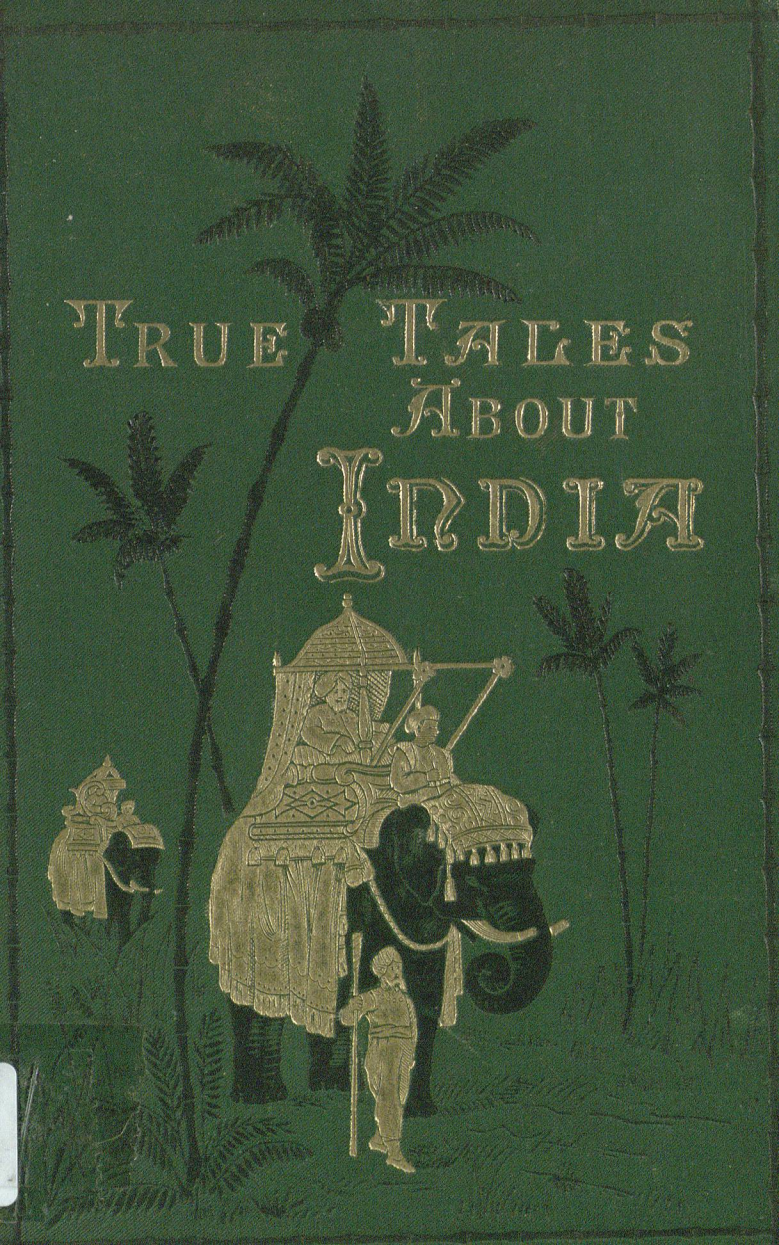
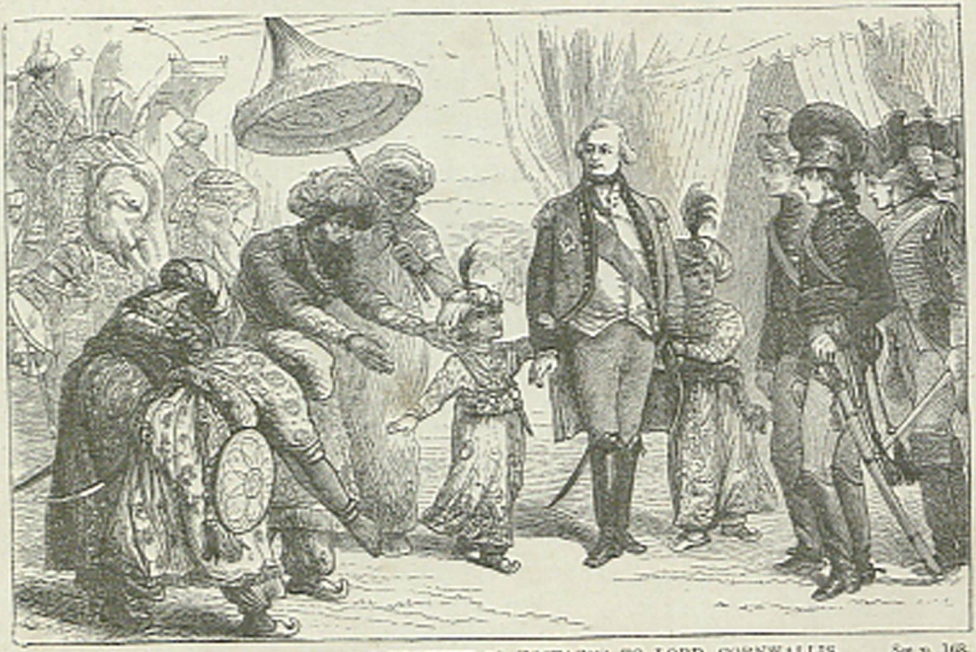
True Tales About India





SONS OF TIPPU SULTAN BROUGHT AS HOSTAGES TO LORD CORNWALLIS. See p. 168.

TRUE TALES ABOUT INDIA:

ITS

Native Princes and British Rulers.

BY

S. J. BALLARD,

OF MANGALORE.

LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,
56 PATERNOSTER ROW, 65 ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,
AND 164 PICCADILLY.

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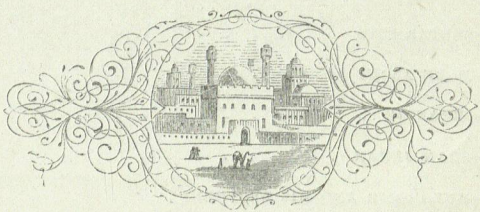

INDIA

Kabul
Jellalabad
Attock
Peshawur
Cashmere
Lahdak
Ghaznee
Derbend
Hussunabad
Rawul Pindee
Islamabad
Kishtewar
Tata Bagh
Jehlpoor
Jhelum
Chenab
Chillianwallah
Sultaunpur
Doorranees
Ganduhar
Dera Ismail Khan
AFGHANISTAN
PUNJAB
Lahore
Umritsir
Sirsa
Monkhera
Leia
Ferozepoor
Sobraon
Hoosyar
Sinaut
Quetta
Mundote
Ferozeshah
Loodiana
Dera Ghazee Khan
Multan
Sirhind
Umbalia
Futtehgurh
Scharunpoor
Hurdwar
Kelat
Bhawulpore
Bhatneer
Jhund
Ahmedpore
Oudipore
Hissar
Meerut
Moorabaad
Semlah
Gundava
DELHI
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Bikaneer
Faondrasir
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Bukkur
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Narnool
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Bhurtpore
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Jeypore
AGRA
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Oude
Selwan
Amber
Rajpoot
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Bithoor
Cawnpore
Joudpore
Ajmeer
Gwalior
Dinapore
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Hyderabad
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Allore
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Allahabad
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Cossimbazar
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CALCUTTA
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Fort St. David
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Madura
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Galle
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Andaman
Lit. Andaman
Ruttland I.
Cape Negrais
Cape Comorin
Laccadives
Maldives
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Gulf of Cutch
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Kattywar
Somnath
Dwarka
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Baroach
Surat
Bombay
Karanja
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Bancote
Gingera
Bankote
Severndroog
Sattara
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Capt. of Telingana
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Bejapore
Kolapore
Belgaum
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Gentiapoor
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Dinajepore
Purneah
Bhaugulpore
Monghyr
Mussurabad
Bhoglipore
Rajmahal
Sonta
Mahanuddy
Ganges
Brahmapoutra
R. Sampoo or Brahmapoutra
L. Pahe
Snowy Mountains
Himalaya Mts.
Indus
Sutlej
Jumna
Ganges
Chumbul
Sinde
Betwa
Kistna
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Soane
Bay of Bengal
Arabian Sea
Indian Ocean
Longitude East from Greenwich
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TRUE TALES ABOUT INDIA.

INTRODUCTION.

INDIA is a large peninsula, stretching from Cape Comorin in the south to the Himalaya Mountains in the north. The distance between these two places is more than 1,500 miles; and many different kinds of people live in the various provinces and kingdoms into which Hindustan or India is divided. Most of these people have dark skins, dark eyes and black hair. You will rarely meet with a blue or grey-eyed child, and light-coloured hair is considered a blemish. Though these people are alike in being of a dark colour, complexions vary among them from a clear olive brown to an ebony black. There are also great differences among them in their customs and religions. Their country is in some places hot, flat and dry, in others mountainous and wet. There are many sandy treeless plains and many fine dark forests; but it will be best to talk

of one part of India in one chapter, and of another further on; for it is very confusing to speak of the whole of India at once. We will begin our Tales in Northern India, for there the best-known kings and princes lived for a long time.

You have read in your History of England about the Britons, who long ago painted themselves with blue woad, and lived as the inhabitants of barbarous, uncivilized countries do now. In those days, long before our blessed Saviour's birth, and for some time after it, the people in India were more civilized than the people of England. They built finer houses, they wore finer clothes, and a man named Menu made some very good laws, as well as some very bad laws, for them. These laws of Menu are still much observed by the people of India; but I am sorry to say they follow more of the bad ones than the good ones. However, some good things Menu taught, which I will relate to you. He said, Children must be very obedient and kind to their parents and to old people. Husbands were to be kind to their wives, and wives to be obedient to their husbands; if they were not obedient the husband was told to beat them! I don't think this was a good thing. Kings were to be kind to the people they reigned over, and to be just and true in all their dealings; and if a king did wrong, he was to be punished. The people were told that in war a man on horseback must not kill one on

foot, nor one who sleeps, or sits down tired. Menu taught the people to worship one great God, and pray daily to Him; but he told them there were some lesser gods they should worship; and the poor foolish people are too apt to follow the last advice, and have added many false gods to the one true God. For many years they had no Bible to tell them anything of God, who made heaven and earth and all that therein is, or of Jesus Christ's coming into the world; but missionaries are now sent to them, and some of the heathen have become Christians; let us hope that many more will follow.

The people of India in Menu's time were divided into four great classes or castes, and these divisions are still kept up, though more than two thousand years have elapsed since that great law-giver lived. The four great castes are: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. These again are divided into many different castes. The laws of Menu tell the people to honour the Brahmins or priests, indeed almost to worship them; yet among the Brahmins are many bad, ignorant men; the people, however, think that by giving the Brahmins presents they will have prosperity in this world and in that which is to come. Even the king is warned not to provoke a Brahmin to anger; for, says the old law, "the Brahmin could easily destroy his sovereign, his elephants and everything belonging to him." The law-giver Menu says, the Brahmin's duties are to read the

Vedas, or sacred books of the Hindus, and to teach young Brahmins. Some of them are spending their lives in a series of childish ceremonies, and living on charity. A Brahmin is not likely to want, for the poorest people will gladly give something to secure his good will; but not a few of this caste prefer earning an honourable livelihood and position for themselves, instead of depending on the gifts of others. They are to be found as magistrates, schoolmasters and soldiers. Many of them are shrewd and clever, and have often shown themselves able men, and risen to high offices in the State, both under Native Princes and Englishmen. The Brahmin women are refined and pretty in appearance. Most of them live in great retirement. They are kind-hearted and very fond of their children and other relatives; but they are very superstitious, at which we cannot be surprised, as hearing and reading foolish tales about witches and wizards, giants and false gods, is almost the only education they receive. Some day, I hope, their minds will be stored with better things.

The Kshatriyas are warriors by caste, the Vaisyas are merchants, and among the Sudras we find labourers, farmers and mechanics. None of these castes intermarry or eat with each other; but the Brahmins have often been soldiers as well as priests, and Kshatriyas are not always soldiers. In short, as far as occupation is concerned, in these days each caste does as it pleases,

though they preserve strictly a separation in their own social intercourse, by which I do not mean to say they will not speak to each other, although in some cases conversation is carried on with inconvenience. Till very lately in some parts of India, a high-caste judge would only hear the cause of a low-caste man through a middle-caste interpreter. The low-caste man must stand at a distance from the judge's seat, and shout what he had to say to the interpreter, who again would repeat it to the judge. This, to say the least, was an inconvenient way of obtaining justice.

By the old laws of Menu the king was supreme lord of all the land in the country, and therefore entitled to a share in every crop. This is the rent the farmer pays for his land, and besides the king's portion he has, according to old custom, to give portions to the priests, the village headman, barber, washerman and blacksmith. Thus it often happened that very little was left for himself. Every Indian village had, and has now, its own headman, to settle small disputes, its accountant, who keeps an exact record of the crops, its Brahmin or priest, and its astrologer, who pretends to tell the people by the stars what days are lucky or unlucky for sowing, reaping, marrying, or starting on a journey. The village has also its carpenter, smith, washerman and barber, the offices being generally hereditary. As long as the villagers can keep up their own little kingdom, they

do not much mind who rules the great empire of Hindustan.

Though the law-giver Menu lived so many years before the birth of our Saviour, most of the rules laid down by him are the law of the Hindus to this day; and when you learn how many different masters have ruled India during the last two thousand years, you will say it is strange that so much of the old master's teaching should remain among the people. But they are very conservative—that means, they are fond of old habits and customs.

CHAPTER I.

Mahmud of Ghazni.

I MUST now pass over a long period, during which Northern India was often overrun by armies from foreign countries, who sadly oppressed her people. Mahmud of Ghazni was one of the fiercest of these foreign invaders. He was in religion a Mahommedan, or believer in a man called Mahommed, who lived between five and six hundred years after Christ's birth. Mahommed was cruel, but very clever. He persuaded many people that he was a greater prophet

than Jesus Christ, and he told his followers they might kill any one who would not become a Mahommedan.

Now I will tell you one story of Mahmud of Ghazni. He started in A.D. 1024 from Candahar with a large army, which at first frightened the Indian princes very much. Several towns were easily taken by his troops; but when he came to Somnáth in Rajputana, he found it defended by some brave men. Rajputana is a beautiful hilly country, and its people, the Rajputs, are the bravest and most warlike in India. They defended Somnáth with so much courage that the Mahommedans began to tire of the contest, and were anxious to give it up. Mahmud, however, persuaded them to fight on. At last they took the city. In it they found a splendid temple, with many precious stones adorning its walls, and a large idol for the people to worship. The Mahommedans are very much opposed to idols, and were in the habit of breaking images wherever they found them but the Rajputs implored Mahmud to spare this one, and promised, if he would only grant their request, they would pay him a large sum of money. Mahmud was very fond of money, and he knew he could get the coveted gold more easily if the owners brought it, than if he had to hunt for it in the cunning hiding-places where they were fond of concealing it. At first he was disposed to spare the idol, and receive the money. Then he thought that would not be right, and he broke

the image with a huge club he had in his hand—and what do you think happened? There fell on the ground quantities of diamonds and emeralds and rubies and precious stones of all sorts, which were far more valuable than the money the cunning priests had offered to him. So Mahmud was very pleased with what he had done.

He died about 1030, thirty-six years before the famous battle of Hastings was fought in England. He was succeeded by his son, who only reigned a very short time.

CHAPTER II.

The Slave Kings.

ABOUT the year 1221 a terrible invasion of Northern India took place, by a wild people called the Moguls. Mahmud of Ghazni's descendants had long ago been driven away, and Altamish, who had been a slave, but by his cleverness had become king, was now reigning. There were other petty princes, and frequent wars among them; but these little wars were forgotten when the barbarous chief Genghiz Khan with his large army overran the country. They did the poor Hindus much harm, and taught them nothing. When the Romans

invaded England, they taught the people to build better houses, and many other useful arts; but Genghiz Khan and his rude soldiers knew nothing useful or good to teach their captives; and the Hindus were unable to teach their conquerors such useful knowledge as they possessed. Probably the Moguls did not care to learn the arts of peace, for they continued a cruel, uncivilized people, much dreaded by the natives of India.

The Slave Kings (so called because the first of the race, Kuttub, and his son-in-law Altamish, had been imported as slaves from Tartary) reigned during the thirteenth century. Towards its close a very foolish, pleasure-loving king, named Kei Kobad, began to reign. He really had no right whatever to the throne, but his father, Bakarra Khan, was Governor of Bengal, and the chiefs thought to please him by raising his sons to power.

Kei Kobad showed himself quite unworthy of the great trust which had been committed to him, and behaved so badly that his father, after rebuking him for bad conduct, came against him with an army, but, unwilling to injure his good-for-nothing son, he sent him a very kind letter, begging to see him. Kei Kobad was touched by the affection his father expressed, and said they had better meet one another. The young man was surrounded by bad advisers, who wished to make

the meeting as disagreeable as possible, for they did not wish to see their prince and his wise father on good terms. The chief minister was Nizam-ud-deen, who told the prince that he was a much greater man than his father, and therefore the first visit should be paid by the old man to his son, and not by the son to the father. When kings and princes visit in India there are generally strict rules laid down as to the forms to be observed; but a wise prince would have been only too glad to lay these aside for the purpose of showing respect to his father. However, Kei Kobad said Bakarra must come to see him, because he was a king and a greater man than the Governor of Bengal. And Bakarra came, for he wanted, if possible, to save his son from the dangers into which his folly was leading him. The old man was told at the door that, when he came in sight of his son on the throne, he must kiss the ground three times, while the mace-bearer called out: "The noble Bakarra to the King of the World sends health!"

All was arranged to humble the father and exalt the son, but Bakarra was unable to restrain his tears as he entered Kei Kobad's presence. Then the young prince forgot his pride and the evil counsels of Nizam-ud-deen, and in a moment he had himself taken the lowly place of salutation on the ground, praying his father to forgive the past. And you may be sure Bakarra forgave

his son, and gave the young man the best advice, which he seemed inclined to follow; but as soon as his father had gone back to Bengal bad men tempted Kei Kobda again to sin and folly, which ended in his being killed after a short reign of about three years.

CHAPTER III.

Alla-ud-Deen and the Sack of Chittore.

