloof from a cause which neither valour nor wisdom could longer serve. They respected the emperor, but the system of government had long alienated these gallant supporters of the throne. We may exemplify the trials to which Rajpoot fidelity was exposed, by one of "the hundred and nine deeds of Jey Sing," which will at the same time serve further to illustrate the position, that half the political and moral evils which have vexed the royal houses of Rajpootana, take their rise from polygamy.

Mahraja Bishen Sing had two sons, Jey Sing and Beejy Sing. The mother of Beejy Sing, doubtful of his safety, sent him to her own family in Keechiwarra. When he had attained man's estate, he was sent to court, and by bribes, chiefly of jewels presented by his mother, he obtained the patronage of Kumurodin Khan, the vizier. At first his ambition was limited to the demand of Busswa, one of the most fertile districts of Amber, as an appanage; which being acceded to by his brother and sovereign, Jey Sing, he was stimulated by his mother to make still higher demands, and to offer the sum of five crores of rupees and a contingent of five thousand horse, if he might supplant his brother on the throne of Amber. The vizier mentioned it to the emperor, who asked what security he had for the fulfilment of the contract; the vizier offered

* The Raja says he finished his tables in A. D. 1728, and that he had occupied himself seven years previously in the necessary observations; in fact, the first quiet years of Mahomed Shah's reign, or indeed that India had known for centuries.



his own guarantee, and the *sumuds* of Amber were actually preparing, which were thus to unseat Jey Sing, when his *pugri budul bhae*, Khandoran Khan, informed Kirparam, the Jeipoor envoy at court, of what was going on. The intelligence produced consternation at Amber, since Kumurodin was all-powerful. Jey Sing's dejection became manifest on reading the letter, and he handed it to the confidential Nazir, who remarked, "it was an affair in which force could not be used, in which wealth was useless, and which must be decided by stratagem* alone; and that the conspiracy could be defeated only through the conspirator. At the Nazir's recommendation he convened his principal chiefs, Mohun Sing, chief of the Nathawuts; Deep Sing, Khombani, of Bhansko; Zooravur Sing, Seoburunpota; Himmat Sing, Narooka, Koosul Sing of Jhulaye; Bhojraj of Mozabad, and Futteh Sing of Maoli; and thus addressed them on the difficulties of his position: "You placed me on the *gadi* of Amber; and my brother, who would be satisfied with Busswa, has Amber forced upon him by the Nawab Kumurodin." They advised him to be of good cheer, and they would manage the affair, provided he was sincere in assigning Busswa to his brother. He made out the grant at the moment,

* The Nazir is here harping on three of the four predicaments, which (borrowed originally from Menu, and repeated by the great Rajpoot oracle, the bard Chund) govern all human events, *shata, dan, bhed, dind*, 'arguments, gifts, stratagem, force.'

† He is the hereditary premier noble of this house (as is Salombara of Mewar, and the Ahwa chief of Marwar), and is familiarly called the '*Patel of Amber*.' His residence is Chomoo, which is the place of rendezvous of the feudality of Amber, whenever they league against the sovereign.

ratified it with an oath, and presented it with full powers to the chiefs to act for him. The *Panch* (council) of Amber sent their ministers to Beejy Sing, provided with all the necessary arguments; but the prince replied, he had no confidence in the promises or protestations of his brother. For themselves, and in the name of the *barah kotri Amber ca* (the twelve great families), they gave their '*seeta-ran*,' or security; adding that if Jey Sing swerved from his engagements, they were his, and would themselves place him on the *gadi* of Amber.

He accepted their interposition and the grant, which being explained to his patron, he was by no means satisfied; nevertheless he ordered Khandoran and Kirparam to accompany him, to see him inducted in his new appanage of Busswa. The chiefs, anxious to reconcile the brothers, obtained Beejy Sing's assent to a meeting, and as he declined going to Amber, Chomoo was proposed and agreed to, but was afterwards changed to the town of Sanganair, six miles south-west of Jeipoor, where Beejy Sing pitched his tents. As Jey Sing was quitting the *darbar* to give his brother the meeting, the Nazir entered with a message from the queen-mother, to know, "why her eyes should not be blessed with witnessing the meeting and reconciliation of the two *Laljis*."* The Raja referred the request to the chiefs, who said there could be no objection.

The Nazir prepared the *mahadole*, with three hundred chariots for the females; but instead of the royal litter containing the

* *Lalji* is an epithet of endearment used by all classes of Hindus towards their children, from the Sanscrit *lala*.



queen-mother, it was occupied by Oogur Sen, the Bhatti chief, and each covered chariot contained two chosen *Sillehposhians*, or men at arms. Not a soul but the Nazir and his master were aware of the treachery. The procession left the capital; money was scattered with profusion by the attendants of the supposed queen-mother, to the people who thronged the highways, rejoicing at the approaching conclusion of these fraternal feuds.

A messenger having brought the intelligence that the queen-mother had arrived at the palace of Sangannair, the Raja and his chiefs mounted to join her. The brothers first met and embraced, when Jey Sing presented the grant of Busswa, saying, with some warmth, that if his brother preferred ruling at Amber, he would abandon his birth-right and take Busswa. Beejy Sing overcome with this kindness, replied, that "all his wants were satisfied." When the time to separate had arrived, the Nazir came into the court with a message from the queen-mother, to say, that if the chiefs would withdraw she would come and see her children, or that they might come to her apartment. Jey Sing referred his mother's wish to the chiefs, saying he had no will but theirs. Having advised the brothers to wait on the queen-mother, they proceeded hand in hand to the interior of the mahl. When arrived at the door, Jey Sing, taking his dagger from his girdle, delivered it to an eunuch, saying, "what occasion for this here?" and Beejy Sing, not to be outdone in confidence, followed his example. As the Nazir closed the door, Beejy Sing found himself, not in the embrace

of the queen-mother, but in the iron gripe of the gigantic Bhatti, who instantly bound him hand and foot, and placing him in the *mahadole*, the mock female procession with their prisoner returned to Amber. In an hour, tidings were conveyed to Jey Sing of the prisoner being safely lodged in the castle, when he rejoined the conclave of his chiefs; who on seeing him enter alone, attended by some of the 'men at arms,' stared at each other, and asked "what had become of Beejy Sing?"—"Humara part myn", 'in my belly!' was the reply. "We are both the sons of Bishen Sing, and I the eldest. If it is your wish that he should rule, then slay me and bring him forth. For you I have forfeited my faith, for should Beejy Sing have introduced, as assuredly he would, your enemies and mine, you must have perished." Hearing this, the chiefs were amazed; but there was no remedy, and they left the palace in silence. Outside were encamped six thousand imperial horse, furnished by the vizier as the escort of Beejy Sing, whose commander demanded what had become of their trust. Jey Sing replied, "It was no affair of theirs", and desired them to be gone, "or he would request their horses of them". They had no alternative but to retrace their steps, and thus was Beejy Sing made prisoner.*

Whatever opinion the moralist may attach to this specimen of "the hundred and nine goon" of the royal astronomer of Amber, which might rather be styled *goonaf* (vice) than *goon* (virtue), no one will deny

* I have made a *perbatin* translation of this *goon*.

† This is a singular instance of making the privative an affix instead of prefix; a-*goon*, 'without virtue,' would be the common form.



that it was done in a most masterly manner, and where *châl* or stratagem is a necessary expedient, did honour to the talents of Jey Sing and the Nazir, who alone, says the narrative, were necessary to the plot. In this instance, moreover, it was perfectly justifiable; for with the means and influence of the vizier to support him, Beejy Sing must, sooner or later, have supplanted his brother. The fate of Beejy Sing is not stated.

The Cuchwaha state, as well as its capital owes every thing to Jey Sing: before his time, it had little political weight beyond that which it acquired from the personal character of its princes, and their estimation at the Mogul court. Yet, notwithstanding the intimate connexion which existed between the Amber Rajas and the imperial family, from Baber to Arungzeb, their patrimonial estates had been very little enlarged since Pujoon, the cotemporary of the last Rajpoot emperor of Delhi. Nor was it till the troubles which ensued on the demise of Arungzeb, when the empire was eventually partitioned, that Amber was entitled to the name of a *raj*. During those troubles, Jey Sing's power, as the king's lieutenant in Agra, which embraced his hereditary domains, gave him ample opportunity to enlarge and consolidate his territory. The manner in which he possessed himself of the independent districts of Deoti and Rajore, affords an additional insight into the national character, and that of this prince.

At the accession of Jey Sing, the *raj* of Amber consisted only of the three *pergunnas* or districts of Amber, Deosah, and Bussao; the western tracts had been sequestered, and added to the royal domains attached to

Ajmer. The Shekhavati confederation was superior to, and independent of, the parent state, whose boundaries were as follows. The royal *thorma* (garrison) of Chatsoo, to the south; those of Sambhur to the the west, and Hastinah to the north-west; while to the east, Deosah and Bussao formed its frontier. The *kotribunds*, as they denominate the twelve great feudalities, possessed but very slender domains, and were held cheap by the great vassals of Mewar, of whom the Saloombra chief was esteemed, even by the first Peshwa, as the equal of the prince of the Cuchwahas.

Rajore was a city of great antiquity, the capital of a petty state called Deoti, ruled by a chief of the Birgoojurs tribe, descended, like the Cuchwahas, from Rama, but through Lao, the elder son. The Birgoojurs of Rajore had obtained celebrity amongst the more modern Rajpoots, by their invincible repugnance to matrimonial alliance with the Mahomedans; and while the Cuchwahas set the degrading example, and by so doing eventually raised themselves to affluence, the Birgoojur 'conquered renown in the song of the bard,' by performing the *saka* in defence of his honour. While, therefore, Sowae Jey Sing ruled as a viceroy over kingdoms, the Birgoojur was serving with his contingent with the *Byeese*, and at the period in question, in Anopsheher, on the Ganges. When absent on duty, the safety of Rajore depended on his younger brother. One day, while preparing for the chase of the wild boar, he became so impatient for his dinner, that his sister-in-law remarked, "one would suppose you were going to throw a lance at Jey Sing, you are in such a hurry."



This was touching a tender subject, for it will be recollected that the first territory in the plains obtained by the Cuchwahas, on their migration from Nurwar, was Deosah, a Birgoojur possession. "By *Thakoor-ji* (the lord), I shall do so, ere I eat from your hands again," was the fierce reply. With ten horsemen he left Rajore, and took post under the *dhoolkote*, or 'mud walls,' of Amber. But weeks and months fled ere he found an opportunity to execute his threat; he gradually sold all his horses, and was obliged to dismiss his attendants. Still he lingered, and sold his clothes, and all his arms, except his spear; he had been three days without food, when he sold half his turban for a meal. That day, Jey Sing left the castle by the road called *mora*, a circuitous path to avoid a hill. He was in his *sookhavan*,* as he passed, a spear was delivered, which lodged in the corner of the litter. A hundred swords flew out to slay the assassin; but the Raja called aloud to take him alive, and carry him to Amber. When brought before him and asked who he was, and the cause of such an act, he boldly replied, "I am the Deoti Birgoojur, and threw the spear at you merely from some words with my *Bhabee*; either kill or release me." He related how long he had lain in wait for him, and added, that "had he not been four days without food, the spear would have done its duty." Jey Sing, with politic magnanimity, freed him from restraint, gave him a horse and dress of honour (*khelat*), and sent him, escorted by fifty horse, in safety to Rajore." Having told his adventure to his sister-in-law, she replied,

* A *Bjjer*, literally 'seat (*asana*) of ease (*sookh*).

"you have wounded the envenomed snake, and have given water to the state of Rajore." She knew that a pretext alone was wanting to Jey Sing, and this was now unhappily given. With the advice of the *elders*, the females and the children were sent to the Raja at Anopsheher,* and the castles of Deoti and Rajore were prepared for the storm.

On the third day after the occurrence, Jey Sing, in a full meeting of his chiefs, related the circumstance, and held out the *beera* against Deoti; but Mohan Sing of Ohomoo warned his prince of the risk of such an attempt, as the Birgoojur chief was not only estimated at court, but then served with his contingent. This opinion of the chief noble of Amber alarmed the assembly, and none were eager to seek the dangerous distinction. A month passed, and war against Deoti was again proposed; but none of the *Kotribunds* seeming inclined to oppose the opinion of their ostensible head, Futteh Sing Bunbeerpota, the chieftain of one hundred and fifty vassals, accepted the *beera*, when five thousand horse were ordered to assemble under his command. Hearing that the Birgoojur had left Rajore to celebrate the festival of Gungore, he moved towards him, sending on some messengers with "the compliments of Futteh Sing Bunbeerpota, and that he was at hand." The young Birgoojur, who, little expecting any hostile visitation, was indulging during this festive season, put the heralds to death, and with his companions, completely taken by surprise, was in turn cut to pieces by the Jeipoor troops. The Rani of Rajore

* The descendants of this chieftain still occupy lands at Anopsheher.



was the sister of the Cuchwaha chief of Chomoo: she was about giving a pledge of affection to her absent lord, when Rajore was surprised and taken. Addressing the victor, Futteh Sing, she said, "Brother, give me the gift (*dan*) of my womb;" but suddenly recollecting that her own unwise speech had occasioned this loss of her child's inheritance, exclaiming, "Why should I preserve life to endenger fends?" she sheathed a dagger in her bosom and expired. The heads of the vanquished Birgoojurs were tied up in handkerchiefs, and suspending them from their saddle-horses, the victors returned to their prince, who sent for that of his intended assassin, the young Birgoojur chieftain. As soon as Mohun Sing recognized the features of his kinsman, the tears poured down his face. Jey Sing, recollecting the advice of this, the first noble of his court, which delayed his revenge a whole month, called his grief treason, and upbraided him, saying, "when the spear was levelled for my destruction, no tear fell." He sequestered Chomoo, and banished him from Dhoondar: the chief found refuge with the Rana at Oodipoor. "Thus (says the manuscript) did Jey Sing dispossess the Birgoojur of Deoti and Rajore, which were added to his dominions: they embraced all the tract now called Macherri."*

Amongst the foibles of Jey Sing's character was his partiality to "strong drink." What this beverage was, whether the juice of the *madhu* (mead), or the essence (*arac*) of rice,

the traditional chronicles of Amber do not declare, though they mention frequent appeals from Jey Sing drunk, to Jey Sing sober: one anecdote has already been related.*

In spite of his many defects, Jey Sing's name is destined to descend to posterity as one of the most remarkable men of his age and nation.