A VERY clever old man, who was already seventy years of age, now became king and the founder of a new dynasty. His name was Jelal-ud-deen Khilji. He at first pretended not to wish to become a king, but once seated on the throne he reigned fairly well for those troublous times. Some writers of history think he killed the infant son of the late king; but, with so many wild, lawless men about the country, we may give the old man the benefit of the doubt, as his character generally was kind and merciful. His own end was a sad one, for he was killed by assassins hired for the purpose by his nephew Alla-ud-deen. He had brought up this nephew from childhood, and though he had been warned against the man's cruelty and ambition, he could not believe that his adopted son was quite

without gratitude and affection. Alas! while he was speaking affectionately to his nephew, who had just returned from a successful war, the murderers stepped forward and in a moment stabbed him to death.

Few people dared to oppose Alla-ud-deen, who was a great and powerful general; so he seated himself on the throne; but you will not be surprised to hear he had a very disturbed reign. When surrounded by enemies, he must sometimes have thought what a kind friend he had lost in his poor old murdered uncle.

When Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India, as was just now related, he was stoutly opposed by the inhabitants of Rajputana. When Indian history brings us to this part of the country, and we read of the noble, generous, and courteous Rajputs, we are reminded in many ways of the chivalrous knights of Europe. We find ourselves among strong castles and mountain fastnesses, prancing steeds, polished lances and waving banners, bold warriors and beautiful ladies.

Rajputana possessed many petty princes. Its most important state was Mewar, and the capital of Mewar was Chittore. Its princes were called "children of the sun," and claimed to be descended from Porus, who lived in the days of Alexander the Great, and was conquered by him. The bards of Rajputana, like the troubadours in Europe, used to sing wonderful ballads about the kings and soldiers of bygone days, mixing many fables

with the stories they told, as is generally the case in early histories.

After Alla-ud-deen had reigned some years, and conquered Guzerat and many other places, he coveted Chittore; but he did not win it without a desperate struggle.

The Rana or King of Mewar was a minor, and his uncle Bheemsi was his regent. Bheemsi was married to a Cingalese lady of great beauty, named Padmani. Chittore had been besieged for some time, when Alla-ud-deen pretended that if he might but behold the beautiful Padmani he would withdraw his troops. But Hindu ladies of rank rarely show themselves to strangers, and the utmost that could be allowed was a sight of the fair one's face and form in mirrors so arranged that she herself could not be seen. In fact, however, Alla-ud-deen's wish to see Padmani was only a device to enter into Chittore, and to get hold of her husband. He knew the Rajputs had a high sense of honour, and if they passed their word that he should be safe in Chittore, safe he would be; and if he trusted them by entering their town, they would think it ungenerous not to trust him by escorting him back to his own camp, and thus he would get Bheemsi into his power. What a mean creature this fierce soldier was!

All happened as he expected. The crafty king entered Chittore, and the noble Bheemsi, in all good faith,

escorted him beyond the walls, and found himself immediately made a prisoner. The sorrow and anger of the Rajputs can better be imagined than described; and, finding what kind of men they had to deal with, they determined to oppose craft by craft.

First they asked: "For what ransom will you give us back our brave Bheemsi?"

Alla-ud-deen replied: "If your beautiful Padmani becomes my prisoner I will send Bheemsi back."

Then there was great grief in Chittore.

But when Padmani heard the offer she said: "I will go, and save my husband and Chittore." So she sent for her uncle Gorah and another relation named Badel, and they consulted how to make sure of Bheemsi's safety, for they could not trust the word of treacherous Alla-ud-deen. They arranged that Padmani should pretend to go to Alla-ud-deen's camp with a large retinue, supposed to be her maidens; but in each of the seven hundred covered litters an armed man instead of a young damsel was stowed away, and each litter was carried by six stalwart soldiers. Thus upwards of four thousand men entered Alla-ud-deen's camp, but no fair lady was with them.

You may imagine how astonished the enemy were when the litter-carriers turned out to be gallant soldiers carrying strong men instead of frightened girls.

Defended by the brave four thousand, Bheemsi

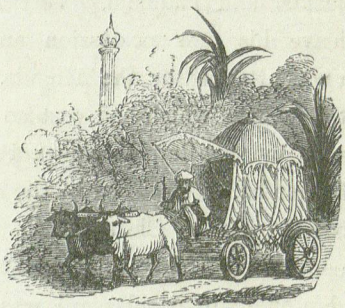
escaped on a fleet horse into Chittore. The town, the prince, and the princess were saved, for Alla-ud-deen lost so many men that he was obliged to go away. But the enemy returned to Chittore. Vainly the Rajputs fought against him and fell. Alla-ud-deen at last triumphed, and entered an almost lifeless capital.

When the Hindu ladies saw husbands, fathers and brothers falling thick and fast in the fray, they determined not to survive their relatives, and numbers of them entered a deep, dark cavern, at the mouth of which a fire was kindled, by which they perished. You may be sure strange tales were told of this cavern. Some said a giant serpent guarded its entrance, and others, that if any one would go far enough inside he would reach a splendid palace. Who would like a palace with such an avenue leading to it?

Alla-ud-deen destroyed many beautiful buildings and much valuable property in Chittore, but he spared the palace of Bheemsi and Padmani. Very soon he was obliged to leave his new possession and return to Delhi, which was attacked by the Moguls. Before his death he lost the town which had cost so much blood. It was recovered by the Rajputs under Prince Hourin, whose grandfather had been killed in the sadly famous, long-remembered "Sack of Chittore."

Alla-ud-deen died in 1316. Although he was a cruel tyrant when his own will or pleasure was crossed, the

country during his reign is said to have become more prosperous than it had been before. Like many tyrants, he had enemies who would have killed him if they could; and he became much afraid that he would lose his life by them. So he consulted with some friends as to what arrangements he could make to guard against this danger. They said: "Do not allow your subjects to meet together at parties, and to drink wine together. When they do so they invent many evil things." Alla-ud-deen then made laws against wine-drinking, and without an order from the vizier or prime minister nobody could be asked out to dinner. Alla-ud-deen also thought it for his safety that none of his subjects should be very rich, and farmers were only allowed to have a small quantity of land, and a certain limited number of cows and servants. Other laws he made; but we have heard enough of Alla-ud-deen.



CHAPTER IV.

Marco Polo.

IN what people call the good old times, when Europe and Asia were constantly ravaged by war, English people and Europeans in general knew very little about India. Some tales of a rich and beautiful country in the far east had reached them, but they were too much occupied with the Crusades and tumults at home to care much about this distant land, which rumour filled with wild beasts and deadly snakes, as well as with gold and gems.

In Venice, however, during the thirteenth century there dwelt some merchants, who had bought spices and silks and fine stuffs through Moorish and Arab traders, who made their purchases in the east. These merchants of Venice were brave men, and they thought they would like to see some of the strange countries whence these things came. Their story is connected with India, and it will interest you to hear it.

Venice you know is a city in Italy, famous for its beautiful palaces, and also on account of its being built on islands; and people pay visits to each other

by means of little boats, called "gondolas," instead of walking or driving from street to street. In the middle ages Venice was also famous for its rich merchants, and among these the Polo family were distinguished, not so much for their wealth as for their travels and adventures in distant unknown lands. Marco Polo wrote an account of his travels, which has made him the best known of the family. He was about fifteen years of age when his father and uncle returned from a long and wonderful journey they had made far east to Tartary. The Khan or King of Tartary had treated them very kindly, and begged them to return to his country, and to bring with them some missionaries to teach his people Christianity.

Marco was about nineteen years old when he started for the East in 1271, with his father and uncle and two priests. The priests very soon became frightened by the dangers of the journey, and turned back; but the three brave Polos went on, and at the end of three and a half years they reached Kublai. The Khan of Tartary welcomed them most heartily, and they stayed a long time at his court.

The Khan was so much pleased with young Marco Polo that he sent him on some important business to different countries, and to India among others. Marco landed first on the eastern, or Coromandel coast. He was much surprised at many things he saw in India,

and the natives must have been surprised at him, the first European they had ever seen. He saw the people fishing for pearl oysters on the coast. The strange story he tells of the way in which they got diamonds is very amusing. Travelling north he came to a mountainous country, where many diamonds were to be found. These precious stones were said to lie in abundance at the bottom of deep ravines, guarded by deadly serpents. On the hill-sides white eagles flew about in search of prey, so the people used to throw pieces of meat into the valleys and deep holes, and the eagles would swoop down and carry the food to the hill-tops, where men would come and frighten them away, hoping that in their fear they would drop some of the meat, and that diamonds would be found sticking to it. Sometimes too it is said that they found diamonds in the birds' nests.

Marco Polo travelled on to Travancore and Malabar, and much he seems to have enjoyed seeing these beautiful countries, and the parrots and the peacocks flying, and the monkeys jumping from tree to tree in the jungles. Marco Polo was also pleased and surprised to find some Christian people in the midst of the heathen, who said their ancestors had been taught the Christian religion by St. Thomas the Apostle. These people are known in Travancore and Malabar as St. Thomas's Christians, or Nazarinoes. Sometimes

they are called Syrians. For a long time some of them used to make a pilgrimage every year to Madras, to a rock where they thought the body of St. Thomas was buried.

In those days travelling in Travancore and Malabar was very difficult, for there were few roads and few bridges; but our traveller Marco Polo was a brave man, and not soon turned back by finding a thing difficult. Will you try to be like him in this?

Marco visited China and other eastern countries, but I cannot tell you about these in my Tales about India When you grow older you can read some of his travels.

After some years the Polos began to long to get home. The Khan was very fond of them, and at his court they were treated with great kindness; but he was an old man, and the travellers were rather afraid that if he died his successor might not be so kind. They therefore begged him to permit them to return to their own beautiful Venice. About this time three Persian noblemen came to the great Khan's court with a message from their master, "the Lord of the Levant," asking the Khan to send him a wife from Kublai. So the Khan fixed on a handsome young lady, aged seventeen, named Cocachin, to be the bride of Argon. The Persian nobles prepared to return with their charge, and hearing that the three Venetian travellers were about to start for the west, they begged that all the

party might go together as far as possible, it being generally much safer in uncivilized countries to travel in large parties.

The Khan was grieved to part with the Polos, but he was glad that his young friend Cocachin should have kind, wise men to travel with; so he consented to their departure, and gave them some gold tablets, on which were written commands to his subjects to be kind to the travellers. The farewells were said with mutual regrets, and the Polos set out on their homeward journey. Partly by sea and partly by land they travelled to Abhar, in the north of Persia, and were two years on the journey. Here they took leave of Cocachin, who was met by her future husband. There was a very sorrowful parting between the young bride and her good friends, who had been very kind to her, and seemed to belong to her own country, which she had left so far behind for an unknown husband. Let us hope he proved a good one; but we must follow the Polos, who had still a long way to go before reaching Venice.

They must have felt very happy when they saw its churches and palaces, and heard the splashing gondolas, after all the barbarous countries they had passed through. But when they arrived at home their friends did not know them! Their clothes were shabby, and not of a Venetian cut, and they had been

so long among strangers that their manner and way of talking seemed quite different to that of their towns-people, who did not receive them kindly, but seemed to consider them impostors. They must have felt rather hurt, and perhaps they thought regretfully of the hearty welcome the kind old Khan had given them when they reached his capital. However, they had their pockets full of money, and they hired a house, and invited some neighbours to a feast, and received them in dresses of crimson satin, which they changed for robes of crimson velvet, and, I dare say, they looked more like gentlemen than when they arrived in their old travelling clothes, weary and way-worn. After supper Marco brought in these soiled and despised garments, ripped up the seams, and out came rubies and emeralds and diamonds. The guests were much astonished, but they began to believe some of the marvellous travellers' tales they heard; and soon it became known that these three men really were the long-lost Polos; and people came in crowds to see them, and to hear about Kublai Khan and the lady Cocachin, and about India and "far Cathay," (which is generally thought to mean China,) and all the places Marco Polo had visited.

In another chapter I will tell you of more European visitors to India; but they were very different men from Marco Polo.

CHAPTER V.

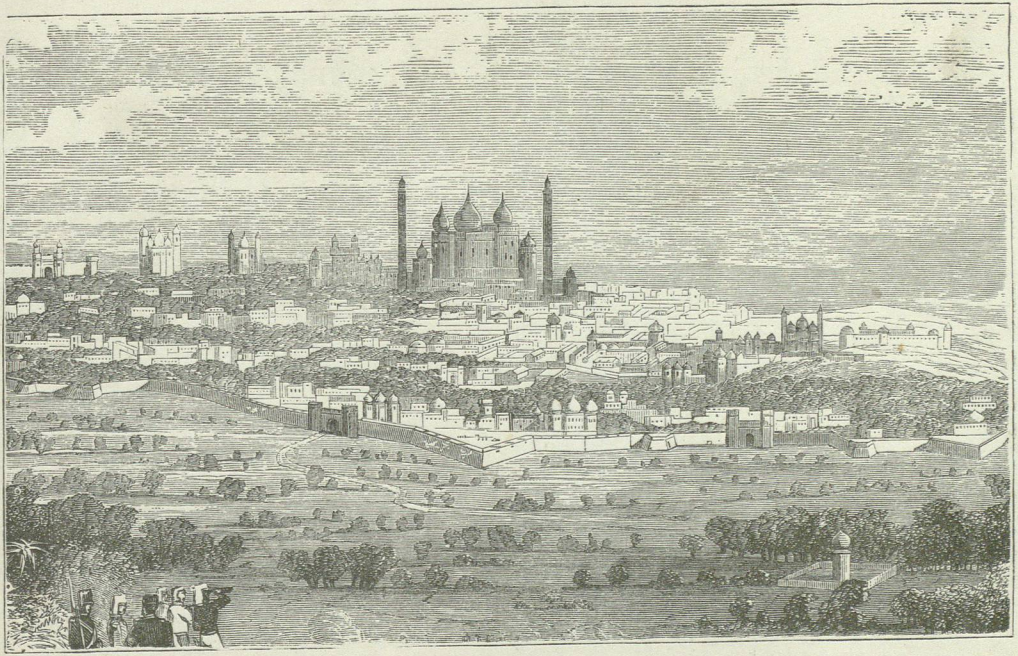
Baber, the Founder of the Mogul Dynasty.

ABOUT the year 1398 a clever, cruel chief, named Tamerlane, invaded India with a large army of Tartars as fierce and cruel as himself. He carried thousands of poor men and women away from their own land to be his slaves. The natives of India are not a strong people, and they have some very foolish customs, which prevent their uniting together, as some nations do, to resist an enemy. Thus they have often been invaded and governed by some foreign race; but they have never been so well governed as by our good Queen Victoria. Many changes took place, and many princes and peasants fought and fell and passed away before she became Empress of the Indies.

For the present we must return to Tamerlane. He robbed India of all he could get, and returned to his own country, not caring a bit what became of the poor people he had conquered. They were governed by Mahommedan kings for many years, and much oppressed. The princes quarrelled with each other,

and the people suffered by having their houses and fields and gardens plundered.

About a hundred years after Tamerlane's invasion a descendant of his, named Baber, was born. He was one of the most celebrated Emperors of India, and the founder of what is called the Great Mogul dynasty. Baber was born in 1472. His father was king of a small but beautiful country, called Ferghana, in Central Asia. Baber was only twelve years old when by the death of his father he became king; and he was soon involved in wars, as most kings were in those days. Baber was rather young to command an army, and his first wars were not successful. He lost a great deal, and had to wander about, trying to hide himself, and finding it very difficult to get enough to eat. But tales were told in Ferghana of a fine country beyond the high mountains of Hindu-Koosh, where images of gold and silver might be found, and broken and carried off by those who thought themselves good Mussulmans, with out such theft being called a sin. I need hardly tell you the name of this country was India. Baber started with a small band of soldiers, but his numbers soon increased. He first made himself King of Cabul. Then he left India for a time, and, returning with a larger army, took Delhi and Agra. In the last place he found many useful things, and took the opportunity of sending presents to men, women, and children among his subjects



DELHI.

in Cabul. This may have seemed very generous to his friends in Cabul, but the people of Agra could not have liked to see their property taken away and given to strangers.

The bravest race in India were the Rajputs. You remember their gallant defence of Chittore. They determined, if possible, not to let the invaders conquer Rajputana. It was then governed by a prince called Sanga, under whom the army marched to attack the enemy. Baber's people were rather frightened when they saw this warlike force; for a man who pretended he could tell what was going to happen by looking at the stars said, "Baber will be defeated." But the soldiers were very fond of their general, and they fought so hard that they gained a great victory over poor Sanga. After the battle the old astrologer (or man who pretended to foretell events by the stars) came to Baber, and said he was glad Sanga had been defeated; but Baber was angry with the false prophet, because he had said such foolish things and frightened the men before the battle. So he only replied to his congratulations by saying, "Go away, and don't come into my kingdom any more;" but he gave the old fellow a handsome present as he was going, which the astrologer could not have expected after his conduct. Baber was now a rich man and a powerful king; he did not, however, live long to enjoy his new kingdom.

About two years after the defeat of Sanga, Baber's favourite son Humayun became very ill, and the doctors said he would die. Now many people in India think if a sick man in a family is likely to die, and one of his relations is willing to die instead, and determines to do so, the sick man will recover. This Baber believed, and said he would die for Humayun. He went to his son's bedside, and prayed that he might die in his place. After this he was much agitated, and said, "I have borne it away, I have borne it away." Only God orders the issues of life and death; but Baber went away from his son's bedside, feeling sure he would shortly die, and so he did, worn out by the hardships of a troublous life and the anxiety and sorrow he felt about Humayun's illness.

CHAPTER VI.

The Zamorin's Country, or Malabar.

NOW we will leave Baber's son Humayun and the cities of Northern India for a time, and return by-and-by to see how he is getting on. In this chapter I am going to tell you something about Malabar, which you had better find out on the map.

Malabar is a long strip of land on the western coast of India, and was one of the countries visited by Marco Polo. It is so much separated from the east of India by a grand chain of mountains, called the Western Ghauts, that the country often escaped the invasion of foreign armies when they desolated neighbouring provinces. There are not many stories to tell of Malabar history, but this one may amuse you.