Until Jey Sing's time, the palace of Amber, built by the great Raja Maun, inferior to many private houses in the new city, was the chief royal residence. The Mirza Raja made several additions to it, but these were trifles compared with the edifice added† by Sowae Jey Sing, which has made the residence of the Cuchwaha princes as celebrated as those of Boondi or Oodipoor, or, to borrow a more appropriate comparison, the Kremlin at Moscow. It was in S. 1784 (A. D. 1728) that he laid the foundation of Jeipoor. Raja Mull was the *mosaheb*, Kirparam the stationary vakeel at Dehli, and Boodh Sing Khombani, with the *cordoo*, or royal camp, in the Dekhan: all eminent men. The position he chose for the new capital enabled him to connect it with the ancient castle of Amber, situated upon a peak at the apex of the re-entering angle of the range called *Khali-kho*; a strong circumvallation enclosed the gorge of the mountain, and was carried over the crest of the hills, on either side, to unite with the castle, whilst all the adjoining passes were strongly fortified.

* Annals of Marwar, Vol. II. p. 93.

* Rajore is esteemed a place of great antiquity, and the chief seat of the Birgoojur tribe for ages a tribe mentioned with high respect in the works of the bard Chund, and celebrated in the wars of Pirthwintaj. I sent a party to Rajore in 1813.

† This manuscript says, "On the spot where the first Jey Sing erected the three *malls*, and excavated the tank called the *Talkatora*, he erected other edifices." As Hindu princes never throw down the works of their predecessors, this means that he added greatly to the old palace.



CSL

The sumptuary laws which he endeavoured to establish throughout Rajpootana for the regulation of marriages, in order to check those lavish expenses that led to infanticide and *satis*, will be again called forth when the time is ripe for the abolition of all such unhallowed acts. For this end, search should be made for the historical legends called the 'hundred and nine acts,' in the archives of Jeepoor, to which ready access could be obtained, and which should be ransacked for all the traces of this great man's mind.* Like all Hindus, he was tolerant; and a Brahmin, a Mahomedan, or a Jain, were alike certain of patronage. The Jains enjoyed his peculiar estimation, from the superiority of their knowledge, and he is said to have been thoroughly conversant both in their doctrines and their histories. Vidhyadhar, one of his chief coadjutors in his astronomical pursuits, and whose genius planned the city of Jeepoor, was a Jain, and claimed spiritual descent from the celebrated Hemacharya, of Nehrvala, minister and spiritual guide of his namesake, the great Sidraj Jey Sing†

Amongst the vanities of the founder of Amber, it is said that he intended to get up the ceremony of the *asvamedha yuga*, or 'sacrifice of the horse,' a rite which his research into the traditions of his nation must have informed him had entailed des-

truction on all who had attempted it, from the days of Janmeja the Pandu, to Jeichund, the last Rajpoot monarch of Canouj. It was a virtual assumption of universal supremacy; and although, perhaps, in virtue of his office, as the satrap of Delhi, the horse dedicated to the sun might have wandered unmolested on the banks of the Ganges, he would most assuredly have found his way into a Rahtore stable had he roamed in the direction of the desert: at the risk both of *jewa* and *gadi* (life and throne), the Hara would have seized him, had he fancied the pastures of the Chumbul.* He erected a sacrificial hall of much beauty and splendour, whose columns and ceilings were covered with plates of silver; nor is it improbable that the steed, emblematic of *Surya*, may have been led round the hall, and afterwards sacrificed to the solar divinity. The *Yugsala* of Jey Sing, one of the great ornaments of the city, was, however, stripped of its rich decoration by his profligate descendant, the late Juggt Sing, who had not the grace even of Rehoboam, to replace them with inferior ornaments; and the noble treasures of learning which Jey Sing had collected from every quarter, the accumulated results of his own research and that of his predecessors, were divided into two portions, and one half was given to a common prostitute, the favourite of the day. The most remarkable MSS. were, till lately, hawking about Jeipor.

Sowae Jey Sing died in S. 1799 (A.D. 1743), having ruled forty-four years. Three of his wives and several concubines ascended his funeral pyre, on which science expired with him.

* By such researches we should in all probability recover those sketches of ancient history of the various dynasties of Rajpootana, which he is said to have collected with great pains and labour, and the genealogies of the old races, under the titles of *Rajavali* and *Raj Tarangini*: besides, the astronomical works, either original or translations, such as were collected by Jey Sing, would be a real gift to science.

† He ruled from S. 1160 to S. 1201, A. D. 1094-1145.

* See Vol. I. for a description of the rite of *Asvamedha*.



CHAPTER III.

The Rajpoot league.—Aggrandizement of Amber.—Eesuri Sing succeeds.—Intestine troubles produced by polygamy.—Madhu Sing.—The Jats.—Their Rajas.—Violation of the Amber territory by the Jats.—Battle. Rise of Macherri.—Decline of the Cuchwaha power after the death of Madhu Sing.—Pirthoi Sing.—Pertap Sing.—Intrigues at his court.—The stratagems of Khooshialiram, and the Macherri chief.—Death of Feroz the feelban, paramour of the Pat-Rani.—Broils with the Mahrattas.—Pertap attains majority, and gains the victory of Tonga.—His difficulties.—Exactions of the Mahrattas.—Juggut Sing.—His follies and despicable character.—Makes Ras-caphoor, his concubine, queen of half Amber.—Project to depose him prevented by a timely sacrifice.—Mohun Sing elected his successor.

THE league formed at this time by the three chief powers of Rajpootana has already been noticed in the annals of Mewar. It was one of self-preservation; and while the Rahtores added to Marwar from Guzzerat, the Cuchwahas consolidated all the districts in their neighbourhood under Amber. The Shekhavati federation was compelled to become tributary, and but for the rise of the Jats, the state of Jeipoor would have extended from the lake of Sambhur to the Jumna.

Eesuri Sing succeeded to a well-defined territory, heaps of treasure, an efficient ministry, and a good army; but the seeds of destruction lurked in the social edifice so lately raised, and polygamy was again the immediate agent. Eesuri Sing was the successor of Jey Sing, according to the fixed laws of primogeniture; but Madhu Sing, a younger son, born of a princess of Mewar, possessed conventional rights which vitiated those of birth. These have already been discussed, as well as their disastrous

issue to the unfortunate Eesuri Sing, who was not calculated for the times, being totally deficient in that nervous energy of character, without which a Rajpoot prince can enforce no respect. His conduct on the Abdalli invasion admitted the construction of cowardice, though his retreat from the field of battle, when the commander-in-chief, Kumurodin Khan, was killed, might have been ascribed to political motives, were it not recorded that his own wife received him with gibes and reproaches. There is every appearance of Jey Sing having repented of his engagement on obtaining the hand of the Seesodia princess, namely, that her issue should succeed, as he had in his life time given an appanage unusually large to Madhu Sing, viz. the four pergunnahs of Tonk, Rampoor, Phaggi, and Malpoora. The Rana also, who supported his nephew's claims, assigned to him the rich fief of Rampoor Bhanpoora in Mewar, which as well as Tonk Rampoor, constituting a petty sovereignty, were, with eighty-four lakhs



(£840,000 sterling), eventually made over to Holcar for supporting his claims to the 'cushion' of Jeipoor. The consequence of this barbarous intervention in the international quarrels of the Rajpoots annihilated the certain prospect they had of national independence, on the breaking up of the empire, and subjected them to a thralldom still more degrading, from which a chance of redemption is now offered to them.

Madhu Sing, on his accession, displayed great vigour of mind, and though faithful to his engagements, he soon shewed the Mahrattas he would admit of no protracted interference in his affairs; and had not the rising power of the Jats, distracted his attention and divided his resources, he would, had his life been prolonged, in conjunction with the Rahtores, have completely humbled their power. But this near enemy embarrassed all his plans. Although the history of the Jats is now well known, it may not be impertinent shortly to commemorate the rise of a power, which, from a rustic condition, in little more than half a century was able to baffle the armies of Britain, led by the most popular commander it ever had in the East; for till the siege of Bhurtpore the name of Lake was always coupled with victory.

The Jats* are a branch of the great Getic race, of which enough has been said in various parts of this work. Though reduced from the rank they once had amongst the 'thirty-six royal races,' they appear never to have renounced the love of independence, which they contested with Cyrus in their ori-

ginal haunts in Sogdiana. The name of the Cincinnatus of the Jats, who abandoned his plough to lead his countrymen against their tyrants, was Chooramun. Taking advantage of the sanguinary civil wars amongst successors of Arungzeb, they erected petty castles in the villages (whose lands they cultivated) of Thoon and Sinsini, and soon obtained the distinction of *kuzzaks*, or 'robbers,' a title which they were not slow to merit, by their inroads as far as the royal abode of Ferochser. The Syeds, then in power, commanded Jey Sing of Amber to attack them in their strong-holds, and Thoon and Sinsini were simultaneously invested. But the Jats, even in the very infancy of their power, evinced the same obstinate skill in defending mud walls, which in later times gained them so much celebrity. The royal astronomer of Amber was foiled, and after twelve months of toil, was ingloriously compelled to raise both sieges.

Not long after this event, Buddun Sing, the younger brother of Chooramun, and a joint proprietor of the land, was for some misconduct placed in restraint, and had remained so far some years, when, through the intercession of Jey Sing and the guarantee of the other Bhomia Jats, he was liberated. His first act was to fly to Amber and to bring its prince, at the head of an army, to invest Thoon, which, after a gallant defence of six months, surrendered was razed to the ground. Chooramun and his son, Mohkun Sing, effected their escape, and Buddun Sing was proclaimed chief of the Jats, and installed, as Raja, by Jey Sing, in the town of Deeg, destined also in after times to have its share of fame.

* It has been seen how the Yudu-Bhatti princes, when they fall from their rank of Rajpoots, assumed that of Jits, or Jats, who are assuredly a mixture of the Rajpoot and Yudi, Jit, or Getic races.



Buddun Sing had a numerous progeny, and four of his sons obtained notoriety, *viz.* Soorajmull, Subharam, Pertap Sing, and Beernarain. Buddun Sing subjected several of the royal districts to his authority. He abdicated his power in favour of his elder son, Soorajmull, having in the first instance assigned the district of Wayr, on which he had constructed a fort, to his son Pertap.

Soorajmull inherited all the turbulence and energy requisite to carry on the plans of his predecessors. His first act was to dispossess a relative, named Kaima, of the castle of Bhurtpoor, afterwards the celebrated capital of the Jats. In the year S. 1820 (A. D. 1764), Soorajmull carried his audacity so far as to make an attempt upon the imperial city; but here his career was cut-short by a party of Baloch horse, who slew him while enjoying the chase. He had five sons, *viz.* Jowahir Sing, Rattun Sing, Newul Sing, Nahur Sing, Runjeet Sing, and also an adopted son, named Hurdeo Buksh, picked up while hunting. Of these five sons, the first two were by a wife of the *Koormi** tribe; the third was by a wife of the *Malin*, or horticultural class; while the others were by *Jatni*'s, or women of his own race.

Jowahir Sing, who succeeded, was the contemporary of Raja Madhu Sing, whose reign in Jeipoor we have just reached; and to the Jat's determination to measure swords with him were owing, not only the frustration of his schemes for humbling the Mahratta, but the dismemberment of the country by the defection of the chief

of Macherri. Jowahir Sing, in A. H. 1182, having in vain solicited the district of Kamona, manifested his resentment by instantly marching through the Jeipoor territories to the sacred lake of Poshkur, without any previous intimation. He there met Raja Beejy Sing of Marwar, who, in spite of his Jat origin, condescended to "exchange turbans," the sign of friendship and fraternal adoption. At this period, Madhu Sing's health was on the decline, and his counsels were guided by two brothers, named Hursae and Goorsae, who represented the insulting conduct of the Jat and required instructions. They were commanded to address him a letter warning him not to return through the territories of Amber, and the chiefs were desired to assemble their retainers in order to punish a repetition of the insult. But the Jat, who had determined to abide the consequences, paid no regard to the letter, and returned homewards by the same route. This was a justifiable ground of quarrel, and the united *Kotribunds* marched to the encounter, to maintain the pretensions of their equestrian order against the plebeian Jat. A desperate conflict ensued, which, though it terminated in favour of the Cuchwahs, and in the flight of the leader of the Jats, proved destructive to Amber, in the loss of almost every chieftain of note.*

* Having given a slight sketch of the origin of the Jats, I may here conclude it.

Rattun Sing, the brother of Jowahir, succeeded him. He was assassinated by a Gosen Brahmin from Bindra-band, who had undertaken to teach the Jat prince the transmutation of metals, and had obtained considerable sums on pretence of preparing the process. Finding the day arrive on which he was to commence operations, and which would reveal his imposture, he had no way of

* The *Koormi* (the *Koolmbi* of the *Dekhan*) is perhaps the most numerous, next to the Jats, of all the agricultural classes.