Long, long ago, there was a great King of Malabar named Seramen Perumaul, and his kingdom stretched from Canara all down the western coast of India as far as Cape Comorin. After he had reigned a good many years, he one day called his friends together and told them he was going to leave them, and retire from public life, and he divided his kingdom among them. Each great noble received a gift of land from the Raja. Travancore and Cochin, Colastri and Canara, were fine presents, and Seramen Perumaul had little left, when a poor man's voice was heard claiming a portion, and reminding the Raja of some service rendered to him in former days. The Raja listened, and remembered the poor cowherd's fidelity on some occasion; but he said, "I have now little left; but what I can I will do for you. Take this sword; with it I give you the title of 'Lord of the Rajas,' and as much land as a cock in that pagoda can be heard crowing over." So the poor man took the sword, and he took a cock to the pagoda,

that is, a building where an idol is kept and worshipped. In the fields near the pagoda some people heard the cock crowing, and those fields became the cowherd's property, and a town was built there, called Calicut, the word, in the Malabar language, meaning the "crowing of the cock." But the Zamorin, or "Lord of the Rajas," was not content with a few fields round the pagoda. He made great use of the Raja's sword, and conquered many petty chiefs, so that for hundreds of years the Zamorins of Malabar were among the most powerful princes of Southern India. The people they ruled over were divided into four great sects or castes: the Brahmins or priests, the Náyars or soldiers, the Teers or vassals of the Náyars, and the Chermas or slaves.

The Malabar Brahmins are called Namburis. They consider themselves very great people. Their houses are built as much as possible in quiet shady places, surrounded by cocoa-nuts or jack-trees. We should think their life very dull, for the ladies seldom go out, and as seldom receive guests, so that they are called among their own people the "concealed." The men for the most part lead lazy, useless lives, taking no interest in improving themselves or their fellow-creatures. I think the children have the best of it, for they may run about the house and into the garden sometimes, and play with one another; but when the girls grow big they are closely confined. This has been the

Namburis' way of living during the many years which have passed since Seramen Perumaul died.

The Náyars are not quite so much shut up as the Namburis. They often see one another, but the richer ones always live in detached houses, with a bit of garden round the house. In the garden there are plenty of plantains with golden skins, and mangoes with soft creamy pulp. The interior of the house is sometimes roomy, but the supply of tables and chairs is very small. A few among the Náyar ladies are now beginning to learn English and needlework. Some of them learn to read and write Malayálam, which is their own language; but there are very few good books written in Malayálam. Many learn to play on an Indian instrument called the vína, which is something like a guitar. The Náyar ladies have rather more education than women of their rank in other parts of India; but they spend a great deal of their time in sleeping and gossiping. In the old fighting days, the Náyars held their lands on the condition of giving the Raja their service in the battle-field, when they were armed with a round shield, a strong sword, and a dagger, which hung behind. On the very rare occasions on which some of the petty Rajas show themselves in public, a train of Náyars thus armed may be seen behind them; but the Náyar has taken to peaceful employments, and seldom requires his sword or shield. He generally wears a

simple piece of fine muslin from his waist to a little below the knee. This, with an umbrella made of the leaves of a palm called the talipot, composes his costume.

As the Náyars were the Raja's vassals, so the Teer was a sort of vassal to the Náyar. The Teers are much employed as labourers and servants. They climb trees to gather the cocoa-nuts, and to collect a juice, called toddy, obtained from palm-trees, and used as a drink by the natives.

The poor Chermas were oppressed by all the other castes, and had very hard times till lately, when the British rulers made some laws for their good, and said they must not be bought and sold like animals, or cruelly used by their masters.

Such were the people over which the Zamorin reigned, and such are the people who live in Malabar. Since the country has been under the Queen of England, the Náyars and Teers and Chermas have all much improved in condition; but the Namburis keep themselves shut up as much as ever in their dull houses. Alas, all these people worship idols of wood and stone, and gold and silver, but I hope some day the light of the Holy Spirit will shine upon them.

Malabar is a beautiful country, with winding lanes and fern-clad banks, and tall trees, over which the gorgeous yellow allamanda creeps and hangs in rich

festoons. The coast is fringed with palm-trees, whose fruit and wood are both valuable. Inland rise the rugged steeps of the Western Ghauts, where the air is cool and fresh, and extremely pleasant during the dry season, but the monsoon or rainy season is very disagreeable. A great deal of coffee is grown on these hills, and exported to France and England. Another useful product of Malabar is its teak, a kind of timber much used in ship-building, and the Malabar teak is thought the best in the world. Sometimes it is called the "Indian oak," but it does not resemble the oak except in producing a strong, durable wood suitable for ships.

While Baber was conquering the north of India, Malabar was visited by a famous Portuguese admiral, named Vasco de Gama. I do not know whether he had heard of Marco Polo's adventures in the east, and the fine countries he had seen, but De Gama wanted to find out a way by which ships could easily visit the distant lands of Asia. He sailed from Portugal with some brave companions on a voyage of discovery, and accomplished the first voyage from Europe to Asia round the Cape of Good Hope. It was in 1497 that De Gama sighted the western coast of India, after many storms and dangers by the way. The Náyars and fishermen on the coast were much surprised when they saw these strange ships and strange people on their shores.

The visitors did not know Malayálam, so no questions or answers could be exchanged at first. But there was a Moorish merchant in Calicut who knew something about Europe, for he carried the spices of Malabar to sell in the west, and when he saw the strangers he at once knew who they were. He was not altogether pleased to see them, for he thought they might want some of the good things of Malabar for themselves. However he made the best of it, and interpreted between the Portuguese and the natives, and told the strangers many things they wanted to know. Then the Zamorin was told about his visitors. He was not more glad than the Moor to see them; for the Hindu people are not fond of change, but like to go on, year after year, in their own quiet way. But the gallant Portuguese, who had overcome the difficulties of a long voyage, were not likely to turn back without seeing something of the country they had discovered; and they visited the Zamorin, and obtained a letter from him for their master the King of Portugal, and returned to their own land, where they were received with honours. Then the Portuguese began to sail in numbers to India. Some good men came; and some very bad men, who were very cruel to the natives, came also. Traders from other European nations, too, began to arrive, wishing to exchange their merchandize for the nutmegs and pepper, and cloths and jewels, which they found in

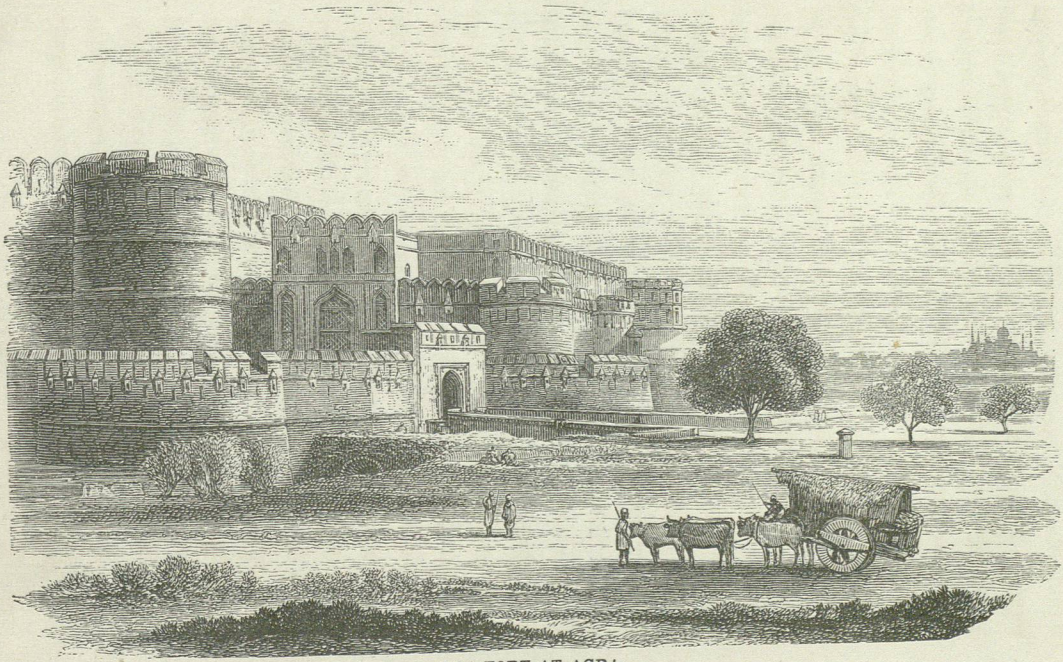
India. Thus the Danes and the Dutch, and the English and the French, began trading with India. The native princes sometimes gave them land, and sometimes quarrelled with them, and often the Europeans quarrelled among each other. But you would not be interested in hearing of these quarrels. I will therefore finish this chapter, and tell you hereafter how Malabar became a province of British India.

CHAPTER VII.

Humayun.

NOW we will return to Humayun. He was not so famous a man as his father Baber, or his own son Akbar. Baber by his energy and skill succeeded in getting for himself a splendid kingdom. Humayun had much difficulty in keeping even a part of the kingdom his father had won. Indeed at one time he lost all, and had to seek refuge with the King of Persia. You would be tired if I were to tell of half Humayun's wars with other Indian princes and nobles, so I will not attempt to give you their history. He would have preferred remaining quiet as a rich, powerful king, could he have done so; but this his enemies would not allow.

First he was driven from Bengal by a strong and valiant warrior, named Shir Shah, who also took the fine cities of Agra and Delhi. Humayun then tried very hard to make the people of Scind (a large province in the north-west) accept him as their king; but his army was too small to conquer them, and as there was nothing very loveable about his character the people would not have a poor defeated king set over them. Driven from Bengal and his capital, Humayun had now sunk very low in the world. He had a small army of followers, but they often gave him a great deal of trouble. He asked the Rajput prince Maldeo, who was King of Marwar, to be his friend; but Maldeo was not inclined to be friendly with the Mahommedans, who when they were in power had often oppressed his Hindu subjects. Then Humayun thought he would try to get as far as Amercot, where he hoped to find a friend in another Rajput prince named Rana Persad. He began a march of fearful danger and difficulty, through sandy deserts and an enemy's country. Moreover, poor Humayun had the ladies of his family with him, and a young and beautiful wife, named Hamida, to whom he had not been long married. The weary march began, and from the first water could only be obtained by fighting with the village people for draughts from their wells. Soon the little army left even the village wells behind, and entered the dreary, uninhabited desert. One morning a



THE FORT AT AGRA.

large number of horsemen were seen. Rapidly they drew near the poor tired travellers and surrounded them, killing all who resisted. The enemy having shown their power, unfurled the white flag of truce, and their commander came forward to speak with Humayun. Then he gave the unhappy people a supply of water—the greatest boon they could have received at that time. The captain of this force said he was the son of Maldeo, and that Humayun should not have entered his father's territory without leave; nevertheless he allowed the exiled king and his followers to pass on. Before long new troubles met them. Humayun's horse fell down, worn out with fatigue; and for some time none of his people would give him another, so the king had to walk like any foot-soldier. At last one man had compassion on his monarch, and lent him a horse, with which he rode on, to see how it fared with poor Hamida. As he rode he came upon a supply of water. We who only know thirst after a long walk on a hot summer day, or under similar circumstances, can hardly imagine the joy of the weary, thirsty travellers on finding this well in the desert. Presently his followers came up, and great, you may be sure, was the clamour for the first draught.

Refreshed and strengthened, they again marched on; but they had very few vessels for carrying away a supply of the precious liquid, and we are told their sufferings on a four days' march to the next well were

greater than ever. Poor people! the well, when they came to it, was deep, and they had but one bucket. Picture to yourself what an age it seemed to them while this bucket was being slowly and carefully let down and drawn up again with the rerreshing drink! Fancy the loud beating of the drum in that lonely desert to tell them the bucket was near the top! Alas, their misfortunes had made them quite lawless and reckless. Ten or twelve men threw themselves on the vessel; the rope broke, and the bucket fell into the deep, dark well. Then the screams of agony were terrible indeed. Some of the people, almost mad with suffering, jumped into the well, and were drowned, others sank exhausted on the sand, and a small remnant marched on. They reached water the next day, and many died from drinking too much after their long thirst. At last Humayun and a few followers reached Amercot, where the Raja received them kindly. But Humayun was not a wise prince, and in some foolish way he offended this kind Raja, who changed from a friend to a foe. So Humayun and his people had to march again, and they now took refuge in Persia. The King of Persia was sorry for the exiled prince, and raised an army to help him to recover his throne in India. This Humayun did, but not before many brave men had fallen.

It was about 1555 when Humayun again got possession

of Delhi. Six months after this success, he was one day going down the marble stairs from his library, when he heard the Mahommedan call to prayer sounding from a neighbouring mosque. When devout Mahommedans hear the call to prayer in these words, "There is no God but God, and Mahommed is His prophet," they generally stop, wherever they may be, in the street, or in their own houses, and worship God. Humayun heard the call, and stopped to repeat his creed. As he rose from his devotions his foot slipped, and the stair having no railing, he fell over the side to the ground. He was taken up so much hurt that he died in four days. Such was the end of the man who had escaped in so many battles and so many perils.

CHAPTER VIII.

Akbar.

AKBAR was born at Amercot, where Humayun found shelter for a time after the disastrous march through the desert. It is the custom of Mahommedans to give presents to friends and servants when a son is born. Poor Humayun had little to give, so he took a

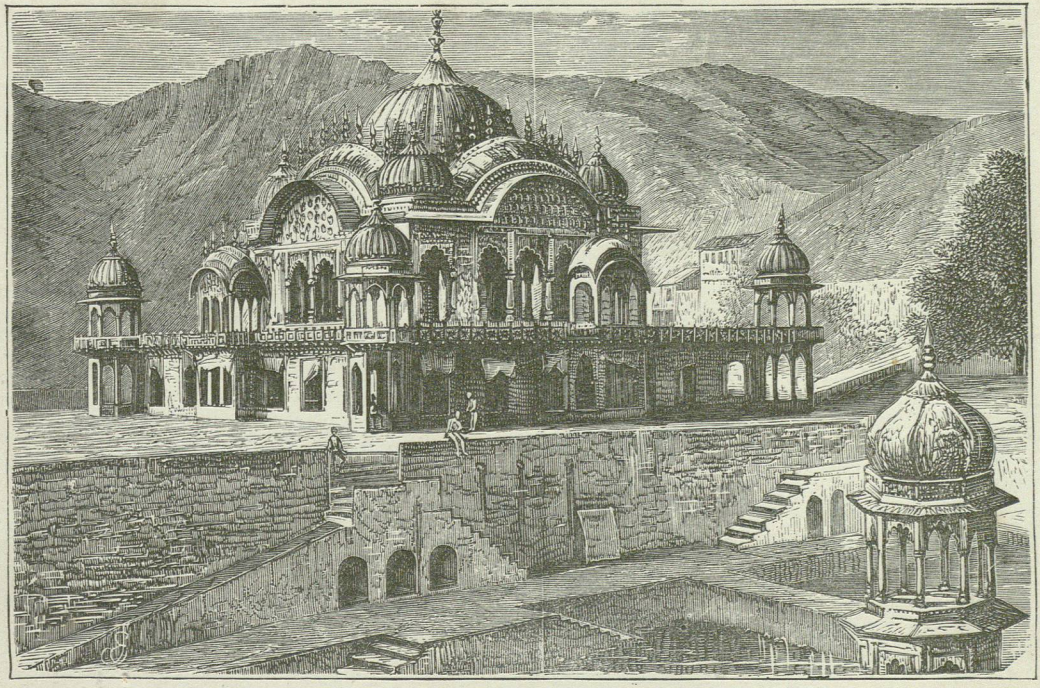
pod of musk and broke it among his friends, saying he hoped his son's fame might spread far and wide, as the perfume of musk does. It did not then seem very likely that the baby Akbar's fame would be almost world-wide; but his father's wishes were fulfilled, for no Indian king's name is so well known as Akbar's. He was thirteen years old when his father died. He was a fine, manly boy, but too young to govern; so Behram, an old and faithful servant of his father, was appointed his adviser in everything. Behram was a bold, clever man, but fierce and cruel. The slightest affront or contradiction provoked his bad temper, and he avenged himself, not by sharp words, or even blows, which are bad enough, but by putting his enemies to death. Akbar was not cruel, and he did not like Behram's harshness with the people, so he thought he would try to get rid of him as tutor. Akbar was now an intelligent youth about eighteen years of age, and likely to rule better without Behram than with him. Determined to escape from his tutor's control, Akbar went out hunting with some friends one fine morning, and rode away to Delhi, where he proclaimed himself king, and said that nothing must now be done without his orders. Behram did not like this, and he got ready to make war against Akbar, thinking, doubtless, that so young a general had no chance against an experienced old fellow like himself. But Akbar beat him,

and after that sent for him, and showed him great kindness; for Akbar did not forget that Behram had been a good and faithful friend to Humayun during the latter's great losses and troubles. The young king offered Behram a post in his government; but in this post Behram would have been under Akbar instead of over him, as hitherto, and this his proud spirit could not bear. So he said: "No, thank you; I will go on a pilgrimage to Mecca." Mecca is the place where the prophet Mahommed was buried; and all Mahommedans ought to make a pilgrimage there once during their lives, though many cannot afford it. Most of those who go make their voyages in very uncomfortable ships, overcrowded with people. Often illness breaks out on board from the dirt and want of good food, and then numbers of the poor creatures die; but if they live and return safely from Mecca they are called Hadjis, or pilgrims, which is thought a very honourable title. The Mahommedans are proud of their Hadjis, and Behram prepared to become one; but ere he had left India he was assassinated by an Afghan chief, whose father had fallen in battle by Behram's sword; and the young Akbar was left to manage his kingdom without his strong but somewhat troublesome adviser.

Akbar was a much better ruler than Behram. Indeed, he was superior to any of the kings of India

whose stories we have read as yet. He was generous, brave and wise, and very anxious to make the Hindus feel he was their friend, as well as the friend of his own Mussulman people; and thus he tried to show himself the head of a great nation, not merely the leader of a few troublesome followers. The first few years of his reign were occupied in trying to reduce to order some of his turbulent chiefs, who were disposed to become kings themselves instead of being dutiful vassals to their young king. But Akbar, by his tact and skill, showed them that they were likely to be better off as his honoured officers than as his enemies.

Akbar in early life married a Rajput princess. Such marriages are very uncommon, but Akbar was not a bigoted Mahommedan, and the Rajputs were glad to secure the friendship of so powerful a king, and many of their princes became his vassals. Chittore, however, had not forgotten Bheemsi and Padmani, and the gallant deeds done in their time, and the little state made a brave resistance against foreign aggression. It was the state rather than the king, because the latter was a coward, and fled at Akbar's approach. His name was Udi Sing. His general, Jei-Mal, was very brave, and with the aid of his good soldiers he held the place against Akbar for some time. But one night when Akbar was out looking after his own men, he spied



TEMPLE IN RAJPUTANA.