This battle was the indirect cause of the formation of Macherri into an independent state, which a few words will explain. Pertap Sing, of the Narooka clan, held the fief of Macherri; for some fault he was banished the country by Madhu Sing, and fled to Jowahir Sing, from whom he obtained *Sirna* (sanctuary), and lands for his maintenance. The ex-chieftain of Macherri had, as conductors of his household affairs and his agents at court, two celebrated men, Khooshialiram* and Nandram, who now shared his exile amongst the Jats. Though enjoying protection and hospitality at Bhurtpoor, they did not the less feel the national insult, in that the Jat should dare thus unceremoniously to traverse their country. Whether the chief saw in this juncture an opening for reconciliation with his liege lord, or that a pure spirit of patriotism alone influenced him, he abandoned the place of refuge, and ranged himself at his old post, under the standard of Amber, on the eve of the battle, to the gaining of which he contributed not a little. For this opportune act of loyalty his past error were forgiven, and Madhu Sing, who only survived that battle four days, restored him to his favour and his fief of Macherri.

escape but by applying the knife to his dups. Kesari Sing, an infant, succeeded, under the guardianship of his uncle, Newel Sing. Runjeet Sing succeeded him, a name renowned for the defence of Bhurtpoor against Lord Lake. He died A. D. 1815, and was succeeded by the eldest of four sons, viz. Randheer Sing, Baldeo Sing, Hurdeo Sing, and Lachmun Sing. The infant son of Randheer succeeded, under the tutelage of his uncle; to remove whom the British army destroyed Bhurtpoor, which plundered it of its wealth, both public and private.

* Father of two men scarcely less celebrated than himself, Chutturhoj and Duolul Ram.

Madhu Sing died of a dysentery, after a rule of seventeen years. Had he been spared, in all human probability he would have repaired the injurious effects of the contest which gave him the *gadi* of Amber; but a minority, and its accustomed anarchy, made his death the point from which the Ouchwaha power declined. He built several cities, of which that called after him Madhu-poor, near the celebrated fortress of Rinthumbor, the most secure of the commercial cities of Rajwarra is the most remarkable. He inherited no small portion of his father's love of science, which continued to make Jeipoor the resort of learned men, so as to eclipse even the sacred Benares.

Pirthi Sing II., a minor, succeeded, under the guardianship of the mother of his younger brother, Pertap. The queen-regent, a Chondawutni, was of an ambitious and resolute character, but degraded by her paramour, Feeroz, a *Feelban*, or 'elephant-driver,' whom she made member of her council, which disgusted the chiefs, who alienated themselves from court and remained at their estates. Determined, however to dispense with their aid, she entertained a mercenary army under the celebrated Umbaji, with which she enforced the collection of the revenue. Arat Ram was at this period the Dewan, or prime minister, and Khooshialiram Bora, a name afterwards conspicuous in the politics of this court, was associated in the ministry. But though these men were of the highest order of talent, their influence was neutralized by that of the *Feelban*, who controlled both the regent Rani and the state. Matters remained in this humiliating posture during nine years, when Pirthi Sing died

through a fall from his horse, though not without suspicions that a dose of poison accelerated the vacancy of the *gadi*, which the Rani desired to see occupied by her own son. The scandalous chronicle of that day is by no means tender of the reputation of Madhu Sing's widow. Having a direct interest in the death of Pirthi Sing, the laws of common sense were violated in appointing her guardian, notwithstanding her claims as *Pat Rani*, or chief queen of the deceased. Pirthi Sing, though he never emerged from the trammels of minority and the tutelage of the Chondawatni, yet contracted two marriages, one with Bikaner, the other with Kishengurh. By the latter he had a son, Maun Sing. Every court in Rajpootana has its pretender, and young Maun was long the bugbear to the court of Amber. He was removed secretly, on his father's death to the maternal roof at Kishengurh; but as this did not offer sufficient security, he was sent to Sindia's camp, and has ever since lived on the bounty of the Mahratta at Gwalior.*

Pertap Sing was immediately placed upon the *gadi* by the queen regent, his mother, and her council, consisting of the Feelban, and Khooshialiram, who had now received the title of Raja, and the rank of prime minister. He employed the power thus obtained to supplant his rival Feeroz, and the

means he adopted established the independence of his old master, the chief of Macherri. This chief was the only one of note who absented himself from the ceremony of the installation of his sovereign. He was countenanced by the minister, whose plan to get rid of his rival was to create as much confusion as possible. In order that distress might reach the court, he gave private instructions that the zemindars should withhold their payments; but these minor stratagems would have been unavailing, had he not associated in his schemes the last remnants of power about the Mogul throne. Nujif Khan was at this time the imperial commander, who, aided by the Mahrattas, proceeded to expel the Jats from the city of Agra. He then attacked them in their stronghold of Bhurtpoor. Newul Sing was then the chief of the Jats. The Macherri chief saw in the last act of expiring vigour of the imperialists an opening for the furtherance of his views, and he united his troops to those of Nujif Khan. This timely succour, and his subsequent aid in defeating the Jats, obtained for him the title of Rao Raja, and a *sumud* for Macherri, to hold direct of the crown. Khooshialiram, who, it is said, chalked out this course, made his old master's success the basis of his own operations to supplant the Feelban. Affecting the same zeal that he recommended to the chief of Macherri, he volunteered to join the imperial standard with all the forces of amber. The queen regent did not oppose the Bhora's plan, but determined out of it still higher to exalt her favourite: she put him at the head of the force, which post the minister had intended for himself. This exaltation proved his ruin,

* Two or three times he had a chance of being placed on the *gadi* (vide letter of Resident with Sindia to Government, 27th March 1812), which assuredly ought to be his: once, about 1810, when the nobles of Jeipoor were disgusted with the libertine Juggut Sing; and again, upon the death of this dissolute prince, in 1820. The last occasion presented a fit occasion for his accession; but the British Government were then the arbitrators, and I doubt much if his claims were disclosed to it, or understood by those who had the decision of the question, which nearly terminated in a civil war.

Feeroz, in command of the Amber army, met the Rao Raja of Macherri on equal terms in the tent of the imperial commander. Foiled in these schemes of attaining the sole control of affairs, through the measure adopted, the Macherri chief, at the instigation of his associate, resolved to accomplish his objects by less justifiable means. He sought the friendship of the Feelban, and so successfully ingratiated himself in his confidence as to administer a dose of poison to him, and in conjunction with the Bhora succeeded to the charge of the government of Amber. The regent queen soon followed the Feelban, and Raja Pertap was yet too young to guide the state vessel without aid. The Rao Raja and the Bhora, alike ambitious, soon quarrelled, and a division of the imperialists, under the celebrated Hamadan Khan, was called in by the Bhora. Then followed those interminable broils which brought in the Mahrattas. Leagues were formed with them against the imperialists one day, and dissolved the next; and this went on until the majority of Pertap, who determined to extricate himself from bondage, and formed that league, elsewhere mentioned, which ended in the glorious victory of Tonga, and for a time the expulsion of all their enemies, whether imperial or Mahrattas.

To give a full narrative of the events of this reign, would be to recount the history of the empire in its expiring moments. Throughout the twenty-five years' rule of Pertap, he and his country underwent many vicissitudes. He was a gallant prince, and not deficient in judgment; but neither gallantry nor prudence could successfully apply the resources of his petty state against its

numerous predatory foes and its internal dissensions. The defection of Macherri was a serious blow to Jeipoor, and the necessary subsidies soon lightened the hoards accumulated by his predecessors. Two payments to the Mahrattas took away eighty lakhs of rupees (£800,000); yet such was the mass of treasure, notwithstanding the enormous sums lavished by Madhu Sing for the support of his claims, besides those of the regency, that Pertap expended in charity alone, on the victory of Tonga, A.D. 1789, the sum of twenty-four lakhs, or a quarter of a million sterling.

In A.D. 1791, after the subsequent defeats at Patun, and the disruption of the alliance with the Rahtores, Tukaji Holcar invaded Jeipoor, and extorted an annual tribute, which was afterwards transferred to Ameer Khan, and continues a permanent incumbrance on the resources of Jeipoor. From this period to A.D. 1803, the year of Pertap's death, his country was alternately desolated by Sindia's armies, under De Boigne or Perron, and the other hords of robbers, who frequently contested with each other the possession of the spoils.

Juggut Sing succeeded in A.D. 1803, and ruled for seventeen years, with the disgraceful distinction of being the most dissolute prince of his race or of his age. The events with which his reign is crowded, would fill volumes were they worthy of being recorded. Foreign invasions, cities besieged, capitulations and war-contributions, occasional acts of heroism, when the invader forgot the point of honour, court intrigues, diversified not unfrequently, by an appeal to the sword or dagger, even in the precincts of the court.

Sometimes the daily journals (*akbars*) disseminated the scandal of the *rawula* (female apartments), the follies of the libertine prince with his concubine *Ras-caphoor*, or even less worthy objects, who excluded from the nuptial couch his lawful mates of the noble blood of Joda, or Jessa, the Rahtores and Bhattis of the desert. We shall not disgrace these annals with the history of a life which discloses not one redeeming virtue amidst a cluster of effeminate vices, including the rankest, in the opinion of a Rajpoot—cowardice. The black transaction respecting the princes of Odipoor has already been related (Vol. I. p. 359), which covered him with disgrace, and inflicted a greater loss, in his estimation, even than that of character—a million sterling. The treasures of the *Jey-Mindra* were rapidly dissipated, to the grief of those faithful hereditary guardians, the Meenas of Kalikho, some of whom committed suicide rather than see these sacred deposits squandered on their prince's unworthy pursuits. The lofty walls which surrounded the beautiful city of Jey Sing were insulted by every marauder; commerce was interrupted, and agriculture rapidly declined, partly from insecurity, but still more from the perpetual exactions of his minions. One day a tailor* ruled the councils, the next a Baniah, who might be succeeded by a Brahmin, and each had in turn the honour of elevation to the *donjon keep* of Nahrgurh, the castle where criminals are confined, overlooking the city. The feudal

chiefs held both his authority and his person in utter contempt, and the pranks he played with the 'Essence of Camphor' (*ras-caphoor*),* at one time led to serious thoughts of deposing him; which project, when near maturity, was defeated by transferring "this queen of half of Amber," to the prison of Nahrgurh. In the height of his passion for this Islamite concubine, he formally installed her as queen of half his dominions, and actually conveyed to her in gift a moiety of the personalty of the crown, even to the invaluable library of the illustrious Jey Sing, which was despoiled, and its treasures distributed amongst her base relations. The Raja even struck coin in her name, and not only rode with her on the same elephant, but demanded from his chieftains those forms of reverence towards her, which were paid only to his legitimate queens. This their pride could not brook, and though the Dewan, or prime minister, Mistr Sheonarin, albeit a Brahmin, called her "daughter," the brave Chand Sing of Doonee indignantly refused to take part in any ceremony at which she was present. This contumacy was punished by a mulct of £20,000, nearly four years' revenue of the fief Doonee!

Menu allows that sovereigns may be deposed, and the aristocracy of Amber had ample justification for such an act. But unfortunately the design became known, and some judicious friend, as a salvo for the Raja's dignity, propagated a report injurious to the fair fame of his Aspasia, which he affected to believe; a mandate issued for

* Rorji Khawas was a tailor by birth, and, I believe, had in early life exercised the trade. He was, however, amongst the *Moosahebs*, or privy councillors of Juggut Sing, and (I think) one of the ambassadors sent to treat with Lord Lake.

* *Ras-caphoor*, I am aware, means 'corrosive sublimate,' but it may also be interpreted 'essence of camphor.'

the sequestration of her property, and her incarceration in the castle allotted to criminals. There she was lost sight of, and Juggut continued to dishonour the *gadi* of Jey Sing until his death, on a day held specially sacred by the Rajpoot, the 21st of December 1818, the winter solstice, when, to use their own metaphorical language, "the door of heaven is reopened."

Raja Juggut Sing left no issue, legitimate or illegitimate, and no provision had been made for a successor during his life. But as the laws of Rajpootana, political or religious, admit of no *interregnum*, and the funereal pyre must be lit by an adopted child if there be no natural issue, it was

necessary at once to inaugurate a successor; and the choice fell on Mohun Sing, son of the ex-prince of Nurwar. As this selection, in opposition to the established rules of succession, would, but for a posthumous birth, have led to a civil war, it may be proper to touch briefly upon the subject of heirs presumptive in Rajpootana, more especially those of Jeipoor: the want of exact knowledge respecting this point, in those to whom its political relations with us were at that time entrusted, might have had the most injurious effects on the British character. To set this in its proper light, we shall explain the principles of the alliance which rendered Jeipoor a tributary of Britain.

CHPATER IV.

Jeipoor the last of the Rajpoot states to embrace the proffered alliance of the British.—Procrastination habitual to the Rajpoots, as to all Asiatics.—Motives and considerations which influenced the Jeipoor court in declining our alliance.—A treaty concluded.—Death of Juggut Sing.—Effects of our interference in the intrigues respecting the succession.—Law of primogeniture.—The evils attending an ignorance of Rajpoot customs.—Violation of the law of succession in the placing of Mohun Sing on the gadi.—Reasons for departing from the rules of succession.—Conduct of the British authorities.—The title of Mohun Sing disputed by the legal heir presumptive.—Dilemma of the Nazir and his faction.—The threatened disorders prevented by the unexpected pregnancy of one of the queens of Juggut Sing.—Birth of a posthumous son.

JEIPOOR was the last of the principalities of Rajpootana to accept the protection tendered by the government of British India. To the latest moment, she delayed her sanction to a system which was to banish for ever the enemies of order. Our overtures and expostulations were rejected, until the predatory powers of India had been, one

after another, laid prostrate at our feet. The Pindarries were annihilated; the Peshwa was exiled from poona to the Ganges; the Boonsla was humbled; Sindia palsied by his fears; and Holcar, who had extensive lands assigned him, besides a regular tribute from Jeipoor, had received a death-blow to his power in the field of Mehidpoor.

Procrastination is the favourite expedient of all Asiatics ; and the Rajpoot, though a fatalist, often, by protracting the irresistible *honhar* (destiny), works out his deliverance. Ameer Khan, the lieutenant of Holcar, who held the lands and tribute of Jeipoor in *jaedad*, or assignment for his troops, was the sole enemy of social order left to operate on the fears of Jeipoor, and to urge her to take refuge in our alliance ; and even he was upon the point of becoming one of the illustrious allies, who were to enjoy the "perpetual friendship" of Great Britain. The Khan was at that very moment battering Madhurajpoora, a town almost within the sound of cannon-shot of Jeipoor, and we are compelled to make an indirect use of this incident to hasten the decision of the Cuchwaha prince. The motives of his backwardness will appear from the following details.

Various considerations combined to check the ardour with which we naturally expected our offer of protection would be embraced. The Jeipoor court retained a lively, but no grateful remembrance, of the solemn obligations we contracted with her in 1803, and the facility with which we extricated ourselves from them when expediency demanded, whilst we vainly attempted to throw the blame of violating the treaty upon our ally. To use the words of one who has been mixed up with all the political transactions of that eventful period, with reference to the letter delivered by the envoy at the Jeipoor court from our viceroy in the East, notifying, the dissolution of the alliance ; "the justice of these grounds was warmly disputed by the court, which,

under a lively sense of that imminent danger to which it had become exposed from this measure, almost forgot for a moment the temper and respect which it owed to the English nation." But the native envoy from Jeipoor, attending the camp of the gallant Lake, took a still higher tone, and with a manly indignation observed, that this was the first time, since the English government was established in India, that it had been known to make its faith subservient to its convenience : "a reproach the more bitter and unpalatable from its truth.*

The enlarged and prophetic views of Marquis Wellesley, which suggested the policy of uniting all these regular governments in a league against the predatory powers, were counteracted by the timid, temporising policy of Lord Cornwallis, who could discover nothing but weakness in this extension of our influence. What misery would not these states have been spared, had those engagements, executed through the noble Lake (a name never mentioned in India, by European or native, without reverence), been maintained ; for the fifteen years which intervened between the two periods produced more mischief to Rajwarra than the preceding half century, and half a century more will not repair it !

A circumstance that tended to increase this distrust was our tearing Vizier Alli from his sanctuary at Jeipoor, which has cast an indelible stain upon the Cuchwaha name. We have elsewhere† explained the privileges of *sirna*, or 'sanctuary,' which, when claimed by the unfortunate or crimi-

* *Vide* Malcolm's Political History of India.

† Vol. I. p. 413.

nal, is sacred in the eye of the Rajpoot. This trust we forced the Jeipoor state to violate, though she was then independent of us. It was no excuse for the act that the fugitive was a foul assassin: we had no right to demand his surrender.*

There were other objections to the proffered treaty of no small weight. The Jeipoor court justly deemed one-fifth (*eight lakhs*) of the gross revenues of the crown, a high rate of insurance for protection; but when we farther stipulated for a prospective increase† of nearly *one-third* of all surplus revenue beyond *forty lakhs*, they saw, instead of the generous Briton, a sordid trafficker of mercenary protection, whose rapacity transcended that of the Mahratta.

Independent of these state objections, there were abundance of private and individual motives arrayed in hostility to the British offer. For example: the ministers dreaded the *surveillance* of a resident agent, as obnoxious to their authority and influence; and the chieftains, whom rank and ancient usage kept at court as the counsellors of

* A better commentary on the opinions held by the natives upon this subject could not be given than the speech of Holcar's envoy to the agent of the Governor General of India, then with Lord Lake: "Holcar's vakeel demanded, with no slight degree of pertinacity, the cession of the Jeipoor and Boondi tributes; and one of them, speaking for the former, stated, that he no doubt would continue to enjoy the friendship of the English, as he had disgraced himself to please that nation, by giving up Vizier Ali (who had sought his protection) to their vengeance. The vakeel was severely rebuked by the agent (Colonel, now Sir John Malcolm) for this insolent reflection on the conduct of an ally of the British Government, who had delivered up a murderer whom it would have been infamy to shelter;" though the author of the "*Political History of India*" might have added—but whom it was still great infamy, according to *their code*, to surrender. See Malcolm's *Political History of India*, p. 432.

† See Article 6 of the Treaty, Appendix, No. 5.

their prince, saw in prospect the surrender of crown-lands, which fraud, favour, or force, had obtained for them. Such were the principal causes which impeded the alliance between Amber and the Government-general of British India; but it would have marred the uniformity of Lord Hastings' plan to have left a gap in the general protective system by the omission of Jeipoor. The events rapidly happening around them—the presence of Meer Khan—the expulsion of the orange flag of the Mahratta, and the substitution of the British banner on the battlements of Ajmer—at length produced a tardy and ungracious assent, and, on the 2nd of April 1818, a treaty of ten articles was concluded, which made the Cuchwaha princes the friends and tributaries in perpetuity of Great Britain.

On the 21st of December of the same year, Juggut Sing died, and the choice of a successor speedily evinced to the ministers the impracticability of their exercising, as in days of yore, that "absolute power over their country and dependants," guaranteed to them by the treaty.* Our office of arbitrating the difference between the Raja and his vassals, on the subject of the usurpations from the crown-lands, was easy, and left no unpleasant feeling; but when we inter-meddled with the intrigues respecting the succession, our ignorance of established rights and usage rendered the interference offensive, and made the Jeipoor chiefs repent the alliance which temporary policy had induced their prince to accept.

It may be of use in future negotiations, to explain the usages which governed the

* See Article 8 of the Treaty.

different states of Rajpootana in respect to succession. The law of primogeniture prevails in all Rajpoot sovereignties ; the rare instances in which it has been set aside, are only exceptions to the rule. The inconclusive dicta of Menu, on this as on many other points, are never appealed to by the Rajpoots of modern days. Custom and precedent fix the right of succession, whether to the *gadi* of the state, or to a fief, in the eldest son, who is styled *Rajkomar*, *Pat-komar*, or simply *Komraji*, 'the prince ;' while his brothers have their proper names affixed, as *Komar Jowan Sing*, 'Prince Jowan.' Seniority is, in fact, a distinction pervading all ranks of life, whether in royal families or those of chieftains ; all have their *Pat-komar*, and *Patrani*, or 'head child,' and 'head queen.' The privileges of the Patrani are very considerable. In minorities, she is the guardian, by custom as well as nature, of her child ; and in Mewar (the oldest sovereignty in India), she is publicly enthroned with the Rana. Seniority in marriage bestows the title of *Pat-rani*, but as soon as an heir is given to the state, the queen mother assumes this title, or that of *Mahji*, simply 'the mother.*' In the duties of guardian, she is assisted by the chiefs of certain families, who with certain officers of the household enjoy this as an established hereditary distinction.

On the demise of a prince without lawful issue of his body, or that of near kindred, brothers or cousins, there are certain famil-

ies in every principality (*raj*) of Rajwarra, in whom is vested the right of presumptive heirship to the *gadi*. In order to restrict the circle of claimants, laws have been established in every state limiting this right to the issue of a certain family in each principality. Thus, in Mewar, the elder of the Ranawut clans, styled *Babas*, or 'the infants,' possesses the latent right of heir presumptive. In Marwar, the independent house of Eedur, of the family of Joda ; in Boondi, the house of Doogari ; in Kotah, the Apjis of Polaitoh ; in Bikaner, the family of Mahajin ; and in Jeipoor, the branch Rajwaut (according to seniority), of the stock of Raja Maun. Even in this stock there is a distinction between those prior, and those posterior, to Raja Madhu Sing ; the former are styled simply *Rajawut*, or occasionally conjoined, *Mansingote* ; the other *Madhani*. The Rajawuts constitute a numerous *frerage*, of which the Jhulary house takes the lead ; and in which, provided there are no mental or physical disabilities, the right of furnishing heirs to the *gadi* of Jeipoor is a long-established, incontrovertible, and inalienable privilege.

We have been thus minute, because, notwithstanding the expressed wish of the government not to prejudge the question, the first exercise of its authority as lord-paramount was to justify a proceeding by which these established usages were infringed, in spite of the eighth article of the treaty : "The Maharaja and his successors shall remain absolute rulers of their country and dependants according to long established usage," &c. "*C'est le premier pas qui coute* ;" and this first step, being a wrong

* In Mewar, simply *Mahji* ; at Jeipoor, where they have long used the language and manners of Delhi, they affix the Persian word *Sakobeh*, or 'lady-mother.'

one, has involved an interference never contemplated and fully justifying that wariness on the part of Jeipoor, which made her hesitate to link her destiny with ours.

Both the sixth and seventh articles contain the seeds of disunion, whenever it might suit the chicanery or bad faith of the protected, or the avarice of the protector. The former has already been called into operation, and the 'absolute rulers' of Jeipoor have been compelled to unfold to the resident agent the whole of their financial and territorial arrangements, to prove that the revenues did not exceed the sum of forty *lakhs*, as, of the sum in excess (besides the stipulated tributary *fifth*), our share was to be *three-sixteenths*.*

While, therefore, we deem ourselves justified in interfering in the two chief branches of government, the succession and finances, how is it possible to avoid being implicated in the acts of the government-functionaries,

* Mewar was subjected to the same *premium* on her reviving prosperity. The author unsuccessfully endeavoured to have a limit fixed to the demand; but he has heard with joy that some important modifications have since been made in the tributary engagements both with Mewar and Amber: they cannot be made too light. Discontent in Rajpootana will not be appeased by a few lakhs of extra-penditure. I gave my opinions fearlessly when I had every thing at stake; I will not suppress them now, when I have nothing either to hope or to fear but for the perpetuity of the British power in these regions, and the revival of the happiness and independence of those who have sought our protection. He will prove the greatest enemy to his country, who, in ignorance of the true position of the Rajpoots, may aim at further trenching upon their independence. Read the thirty years' war between Arungzeb and the Rahtores! where is the dynasty of their tyrant? Look at the map: a desert at their back, the Aravulli in front; no enemies to harass or disturb them! How different would a Rajpoot foe prove from a contemptible Mahratta, or the mercenary array of traitorous Nawabs, whom we have always found easy conquests! Cherish the native army: conciliate the Rajpoots; then, laugh at foes!

and involved in the party views and intrigues of a court, stigmatized even by the rest of Rajwarra with the epithet of *jootha durbar*, the 'lying court?' While there is a resident agent at Jeipoor, whatever his resolves, he will find it next to impossible to keep aloof from the vertex of intrigue. The purest intentions, the highest talents, will scarcely avail to counteract this systematic vice, and with one party at least, but eventually with all, the reputation of his government will be compromised.

This brings us back to the topic which suggested these remarks, the installation of a youth upon the *gadi* of Jeipoor. We shall expose the operation of this transaction by a literal translation of an authentic document, every word of which was thoroughly substantiated. As it presents a curious picture of manners, and is valuable as a precedent, we shall give it entire in the Appendix, and shall here enter no farther into details than is necessary to unravel the intrigue which violated the established laws of succession.

The youth, named Mohun Sing, who was installed on the *gadi* of Jeipoor, on the morning succeeding Juggut Sing's decease, was the son of Munohur Sing, the ex-Raja of Nurwar, who was chased from his throne and country by Sindia. We have stated that the Jeipoor family sprung from that of Nurwar eight centuries ago; but the parent state being left without direct lineage, they applied to Amber and adopted a son of Prithi Raj I., from whom the boy now brought forward was fourteen generations in descent. This course of proceeding was in direct contravention of usage, which had fixed, as

already stated, the heirs-presumptive, on failure of lineal issue, to the *gadi* of Amber, in the descendants of Raja Maun, and the branch Madhani, generally styled *Rajawut*, of whom the first claimant was the chief of Jhulaye, and supposing his incompetency, Kamah, and a dozen other houses of the 'infantas' of Jeipoor.

The causes of departure from the recognized rule, in this respect, were the following. At the death of Juggut Sing, the reins of power were, and had been for some time, in the hands of the chief eunuch of the *rawula* (seraglio), whose name was Mohun Nazir,* a man of considerable vigour of understanding, and not without the reputation of good intention in his administration of affairs, although the system of chicanery and force,† by which he attempted to carry his object, savoured more of self-interest than of loyalty. The youth was but nine years of age; and a long minority, with the exclusive possession of power, suggested the true motives of the Nazir. His principal coadjutor, amongst the great vassals of the state, was Megh Sing of Diggee, a chief who had contrived by fraud and force to double his hereditary fief by usurpations from the crown-lands, to retain which he supported the views of the Nazir with all the influence of his clan (the Khangarote), the most powerful of the twelve great families of Amber.‡ The personal servants of the crown

such as the *Purohīts*, *Dhabhaes* (domestic chaplains and foster-brothers), and all the subordinate officers of the house-hold, considered the Nazir's cause as their own: a minority and his favour guaranteed their places, which might be risked by the election of a prince who could judge for himself, and had friends to provide for.