Jei-Mal by torchlight. In a moment the king shot at him, and the Rajput hero was no more.

When the Rajputs lost their gallant leader, they lost heart, and cared no more for life. Many poor women were burnt with the dead body of Jei-Mal, and many men rushed out to meet death by the swords of the Mahommedans. About two thousand contrived rather cleverly to escape. They tied the hands of their women and children, and marched with them through a part of the besieging army, pretending they were prisoners; and their bold device was not discovered till they were out of harm's way.

And so Akbar became master of Chittore; but the king remained concealed among his mountain caves, and his son, a brave, clever prince, named Rana Pertab, after Udi Sing's death got back part of his kingdom. Rana Pertab had many adventures, some of which will be told in the next chapter.

Akbar pursued a career of victory, conquering Bengal, Guzerat, Cashmir, Scind, and Orissa. When he had fairly established his kingdom from the Himalayas to the Nerbudda, he began to wish to extend his conquests to the Deccan. In former days the Deccan signified that part of India which is south of the Vindhya Mountains. Now it is generally considered to reach only as far as the River Krishna. The Deccan in 1595 was disturbed by rival factions. The capital,

Ahmednuggur, was in the hands of a very remarkable Mahommedan lady, named Chand Sultana, who held it for her baby nephew. She married in early youth Ali Adil Shah, King of Bijapore, who was devotedly attached to his beautiful and accomplished wife. Whether he marched or hunted or devoted himself to the useful task of trying to improve his conquered provinces, Chand Sultana was with him; and on his death in 1580 he appointed her the guardian of his nephew and heir, Ibrahim. Queen Chand took great pains to fulfil the important duties which had been committed to her. She listened every day while her minister transacted business, sitting a little behind him, with a veil round her. Mahommedan ladies, if they do appear in public, are always veiled. She was a popular regent; but her prime ministers were sometimes rather jealous of her power.

When Bijapore was attacked by the Kings of Berar and Golconda, Chand Sultana rode from fort to fort at night, cheering her soldiers, and quite regardless of the weather, which was stormy and wet. Through her exertions and example the town was held until the enemy, wearied out, retired to their own dominions. Something of the same kind occurred at her native town, Ahmednuggur, which was attacked by the Mogul army under Prince Morad. Chand Sultana exposed herself to the dangers of the siege clad in full armour, with a

veil over her face, loading her guns with silver and gold bullets and precious jewels, before she would consent to treat for peace, so the traditions of the Deccan say. Chand Sultana managed to preserve Ahmednuggur from the Moguls for some time; but there were rebels in her fort. She had no wish, therefore, to prolong the strife when the Moguls were ready to give her terms of peace. But while these terms of peace were being settled the brave queen was cruelly killed in her own room by some of the rebels who had given her so much trouble. No Indian princess has surpassed her in beauty, talent and good government, as far as that was possible among the troublesome people with whom she had to deal.

A few days after the Queen's murder Ahmednuggur was taken by Akbar's troops. Then he conquered Kandeish; but he was obliged to give the charge of his new possessions to governors, and to return northwards himself, to look after his son Selim, who was behaving very badly. Selim was not so amiable or so wise a man as his father Akbar. He drank great quantities of wine, and ate a great deal of opium. People who do these things often become mad, and Selim's evil temper and cruel deeds were like those of a man who had lost his senses. His wickedness was a great sorrow to his father Akbar; and, I am sorry to say, the king's third son, Danial, was quite as bad as Selim. It would be of

no use, however, to tell you of their crimes. I will give you instead some account of the misfortunes and adventures of Rana Pertab, the brave prince of Rajputana who could not bear to submit to the foreign yoke.

CHAPTER IX.

Pertab Sing.

RANA PERTAB SING was a brave soldier, very patriotic, and anxious to do what he thought would be for his country's honour and good. He resented the ills Rajputana had borne from several Mahommedan kings, and resolved that at any cost he must get rid of these enemies. But the only way in which he thought he could get rid of them was by making his country a desert, so that it would not be worth their while to take it. For this purpose he told the people that they must leave their pleasant fields and houses, and take refuge in the mountain fastnesses. The houses would thus become ruins, for houses without inhabitants in India quickly go to pieces, and in the lonely fields beasts of prey would make their dwellings. Thus if the strong Mahommedan came he would find no pleasant fruit-gardens and homesteads, but thick jungle and wild animals in their place. The Rajputs did as Prince

Pertab Sing told them, and the country became a desolate waste, though for a time it did not suffer the dishonour of having a foreign king set over it. Still, Pertab would have done better had he made an alliance with Akbar; and as they were both fine, generous fellows, they might have come to terms which would have been honourable for both parties. When Akbar found how entirely Rana Pertab was opposed to him, he sent his son Selim with an army to conquer him; and with Selim was a Rajput prince, named Raj Maun, who was nearly connected with Akbar by marriage. At last the invading army saw the crimson banner which belonged to Pertab Sing's force in the plain of Baldighat. The Rajputs were fighting for all they held most dear, and we must feel sorry for the poor fellows, who were defeated by Selim's well-disciplined soldiers. Pertab insisted on retaining the use of the royal umbrella, a sign of rank which marked him out to the foe as the prize of the field. Three times his soldiers saved him when in great peril, when at last one of his chiefs, named Mana, seized the fatal mark of dignity, and, followed by his vassals, made a desperate onslaught, while some others hurried Pertab from the scene. Mana's fidelity proved vain against the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. He fell with his brave followers, while Pertab, on his good horse Cheytuc, fled, pursued by two Moguls. Very hot was the pursuit, till

they came to a brawling mountain stream, which Cheytuc and his master cleared with a bound, but it delayed the pursuers, whose horses were perhaps less accustomed to rushing water. Away flew Cheytuc and Pertab; but the horse had been wounded in the fight, and the clattering feet of the pursuers began to sound terribly near. "Ho! rider of the blue horse!" were the words Pertab now heard, in a friendly tone and tongue; so he looked back and saw a single horseman, who proved to be his brother Sakta. Now Sakta and Pertab had never been friends, and Sakta had joined Akbar's army. But when he saw the bravery of his countrymen, and his brother flying from the field all alone, pursued by the Mogul chiefs, he joined the chase, only for the purpose of protecting his brother from their violence. So they became friends again, and as they talked Cheytuc died. A monument was placed on the spot in remembrance of him, and was in existence till the end of the last century.

When Sakta came back to Selim's camp, many suspected he had followed his brother rather as a friend than a foe; and Selim said if he would only speak the truth he should be forgiven, whatever he had done. Then Sakta said: "The burden of a kingdom is on my brother's shoulders, how could I witness his danger without defending him from it?" Selim kept his word by permitting Sakta to join his brother unhurt.

So ended the bloody battle of Baldighat, where the best and bravest men in Rajputana fell. Those who were left rallied round their king, who, with his family, led a wandering life in the forests and mountains. The poor little children were often suspended to high branches of trees at night, that the tigers might not run off with them, and during the day they frequently cried from hunger. One day the queen and another lady made some cakes of coarse flour, half of which were given out for dinner, and the other half put aside for supper. The king after this light dinner was sitting thinking over his misfortunes, when he heard a loud scream from his daughter. A wild cat had run off with the cakes put aside for supper, and the poor child was so hungry and so miserable at the loss of her supper that she could not help screaming. The bold warrior, who had endured so much misfortune without yielding, had a soft, tender spot in his heart. His child's cry of hunger was more than he could bear, and it prevailed on him to write to Akbar, making some kind of offer of submission. It was not a very distinct or humble submission, but it gave Akbar hope that his direst Hindu foe was to be changed into a friend. Among Akbar's prisoners, however, there was a Rajput prince named Pirthi; and he could not bear the thought that Pertab Sing, the hero who had so long held out against Mahommedan power, should now give up.

Pirthi was a poet, and he sent Pertab Sing some beautiful verses, in which he implored him to go on resisting Akbar, and keeping up what he considered the honour of Rajasthan; and Pertab was only too ready to follow this advice. A timely supply of money, with which one of his friends presented him, enabled the unfortunate wanderer to collect fresh bands of soldiers; with these he succeeded in regaining the greater part of the province of Mewar, and a period of comparative rest followed. Akbar and his troops found plenty to do elsewhere, and were not sorry to give up fighting against this unhappy prince, who could lose everything he had, from a great city to a simple meal, but could not be conquered. But the years of hardship had weakened the health of Pertab Sing, and his friends saw that his end drew near. His greatest fear was that his son, Prince Umra, would barter away the independence of Rajputana. The prince and the ministers around the warrior's deathbed soothed him with promises regarding their future conduct. They all said they would allow no splendid mansions to be built in the country till Mewar had quite recovered her independence. With this the dying chief seemed satisfied, and soon after he breathed his last.

Poor Pertab's life had been a troubled one; and although Rajputana may have had better princes, she has never had one who loved her more than this gallant but unfortunate Rana Pertab Sing.

CHAPTER X.

More about Akbar.

AKBAR lived in stormy times. He was surrounded by turbulent and cunning men, who were anxious to get as much wealth and power as they could for themselves, and he had to look out very sharply to see that they did not snatch away parts of his kingdom.

Although he thus lived in the tumult of war, Akbar gave much thought and care towards making good laws for all his people. He was much kinder to his Hindu subjects than the other Mahommedan kings, but he forbade them to do several foolish and wicked things which their own laws permitted. One thing he forbade was the burning of widows with their dead husbands without their consent. It is the custom in India among the higher castes to burn the bodies of the dead; and in many places it was common, when a husband died, for his widow to put on all her finest clothes and jewels, and allow herself to be burnt with her dead husband. Her friends and relatives encouraged and sometimes forced her to do this, and it was very difficult to put a stop to it. Now, however, this burning

or Suttee, as it is called, is contrary to law, even if a widow desires it (which, strange to say, she sometimes does); it is only in out-of-the-way parts of the country that there is now and then an attempt still made to keep up the old barbarous custom. But the widow's relations know that if it is found out that they have allowed such a thing they will be punished. Akbar had of course been brought up as a Mahommedan. In after life he discovered many errors in the religion of the false prophet, and tried to introduce a purer faith. But he had himself few religious advantages. Some Roman Catholics visited his kingdom at one time, and he was much interested in hearing of their religion and of Jesus, our blessed Saviour, regarding whom he caused his son Morad to receive some instruction. Akbar's life as well as his faith was superior to that of most other Indian princes; but after his death all the old Mahommedan customs were restored.

Akbar encouraged learning and learned men. Amongst his greatest friends were two brothers famous for their wisdom, Feizi and Abu Fazl. Feizi at his death is said to have left a library of four thousand books. He was at one time employed by Akbar in translating the Gospels; and many were the conversations the three friends held together regarding the best way to improve the people, the best books to read, and the best religion to teach. Akbar's distress at

BURNING THE DEAD.

the death of these two brothers showed his affectionate nature. One night a man came to tell him Feizi was dying. The king immediately went to his favourite's bedside. Finding him speechless and almost insensible, Akbar gave way to bitter grief, but tried to console the dying man's brother, Abu Fazl. The latter was killed some years afterwards at the time of Prince Selim's rebellion. Akbar, on hearing of the death, shut himself up without food for two days. The death of his friends and the misconduct of his sons grieved the king to the heart, and his health began to fail. In 1605, feeling his end draw nigh, he wished to settle his affairs. Hostile parties wished for different persons to succeed the king. One party was in favour of Selim, who really was the rightful successor, but many preferred his son Khusru. Selim felt he had been so disobedient to his father, and so wicked as a prince, that he was afraid Akbar would not leave him the kingdom, and he dreaded even to come near his father's bedside, though the latter wished very much to see him. At last Selim was persuaded by some of the better-disposed people to come to his father, who received him kindly, and presented him with a favourite scimitar. Akbar asked forgiveness of all who stood round of any offences he might have committed against them. Selim was much affected as he received his father's dying instructions.

Akbar was a fine fellow. He was buried near Agra, in a splendid tomb of carved white marble. The Mahommedans are very particular about their tombs, and those of the Mogul emperors are remarkable for their beauty.

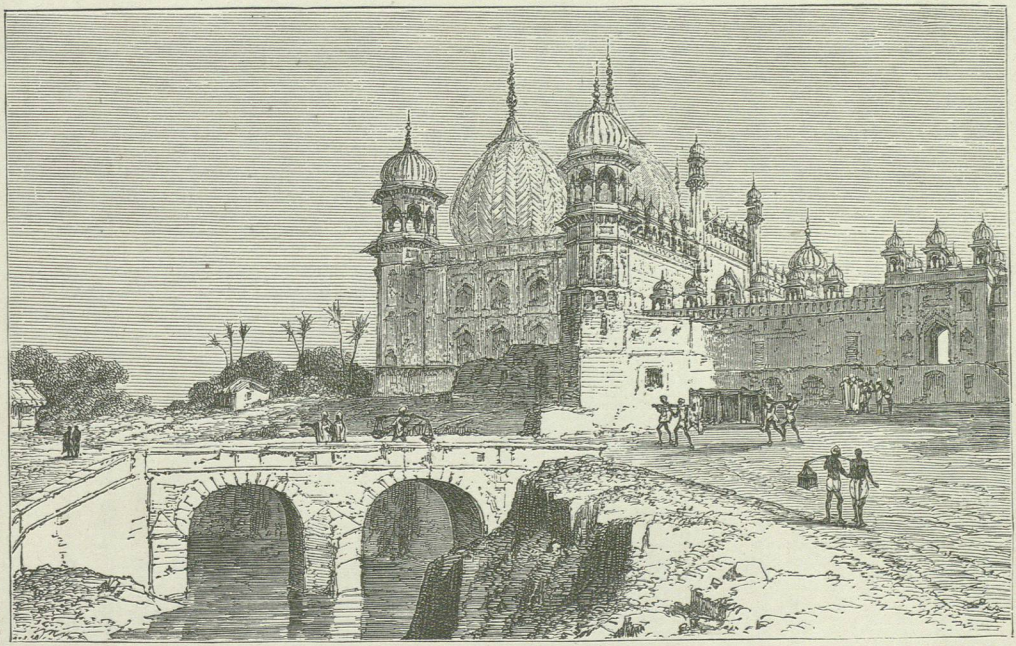
CHAPTER XI.

Jehangir.

PRINCE SELIM began to reign in 1605, and took the title of Jehangir, or Conqueror of the World. But you must not suppose from this high-sounding title that he made any remarkable conquests.

Soon after Selim's accession his brother Khusru, who had half hoped to be chosen king, rebelled against him. Khusru's troops took the town of Lahore, but Jehangir's soldiers marched against the rebels, and made many of them prisoners; among the captives was Khusru. Jehangir behaved to his prisoners very cruelly. He put them to a painful death, and compelled Khusru to witness the agony of those who had been good friends to him; and as he could not help them, seeing them suffer must have been a far greater punishment than the chains with which he was himself loaded.

You have read of Jehangir's expedition against Mewar



TOMB OF AKBAR.

when he was Prince Selim. About four years after his accession to the throne, he determined completely to subdue the little province whose independence was so painful to him. Brave Pertab Sing had been succeeded in Mewar by his son Umra, who had spent his time of rest from war very wisely. He had looked into the private affairs of his kingdom, and you may be sure he found them somewhat disordered after the terrible conflict in which Mewar had been engaged. Nor can we wonder that when war was again declared he was half-inclined to make peace and become a vassal of Jehangir. He had built himself a palace; and doubtless he found it a good deal more comfortable than the caves and woods in which he had wandered with his father; and perhaps he thought his poor subjects also had better pay a tax to the Mogul than be again overrun by a lawless army.

Certainly some of his courtiers were of the same opinion, and counselled terms of peace; but the chieftain of Salumbra was shocked at what he considered the degeneracy of the youth of Rajputana, and at the idea of breaking the promise made to Pertab Sing in his last hours. So he went with some other brave men to the "abode of immortality," as Rana Umra's new palace was called. It is said to have been a rude building in comparison with the more splendid abodes of his successors, but to the warlike chieftain of

Salumbra, accustomed to the troublous times of Pertab Sing, it seemed a home of luxury and indolence. A European mirror hung on the wall of the room in which Umra sat. Salumbra thought this a ridiculous piece of vanity, and seeing Umra hesitate while he pressed the duty of immediate action against Jehangir, the rugged chieftain seized his young sovereign by the arm and dashed him against the mirror. A burst of indignation from the nobles followed this rough treatment of their sovereign, but Salumbra only shouted "To horse! to horse, chiefs! and save from infamy the son of Pertab." The current of feeling was with him, and Umra himself, though he smarted under his vassal's rude remonstrance, felt that, according to a Rajput's notion of honour, he had deserved it. He had not ridden far before he turned to the chiefs, and courteously saluting them all, especially Salumbra, he said: "Lead on; you shall not have to regret your late sovereign."

So the war raged again, but the Rajputs were so often victorious that Jehangir determined on the experiment of giving them a prince of their own. He chose Suzra, of a Rajput family, and appointed him Rana of poor ruined Chittore. It is said that the sad state of his capital, in which many fine buildings lay destroyed, so affected him that he never enjoyed his exaltation. Certain it is that after a few years he made over

Chittore to Umra, for which act Jehangir very naturally upbraided him as a traitor; and indeed we cannot admire Suzra, a traitor first to his own prince, and then to his foreign master; like another traitor, he put an end to his miserable career, and killed himself one day while Jehangir spoke to him of his conduct.

The Mogul emperors had some respect and regard for their brave Rajput foes; but they could not give up the idea of making them vassals, and the Rajputs for a long time could not bear the idea of becoming vassals. At last Kurran, the son of Umra, was persuaded to acknowledge the Mogul supremacy. For this young man Jehangir seems to have had some regard, as he writes in his memoirs kindly about him.

While Kurran was staying at Jehangir's court the emperor wrote, "Owing to the rude life he had led in his native hills, Kurran was extremely shy, and unused to the pageantry and experience of a court. In order to reconcile him, and give him confidence, I daily gave him some testimonies of my regard and protection, and in the second day of his service I gave him a jewelled dagger, and on the third a choice steed of Irak, with rich caparisons, and on the same day I took him with me to the queen's court, when the Queen Nur Jehan made him splendid presents, caparisoned elephant and horse, sword, etc. The same day I gave him a rich necklace of pearls, another day an elephant, and it was

my wish to give him rarities and choice things of every kind. I gave him three royal hawks and three gentle falcons trained to the hands, a coat of mail, chain and plate armour, and two rings of value, and on the last day of the month carpets, state cushions, perfumes, vessels of gold, and a pair of bullocks of Guzerat."