A reference to the "Summary of transactions" (in the Appendix) will shew there was no previous consultation or concert amongst the military vassals, or the queens; on the contrary, acting entirely on his own responsibility, the Nazir, on the morning succeeding the death of his master, placed young Mohun in "the car of the sun," to lead the funeral procession, and light the pyre of his adopted sire. Scarcely were the ablutions and necessary purifications from this rite concluded, when he received the congratulations of all present as lord of the Cuchwahas, under the revived name of Maun Sing the Second. The transactions which followed, as related in the diary, until the final *denouement*, distinctly shew, that having committed himself, the Nazir was anxious to obtain through the resident agents of the chieftains at court, their acquiescence in the measure under their signs-manual. It will be seen that the communications were received and replied to in that cautious yet courteous manner, which pledged the writer to nothing, and gained him time for the formation of a deliberate opinion: the decision was thus suspended; all eyes were

* *Nazir* is the official name, a Mahomedan one, denoting his capacity, as emasculated guardian of the seraglio. Jeipoor and Boondi are the only two of the Rajpoot principalities who, adopting the Mooslem custom, have contaminated the palaces of their queens with the presence of these creatures.

† See "Summary of Transaction," Appendix, No. 5.

‡ The Khangarote clan enumerates twenty-two fiefs, whose united rent-rolls amount to 4,02,806 rupees annu-

ally, and their united quotas for the service of the state, six hundred and forty-three horse. Megh Sing, by his turbulence and intelligence, though only the sixth or seventh in the scale of rank of this body, had taken the lead, and become the organ of his clan at court.

directed to the paramount power; and the Nazir, whose first desire was to propitiate this, entreated the British functionary at Delhi to send his confidential moonshee to Jeipoor without delay. This agent reached Jeipoor from Delhi six days after the death of Juggut. He was the bearer of instructions, "requiring a full account of the reasons for placing the son of the Nurwar Raja on the musnud; of his family, lineage, right of succession, and by whose councils the measure was adopted." On the 11th of January this requisition was reiterated; and it was further asked, whether the measure had the assent of the queens and chiefs, and a declaration to this effect, under their signatures, was required to be forwarded. Nothing could be more explicit, or more judicious, than the tenor of these instructions.

The replies of the Nazir and confidential moonshee were such, that on the 7th of February the receipt of letters of congratulation from the British agent, accompanied by one from the supreme authority, was formally announced, which letters being read in full court, "the *nobat* (kettledrum) again sounded, and young Maun Sing was conducted to the Pertap Mahl, and seated on the musnud." On this formal recognition by the British government, the agents of the chieftains at their sovereign's court, in reply to the Nazir's demand, "to know the opinions of the chiefs," answered, that "if he called them, they were ready to obey;" but at the same time they rested their adhesion on that of the chief queen, sister of the Raja of Jodpoor, who breathed nothing but open defiance of the Nazir and his *junta*. Early in March, public discontent became

more manifest: and the Rajawut chief of Jhulaye determined to appeal to arms in support of his rights as heir presumptive, and was soon joined by the chiefs of Sirwur and Eesurda, junior but powerful branches of the same stock.

Another party seemed inclined, on this emergency, to revive the right of that posthumous son of Pirthi Sing, whom we have already described as living in exile at Gwalior, on the bounty of Sindia; and nothing but the unfavourable report of his intellect and debased habits prevented the elder branch of the sons of Madhu Sing recovering their lost honours.

While the paramount authority was thus deluded, and the chieftains were wavering amidst so many conflicting opinions, the queen continued resolute, and the Rajawuts were arming—and the Nazir, in this dilemma, determined as a last resource, to make Raja Maun of Jodpoor the umpire, hoping by this appeal to his vanity, to obtain his influence over his sister to an acquiescence in the irremediable step, which had been taken "in obedience (as he pretend) to the will of the deceased prince." Raja Maun's reply is important: "that there could be no occasion for his or his sister's signature to the required declaration on the right of succession to the musnud of Jeipoor, which depended upon, and was vested in, the elders of the twelve tribes of Cuchwahs; that if *they* approved and signed the declaration, the queen his sister, and afterwards himself, would sign it, if requisite."

The Nazir and his faction, though aided by the interposition of the moonshee, were now in despair, and in these desperate

circumstances, he attempted to get up a marriage between the puppet he had enthroned and the grand-daughter of the Rana of Mewar. It was contrived, and not ill-received by the Rana; but there was an influence at his court which at once extinguished the plot, though supported at Delhi by the Rana's most influential agent. It was proposed that, at the same time, the Rana should consummate his nuptials with the Jeipoor Raja's sister, the preliminaries of which had been settled a dozen years back. Money in abundance was offered, and the Rana's passion for pageantry and profusion would have prevented any objection to his proceeding to the Jeipoor capital. To receive the chief of the universal Hindu race with due honour, the whole nobility of Amber would have left their estates, which would have been construed into, and accepted as, a voluntary acquiescence in the rights of the Nazir's choice, which the marriage would have completely cemented. Foiled in this promising design, the knot, which the precipitate and persevering conduct of the Nazir had rendered too indissoluble even for his skill to undo, was cut by the annunciation of the advanced pregnancy of the Bhattiani queen.

This timely interposition of *Mata Januvr* (the Juno Lucina of Rajwarra) might well be regarded as miraculous; and though the sequel of this event was conducted with such publicity as almost to choke the voice of slander, it still found utterance.* It

was deemed a sort of prodigy, that an event, which would have caused a jubilee throughout Dhoondar, should have been kept secret until three months after the Raja's death.* The mysteries of the *rawals* of Rajpoot princes find their way to the public out of doors; and in Oodipoor, more especially, are the common topics of conversation. The variety of character within its walls, the like variety of communicants without, the conflicting interests, the diversified objects of contention of these little worlds, render it utterly impossible that any secret can long be maintained, far less one of such magnitude as the pregnancy of the queen of a prince without issue. That this event should be revealed to the Nazir, the superintendent of the queen's palace, with all the formality of a new discovery, *three months* after Juggut Sing's death, must excite surprise; since to have been the bearer of such joyful intelligence to his master, to whom he was much attached, must have rivetted his influence.

At three o'clock on the 1st of April, a council of sixteen queens, the widows of the late prince, and the wives of all the great vassals of the state, "assembled to ascertain the fact of pregnancy," whilst all the great barons awaited in the antichambers of the *Zengna Deori* the important response of this council of matrons. When it announced that the Bhattiani queen was pregnant beyond a doubt, they consulted until seven, when they sent in a written

insisted on the *Marechaux* as well as the *Marechauxes* of France being in the room at the moment of parturition.

* The publicity, on this occasion, is precisely of the same character as marked the accouchement of the Duchess de Berri, who, it is said, not only had the usual witnesses to silence the voice of doubt, but absolutely

* Raja Juggut Sing died the 21st December 1818, and the announcement of the Bhattiani being in "the eighth month of her pregnancy," was on the 24th March 1819.



declaration, avowing their unanimous belief of the fact; and that "should a son be born, they would acknowledge him as their lord, and to none else pledge allegiance." A transcript of this was given to the Nazir, who was recommended to forward an attested copy to the British agent at Delhi. From the deliberations, from which there was no appeal, the Nazir was excluded by express desire of the Rahtore queen. He made an ineffectual effort to obtain from the chiefs a declaration, that the adoption of the Nurwar youth was in conformity to the desire of the deceased prince, their master; but this attempt to obtain indemnity for his illegal acts was defeated immediately on the ground of its untruth.*

By this lawful and energetic exertion of the powers directly vested in the queen-mother and the great council of the chiefs, the tongue of faction was rendered mute; but had it been otherwise, another queen was

* Deeming a record of these transactions useful, not only as descriptive of manners, but as a *precedent*, inasmuch as they shew the powers and position of the different authorities composing a Rajpoot state in case of succession, I have inserted it in the Appendix.

pronounced to be in the same joyful condition.* On the morning of the 25th April, four months and four days after Juggut Sing's death, a son was ushered into the world with the usual demonstrations of joy and received as the Autocrat of the Cuchwas; while the infant interloper was removed from the *gadi*, and thrust back to his original obscurity. Thus terminated an affair which involved all Rajwarra in discussion, and at one time threatened a very serious result. That it was disposed of in this manner was fortunate for all parties, and not least for the protecting power.

Having thus given a connected, though imperfect, sketch of the history of the Jeipoor state, from its foundation to the present time, before proceeding with any account of its resources, or the details of its internal administration, we shall delineate the rise, progress, and existing condition of the Shekhavati federation, which has risen out of, and almost to an equality with, the parent state.

* No notice, that I am aware of, was ever taken of this second annunciation,

SHEKHAWUT FEDERATION.

CHPATER V.

Origin of the Shekhavati federation.—Its constitution.—Descent of the chiefs from Baloji of Amber. Mokulji.—Miraculous birth of his son.—Shekhji.—Aggrandizes his territory.—Raemul.—Sooja.—Raesil. His heriism.—Obtains grants from Akber.—Gets possession of Khundaila and Oodipoor.—His exploits and character.—Ghirdhurji.—Is cut off by assassination.—Dwarçadas.—His extraordinary feat with a lion.—Falls by Khan Jehan Lodi.—Birsingdeo.—His authority usurped by his son.—Buhadoor Sing. Arungzeb directs the demolition of the temple of Khundaila.—Buhadoor deserts his capital.—Shujaun Sing Raesilote flies to its defence.—He is slain, the temple razed, and the city garrisoned.—Kesuri.—Partition of the territory between Kesuri and Putteh Sing.—assassinated.—Kesuri resists the regal authority. Is deserted in the field and slain.—His son Oodi Sing taken to Ajmer.—Khundaila retaken, and restored to Oodi Sing, who is liberated.—He resolves to punish the Munohurpoor chief.—Is baffled by that chief's intrigues. Is besieged by Jey Sing of Amber. Khundaila becomes tributary to Amber.

WE proceed to sketch the history of the Shekawut confederation, which, springing from the redundant feodality of Amber, through the influence of age and circumstances, has attained a power and consideration almost equalling that of the parent state, and although it possesses neither written laws, a permanent congress, nor any visible or recognized head, subsists by a sense of common interest. It must not be supposed, however, that no system of policy is to be found in this confederation, because the springs are not always visible or in action; the moment any common or individual interest is menaced the grand council of the Barons of Shekhavati assembles at Oodipoor to decide the course of action to be pursued.

The Shekhawut chieftains are descended from Baloji, the third son of Raja Oodikurn, who succeeded to the throne of Amber in S. 1445, A. D. 1389. At his period, if we look back to the political state of society we find that nearly the whole of the tracts, which now obey the Shekhavati federation, were parcelled out amongst numerous chieftains of the Chohan or Tuar tribes,* the descendants of the ancient Hindu emperor of Delhi, who evinced no more submission than the sword and their Islamite successors exacted from them.

Baloji, who was the actual founder of the numerous families now designated by the

* The lovers of antiquity have only to make the search to find an abundant harvest, throughout all these coun-

more distinguished name of Shekhji, his grandson, obtained as an appanage the district of Amrutsir, but whether by his own prowess or by other means, is not mentioned. He had three sons; Mokulji, Khemarji, and Kharud. The first succeeded to the patrimony of Amrutsir; the second had a numerous issue styled *Balapota*, one of whom was adopted into the twelve chambers (*bara kotri*) of Cuchwahas. The third had a son called Kumun, whose descendants were styled Kumawut, but are now nearly extinct.

Mokul had a son who was named Shekji, in compliment to a miracle-working Islamite saint, to whose prayers the childless chief was indebted for a son destined to be the patriarch of a numerous race, occupying under the term Shekhawut, an important portion of the surface of Rajpootana. Shekh Boorhan was the name of this saint, whose shrine (still existing) was about six miles from Achrole, and fourteen from the residence of Mokul. As the period of time was shortly after timoor's invasion, it is not unlikely he was a pious missionary, who remained behind for the conversion of the warlike but tolerant Rajpoot, with whom, even if he should fail in his purpose, he was certain of protection and hospitality. The Shekh in one of his peregrinations had reached the confines of Amrutsir, and was

tries, of ancient capitals and cities, whose names are hardly known even to the modern inhabitants. Of the ancient *Rajore* I have already spoken, and I now draw the attention of my countrymen to *Abhanair*, which boasts a very remote antiquity; and from an old stanza, we might imagine that its princes were connected with the *Kaian* dynasty of Persia. I copied it, some twenty years ago, from an itinerant bard, who had an imperfect knowledge of it himself, and I have doubtless made it amiss so, but it is still sufficiently intelligible to point at remarkable coincidence:

passing over an extensive meadow, in which was Mokulji. The *Mangta* (mendicant)

"*Raja Chund ca Abhanair,
"Bea Sanjog, ayo Girnair (Girnar)
"Dek'h Bharat, leo bulae
"Keo bidut, mun begae,
"Bea Sanjog, Permala burre
"Kos sat'h so, mun chit d'harre;
"Tu beti Kaicum ca
"Nam Permala (+) ho
"Lekha hooa kurtar ko
"Ea jana sarb ho."*

This is a fragment of a long poem relative to the rivalry of Raja Chund of Abhanair, and Raja Soorsen of Indrapoori, who was betrothed to Permala, daughter of *Kaicum*, and had gone to Girnair, or Girnar, to espouse her, when the Abhanair prince abducted her. Raja Soorsen of Indrapoori (Dehli), of the ancestor of the Suraseni, and founder of Soorpoori, existed probably twelve hundred years before Christ. That sun-worshippers had established themselves in the peninsula of Saurashtra, (whose capital was Junagurh-Girnar), its appellations, in the days of the Greeks of Bactria, as now, proves; (see Strabo, Justin, &c.) but whether Kaicum, the father of Permala, is the Caicumaras of Ferdoosi, we shall not stop to inquire. The connection between this peninsula and Persia was intimate in later times, so as even to give rise to the assertion that the Ranas of Mewar were descended from the Sassanian kings. It was my good fortune to discover Soorpoori, on the Jumna, the residence of the rival of Chund of Abhanair, which city I leave to some one imbued with similar taste to visit, and merely add, he will find there an inscription in a *coond* or fountain dedicated to the Sun. The distance however, seven hundred coss (*kos sat'h so*), whether from Indrapoori or Abhanair, to Girnar, even admitting them to be *gao coss*, would be too much. I believe this would make it eight hundred miles, and certainly, as the crow flies, it is not seven hundred. Interwoven with the story there is much about Raja Chambha, prince of Jajnuggur, a city of great antiquity in Orissa, and containing some of the finest specimens of sculpture I ever saw. There is also mention of a Raja Saer, (*qv.* Sahir or Sehri of Arore) of Perman. In 1804, I passed through Jajnuggur, after the conquest of the province of Cuttack, with my regiment. At Jajnuggur, my earliest friend, the late captain Bellet Sealy, employed his pencil for several days with the sculptured remains. These drawings were sent to the authorities at Calcutta: perhaps this notice may rescue from oblivion the remains of Jajnuggur, and of my deceased friend's talent, for Captain Bellet Sealy was an ornament equally to private life and to his profession. He fell a victim to the fever contracted in the Nepal war. The ruins of *Abhanair* are on the Bangunga, three coss east of Lalsont.

† *Peri-mala*, means Fairy garland.

approached with the usual salutation, "have you any thing for me?" "Whatever you please to have, *Babaji* (sire)," was the courteous reply. The request was limited to a draught of milk, and if our faith were equal to the Shekhawut's we should believe that Shekh Boorhan drew a copious stream from the exhausted udder of a female buffalo. This was sufficient to convince the old chief that the Shekh could work other miracles; and he prayed that, through his means, he might no longer be childless. In due time he had an heir, who, according to the injunctions of Boorhan, was styled, after his own tribe, Shekh. He directed that he should wear the *Buddea*,* which, when laid aside, was to be suspended at the saint's *durgah*; and further, that he should assume the blue tunic and cap, abstain from hog's flesh, and eat no meat "in which the blood remained." He also ordained that at the birth of every Shekhawut male infant a goat should be sacrificed, the *Kulma* (Islamite creed) read, and the child sprinkled with the blood. Although four centuries have passed away since these obligations were contracted by Mokul, they are still religiously maintained by the little nation of his descendants, occupying a space of ten thousand square miles. The wild hog, which, according to immemorial usage, should be eaten once a year by every Rajpoot, is rarely even hunted by a Shekhawut; and though they have relaxed in that ordinance, which commanded the suspension of the *buddeas* at the shrine of Boorhan, still each infant wears them, as well as the blue tunic

and cap, for two years after his birth; and a still greater mark of respect to the memory of the saint is evinced in the blue pennon which surmounts the yellow banner, or national flag, of Shekhawuts. It is even gravely asserted, that those who, from indolence, distance, or less justifiable motives, have neglected the least important injunction, that of depositing the initiatory strings or *buddeas*, have never prospered. But a still stronger proof is furnished of the credulity, the toleration and yet immutability of the Rajapoot character, in the fact, that, although Amrutsir,* and the lands around the *durgah*, are annexed to the fise of Amber, yet the shrine of Shekh Boorhan continues a *sirna* (sanctuary), while lands are assigned to almost a hundred families, the descendants of the saint, who reside in the adjacent town of Talla.

Shekhji, when he attained man's estate, greatly augmented the territory left by his father, and had consolidated three hundred and sixty villages under his sway, by conquest from his neighbours, when his reputation and power attracted the jealous notice of the lord paramount of Amber. He was attacked; but by the aid of the Punee Pat-hans† he successfully withstood the reiterated

* The town of Amrutsir and forty-five villages are still left to the Munohurpoor branch.

† The Punnees are a tribe of Dooranness, regarding whom Mr. Elphinstone's account of Caubul may be consulted. In after times, there was a chieftain of this tribe so celebrated for his generosity and hospitality, that his name has become proverbial:

Bunne, to, bunne

Nuhyn, Daod Khan Punne;

that is, if they failed elsewhere, there was always Daod Khan in reserve. His gallant bearing, and death in Ferocsher's reign, are related in Scott's excellent History of the Dekkhan.

* Strings, or threads worn crossways by Mahomedan children.

assaults of his suzerain. Up to this period, they had acknowledged the Amber princes as leige lords, and in token of alliance paid as tribute all the colts reared on the original estates.* A dispute on this point was the ostensible cause (though subordinate to their rapid prosperity), which occasioned a total separation of the Shekhawut colonies from the parent state, until the reign of Sowae Jey sing, who, with his means as lieutenant of the empire, compelled homage, submission, and pecuniary relief from them. Shekhji left a well-established authority to his son, *Raemul*, of whom nothing is recorded. *Raemul* was followed by *Sooja*, who had three sons, viz. Noonkurn, Raesil, and Gopal. The elder succeeded to the patrimony of Amrutsir and its three hundred and sixty townships, while to his brothers, the fiefs of Lambi and Jharli were respectively assigned. With the second brother, Raesil, the fortunes of the Shekhawuts made a rapid stride, from an occurrence in which the Rajpoot appears in the position we desire to see him occupy.

Noonkurn, the chief of the Shekhawuts, had a minister named Devidas, of the *benya* or mercantile caste, and, like thousands of that caste, energetic, shrewd, and intelligent. He one day held an argument with his lord (which the result proves he maintained with indepedence), that "genius with good fortune was the first gift of heaven, and to be far more prized than a man's mere inheritance." Noonkurn warmly

disputed the point, which ended by his telling the minister he might go to Lambi and make experiment of the truth of his argument on his brother Raesil. Devidas lost no time, on this polite dismissal from his office, in proceeding with his family and property to Lambi. He was received with the usual hospitality; but soon discovered that Raesil's means were too confined to bear an additional burthen, and that the field was too restricted to enable him to demonstrate the truth of the argument which lost him his place. He made known his determination to proceed to the imperial city, and advised Raesil to accompany him, and try his luck at court. Raesil, who was valiant and not without ambition, could only equip twenty horse, with which he arrived at Dehli just as an army was forming to oppose one of those afghan invasions, so common at that period. In the action which ensued Raesil had the good fortune to distinguish himself by cutting down a leader of the enemy, in the presence of the imperial general, which had a decided influence on the event of the day. Enquiries were made for the brave unknown, who had performed this heroic deed; but as, for reasons which will be perceived, he kept aloof from the quarters of his countrymen, the argument of Devidas would never have been illustrated, had not the imperial commander determined to seek out and reward merit. He ordered a grand *zeafut*, or 'entertainment' to be prepared for the chiefs of every grade in the army, who were commanded afterwards to pay their respects to the general. As soon as Raesil appeared, he was recognized as the individual of whom they were in

* This will recall to the reader's recollection a similar custom in the ancient Persian empire, where the tribute of the distant Satrapies was of the same kind. Armenia, according to Herodotus, alone gave an annual tribute of twenty thousand colts.



search. His name and family being disclosed, his brother, Noonkurn, who was serving with his quota, was called, whose anger was peremptorily expressed at his presuming to appear at court without his permission; but this ebullition of jealousy was of little avail. Raesil was at once introduced to the great Akber, who bestowed upon him the title of *Raesil Durbari*,* and a more substantial mark of royal favour, in a grant of the districts of Rawasso and Khasulli, then belonging to the Chundaila Rajpoots. This was but the opening of Raesil's career, for scarcely had he settled his new possessions, when he was recalled to court to take part in an expedition against Bhutnair. Fresh services obtained new favours, and he received a grant of Khundaila and Oodipoor, then belonging to the Nurbhan Rajpoots, who disdained to pay allegiance to the empire, and gave themselves up to unlicensed rapine.

Raesil finding it would be a work of difficulty to expel the brave Nurbhans from their ancient *bapota* (patrimony), had recourse to stragem to effect his object. Previous to the expedition to Bhutnair, Raesil had espoused the daughter of the chief of Khundaila, and it is related that a casual expression, dropped on that occasion, suggested his desire to obtain it for himself. Being dissatisfied with the dower (*daeja*) given with his bride, he, with no commendable taste, pertinaciously insisted upon an increa-

se; upon which the Nurbhan chief, losing patience, hastily replied, "we have nothing else to give, unless you take the stones of the hill." The attendant *Soguni* (angur), immediately turning to Raesil, said, in an under-tone, "tie a knot on the skirt of your garment in remembrance of this." An expression like this from a prophetic tongue, gave birth to the wish to be lord of Khundaila; while his services to the king, and the imbecility of its Nurbhan possessor, conspired to fulfil it. Watching his opportunity, he marched against the place, and being in all probability supported by his liege lord, it was abandoned without defence, and the inhabitants tendered their submission to him. Henceforth, Khundaila was esteemed the principal city of the Shekhawut confederation; and the descendants of Raesil, using his name as a patronymic, are styled Raesilote, occupying all southern Shekhavati; while another branch of later origin, called *Sadhani*, holds the northern tracts. Immediately after the occupation of Khundaila, Raesil obtained possession of Oodipoor, formerly called *Kasoombi*, also belonging to the Nurbhans.*

Raesil accompanied his proper liege lord, the great Raja Maun of Amber, against the heroic Rana Pertap of Mewar. He was also in the expedition to Caubul, against the Afghans of Cohistan, in all of which enterprizes he obtained fresh distinctions.

* It is always agreeable to find the truth of these simple annals corroborated in the historical remains of the conquerors of the Rajpoots. The name of Raesil Durbari will be found, in the Ayceen Akberi amongst the *munsubdars* of twelve hundred and fifty horse; a rank of high importance, being equivalent to that conferred on the sons of potent Rajas.

* The Nurbhan is a *sach'ha*, or ramification of the Caohan race. They had long held possession of those regions, of which *Zais*, or *Kasoombi*, now Oodipoor, was the capital, the city where the grand council of the confederation always meet on great occasions. This may throw light on the Cusoombee mentioned on the triumphal pillar at Dehli; the Nurbhan capital is more likely to be the town alluded to, than Cusoombee on the Ganges,



Regarding his death, there is no record; but his history is another illustration of the Rajpoot character, whilst it confirms the position of the *Banya*, that "genius and good fortune are far superior to inheritance."

Raesil, at his death, had a compact and well-managed territory, out of which he assigned appanages to his seven sons, from whom are descended the various families, who, with relative distinctive patronymics, Bhojanis, Sadhanis, Larkhanis, Taj-khanis, Parsrampotas, Hur-rampotas, are recognized throughout Rajwarra by the generic name of Shekhawut.

1. Girdhar.....had Khundaila and Rewasso
2. Larkhan.....Kachriawas.
3. Bhojraj.....Oodipoor.
4. Tirmul Rao.....Kasulli and eighty-four villages.
5. Pursram.....Bae.
6. Hur-ramji.....Moondurri.
7. Taj-khan.....No appanage.

We shall not break the thread of the narrative of the elder branch of Khundaila "chief of the sons of Shekhji," to treat of the junior line, though the issue of Bhojraj have eclipsed, both in population and property, the senior descendants of Raesil.

Girdhur-ji succeeded to the prowess, the energy, and the estates of his father, and for a gallant action obtained from the emperor the title of Raja of Khundaila. At this period, the empire was in a most disordered state, and the mountainous region, called Mewat, was inhabited by a daring and ferocious banditti, called Mewohs, who pillaged in gangs even to the gates of the capital. The task of taking, dead or alive, the leader of this banditti, was assigned to

the chief of Khundaila, who performed it with signal gallantry and success. Aware that, by the display of superior force, his enemy would remain in his lurking places, Girdhur put himself on terms of equality with his foe, and with a small but select band hunted the Mewatti leader down, and in the end slew him in single combat. The career of Girdhur, short as it was brilliant, was terminated by assassination, while bathing in the Jumna. The anecdote is descriptive of the difference of manners between the rustic Rajpoot and the debauched retainer of the court.

One of the Khundaila chief's men was waiting, in a blacksmith's shop, while his sword was repaired and sharpened. A Mooslem, passing by, thought he might have his jest with the unpolished Rajpoot, and after asking some impertinent questions, and laughing at the unintelligible replies in the *Bakha* of Rajwarra, slipped a heated cinder in the turban of the soldier: the insult was borne with great coolness, which increased the mirth of the Mussulman, and at length the turban took fire. The sword was then ready and the *Thakoor*, after feeling the edge with one blow laid the jester's head at his feet. He belonged to one of the chief nobles of the court, who immediately led his retainers to the Khundaila chief's quarters, and thence to where he was performing his religious ablutions in the Jumna, and whilst engaged in which act, unarmed and almost unattended, basely murdered him. Girdhur left several children.