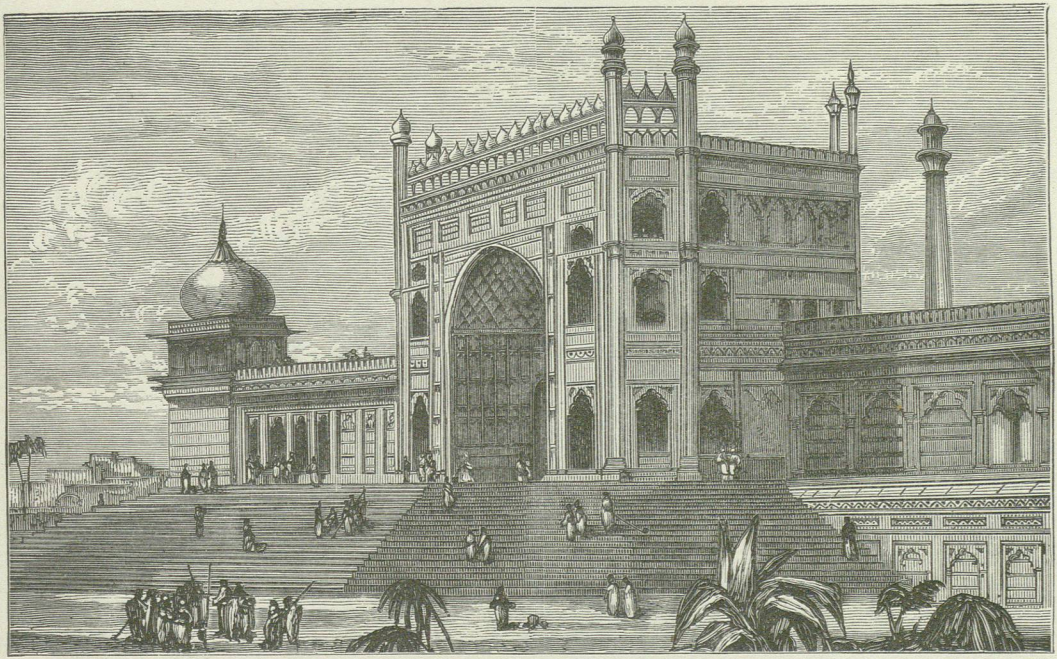
Perhaps the attentions of Jehangir and his beautiful Queen Nur Jehan softened Kurran's sorrow, as he returned to Mewar a vassal instead of a sovereign prince. His father immediately made over to him such authority as was left them in their little principality, and retired himself to a lonely palace, the threshold of which he only recrossed when his eyes had closed for ever on the forests of Mewar. Records of his justice and bravery, his generosity and kindness, still exist. You read just now of Kurran's visit to the queen's court while he was staying with Jehangir. I must now go back a little, to tell you the queen's story, in which you will be interested.

Many years before Jehangir became emperor a poor Persian gentleman, named Mirza Gheias, left his own land for India. He, with his wife and family, travelled with a large company, as is often the custom among eastern people. Mirza with great difficulty met the expenses of bringing his family on so long a journey, but he hoped to get employment in India. When they reached Candahar, a town on the north-west, a little

baby girl was born. This little wailing baby was to become one of the most celebrated empresses of India. Her parents must have been very heartless people, or they would not have left her to perish by the roadside; but a kind merchant of the party took compassion on her. It is true that her parents were oppressed with difficulties, but one cannot excuse their deserting the poor helpless baby, and the mother did not deserve the happiness she had of becoming its nurse. The merchant was at a loss to know what to do with his little charge, and was glad to find some one in the company who would take care of it, and then he found out Mirza's story, and that the nurse was the infant's mother. He was very kind to all the poor family, and was able to help them to employment. The baby girl grew up to be both clever and beautiful, and Prince Selim fell in love with her; but she married a young Persian named Shir Afghan. This poor man was ere long killed in a quarrel with some of Prince Selim's followers, and the prince begged the widow to marry him. But she would have nothing to do with a man who had perhaps contrived her husband's murder, and she showed her hatred so strongly that for some time Selim gave her up. Some years passed away, yet Nur Jehan's beauty did not fade. Prince Selim had now become the Emperor Jehangir, and he once more asked her to become his bride. This time she consented. So

the once forlorn baby was surrounded with gold and gems and servants, and lived in splendid halls filled with scents and flowers and silken hangings. It is said the delicious attar of roses was invented by Nur Jehan. Until her husband's death she exercised great influence over all the affairs of the kingdom.

In the reign of Jehangir two embassies were sent to India from England. The first was commanded by Captain Hawkins, and the second, from James I., was led by Sir Thomas Roe, who describes the magnificence of Jehangir's court. On grand occasions the emperor was covered with diamonds, pearls, and rubies; even the elephants, beside rich trappings, had their heads ornamented with valuable jewels, and the elephant's head is not a small one. Sir Thomas Roe says of the emperor that he was a good-natured, easy man. His easiness led him to permit his ministers to do many very cruel things, and he was too fond of drinking wine to be a really good king. He died in 1627, while travelling from Cashmir to Lahore, and was buried near the latter city, in a tomb which from its magnificence was called "the House of Joy," and by some "the King of Edifices."



GATE OF THE PALACE, DELHI.

CHAPTER XII.

Shah Jehan.

ON the death of Jehangir there was a struggle for power among his children and grand-children. In those days there was no very clear rule as to the rightful heir, and the sons too often fought with their swords in the field against one another, while the ladies in the palace tried by their beauty and cunning to secure the crown for a favourite child. Nur Jehan did her best in behalf of Sheriar, her son-in-law; but Shah Jehan had a strong band of followers, and he did not scruple to shed the blood of his nearest relations on his way to the throne. It is difficult to know how such wicked men came to have so many friends, or rather followers, for people served them through fear, or sometimes through hope of rich rewards, rarely from love. However that may be, certain it is that Shah Jehan had many strong men on his side when he took possession of the throne of the Moguls, in 1628, as "the true Star of the Faith—the King of the World."

Though he had endeavoured to put all his enemies out of the way, you will not suppose Shah Jehan

settled down to a very peaceful reign. First there came the Usbecs, from Tartary, fiery, brave, and warlike, pouring their men into Northern India, so that the emperor was obliged to recall his general, Mohabat Khan, from the Deccan, and send him to drive back the foreign foe. Few men whose names are known to us in the stormy reign of Shah Jehan are introduced with so good a character as Mohabat Khan. Faithful, fearless, and humane, his very name inspired his enemies with fear and his soldiers with confidence.

Mohabat Khan had only just succeeded in expelling the Usbecs, when he was told to march into Bandelkand, with twelve thousand horse and three thousand foot. The Raja of Bandelkand, Hidjar Sing, paid an annual tribute to the Mogul emperor, and the amount of this tribute having been increased, Hidjar Sing rebelled against what he thought an unjust order. His gallant resistance won the admiration of his conqueror Mohabat, who brought the noble prisoner before Shah Jehan, and seemed inclined to make a petition in his favour; but the emperor frowned sternly, and Mohabat retired. Next day, however, he again took the poor Raja into the emperor's presence, and again gloomy looks of displeasure boded ill for Hidjar Sing, who was conducted back to prison. A third time the dauntless Mohabat brought the conquered prince before the throne; he did not speak, but his own hand was

chained to the captive. "Approach, Mohabat," said the emperor; "I pardon Hidjar Sing; but life without dignity is no present from the Emperor of the Moguls to a fallen prince. I therefore restore to Hidjar Sing his kingdom, on his promising sixteen lacs of rupees, and furnishing the imperial army with forty elephants for war."

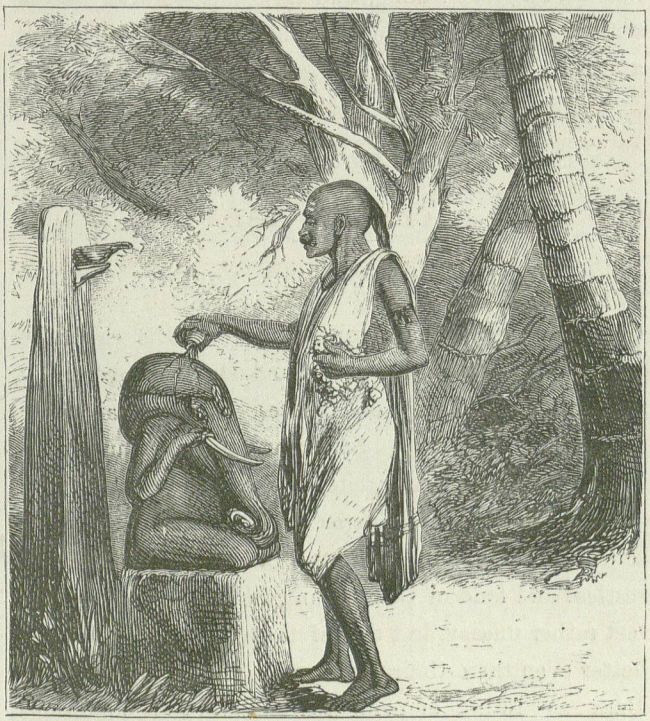
Hidjar Sing did not behave in the end as one would expect an honourable soldier to do. He found the terms imposed on him so severe that he revolted a second time. The emperor's son, Aurangzib, who was only thirteen years of age, was sent with the army against Bandelkand, but the real command was in the hands of an experienced general named Nusserit, from whom the young prince received his first lessons in war. Shah Jehan's troops were again too strong for the Raja, who found himself and his family in great danger. Then he did a sad and shocking thing, too often done by Indian princes in those bloody times. He set fire to his palace, thinking it better that the unhappy ladies of his family and their maids should thus perish, than that they should fall into the hands of cruel soldiers. You have already read in these tales of the poor women meeting this awful kind of death. The burning of widows with the bodies of their dead husbands was one of the most cruel of Hindu customs, and accustomed the minds of the people to these tragedies in time of

war. Probably the Raja of Bandelkand thought he had done the best thing he could under the circumstances; and away he went, with a few trusty followers, and rode two hundred weary miles, hardly pursued by Nusserit. Having crossed the Nerbudda, the fugitives entered a thick forest, and, worn out, they tied their horses to trees, and laid them down to sleep. But there were robbers in the wood, who spied the sleeping men, and, coveting their rich suits of armour, slew them as they slept. As they were disputing over the spoil, up came Nusserit, and took it from them. Gold and silver and precious stones were found in the Raja's treasure-house in such abundance, that probably if he had expended some of them he would have saved his family and himself from their cruel death.

In 1631 Nur Jehan, the beautiful and amiable wife of Shah Jehan, died. She does not appear to have mixed herself up with public affairs, as her namesake, Nur Jehan, the wife of Jehangir, did; but she was a staunch Mahommedan, and inclined to persecute the Portuguese Roman Catholics on account of the images in their churches. Shah Jehan erected a splendid tomb over the body of his empress, ornamenting it with costly jewels; and perhaps no Indian building is so well known by name as the tomb or Taj at Agra of Shah Jehan's wife, which cost seventy-five lacs of rupees.

Do not suppose, though we hear of precious stones

and quantities of money, that the country and the people were really rich and happy. Now there came a sore and grievous famine. The usual rainfall had



A BRAHMIN OFFERING TO HIS IDOL.

failed, and only those who have resided in the tropics can realize the arid deserts which at such times take the place of fruitful fields. The poor Hindus brought

offerings to the shrines of their idols, neglecting, while they performed these ceremonies, to cultivate scanty crops of their fields. This enraged an emperor who had no religious feeling, and no compassion for superstition. He commanded the idols to be broken, and a serious rebellion was the consequence.

CHAPTER XIII.

Aurangzib and his Brothers.

SHAH JEHAN had four sons. Dara, the eldest, he named as his successor; and Dara was certainly the most amiable of these princes, and most sincerely attached to his father. Suja was fond of amusement, Morad of war and its excitement, and Aurangzib, who afterwards became emperor, was cold, deceitful and selfish. All these princes were brave and talented, but restless and fond of power; and Shah Jehan began to feel rather uneasy, lest any of them should love power better even than their father. He hoped by choosing Dara as future emperor to check their ambitious schemes, which were likely to lead to great trouble at his death. So the chief nobles were called together, and a paper was read which changed the prince's name from Dara to Shah Behind Akbal, or "the Emperor

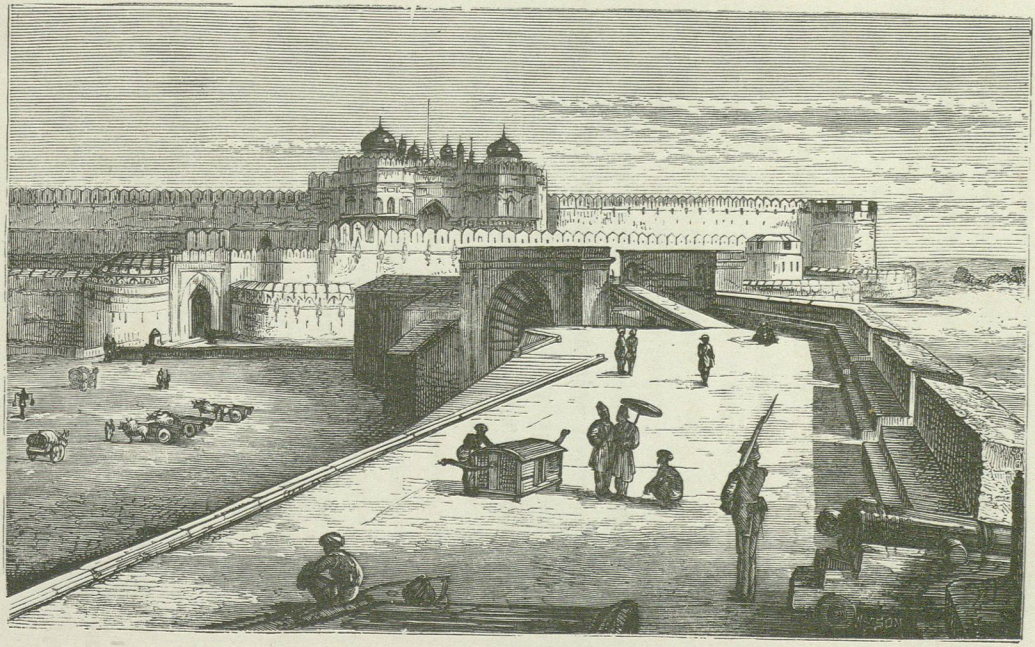
of the Exalted Fortune." The emperor took his son's hand, and said to the people, "Behold your future prince." From this time Dara had a share of his father's power. Some time after the emperor was attacked by paralysis, and Dara not only managed the public affairs, but tenderly nursed his sick father by night and day, showing unfeigned grief when the old man seemed likely to sink under his illness, and unfeigned joy at his recovery. We read of so many bad sons in Indian history, that it is quite a pleasure to hear of some whose natural affection was greater than their love of power and wealth.

Dara, finding himself in authority, did not behave very wisely towards his brothers; he forbade any one to hold correspondence with them, and put some of their friends in prison. A sad civil war broke out. Morad and Aurangzib took the field against their father and Dara. Shah Jehan no longer retained the vigour of youth, and his son Dara, who had a sincere affection for his father, entreated him not to expose himself personally to the hardships of war. Shah Jehan yielded to his son's request, and Dara took the command of the army; but he was no match for Aurangzib in talent, though it would be difficult to say who was bravest.

Dara was defeated, and the victorious brothers Morad and Aurangzib marched to Agra, where their father was living. Having encamped before the town, Aurangzib

sent a message to Shah Jehan, saying that he had only taken up arms against Dara in self-defence, and because he and his brothers thought their brother wished to usurp his father's crown.

Shah Jehan could not quite believe all this, but he was no longer the strong warrior he had once been, and he thought perhaps by peaceful means to bring his sons to a better mind. So he commanded his eldest daughter Jehanara, who was beautiful and clever, to visit her brothers' camp, and try to persuade them to disperse their army, and return to the provinces of which they were governors. First she visited Morad, who spoke very harshly to her, and Jehanara, unaccustomed to angry words from her father or Dara, who were much attached to her, called for her chair and left him in displeasure. Aurangzib was watching for her, and begged her not to leave the camp without visiting his tent, and having persuaded her to enter it, he talked her over with a good deal of flattery. Aurangzib was never tired of saying he did not want power or wealth, he only wanted quiet and to go on a pilgrimage; but people must have been tired of hearing words from which his deeds entirely differed. However, he managed to make his pretty sister believe him, and got from her some information about Dara's movements, she little dreaming she was injuring a favourite brother. Jehanara returned to her father, rejoicing in the success



AGRA.

of her mission, and in Aurangzib's farewell words, "Go to my father, and tell him that in two days he shall see Aurangzib at his feet." The good news was written to Dara; but the letter likewise informed Dara that when Aurangzib entered Agra he would be made a prisoner. The letter was intercepted, and Aurangzib declined paying his visit before his son Mohammed with some troops should be admitted to Agra. By these men the poor old king found himself made a prisoner, and as such he lived for upwards of seven years.

Very hard to the proud old warrior was the trap in which he found himself taken. The Princess Jehanara did her best to soothe the weary days of sickness and sorrow; and while we feel that Shah Jehan deserved his fate, we must also pity the caged lion, deprived of a kingdom by a cunning son, whose command also deprived Dara and Morad of their lives.