Dwarca-das, his eldest son, succeeded, and soon after his accession nearly fell a victim to the jealousy of the Munohurpoor



chief, the representative of the elder branch of the family, being the lineal descendant of Noonkurn. The emperor had caught a lion in the toils, and gave out a grand hunt, when the Manoharpoor chief observed that his relative, the Raesilote, who was a votary of *Nahr-Singh*, was the proper person to engage the king of the forest. Dwarca-das saw through his relative's treachery, but cheerfully accepted the proposal. Having bathed and prayed, to the astonishment of the king and court, he entered the arena unarmed, with a brazen platter containing the various articles used in *pooja* (worship), as grains of rice, curds, and sandal ointment, and going directly up to the monster, made the *tilac* on his forehead, put a chaplet round his neck, and prostrated himself in the usual attitude of adoration before the lion; when, to the amazement of the spectators, the noble beast came gently up, and with his tongue repeatedly licked his face, permitting him to retire without the least indication of anger. The emperor, who concluded that his subject must "wear a charmed life," desired the Khundaila chief to make any request, with the assurance of compliance; when he received a delicate reproof, in the desire "that his majesty would never place another person in the same predicament from which he had happily escaped."

Dwarca-das was slain by the greatest hero of the age in which he lived, the celebrated Khan Jehan Lodi, who, according to the legends of the Shekhawuts, also fell by the hand of their lord; and they throw an air of romance upon the transaction, which would grace the annals of chivalry in any age or country. Khan Jehan and the

chieftain of Khundaila were sworn friends, and when nothing but the life of the gallant Lodi would satisfy the king, Dwarca gave timely notice to his friend of the hateful task imposed upon him, advising either submission or flight. His fate, which forms one of the most interesting episodes in Ferishta's history, involved that of the Shekhawut chief.

He was succeeded by his son, Birsingdeo, who served with his contingent in the conquest of the Dekhan, and was made governor of Pernalla, which he had materially assisted in reducing. The Khundaila annalist is desirous to make it appear that his service was independent of his liege lord of Amber; but the probability is that he was under the immediate command of the Mirza Raja Jey Sing, at that period the most distinguished general of his nation or of the court.

Birsingdeo had seven sons, of whom the heir-apparent, Bahadoor Sing, remained at Khundaila; while estates were assigned to his brothers, viz. Amur Sing, Siam Sing, Jugdeo, Bhopal Sing, Mokri Sing, and Paim Sing, who all increased the stock of Raesilotes. While the Raja was performing his duties in the Dekhan, intelligence reached him that his son at home had usurped his title and authority; upon which, with only four horsemen, he left the army for capital. When within two coss of Khundaila, he alighted at the house of a Jatni, of whom he requested refreshment, and begged especial care of his wearied steed, lest he should be stolen; to which she sharply replied, "Is not Bahadoor Sing ruler here? You may leave gold in the highway, and no



one dare touch it." The old chieftain was so delighted with this testimony to his son's discharge of a prince's duties, that, without disclosing himself or his suspicions, he immediately returned to the Dekhan, where he died.

Bahadoor Sing succeeded, and on his father's death repaired to the armies in the south, commanded by Arungzeb in person. Being insulted by a Mooslem chief, bearing the same name with himself, and obtaining no redress from the bigotted prince, he left the army in disgust, upon which his name was erased from the list of munsubdars. It was at this time the tyrant issued his mandate for the capitation-tax on all his Hindu subjects, and for the destruction of their temples.*

To the personal enemy of the Shekhawut was intrusted the twofold duty of exacting tribute, and the demolition of the temple, the ornament of Khundaila, whose chief, degrading the name of Bahadoor (warrior), abandoned his capital; and the royal army had arrived within two coss without the appearance of opposition. The news spread over the lands of the confederacy, that

* The numerous ruined shrines and mutilated statues in every town and village, still attest the zeal with which the bigot's orders were obeyed: nor is there an image of any antiquity with an entire set of features (except in spots impervious to his myrmidons), from Lahor to Cape Comorin. Omkarji, whose temple is on a small island of the Nerbudda, alone, it is said, supported his dignity in the indiscriminate attack on the deities on Hind. "If they are gods (said the tyrannical but witty iconoclast), let them evince their power, and by some miracle resist my commands." Omkarji received the first blow on his head, as if embued with mortal feeling, for the blood gushed from his nose and mouth, which prevented a repetition of the injury! This sensibility, though without the power of avenging himself, made Omkar's shrine doubly respected, and it continues to be one of the best frequented and most venerated in those regions.

Bahadoor had fled from Khundaila, and that the Toork was bent on the destruction of its shrines. It reached the ear of Shujaun Sing, the chieftain of Chapowlee, a descendant of Bhojraj, the second son of Raesil. Embued with all the spirit of this hero, the brave Bhojani resolved to devote himself to the protection of the temple, or perish in its defence. At the moment the tidings reached him, he was solemnizing his nuptials on the Marwar frontier. Hastening home with his bride, he left her with his mother, and bade both a solemn farewell. In vain his kindred, collecting round him, dissuaded from his design, urging that it was Bahadoor Sing's affair, not his. "Am not I?" he said, "also of Raesil's stock, and can I allow the Toork to destroy the dwelling of the *Thakoor* (lord), and not attempt to save it? Would this be acting the part of a Rajpoot?" As their entreaties were vain, they, to the number of sixty, resolved to accompany him, and share his fate. They were joined by a party of Bahadoor's adherents, and succeeded in entering Khundaila. The imperial commander, to whom this unlooked-for opposition was reported, well aware of what a Rajpoot is capable when excited to action, and perhaps moved by a generous feeling at seeing handful of men oppose an army, requested that two of their number might be deputed to his camp to confer with him. He told them, that notwithstanding it was the king's command that he should raze the temple to the ground, he would be satisfied (if accompanied by proper submission) with taking off the *kullus*, or golden ball which surmounted its pinnacle. They endeavoured to dissuade him; offered money



to the utmost possible amount of their means ; but the answer was, "the *kullus* must come down." One of these noble delegates, no longer able to contain himself, exclaimed, "Break down the *kullus*." as with some moist clay at his feet he moulded a ball, which he placed on a little mound before him ; and drawing his sword, repeated, "Break down the *kullus* ! I dare you even to break this ball of clay !" The intrepidity of this action gained the applause even of the foe, and they had safe conduct to rejoin their brethren, and prepare them for the worst.

At this time, Khundaila had no fortifications ; there was, however, a gateway half way up the hill in the route of ascent, which led to the place of residence of its chieftains, adjoining which was the temple. One party was stationed in the gateway, while Shujaun reserved for himself the defence of the temple, in which he took post with his kinsmen. When the mercenaries of the tyrant advanced, the defenders of the gateway, after dealing many a distant death, marched upon them sword in hand, and perished. When they pushed on to the chief object of attack, the band issued forth in small detached parties, having first made their obeisances to the image, and carried destruction along with them. Shujaun was the last who fell. The temple was levelled to earth, the idol broken in pieces, and the fragments thrown into the foundation of a mosque erected on its ruins. There is hardly a town of note in Rajwarra that has not to relate a similar tale of desperate valour in the defence of their household gods against the iniquitous and impolitic Arungzeb. Khundaila received a

royal garrison ; but the old officers, both territorial and financial, were retained by the conqueror.

Bahadoor Sing continued to reside in an adjacent township, and through his Dewan, obtained a certain share of the crops and transit duties, viz. a seer out of every maund of the former, and one pice in every rupee of the latter. In process of time, the family residence and gardens were given up to him, and when the Syeds obtained power he regained his country, though a garrison of the royal troops was retained, whose expenses he paid. He left three sons, viz. Kesuri Sing, Futteh Sing, and Oodey Sing.

Kesuri, solicitous to hold his lands on the same terms as his ancestors, namely, service to the lord-paramount, assembled his adherents, and with his second brother, Futteh Sing, departed for the imperial camp, to proffer his service. The Munohur-poor chief, the elder branch of the family, was in the royal camp, and having regained his lost consequence by the depression of Khundaila, was by no means willing again to part with it. He intrigued with the second brother, Futteh Sing, to whom he proposed a division of the lands ; the latter lent himself to the intrigue, and the Dewan, seeing that a family quarrel would involve the destruction of them all, repaired to Khundaila, and through the mother, a Gor Rajpootni, he advocated the partition. A census was accordingly made of the population, and a measurement of the lands, of which two portions were assigned to Futteh Sing, and the three remaining to the Raja. The town itself was partitioned in

the same manner. Henceforth, the brothers held no intercourse with each other, and Kesuri preferred Kaotah as his residence, though whenever he came to Khundaila, Futteh Sing withdrew. Things remained in this state until the Dewan prompted his master to get rid of the agreement which had secured the ascendancy of Munohurpoor in the Shekhawut federation, by destroying his brother. The Dewan arranged a friendly meeting at Kaotah for the avowed purpose of reconciliation, when Futteh Sing fell a victim to assassination; but the instigator to the crime met his proper reward, for a splinter of the sword which slew Futteh Sing entered his neck, and was the occasion of his death.

Kesuri Sing, having thus recovered all his lost authority, from the contentions at court, conceived he might refuse the tribute of Rewasso, hitherto paid to the Ajmer treasury, while that of Khundaila went to Narnol. Syed Abdoolla, then Vizier, found leisure to resent this insult, and sent a force against Khundaila. Every Raesilote in the country assembled to resist the Toork, and even his foe of Munohurpoor sent his quota, led by the *dhabhae* (foster-brother), to aid the national cause. Thus strengthened, Kesuri determined to oppose the royal forces hand to hand in the plain, and the rival armies encountered at the border town of Deolee. While victory manifested a wish to side with the confederated Shekhawuts, the old jealousies of Munohurpoor revived, and he withdrew his quota from the field, at the same moment that the Kasulli chief, on whom much depended, was slain. To crown these misfortunes, the Larkhani

chief of Danta, basely deeming this an opportunity to consult his own interest, abandoned the field, to take possession of Rewasso. The 'lion' of Khundaila (Kesuri), observing these defections, when the shout of *Jyl jyl* (victory, victory), already rang in his ears, could not help exclaiming, in the bitterness of despair, "Had Futteh Sing been here, he would not have deserted me." He disdained, however, to give way, and prepared to meet his fate like a true Raesilote. Sending to where the battle yet raged for his youngest brother, Oodey Sing, he urged him to save himself; but the young Rajpoot scorned obedience to such a behest, until Kesuri made known his determination not to quit the field, adding that if he also were slain, there would be an end of his line. Others joined their persuasions, and even attempted to turn Kesuri from his purpose. "No," replied the chief, "I have no desire for life; two black deeds press upon me; the murder of my brother, and curse of the Charuns of Bikaner, whom I neglected at the distribution of the nuptial gifts. I will not add a third by dastardly flight." As Oodey Sing reluctantly obeyed, while the swords rung around him, Kesuri made a hasty sacrifice to *Awini-mata* (mother earth), of which flesh, blood, and earth are the ingredients. He cut pieces from his own body, but as scarcely any blood flowed, his own uncle, Mokum Sing of Alloodha, parted with some of his, for so grand an obligation as the retention of Khundaila. Mixing his own flesh, and his uncle's blood, with a portion of his own sandy soil, he formed small balls in *dan* (gift), for the

maintenance of the land to his posterity. The *D'homb* (bard), who repeated the incantations, pronounced the sacrifice accepted, and that seven generations of his line should rule in Khundaila.* The brave Kesuri was slain, the town taken, and Oodey Sing carried to Ajmer, where he remained three years in captivity. At this time, the chiefs of Oodipoor and Kasulli determined to cut off the royal garrison in Khundaila; but apprehensive of the danger it might occasion to their chief, they sent a special messenger to Ajmer, to acquaint the viceroy of their scheme, previous to its execution, to prevent his being implicated. Khundaila was surprised, and Deonath and three hundred Toorks put to the sword. The viceroy, desirous to recover the place, consulted his prisoner, who offered to re-instate him if he granted him liberty. The Nawab demanded a hostage, but the young Rajpoot said he knew of none but his own mother, who willingly became the pledge for her son. He fulfilled his agreement, and the viceroy was so pleased with his frank and loyal conduct, that on paying a large *nuzzerana*, he restored him to his capital.

Oodey Sing's first act was to assemble his brethren, in order to punish Munohurpoor, whose treachery had caused them so much misery. The foster brother, who commanded on that occasion, was again entrusted with the command; but he fled after a sharp encounter, and Munohurpoor was invested. Seeing he had no chance of salva-

tion, he had again recourse to *chul* (stratagem.) There were two feudatories of Noonkurn's line, joint-holders of Khajroli, who had long been at variance with Deep Sing of Kasulli, the principal adviser of the young Raja of Khundaila. They were gained over to the purpose of the Munohurpoor chief, who sent them with a private message to Deep Sing, that no sooner should Monohurpoor fall than he would be deprived of Kasulli. These treacherous proceedings were but too common amongst "the sons of Shekhji." Deep Sing fell into the snare, and at break of day, when the trumpets sounded for the assault, the drums of the Kasulli chief were heard in full march to his estate. Oody Sing, thus deprived of his revenge, followed Deep Sing, who, aware of his inability to cope with his immediate chief, fled for succour to Jeipoor, and Kasulli fell a sacrifice to the artifices which preserved Munohurpoor. The great Jey Sing then ruled Amber; he received the suppliant chief, and promised him ample redress, on his swearing to become his vassal and tributary. Deep swore allegiance to the *gadi* of Jey Sing, and signed a tributary engagement of four thousand rupees annually!