It was some time, however, before Aurangzib got Dara into his cruel hands. Though defeated in battle, Dara escaped to the deserts with some two or three hundred followers. But life in these sterile plains is indeed a living death. No tree shaded the little band from the scorching sun, no blade of grass afforded food to the starving animals. The little party daily dwindled down, and Dara's wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, became alarmingly ill. One day they drew near a village, and asked assistance of a man whom they saw

keeping cows, but he ran away when he heard who they were. But the village people were more kind. Their eyes filled with tears when they heard it was the son of the great Shah Jehan who thus wandered, desolate and distressed. They brought him their beasts of burden, for all his own were dead, and they escorted him to a place called Tatta. Here he was advised to escape from Aurangzib by flight into Persia; but the Sultana Nadira became so much worse her husband refused to leave her, and preferred to cast himself on the mercy of Jihon Khan, a chief who had been greatly befriended by Dara in days of power. Jihon Khan received the wanderers with protestations of friendship, and on the following day poor Nadira died in his house, which was felt by Dara to be the climax of his misfortunes. Soon after the wicked Jihon betrayed the fugitive prince to Aurangzib, who was now at Delhi. Thither he commanded his unhappy brother to be brought; and on a miserable elephant, in a mean and ragged dress, this poor "Emperor of the Exalted Fortune" and his son entered that city. The streets were crowded, and bitter were the lamentations over the unfortunate Dara, who was more loved than his brother; but no rescue was attempted. Probably the people felt that the armies of Aurangzib were too strong to allow the attempt to be a hopeful one. Amidst the tears of the crowd the royal father and his son were conveyed to prison, and Dara

was ere long murdered. Superior to his father and his brothers in filial and domestic virtue, he was no match for the unscrupulous Aurangzib in cunning.

While Dara lived and fought, Shah Jehan's captivity did not seem quite hopeless; but the death of this prince, who was alike the emperor's and the people's favourite, confirmed Aurangzib on the throne. Of all the Mogul emperors we have yet read about, his character was the least pleasing. His reign was long and eventful, and must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Mahrattas and Sivaji

YOU have read how some of the petty kingdoms of India were subdued by the Mogul emperors. Some of them retained their own princes, and paid a tribute to the conqueror, and others were governed by favourites or relatives of the royal family. You have read of Rajputana and its gallant struggle for independence, and of beautiful Malabar, surrounded by a wall of towering mountains, which separated her from the tumults and wars beyond her own "sleepy hollows" and green rice fields. Now I must tell you of a country whose soldiers reduced the strength of the proud Mogul, and

gave our English soldiers a great deal of trouble. Times are changed, and as I pen these lines from the Mahratta country it is strange to shut one's eye for a moment on the gay equipages, the fashionably dressed English, Hindu and Parsee ladies driving with husband and children to our band-stand, and to look with the mind's eye back on the same country when the troops of Shah Jehan and Mahratta horsemen under Sivaji struggled for the mastery.

Bounded on the north by the Nerbudda, and on the east by the Wurda, and extending south to Goa, there exists a sort of triangular tract formerly called Maharashtra, now generally spoken of as the Mahratta country, or by the names of its different divisions, the Konkan, Bijapore, Kandeish, etc.

Alla-ud-deen conquered the greater part of this country, and with his fierce Mahommedan soldiers plundered the Indian peninsula from the Nerbudda to Cape Comorin. The oppressors were only turned back by one of India's terrible famines, which began in 1396 and lasted for twelve years. It would be difficult to picture the misery of a famine in those days, when no means were used to lessen its evils. The starving people died by hundreds in their barren fields, and their conquerors retired to look for richer booty than the Mahratta country could then afford. The forts and strong places they had occupied fell into the hands of Polygars

and robbers, and I suspect the people suffered as much at the hands of their own Polygars as they had previously suffered from the Mahommedans. The latter returned as soon as rain had fallen and the lands had begun once more to yield their fruits. The Polygars were for a long time the only really powerful race in the Mahratta country, and the Mogul emperors found them troublesome neighbours, but never so formidable as the great Hindu chief Sivaji, who first made the Mahrattas famous. I must tell you his story from the beginning.

At the end of the sixteenth century the Bhonsley family were highly esteemed among the Mahrattas, and Maloji Bhonsley was the trusty follower and friend of a chief named Jadow Rao. In 1599 Jadow Rao had a large party at his house, to which Maloji Bhonsley and his little son Shahji were invited. Jadow Rao good-naturedly spoke to his little guest, and took him on his knee with his own pretty daughter Jiji. Then as a joke he asked Jiji if she would take the boy as a husband, and said: "They would make a fine pair;" but it was no longer a joke when Maloji stood up and said, "Take notice, friends, Jadow's daughter is engaged to marry my son." This would have been laughed at in England, but not so in India, where girls are made brides when two or three years old. Jadow did not really think the marriage a good one for his daughter, and when the

mother heard about it she was very angry; but time went on, Maloji rose in the world, and Jadow Rao did not. At last he thought Shahji might really be as good a husband as his daughter could get. So the young people were married, and in course of time Shahji chose, after the too frequent Hindu fashion, to take another wife, which made Jiji very angry; so he sent her with her second son Sivaji, to live quietly on his estate at Poona, under the care of a trustworthy Brahmin named Dadaji, while he and his new wife lived together.

The old man Dadaji seems to have done his best for his master's neglected wife and child. Sivaji learnt to shoot and ride, and use the sword and spear. Sad to say, he would not be taught among his accomplishments to speak the truth, for that was not considered an important part of education among the Brahmins or Hindus. Scampering on his Mahratta pony through the wild bridle-paths, and over the hills of his father's large estate, listening to songs and tales of war and bloodshed, young Sivaji grew up attached to his own people, and to Hindu superstitions, hating the Mahommedans and their iron rule, and ready to use his strong arm, his ready wit, and his knowledge of the country, in driving them away and establishing himself as a despot in their place.

Doubtless the Mahrattas under Sivaji did much to weaken the great Mogul empire established by Baber.

They were brave soldiers, but often treacherous. They were rougher men than the Rajputs of whom you have read, equally troublesome foes, but hardly such pleasant friends. They were clever horsemen, and in the stormy times of the Mahratta wars they were famous "for stopping roads, intercepting supplies, and hanging on the rear of a flying enemy." Picture the Mahratta horseman, with his turban tied on like an old woman's bonnet by a fold under the chin, with his frock of quilted cotton, and his sword fastened on by his waist-cloth; gold and silver necklaces jingled about his person as he galloped along, a blanket and any spare clothes were laid on the top of the saddle, while two cotton pouches were slung in front filled with provisions for a march, or perhaps empty to receive plunder after the battle. Probably no horseman of the Mahratta army could read or sign his own name; certainly their leader could not do so; nevertheless they contrived to wrest from the accomplished Moguls lands and forts supposed to be almost impregnable.

Sivaji did not begin his military career in a very creditable way. It is said he joined bands of Polygars and robbers, and shared in their violent deeds and ill-gotten gains, much to the distress of his old friend and guardian Dadaji, to whose advice he always listened with respect, though he did not always follow it. Ere long, instead of secretly despoiling travellers, he openly

possessed himself of the fort of Tanna, about twenty miles from Poona. Here, in digging about some ruins, a quantity of gold was found, which enabled him to purchase arms and to build another fort, which he called Rajgarh.

Poor old Dadaji now began to think his pupil had some wonderful destiny before him, and finding himself very ill, he called the young man to his bedside, and advised him to become an independent prince, telling him also to protect "Brahmins, cows, and cultivators." It may be thought surprising that he classed cows with men; but the Hindus, especially Brahmins, hold the cow in the highest esteem, and the old laws made it death to kill a cow, whilst the death of a low-caste man or woman or child was more leniently dealt with. Happily for the poor country, in those sad days of war and robbery, Sivaji followed his old tutor's advice by forbidding his men to plunder the "cows, cultivators, and women;" but he and his followers were alike encouraged by Dadaji's dying words. If a sage and cautious old Brahmin like him thought the Mogul yoke might be thrown off, Sivaji and his soldiers were ready for any feats of daring which might gain that end. So he continued adding fort to fort, till the King of Bijapore, alarmed by the young chief's growing power and popularity, thought to check it by treacherously seizing the Raja Shahji, and putting him into a stone dungeon with only one small

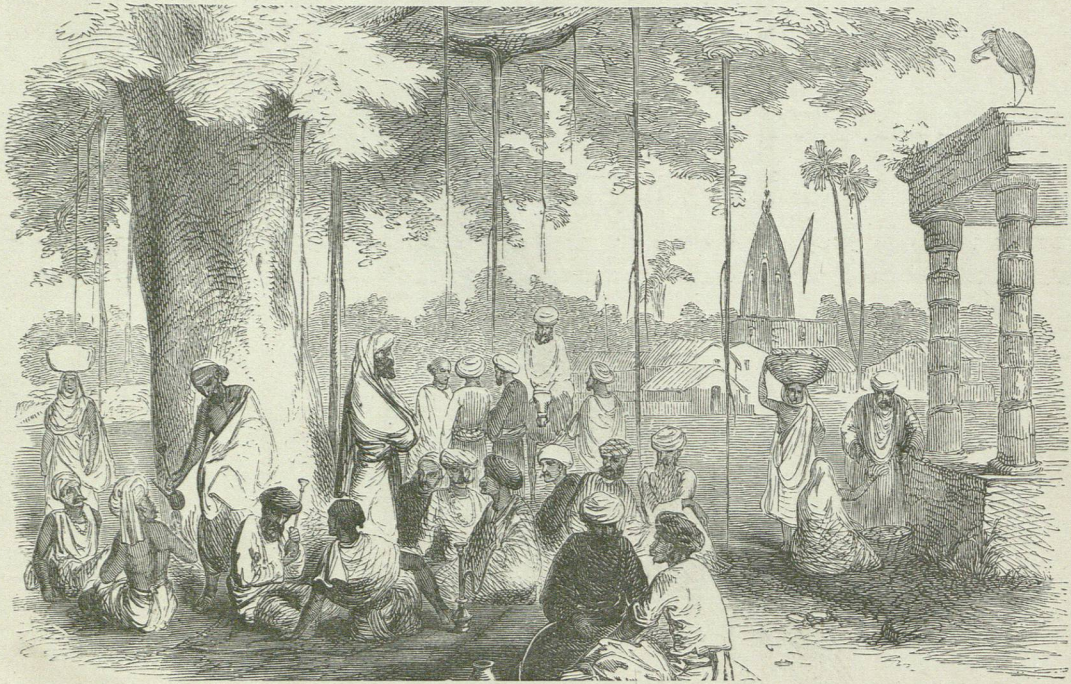
opening. If by a certain time Sivaji did not submit to the king, the hole was to be built up.

Sivaji was so grieved when he heard of this cruel imprisonment of his father that he thought of submitting; but his wife told him not to trust the King of Bijapore, and instead of doing so he wrote to Shah Jehan, and begged him to interfere on Shahji's behalf. The request was granted, and Shahji became a prisoner at large. To ensure his father's safety, Sivaji for some years kept his restless spirit within bounds, but this could not last. His countrymen flocked to him, victory followed his arms, and about 1662 he prepared to attack the territory of the Moguls.

On the death of Shahji in 1664 Sivaji assumed the title of Raja. The Emperor Aurangzib had by this time usurped his father's crown; and though at first he pretended to despise Sivaji, and called him "the mountain rat," he became very angry because Sivaji's fleet had seized some ships carrying pilgrims to Mecca, and had exacted heavy ransoms from them. A large army, under Raja Jey Sing and Dilir Khan, was sent into the Deccan. It required all the Mahratta courage and endurance to cope with this force, and both sides were glad to enter into negotiations.

Sivaji had several times been inclined to become a sort of tributary or ally of the Mogul emperors, and Aurangzib was not loth to get his assistance against the

King of Bijapore. But he still more desired to get Sivaji into his power, and for that purpose he with many compliments invited him to Delhi. Here the "mountain rat" found himself caught in a trap; and, finding remonstrance vain, he determined to effect his escape by cunning; nor was he without some Hindu friends in the Mahommedan court, who thought him very badly used, and were inclined to help him. Sivaji said it was very hard indeed to detain his people as well as himself. Upon this Aurangzib gave Sivaji's principal attendants permission to return to their own country, thinking he would thereby have their master more completely in his power. But Sivaji had his own reasons for wishing to get his servants out of Delhi, intending very soon to follow them himself. Though a prisoner, he was permitted to visit some of the chief Hindu families, and being a man of mark and of agreeable manners, he made a good many friends among them. Then he pretended to be very ill. Doctors visited him, and on his seeming recovery he, according to common Hindu custom, gave presents to the Brahmins. Large baskets of sweetmeats were daily sent to his friends and to the Fakirs from his apartments; and when people had become accustomed to see Sivaji's presents pass by, one fine evening he packed himself in one basket and his son Sambaji in another, and passed his guards in safety. A swift horse awaited him beyond the walls of



HINDU VILLAGERS.

Delhi, on which he and Sambaji both mounted, and reached Mattra the next day.

After this escape Aurangzib thought it best to make friends with Sivaji, and the districts of Poona, Chakun, and Sopa were restored to him. A time of comparative peace followed, during which Sivaji tried to make good laws for his people. All over India quarrels among the villagers are settled by the headman of the place, who has a different name in different parts of India. In the Mahratta country he was called a Patel, and when a case occurred too difficult for him to settle, he called together five people, and this was called a Panchayat, and it was settled by the majority of them. This custom was established before Sivaji's time, but he encouraged and extended it. He appointed eight chief officers of justice to assist him in carrying on public affairs. I will only tell you the name of the highest, which is a name and office familiar to all readers of Indian history—that of the Peishwa. The first Mahratta Peishwa was a Brahmin named Moro Punt. In later times the Peishwas, or Prime Ministers, became the actual kings, though they kept up the form of having nominally a royal master.

The alliance between Aurangzib and Sivaji did not last long. The emperor became alarmed at the latter's increasing power, and tried again to catch the "mountain rat." But Sivaji quickly saw his design, and

determined to make himself stronger than ever by taking the "lion's den," or fort of Singarh, which has on one side a precipice about forty feet deep, and on the others steep craggy rocks. The garrison at Singarh was commanded by a brave soldier named Oody Bawn, but so secure did he and his men think themselves that they became rather careless; and so one dark night a thousand men met below the fortress, which they had reached by many different paths. A ladder of ropes was fastened to the rock, and so quietly and cleverly did they manage, that three hundred men got inside the fort before they were discovered. An alarm was given, and while the Mahratta bowmen plied their arrows, torches were kindled, and the enemy was seen. Soon the leader of the Mahrattas, Tannaji, was slain and the men were ready to turn back, but Tannaji's brother Suryaji shouted out: "Who among you will leave your father's remains to be tossed into a pit?" By their father he meant their late leader Tannaji. Hindu soldiers often call their commander "father," and the words of Suryaji were not lost upon them. Singarh was taken, but Sivaji thought it dearly bought when he heard it had cost Tannaji's life. "The den is taken," he said, "but the lion is slain; we have gained a fort, but, alas, I have lost Tannaji Malusri."

There are so many tales about Sivaji, that this chapter will be too long if I attempt to tell you how

Sattar, Chundun, Wardun and other places fell before the Mahratta troops, till, encouraged by actual success and the prophecies of the Brahmins, Sivaji felt free, in 1674, to declare himself an independent sovereign. Next year he crossed the Nerbudda, which bounds the Mahratta country on the north, and plundered the territory of the Moguls. Then he made wars in Mysore, where he coveted the Jahgir, or territory of his younger brother Venkaji. After some trouble and loss of life, Venkaji agreed to pay his brother a tribute. Many people found it better thus to settle with Sivaji, and pay a so-called black-mail, than have their property burnt and their cattle driven away. The black-mail paid to Sivaji was called "chout," and amounted to a fourth part of the revenue of a country. While it was regularly paid that country was free from Mahratta invasion.

In 1676 Sivaji marched with a large army towards Golconda, and his persuasions, backed by this force, induced the king of that country to make an alliance with him. This alliance was not approved of by Aurangzib, who felt uneasy as Sivaji continued to conquer new districts, either plundering them or demanding "chout." Bangalore, Oonscotta, and Sera all fell before the conqueror. Again a large army under Dilir Khan was sent against him, which excited him to greater fury against the Mahommedan power than he had yet shown;

but in the midst of a career of victory Sivaji was taken ill at Rajgarh, and there died, in 1680, aged fifty three.

If you wish to know something of Indian geography, you can read the following paragraph, but if you only want tales about India you can miss it. "Sivaji at the time of his death possessed the Konkan, from Gundavi to Ponda, with the exception of Goa, Lower Choule, Salsette, and Bassein, belonging to the Portuguese, Jirjum, belonging to the Abyssinians, and the English settlement on the island of Bombay."[1] This last was handed over to the English as the dowry of Catherine of Braganza. Besides this he had a share of Tanjore, and the Carnatic, a tract of country lying between Poona and Joonir, bounded by the rivers Hurnkasi on the south, and the Indurani on the north. He had also many detached forts and villages. Sivaji's memory was long venerated by his countrymen, to whose superstitions he was much attached. You cannot have read this chapter without feeling that he was brave and ambitious, cunning and clever. Some idea of rude justice he had, and made laws accordingly, and we must not judge the bold Sivaji, brought up among wily Brahmins and almost savage Mawulis at Poona, as we may judge those who have had the privilege of an English education.

[1] Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas.*

CHAPTER XV.

Aurangzib and the Mahrattas.

THE famous Sivaji was succeeded by a son who did not inherit his father's great talents. Sambaji was bold, but cruel, and much under the influence of a Bengal Brahmin named Kulusha, who was not so wise as old Moro Punt, the Peishwa of Sivaji.

In 1684 Aurangzib prepared for a great war against the Mahrattas, to recover some of the places taken by Sivaji, and to place the whole country more completely under the Mogul power. He therefore assembled a large and showy army, and began a march towards the Deccan. Tall stalwart men, well armed, on noble horses, hardy mountaineers, bowmen and musketeers, field-pieces and cannon under the command of Englishmen, followed in Aurangzib's train. War elephants with supplies of arms, baggage elephants and camels with tents, the rich apparel of handsome ladies and courtly gentlemen, hounds, hawks, and hunting tigers, added magnificence to the progress of the Great Mogul. Where he halted, tents, divided into splendid rooms, and mosques, lined with velvet, silk, and satin, received

him. Cool sherbets and delicate sweetmeats refreshed him, and the roar of cannon announced his arrival. He took the town of Bijapore, and in 1687 he extended his conquests to Golconda, and even down to Masulipatam and Ganjam.

In 1689 Sambaji was taken prisoner. Aurangzib offered to spare his life on condition of his becoming a Mahommedan, but Sambaji replied by reviling the Mahommedan religion, and was put to a cruel death. This roused the Mahratta chiefs to fury. They had not been much attached to Sambaji, whose conduct, indeed, was not likely to win the affection of his people, but they remembered that he was the great Sivaji's son, and they were indignant at the insults offered him; so they assembled at the strong fort named Rajgarh, famous in Mahratta history. Here they acknowledged Sambaji's infant son as their chief. This boy was soon after taken prisoner by Aurangzib, who seems to have made a pet of him, and treated him very kindly. The boy's name was Sivaji, but he is better known as Saho Raja.