Thus recommenced the supremacy of Amber over the confederated Shekhawuts, which had been thrown off ever since the dispute regarding the colts of Amratsir, the ancient mark of homage, when "the sons of Shekhji" consisted only of a few hundred armed men. Shortly after this transaction, Jey Sing proceeded to the Ganges to fulfil certain rites upon an eclipse, and while performing his ablutions in the sacred stream, and the gifts for distribution to the priests being collected on the bank, he

* The fifth, as will be seen hereafter, has been expelled, and authority usurped by the Kasulli branch of the family, and unless some fortunate charge should occur, the devotion of Kesuri was useless, and the prophecy must fall to the ground.

inquired "who was present to receive *dan* that day?" The Kasulli chief, spreading out the skirt of his garment, replied, he was an applicant. Such *dan* (gifts) being only given to *mangtas*, or mendicants, in which class they put priests, poets, and the poor, the Raja asked, laughing, "What is your desire, Thakoor?" To which Deep Sing replied, that through his intercession the son of Futteh Sing might obtain his father's share of Khundaila; which request was complied with.

This occurrence was in A. D. 1716, when the Jats were rising into power, and when all the minor Rajas served with their contingents under the great Jey Sing, as lieutenant of the emperor. Along with the princes of Kerowli, Bhadorea, Sheopoor, and many others of the third rank, was Oodey Sing of Khundaila. During the siege of Thoon, the Shekhawut chief was reprimanded for neglect of duty, and although he owed a double allegiance to Jey Sing, as his natural liege lord and lieutenant of the king, he would not brook the censure from one of his own race, and indignantly withdrew from the siege. Chooramun the Jat, having contrived to make his peace, with the Syed vizier, when Thoon was upon the eve of surrender, and Oodey Sing being implicated in this intrigue, Jey Sing, who was mortified at an occurrence which prevented the gratification of a long-cherished resentment against the upstart Jats, determined that the Khundaila chief should suffer for his audacity. Attended by the imperialists under Bazeed Khan, and all his home clans, he laid siege to the citadel called Oodigurh. Oodey Sing held out a month in this castle he had constructed and called by his own

name, when his resources failing, he fled to Nuroo in Marwar, and his son, Sowae Sing, presented the keys, throwing himself on the clemency of the conqueror. He was well received, and pardoned, on condition of becoming tributary to Amber. He followed the example of the Kasulli chief, and signed an engagement to pay annually one lakh of rupees. From this a deduction of fifteen thousand was subsequently made, and in time being reduced twenty thousand more, sixty-five thousand continued to be the tribute of Khundaila, until the decay of both the parent state and its scion, when the weakness of the former, and the merciless outrages of the predatory powers, Pathan and Mahratta, rendered its amount uncertain and difficult to realize. Moreover recalling his promise to Deep Sing, he restored the division of the lands as existing prior to the murder of Futteh Sing, viz. three shares to Sowae Sing, with the title of chief of the Shekhawuts, and two to Dheer Sing, son of Futteh Sing. The young cousin chieftains, now joint-holders of Khundaila, attended their liege lord with their contingent; and Oodey Sing, taking advantage of their absence, with the aid of a band of outlawed Larkhanis, surprised and took Khundaila. Attended by the Jeipoor troops, the son performed the dutiful task of expelling his father from his inheritance, who again fled to Nuroo, where he resided upon a pension of five rupees a day, given by his son, until his death. He, however, outlived Sowae Sing, who left three sons; Bindrabun, who succeeded to Khundaila; Simboo, who had the appanage of Ranolli; and Koosul, having that of Piperolli.

CHPATER VI.

Bindrabun Das adheres to Madhu Sing in the civil wars of Amber.—Partition of lands annulled.—Self-immolation of the Brahmins.—Consequences to Bindrabun, in his contest with Indur Sing, the other chief of Khundaila.—Civil war.—Prodigal expiatory sacrifice of Bindrabun.—He abdicates.—Govind Sing.—Is assassinated.—Nursing-Das.—Rise and devastations of the Mahrattas.—Siege of Khundaila.—Terms of redemption. Murder of deputies by the Mahrattas.—Indur Sing perishes in the attempt to avenge them.—Pertap Sing. Rise of the Seekur chief.—Transactions between Pertap and Nursing, his co-partner.—Pertap obtains the whole of Khundaila.—Nursing recovers by stratagem his share of Khundaila.—Domestic broils and feuds.—General assembly of the Sadhani and Raesilote chiefs, to counteract the encroachments of Amber.—Treaty between the Shekhawuts and the court of Amber.—Violated by the latter.—The confederacy assault the town of the Huldea faction.—Nursing refuses tribute to the court, and Khundaila is sequestered.—Nursing and Pertap treacherously made captive, and conveyed to Jeipoor.—Khundaila annexed to the fisc.

BINDRABUN DAS steadfastly adhered to Madhu Sing in the civil wars which ensued for the *gadi* of Amber, and the latter, when success attended his cause, wished to reward the important services of his feudatory. At his request, he consented that the partition of the lands which had caused so much bloodshed should be annulled, and that Bindrabun should rule as sole lord of Khundaila. Five thousand men were placed under his command for the expulsion of the minor, Indur Sing, grandson of Deo Sing, who made a stout resistance for many months; but at length his little castle was no longer tenable, and he fled to Parasoli, where he again defended himself, and was again on the point of surrender, when an unexpected

accident not only saved him from exile, but restored him to his rights.

The mercenaries were supported at the sole charge of Bindrabun, and as his ancestors left no treasury, he was compelled to resort to the contribution called *dind* from his subjects, not even exempting the hierarchy. Piqued at this unusual demand, some of the wealthiest Brahmins expostulated with the Raja on this indignity to the order. But their appeals were disregarded by their chief, whose existence depended on supplies. The loss of influence as well as wealth being the fruit of this disregard of their remonstrance, they had recourse to that singular species of revenge termed *chandi*, or self-immolation, and poignarded themselves in

his presence, pouring maledictions on his head with their last breath. The blood of Brahmins now rested on the head of Bindrabun; even amongst his personal friends he laboured under a species of excommunication, and his liege lord, Madhu Sing of Amber, in order to expiate his indirect share in the guilt, recalled his troops, and distributed twenty thousand rupees to the Brahmins of his own capital. Indur Sing had thus time to breathe, and having collected all his retainers, wisely joined the Jeipoor army assembling under the command of the celebrated Khoshialiram Bhora to chastise the Rao of Macherri, who was expelled and obliged to seek refuge with the Jats. In this service Indur Sing so much distinguished himself, that, on the payment of a *nuzzerana* of fifty thousand rupees, he recovered his lost share of Khundaila, by a regular *putta*, or grant, of the Raja.

Perpetual feuds, however, raged between these two kings of Khundaila, each of whom had his castle, or fortified palace. Each day "there was war even in the gates" of Khundaila, and at the hazard of prolixity we shall state how it was conducted, challenging the records of any civil war to produce an instance in which all the ties of blood and kindred were more disregarded than in this *bellum plusquam civile*.

Indur Sing had popularity on his side to balance the other's superior power, and he was briskly pushing an attack on Oodigurh, the castle of his opponent, when he was joined by Raghunath Sing, the younger son of his foeman. This youth, who had the township of Koochore in appanage, helped himself to three more, to retain which he

sided with his father's foe. Bindrabun, in order to create a diversion, sallied out to attack Koochore; to oppose which, his son, together with his nephew, Pirthi Sing of Ranolli and his retainers, withdrew from the batteries to defend it. But the attack on Koochore had already failed, and Bindrabun was on his retreat to regain Khundaila, when he was intercepted. The battle took place outside the city, whose gates were shut against friend and foe, to prevent a pell-mell entry. At the same time, the siege of Oodigurh was not slackened; it was defended by Govind Sing the eldest son of Bindrabun, while the batteries against it were commanded by another near kinsman Nahr Sing of Cherana. For several days daily combats ensued, in which were to be seen father and son, uncles and nephews, and cousins within every degree of affinity, destroying each other. At length, both parties were exhausted and compromise ensued, in which Indur Sing obtained the rights he had so manfully vindicated.

At this time, a dying and desultory effort to regain his lost power was made by Nujuf Kooli Khan, at the head of the imperialists, who, conducted by the traitorous Macherri Rao, led the royal army into the lands of the confederacy to raise contributions, for which he was cordially and laudably detested. Nowul Sing of Nowulgurh, Bagh Sing of Keytri, Soorajmul of Bussao, all chieftains of the Sadhanis, unble to comply with the requisitions, were carried off, and retained captive till ransomed for many lakhs of rupees; all eventually raised upon the impoverished husbandman and industrious merchant.



The din of civil war having ended, the ministers of religion never ceased pouring into the ears of Bindrabun, the necessity of expiation and oblations for the murder of their brethren, and he was daily sacrificing the birthright of his children, in grants of the best lands of Khundaila, to these drones of society, when Govind, the heir-apparent, remonstrated, which was followed by the abdication of Bindrabun, who, appropriating five townships and the impost duties of Khundaila for his support, left the cares of government to his son.*

Govind Sing did not long enjoy the honours of chief of the Raesilotes. The year of his elevation having produced an unfavourable harvest, at the request of his vassal of Ranolli he proceeded to inspect the crops preparatory to a reduction in the assessment. Less superstitious than his father, he preserved in spite of the predictions of the astrologer, who told him, "to beware the ides (*amavus*) of Paush," and not to go abroad that day. In the course of the excursion, one of his personal attendants, a Rajpoot of Kajrolli, had lost some valuable article entrusted to his charge, and the impetuous chief broadly taxed him with theft. His protestations of innocence were unavailing, and considering himself dishonoured by the imputation, which might possibly be followed by some disgraceful punishment, he determined to anticipate his chief, and murdered him that night. Govind left five sons, Nursing, Soorajmul (who had Dodea), Bagh Sing, Jowan Sing, and Runjeet, all of whom had families.

* His second son, Raghunath, had Koochore in appanage.

Nursing-das, his eldest son, succeeded. In spite of internal dissensions, occasional chastisement, and pecuniary exactions from the imperial armies, or those of their immediate liege lord of Amber, the confederated *frerage* of Shekhavati had increased their territory and population. Only the shadow of a name now remained to the empire of the great Mogul; and their own lord-paramount, satisfied with a certain degree of homage, tribute, and service on emergencies, was little inclined to trench further upon their national independence. But a new enemy had now arisen, and though of their own faith, far more destructive than even the intolerant islamite. Happy were the inhabitants of the desert, who had an ocean of sand between them and this scourge of India, the insatiable Mahratta. After the fatal day of Mairta, where the evil genius of Rajpootana enabled De Boigne to give the last blow to her independence, the desultory hordes roved in bands through the lands of the confederation, plundering, murdering, and carrying off captive the principal chiefs or their children, as hostages for contributions they could not realize. These were dragged about after their armies, until the hardships and indignities they underwent made them sell every article of value, or until the charge of keeping, or the trouble of guarding them, rendered their prolonged captivity burdensome to the wandering Southrons.

Let us follow the path of the barbarians, and trace only one day's acts of outrage. When the Mahrattas entered the lands of the federation, soon after the battle of Mairta, they first attacked Bae. The

inhabitants, knowing that they had no hope of mercy from these marauders, fled, carrying away all the effects they could to the larger towns, while a garrison of eighty Rajpoots took post in the little castle, to defend the point of honour against this new assailant. Bae was stormed; not one Rajpoot would accept of quarter, and all were put to the sword. The enemy proceeded to Khundaila, the route marked by similar tracks of blood. When within two *cos*s of the town, the horde halted at Hodegong, and a *Pundit** was sent to Rao Indur Sing to settle the contribution, which was fixed at twenty thousand rupees, besides three thousand in *ghoos*† (bribe), for the Brahmin negociator. The two chiefs, who negotiated on the part of the joint Rajas of Khundaila, proceeded with the Pundit to the enemy's camp; their names were Nowal and Duleel. As it was out of their power to realize so large a sum, they were accompanied by the joint revenue officers of Khundaila as *ole*, or hostage, when to their dismay, the Southron commander demurred, and said they themselves must remain. One of the chieftains, with the *sang froid* which a Rajpoot never loses, coolly replied, that should not be, and taking his *hooka* from

his attendant, began unceremoniously to smoke, when a rude *Dekhany* knocked the pipe from his hand. The Thakoor's sword was unsheathed in an instant, but ere he had time to use it a pistol-ball passed through his brain. Duleel Sing's party, attempting to avenge their companion, were cut off to a man; and Indur Sing, who had left Khundaila to learn how the negotiations sped, arrived just in time to see his clansmen butchered. He was advised to regain Khundaila: "No," replied the intrepid Raesilote; "better that I should fall before the gates of khundaila than enter them after such disgrace, without avenging my kinsmen." Dismounting from his horse, he turned him loose, his adherents following his example; and sword in hand they rushed on the host of assassins and met their fate. Indur Sing was stretched beside his vassals, and, strange to say, Duleel was the only survivor: though covered with wounds, he was taken up alive, and carried to the hostile camp.

Such was the opening scene of the lengthened tragedy enacted in Shekhavati, when Mahratta actors succeeded to Phathans and Moguls: heirs to their worst feelings, without one particle of their magnanimity or courtesy. But the territory of the confederacy was far too narrow a stage; even the entire plain of India appeared at one time too restricted for the hydra-headed banditti, nor is there a principality, district, or even township, from the Sutlej to the sea, where similar massacres have not been known, and but for our interposition, such scenes would have continued to the present hour.

* The ministers of religion were the only *clerks* amongst this race of depredators, and they were not behind the most illiterate in cupidity, and to say the truth, courage, when required; and as for skill, in negotiation, a Mahratta Brahmin stands alone: keen, skilful, and imperturbable, he would have baffled Machiavelli himself.

† *Ghoos* is literally 'a bribe,' and no treaty or transaction was ever carried on without this stipulation. So sacred was the *ghoos* held, from tyrant usage, that the Peshwa ministers, when they ruled the destinies of their nation, stipulated that the *ghoos* should go to the privy purse!