During his captivity his uncle Raja Ram became regent. This prince is more distinguished as having been the husband of a celebrated Mahratta lady named Tara, than for any wonderful success of his own.

The restless Mahratta soldiery continued to give Aurangzib trouble to the end of his life. They could endure hardship, poverty, or death, but they could not

endure the Moguls ruling them. When they were defeated in battle, the survivors scampered away on their clever little horses, and were soon lost to sight among rocks and defiles known to them from childhood, but almost impenetrable to the Mogul soldiers. From these hiding-places they came forth again, bold and merry, with little to lose and much to gain, and were next heard of flying over the country demanding "chout," which the people were thankful to give to get rid of them, for woe betide any who refused. For nearly twenty years this war lasted. The Mahratta chief, Raja Ram, fell during the siege of Sattara, and was succeeded by his young son. The boy's mother, Tara Bai, acted as regent. She was a lady of great talent and energy, and under her the Mahrattas continued, as before, to be thorns in the side of the proud Mogul.

Aurangzib was now becoming an old man. He endured bravely the hardships and difficulties which long years of war brought even on his once splendidly equipped camp; but he felt that the sands of life were fast running out, and conscience, long stifled amidst the din of arms and the splendour of a court, began to make itself heard. "The fate of Shah Jehan seems never to have been absent from his thoughts, and the empire, snatched by cunning from his old father, began to decline in power. Aurangzib never expressed sorrow for his conduct, but he was haunted in his old age

by a horror of death and judgment, which all his observance of Mahommedan austerities could not remove. By the Mahommedans his name is greatly revered. He died at Agra in 1707, aged 89.

His wish was that his empire should be divided between his three sons; but, as usual, disputes arose after his death. His second son Azim proclaimed himself emperor; Moazzim, as the elder, claimed the same title; and their respective armies met in a bloody battle near Agra. Azim and his two sons were killed, and Moazzim, who now called himself Bahadur Shah, became emperor. Before his last battle Azim had released the young Mahratta prince Saho, who was well received by many of his countrymen on his return to his own land; but many also remained attached to Tara Bai and her infant son. So you may suppose the Mahratta country was not very quiet. Had there been union among the chiefs, they might perhaps have got rid entirely of their Mahommedan enemies; for Bahadur Shah had his hands full of wars and troubles. But there is very little union among the Hindus. The higher castes care so little for the lower castes, and it is so difficult for different castes to work together, that they always seem like a house divided against itself, which cannot stand.

CHAPTER XVI.

The English in India.

WHILE the great Mogul empire is being overrun with Mahratta freebooters on the one hand, and opposed by proud Rajput princes on the other, I will pause in the story of its decline to tell you how the English came to India. Mention has already been made of some Europeans who in early times found their way to the far East; and in good King Alfred's time, an English bishop was sent to inquire after and convey friendly messages to the ancient Christian Church supposed to have been founded by St. Thomas in Travancore.

When the English people heard of this fair land, with its ivory, its spices, and precious stones, their merchants and their sailors alike wanted to share in the glory and gain which might be derived from a voyage to India; but they did not want to quarrel with the Portuguese, who had just overcome the difficulties (which in those days were great) of a voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. So the English in Henry VIII.'s reign tried to sail to India, by the north of America, instead of by the Bay of Biscay and South Atlantic. Many brave

men perished in trying to find this north-west passage, which finally had to be given up, and the ocean highway first discovered by the Portuguese was adopted. By it the English for several generations crossed and recrossed the broad seas which lie between English and Eastern homes; but another way has been opened for many years, through the Mediterranean, Egypt, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and now the Mediterranean and the Red Sea are united by the Suez Canal.

To return, however, to the early voyagers. You have read of Sir Francis Drake, who was a famous admiral in Queen Elizabeth's reign. He made a voyage round the world, coming home by the Cape of Good Hope; and the Queen was so pleased with what he had done that she paid him a visit on board his ship. Sir Francis Drake did not actually touch the Indian peninsula; but he brought home such valuable cargo from the Moluccas and Java that many merchants and other gentlemen became anxious to see the countries from which these treasures came, and several people fitted out vessels to sail for the isles and continents of the East. For some time these ships traded only with the islands of the Indian Ocean, and it was not till 1611 that the English got leave from the Mogul emperor to build houses and warehouses at Surat and Ahmedabad. The Portuguese did all they could to hinder their forming an Indian colony, but in vain. Step by step the English

became what they are now, the strongest power in the East. Little did the early traders think that at a future time the sovereigns of England would be the sovereigns of India also. Little did they think that the East India Company, to which they belonged, would itself exercise sovereign power for about one hundred years.

The East India Company was formed in the reign of Elizabeth, by some people who had heard of the great fortunes which could be made by trading with India. By order of the Queen and Parliament authority was given to them, and without their leave no other English merchant was allowed to trade with India. In the reign of James I. Sir Thomas Roe was sent by him as ambassador to the Emperor Jehangir, who promised encouragement and protection to the East India Company. In the unsettled state of the country these merchants did not altogether escape from robbery and murder; but in spite of difficulties the number of the ships they sent backwards and forwards increased. They built houses for themselves and warehouses for their goods, and offices for their clerks and assistants, and these buildings were called factories. Aurangzib, of whom you read in the last chapter, was divided between a jealousy of the growing English power, and a liking for the taxes they paid him on the calico and silk and spice exported, and the lead and quicksilver and woollen cloths imported by them. On the whole

the Company grew and prospered, and they purchased land round the towns of Sutanutty, Calcutta, and Govindpore. They appointed Councils and Presidents at Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, who could punish their disobedient or offending European servants, and they had also smaller courts, where their numerous native dependants could have their quarrels with each other or with their superiors settled.

In the reign of Farokshir the Company's land and privileges were much increased. The emperor was dangerously ill, and unable to go through the marriage ceremony with a Rajput princess, to whom he is said to have been much attached. In vain the native physicians tried their skill. The emperor continued dangerously ill, and having heard that an English physician, Dr. Hamilton, had come from Surat with some of the English merchants, he sent for him and asked his advice. The doctor's treatment proved so beneficial that Farokshir begged to know how he could best reward his benefactor. With much public spirit, Hamilton asked for certain privileges and territory to be bestowed on the East India Company; and these are said to have been the foundation of their great power in the East. The chief boons for which the Company asked were that the cargoes of their ships, if wrecked on the Mogul's coast, might be protected from plunder; that three villages

near Madras, which had once been given and then taken away, should be restored to them; and that they should be allowed to purchase thirty-seven towns. For Hamilton's sake the requests were granted by the Emperor, but his Viceroy or Nabob, as he was called, in Bengal, prevented their being fully carried out.

No doubt, the Nabob Jaffir was jealous of these powerful white people, who seemed by degrees to be getting houses and lands, wealth and power. With native foes he could contend, by cunning or by courage; but here were people who, if they lacked cunning (though they sometimes had too much of it), made up for the lack by courage and a rude boldness which carried them over all difficulties. While they pressed their claims on the Nabob Jaffir, they did not fail to make him handsome presents; and while he professed no great love for the merchant-princes, he was not prepared for open war with the favourites of his master. For the present therefore the English bought and sold, and increased their houses and lands, and were said to manage the people under them with greater justice and gentleness than the native princes around them, among whom wars and tumults were raging, each one trying how much spoil or land he could get, not by peaceful trade or treaty, but by sword and bow. The power of the Mogul emperors had been greatly reduced, first by Sivaji, and then through the weakness of Aurangzib's

successors. None of them possessed the talents which distinguished Baber, Humayun, Akbar, Shah Jehan, and Aurangzib; and although the petty princes acknowledged the Emperor of Delhi as their nominal head, they paid very little attention to his wishes, if these crossed their own will and pleasure. The strongest power was that of the Mahrattas, who ever since the days of Sivaji had been impatient of control; and to their proceedings we must give another chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Mahratta Peishwas.

THE descendants of Sivaji were not his equals in ability. His grandson, Raja Saho, who was for many years Aurangzib's prisoner, was a weak prince, fonder of hawking, hunting, and fishing than of business, which he left to be managed chiefly by his Peishwa, Balaji Wiswanath. From this time we hear far more of Mahratta Peishwas than of Mahratta Rajas, though the former kept up a form of respect towards the Raja, just as most of the native princes professed some sort of homage to the court at Delhi. Raja Saho was

fortunate in having an able Peishwa like Balaji Wiswanath, who did his best to further the interests of his master, while he did not forget those of his own family.

Balaji Wiswanath, though a Brahmin, was otherwise a man of humble origin; but in those days in India people rose and fell rapidly. He was a village accountant, but having exchanged his pen for a sword he soon showed himself a brave and good soldier, and rapidly rose to command. The Raja Saho was very glad to be saved trouble by his clever Peishwa, who set him firmly on the throne, and also made a favourable treaty for him with the Emperor Farokshir which was confirmed by Mohammed Shah.

One of the most famous Mahrattas at this time was a pirate named Angria. For many long years the name of Angria struck terror into the hearts of Portuguese and British merchants, whose ships too often afforded him a rich prey. This man at first opposed Saho's government, attaching himself to the party of the scheming, ambitious Tara Bai; but he was won over by the Peishwa's persuasions and the present of several forts, in return for which he paid the Raja a tribute of guns and stores, and very often of European articles stolen from the ships he had taken. The British and Portuguese united in vain against this sea-king, who only laughed at them. The Governor of Bombay wrote a letter to Angria, hoping to

bring him to a more peaceful mind; Angria's reply is rather amusing. He says: "As touching the desire of possessing what is another's, I do not find the merchants exempt from this sort of ambition, for this is the way of the world." Very true, Angria! too many covet other people's things, and sometimes try to get them by unfair means, though they would not use guns and swords for the purpose. Again Angria says: "Your Excellency is pleased to write that he who follows war, purely through an inclination that he hath thereto, one time or another will find cause to repent, of which I suppose your Excellency hath found proof."

Truly the English Governor had found cause, if not for repentance, at least for sorrow in the wars with Angria, and there was little peace on the coast till his death, which took place about 1728. He left several sons, who were pirates like himself; and it was not till 1756 that the Angria family received a severe check from a British fleet under Admiral Watson. During the bombardment of the strong fort of Gheria, a shell burst in the *Restoration*, one of the English ships taken by Angria. The flames spread in the pirate's fleet, and in about an hour it was destroyed. Gheria was taken, and Tulaji, the chief of the Angria family, made a prisoner. He remained in confinement till his death.

We must now return to Balaji Wiswanath, who continued to promote the interests of his prince, and also

those of his caste. Brahmins were appointed to many important posts, especially to collect "chout," which by the treaty with the emperor was given to the Mahrattas over a large tract of country. The Mahrattas generally liked "chout" better than actual land in newly conquered countries. Balaji Wiswanath died in 1720, and his still more famous son, Baji Rao Balal, succeeded him, the office of Peishwa having become hereditary.

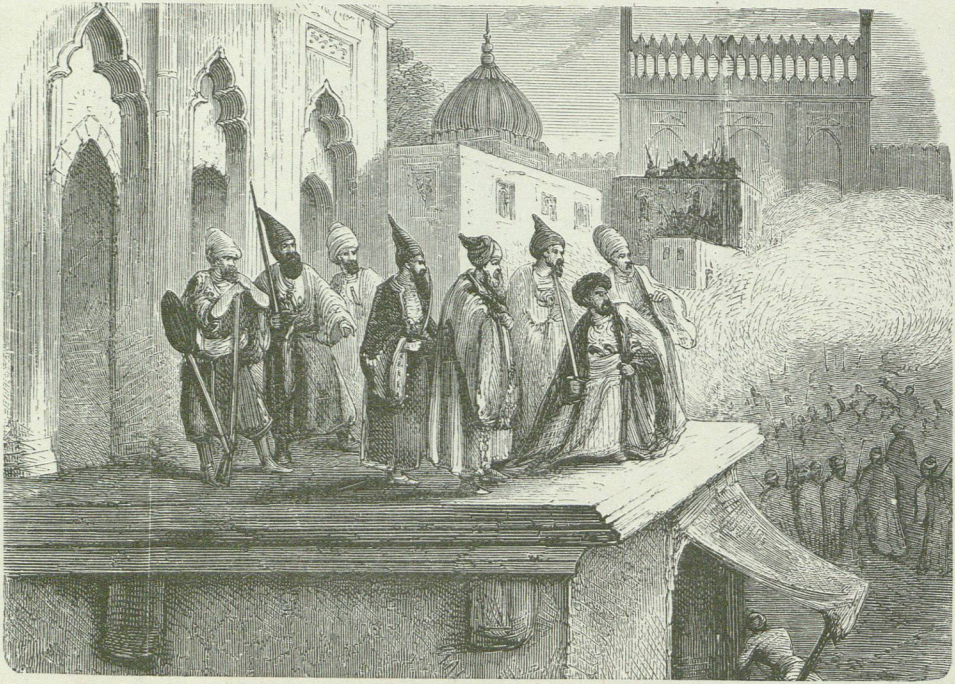
Baji Rao was a frank, brave, and hardy soldier, and he passed his life in the turmoil of war. He was very popular with his troops, sharing, when needful, all their privations. Once a great enemy of his, Nizam-ul-mulk, who had never seen him, wanted to get a likeness of the famous general who gave so much trouble, and a painter was sent to Baji Rao's camp to paint him exactly as he found him at the time. He did so, and brought back Baji Rao's likeness on horseback, eating as he rode some ears of grain which he rubbed out with his hands. His spear rested on his shoulder, and the ropes for tying up his horse were in a common bag by his side.

As soon as he became Peishwa, he said it would be a good thing to employ the horse soldiery away from the Mahratta country, where, if they had nothing to do, they made themselves very troublesome. He saw that the Mogul empire was badly governed, and had become like an old and lifeless tree; and this he pointed out to the Raja, reminding him of Sivaji's

brave and warlike career. "Now is our time," said the gallant Peishwa, "to drive strangers from the land of the Hindu, and to acquire immortal renown. By directing our efforts to Hindustan, the Mahratta flag in your reign shall fly from the Krishna to Attock." "You shall plant it on the Himalaya," exclaimed the Raja; "you are indeed a noble son of a worthy father." So Baji Rao departed with a large army and full authority from his king. The Peishwas were always anxious to get the king's consent to anything they did, but in fact such strong men in word and deed as Baji Rao and his father could persuade a weak prince like Raja Saho to consent to all their wishes. A time came when the Peishwas were overruled by their servants, as they had overruled the Rajas.

The province of Malwa was soon overrun by Baji Rao's troops. The Rajputs had been crushed and conquered by the Moguls, and were not so strong and brave as in the early days of Indian history; but Malwa is said to have been better governed by Baji Rao and his officers than it had been for a long time before. Not satisfied with this conquest, however, Baji Rao overran Bandelkand, and exacted a promise of "chout" over the whole Mogul empire.

The Emperor Mohammed Shah was an extremely weak sovereign, and his empire was in such disorder that Nadir Shah, a fiery Persian chief, thought it would



NADIR SHAH ORDERING THE MASSACRE AT DELHI.

be a good time to invade India, and get a supply of money to pay his soldiers. The troops of Mohammed Shah were no match for the hardy Persians, and the emperor soon surrendered himself a prisoner. The Persian army marched on to Delhi, but orders were given to the soldiers not to molest the people; and perhaps the invasion might have passed off with only the usual horrors of war, which are bad enough, but a report was spread abroad that the leader Nadir Shah was dead. The inhabitants of Delhi then rose upon the Persians, who were quartered in the town, and killed many of them. Nadir Shah made an effort to stop the tumult, but finding all he did in vain, he gave orders for a general massacre of the Hindus; and fearful indeed was the scene of murder which lasted for many hours, and was beheld by the chief in gloomy silence. At last, yielding to the emperor's prayer, he stopped the massacre, and so well disciplined were his men that it ceased with his word.

When Baji Rao heard of these things he was, as usual, engaged in quarrels of his own, but he said: "My quarrel with the Bhonsleys is now nothing, and that with the Portuguese must be left; there is at this moment but one enemy in Hindustan. Hindus and Mussulmans, the whole power of Deccan, must assemble, and I shall spread our Mahrattas from the Nerbudda to the Chambal." Before he reached Delhi,

however, Nadir Shah had gone away, having first restored Mohammed Shah to his throne. This was a poor reparation for all the misery he had caused. In 1740 Baji Rao died, leaving his titles and territories to his son Balaji, another famous chief.

Although Balaji was not satisfied till the imprisoned Raja Saho had appointed him Peishwa, and the weak emperor had appointed him Subadar of Malwa, he would have made both repent if they had not granted his requests; and perhaps it would have been difficult to find a more able general or viceroy. In spite, however, of all his father's conquests, and of all the "chout" thereby received, Balaji found it very difficult to pay his soldiers and meet his expenses; for war is very expensive work, and the Mahratta chiefs seemed to have little or no idea of improving the lands they had got, their great idea being to get money out of the industrious people who tilled the land, and sowed the seed, and tried to reap the harvest. If the poor farmer or labourer heard the Mahratta soldiers had been seen approaching, he would rather leave his fields, and fly to the jungle to eat roots and wild fruits, than stay and be robbed and rudely treated by them. When the East India Company came, they bought land, and by peaceful trade increased both their own property and the property of those who traded with them. But when the Mahrattas came, they seized the

farmers' crops and money, and often so frightened the people that they ran away, and left none to be robbed when they made another "raid."

But a time was fast approaching when the East India Company must take a part, in self-defence, in the wars of the Mahrattas and other principalities belonging to the decaying Mogul empire.

Balaji Baji Rao was, like his father and grandfather, a very clever man, and to his cleverness he added great cunning. He was not by nature cruel, but his ambition was great, and led him to commit some cruel actions. Not long after he became Peishwa, his master the Raja Saho was afflicted with a sort of madness, and more power than ever came into the Peishwa's hands. Poor Raja Saho's madness was harmless enough, but it made him unfit to appear with dignity in public, or to manage any state affairs. One fancy he had was to dress up a pet dog in fine jewels and gold brocade, and give it an estate and a palanquin to ride in. To be allowed to use a palanquin is a great honour in India, and only great people were permitted to travel in them; but I should think the dog would have preferred a good run on his own four legs to the dignity of being carried by palanquin-bearers. I hope the Raja was as kind to his human friends as he was to his canine favourite. We are told he had a regard for those by whom he was brought up in a

sort of kindly captivity. Before his death he recovered his reason, but his bodily health was declining, and his advisers begged him to adopt a son, as his own child was dead. In India when a man gets old without children of his own, it is a common custom to adopt a son. There are some religious ceremonies performed after the death of a Hindu which only a son or an adopted son can undertake, and these ceremonies are supposed to make a difference in the happiness of the dead father. A Hindu proverb says: "The son is the saviour;" but they have yet to learn it is not in the power of an earthly son to save the soul; that power belongs to Him who is "the Son of Man," the Saviour of the world.

Various suggestions were made to Raja Saho regarding boys suitable for adoption. At last he confided to two of his friends that he knew that a descendant of the great Sivaji was living concealed somewhere, and if so he would be the proper person to adopt; and the king declared that Tara Bai, the widow of Rama Raja, knew where her grandson was. This piece of news created great surprise at court, and great displeasure in the mind of Sawitri Bai, Saho's eldest wife, for had the first plan been carried out, she would have been the guardian of the adopted son, and a lady in great authority, which would have been particularly agreeable to her proud spirit. But now a grown-up man

would come to the throne, and if any lady had influence with him. that lady would be his grandmother, clever old Tara Bai. So Sawitri Bai sent a message to the Raja of Kolapore, and offered to do her best to help him to the throne on her husband's death, saying, at the same time, that Tara Bai was putting an impostor forward as her grandson. To those about the court she pretended that, as she intended to burn herself with her husband's body, the future heir was personally a matter of indifference to her. She seldom left the Raja's side, but one day the Peishwa Balaji Baji Rao obtained a private interview, and the Raja then gave him authority over all the Mahratta country, on condition that he should keep up the royal house of Sivaji by placing Tara Bai's grandson on the throne.

The Raja soon after died at Sattara. The Peishwa's troops immediately seized the town, and poor Sawitri Bai found herself completely in the hands of her enemies, who remembered too well her foolish words about burning herself with her husband's body. The Peishwa wanted to get rid of her, and he thought the easiest manner of getting her out of the way was to taunt her and her family with the rash vow she had made, making them feel that the family honour would be tarnished if the horrid act of self-destruction were not accomplished. First the cunning, cruel man sent a message to Sawitri Bai "begging she would not think

of burning with the corpse of her husband, for he and all his servants were ready to obey her commands;" but Sawitri Bai very well knew this message was only sent to insult her, and to remind her what was expected of her according to the Indian idea of honour. To her brother the Peishwa spoke plainly, and said great dishonour would attach to their family if Sawitri Bai lived. He further promised the brother an estate if he could persuade his sister to fulfil her former intention. Among them they made poor Sawitri Bai a victim; but many people even in India, where they were accustomed to "suttee," or widow-burning, were shocked at the Peishwa's conduct. For the act was always supposed to be voluntary, though in many cases the family, from mistaken notions of honour, may have urged it on the unhappy widow.

In the time of Balaji Baji Rao the condition of the Mahratta people improved, and their dominions were extended; but their growing power received a very severe check at the battle of Panipat, in 1761.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Holkar and Scindia.

IF you take any interest in Indian affairs, you will often hear the names of Holkar and Scindia, two great Indian princes who still retain the lands won by the swords of their ancestors. They do not, however, now hold their lands by the sword, but by treaty with Her Majesty the Queen of England.

The names of Holkar and Scindia first became famous in the eighteenth century. Holkar's family belongs to the shepherd-tribe, and one of his most famous ancestors, having found refuge as a fatherless child in an uncle's house, was placed in charge of the sheep. Watching sheep on a still sultry Indian day is not a lively occupation, and no doubt young Holkar often went to sleep when the hot noonday sun prevented his running about and amusing himself after the manner of boys. At any rate, on one memorable day he slept, and a well-known deadly Indian snake, called the cobra de capello, was seen rearing its crested head and spreading out its fan-shaped hood between the weary boy and the sun. If the snake really was thus seen, it must have

been preparing to give the boy a deadly wound, which his sudden awakening prevented; but the natives of India tell strange stories about the cobra, which they call the "good snake," and which they think worthy even of worship. Holkar's family thought the poisonous snake had kindly feelings towards young Holkar, and if the "good snake" had kindly feelings towards him, they thought he would certainly become a great man. So his uncle took him away from the quiet sheepfold and bade him follow one of the turbulent Mahratta chieftains.

Holkar soon showed himself a brave soldier, and the Peishwa Baji Rao took him into his own service. Here he distinguished himself, both against the Portuguese and in the invasion of Malwa. In 1728 he received a large grant of land in Central India, and his capital was established at Indore. Some years later his aid as a general with his successful soldiery was asked against the Rohillas, another turbulent people, who at this time sought and obtained fragments of the decaying Mogul empire.

Not so powerful or famous as the Mahrattas, but active and warlike enough to be dangerous foes, were the Rohillas under their fiery chieftain Ali Mahommed, who managed to get possession of a large tract of country, including Mooradabad, Bareilly, Aunlah, Burdwan and Amral, which were formed into the province of Rohilcund. To prevent their adding the

principality of Oude to their other conquests, the viceroy of that province, Safdar Jung, feeling himself unable to contend with them, called in the aid of Mulhar Rao Holkar and his Mahrattas. Ever ready for a fray, the Mahrattas entered into the quarrel, and soon by stratagem obtained a great victory. With a small body of troops, Holkar determined one night to attack the enemy. He had collected a large number of cattle, and to their horns he tied torches, and sent them on one side. On another side he fastened lights to the trees and bushes, and then marched his men quietly by a third side to attack the enemy. Seeing lights in several directions, and soldiers close by, they thought they were surrounded by a large force, and in great danger, and they fled, leaving their camp to be plundered. While their great chief Ali Mahommed lived, they were more frequently plunderers than plundered. As a reward for this victory, the emperor bestowed on Holkar the headship of the province of Kandeish. In addition to this, he possessed himself of a large tract of country in Rajputana.

The Mahrattas had now enjoyed a long period of success in war under different chieftains, and they were more or less dreaded over all India. In the middle of the eighteenth century, however, they met with enemies as fiery and warlike as themselves. In the north the Afghans drove them from the Punjab, and in the south

they found "foemen worthy of their steel" in Hyder Ali and his Mysoreans.

At the battle of Panipat, the Mahrattas met with one of their most fatal reverses. It was fought against the Afghans, who were completely victorious. In vain Holkar had recommended the general, Sadasiva Bhao, to defer the battle, seeing that the Mahrattas were not well posted for victory. The general insolently asked: "Who wants the advice of a goat-herd?" and insisted on fighting. The battle was long and bloody, and though the Mahrattas fought bravely, they were completely defeated, and many of their great men were slain, among them the Peishwa's son and the general Sadasiva Bhao. Holkar, seeing how the day went, retired with a party of followers. Scindia, too, whose name was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, had a narrow escape, and but for his good Deccany mare would probably have left his body in the field. As it was, an Afghan trooper spied him, and pursued till the weary mare fell down dead. Scindia was soon stripped of his ornaments, and left badly wounded in a ditch, from which a poor water-man helped him out, and placing him on his bullock, aided his escape. Scindia was long haunted by the remembrance of the fierce Afghan trooper steadily following him and his tired mare till both fell into the wayside ditch.

The first news of the defeat was conveyed to the

Peishwa in these words: "Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold pieces have been lost, and of the silver and the copper the total cannot be cast up." From these words he learnt that two great leaders, and many officers and men, had perished. From the shock the news gave him, Balaji Baji Rao never recovered; he made his way slowly to Poona, and there died, in the temple of Parvati.

Scindia's ancestors were by caste cultivators. The first famous man among them was Ranoji Scindia, who entered the Peishwa's service as slipper-carrier. It is a customary mark of respect in India to take off the slippers at the door when paying a visit; and in those days when the general rule was, "that he should take who had the power, and he should keep who can," slippers as well as other things would sometimes disappear if left at a door without any one to take care of them. Baji Rao went in one day to visit Saho Raja, leaving his slippers in his servant Ranoji Scindia's care; when he came out he found the lad asleep at the door, clasping his master's slippers to his breast; and Baji Rao thought, "The man who takes such care of my slippers will be a faithful servant in other things. I will promote him to my body-guard." From this time Ranoji's rise in the world was rapid; and it was his son Madaji Scindia's flight after the battle of Panipat which was described above. By this defeat Scindia lost vast possessions. He

was not long, however, in obtaining a large share of Rajputana. He occupied a high position in the Peishwa's service; but he wished to give his family princely power of their own, though he veiled his schemes under a cloak of humility. For instance, one day, when he was invited to join a large assembly of nobles, not one of whom possessed half his power, he refused at first to be seated. Being courteously pressed, he untied a small parcel, and taking out a pair of old slippers, he placed them before the Peishwa, taking away those he had in use. "This is my occupation," said Scindia, "as it was that of my father." I am afraid, if the Peishwa had told him to take care of the old slippers, Scindia would have been inclined to cut them in pieces with the "sword which won his land." He was proud, ambitious, and revengeful, but possessed a certain frankness and kindness of disposition, which endeared him to his dependants. He was able to read and write, which in those days were rare accomplishments among the Mahrattas. Though governing in the name of the Peishwas, who again governed by the authority of the Mahratta Raja, who again acknowledged the emperor of Delhi as their head, Scindia was in truth an independent prince, with his own army, and possessed a powerful mind, which enabled him to exert a sway over all these authorities. Several of the Rajputana states became his tributaries, and at one time the emperor

made over the provinces of Agra and Delhi to his management. He was greatly assisted by a European adventurer named De Boigne, who was a clever soldier, and persuaded other European officers to serve under Scindia's standard.

Scindia was never fond of the English. He was far too ambitious to see with pleasure another strong power acquiring territory in India, and he objected to a British Resident being sent to the court of the Peishwa.[1] In spite of Scindia's objections, Thomas Mostyn, Esq., of the Bombay Civil Service, was sent as Resident to Poona; and the native chief was too much occupied with great schemes for increasing his power in the north to make very active opposition to the arrangements in the Deccan. His great desire was to be himself independent, but with an alliance between himself and the various Mahratta chiefs, so that they could unite against the English, Mahommedans, or any other common foe.

His life was spent in the turmoil of war, leaving him very little time to see to the welfare of

[1] The Resident at a native court watches over the interests of the British government in that kingdom, and the native government is expected to take counsel with him for the improvement of the country and people; he is the medium of communication between the two governments. Commissioners, Political Agents, and Residents have much the same duties, varying somewhat according to the different native courts to which they are sent, and being onerous or the reverse according to the characters of the various occupants of the musnud or throne.

his conquered provinces; but he chose good officers to manage his districts in Malwa, as well as able generals to assist him in commanding his army. In the midst of many ambitious schemes, he was seized with fever, and died in 1794, leaving no sons. He had for some time before his death talked of adopting his grand-nephew, Doulat Rao, a lad about fifteen years of age; and though the ceremonies of adoption had not been performed, Doulat Rao became the heir of his uncle's large possessions. Of him we shall hear more in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

Lord Clive.

HITHERTO, in this little book, you have heard of the English in India chiefly as a company of merchants, increasing in wealth, and becoming great landowners in various parts of that mighty empire by gift and purchase, but not by war. They had defended themselves with bravery in some encounters with the natives, but they had been inclined to leave the Mahrattas, Rohillas, Rajputs and others to settle their own quarrels without interfering among them. You have heard also that the Mogul emperor was no longer strong enough to command his powerful vassals, and Viceroys and Nabobs, and that

they were always coveting each other's property, and fighting about it. Now you must hear about the English as warriors in India.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the Viceroy of the Deccan, Nizam-ul-mulk, died, and disputes arose as to who should be his successor. His son, Nazir Jung, and his grandson, Mirzapha Jung, were both claimants.

Mirzapha Jung sought and obtained the assistance of the French ; and as there was an extremely clever man, named Dupleix, at the head of their affairs, they were able to give the aspiring Viceroy great help. The French had, like the English, established an East India Company, and at this time they were the most powerful European nation in India. They were delighted at being asked by an Indian prince for aid, knowing that, if he succeeded, it would greatly increase their own power. And at first they proved good allies to Mirzapha Jung. A small number of French, fighting along with the native soldiers, gained some splendid victories, and Mirzapha Jung became Viceroy of the Deccan while Dupleix was proclaimed Governor of India south of the River Krishna.

Dupleix was a man of great talents, but very vain ; and so delighted was he with his success that he erected a great column in memory of his victory, and on its four sides he had his own praises written in four

different languages. It would have been better and wiser if he had remembered the Bible words: "Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips."[1] Round this column a town began to rise to which was given the name of "Dupleix Fatihabad," or the city of the victory of Dupleix.

While Nazir Jung and Mirzapha Jung disputed who should be Viceroy of the Deccan, Chanda Sahib and Mahommed Ali were disputing as to which of them should be master of the Carnatic, one of its richest provinces, the capital of which, Arcot, was held by Chanda Sahib's party, aided by the French.

The English took the part of Mahommed Ali; but they had as yet done very little for him, and he lay besieged by the French at Trichinopoly.

At this time there was among the young Englishmen at Madras in the service of the East India Company, one named Robert Clive. He was neither rich nor famous, but he was patriotic; and he thought if the French were allowed to obtain so much power in India, the English there would fare badly in the event of a war between England and France; and wars between England and France were in those days too common.

Clive's thoughts were the echo of those which occupied the minds of his superiors; but they seemed

[1] Proverbs xxvii. 2.

hardly to know what to do till a scheme was proposed by the young officer, namely, to besiege Arcot, and so to draw off the French troops, which were now besieging Trichinopoly.

The siege of Arcot is famous in the history of the English in India. With a little army of five hundred men Clive was sent against it. Whatever were his virtues or his faults, Clive inspired his enemies with fear and his soldiers with courage. The garrison fled without a blow having been struck, and Clive entered the fort, where he and his small force became besieged instead of besiegers. They had to endure great hardships from their enemies and from want of provisions. One day the sepoys came to say they thought it would be best, now they were short of food, to give the grain to the European soldiers, who needed more substantial food than the Indians, and for themselves the gruel in which the grain was boiled would be enough. This shows the affection and devotion which can be instilled into Indian sepoys and servants by good masters, in whom they can trust. But the English were hard pressed in Arcot, while six thousand of our wild friends the Mahrattas were marching as fast as they could to their relief. They had been raised in aid of Chanda Sahib and the French; but having heard of and admired the doings of the brave little army under Clive, they joined the English

When Raja Sahib, who commanded the besiegers, was told of the approach of the dreaded Mahrattas, he tried to bribe Clive to give up Arcot. Finding his efforts vain, he attacked the place, and was totally defeated.

You can imagine with what joy the English in Madras heard of this great victory. They immediately sent fresh English and native soldiers to the young captain who had shown himself so able a commander; and this force having joined with the Mahrattas, they obtained another great victory over Chanda Sahib. On their march lay the city which showed the greatness of Dupleix, and the monument which displayed his contemptible vanity. Both city and monument were destroyed by Clive's order, and he returned to Madras after a series of triumphs. Soon after he went to England for some years, and was sent back to India by the East India Company as Governor of Fort St. David.

Very soon after his return to the East, he was required to take the command of an army, to show the native princes that gross cruelty towards the English could not be tolerated. The story of the Black Hole at Calcutta is a sad one, but its results were so important that it cannot be left untold.

Except in the south, where the English and French had espoused different sides, the English merchants had carried on their business quietly, without wishing to make war. In Bengal they had endeavoured, by

yielding some points, and by making handsome presents to the old Viceroy, Mir Jaffir, to keep the peace. But Mir Jaffir had now been dead for some time, and the Viceroy in 1756 was a very wicked cruel man, named Suraja Dowlah. He hated the English, and did not love his own people. He was weak in mind, and made himself stupid by drinking spirits. He was rich, but he thought to become richer by robbing the merchants of Calcutta.

Being anxious to quarrel, he soon found an occasion for it. He was displeased because the people at Calcutta had lately fortified the town, and also permitted a fugitive from his cruelty to take refuge there. These matters might have been easily settled without bloodshed, but that would not have suited the cruel prince's humour. He marched with an army towards Calcutta, and took it. Among its residents there was no Lord Clive, or he would not have found it quite so easy to gain the victory. He promised to spare the lives of the captives he made, but promises were little thought of by Suraja Dowlah. The unhappy English, numbering one hundred and forty-six, were confined in a small cell twenty feet square, with only two small apertures, and known too well by the name of the Black Hole of Calcutta. I will not dwell on the misery they endured during one terrible night, in which one hundred and twenty-three persons died in

agony from suffocation. Twenty-three survivors, half dead, issued from the gloomy prison, of whom the chief, a Mr. Holwell, was put in irons, and the others were again confined with so much cruelty that the females of the Viceroy's family implored him to release them, which request was at last granted.

When the story of the Black Hole and the loss of Calcutta reached Madras, there was both sorrow and indignation. Clive was immediately despatched with troops to punish the wicked Viceroy and to retake Calcutta. By this time Suraja Dowlah was thinking that he had made a mistake in making the English his foes. He heard of their prowess, and of their great captain, and he began to miss the sums of money which used to be regularly paid to him as a tax by the Calcutta merchants. He was half-inclined to make friends with them, to pay a heavy fine, and to enter into a treaty, but he was not true even in this. One day he would pretend to be anxious for the English favour, and the next he would be secretly trying to join the French against them. He was utterly false, and Lord Clive, disgusted with his conduct, thought himself justified in meeting falsehood by deceit. The Nabob's falsehood did not save him from ruin, and Clive's deceit only brought obloquy on the English name, without doing away with the necessity of a battle.

Suraja Dowlah's people were weary of his oppres-

sion and of his crimes, and a plot was formed to dethrone him, and place his general, Mir Jaffir, on the throne. The English were ready to support Mir Jaffir. He was not very estimable, but he had more sense and less innate cruelty than Suraja Dowlah. A few Frenchmen gave the aid of their military experience to the great army of the Nabob, as it covered the plain of Plassey, but the secret of success was not with that mighty host. Suraja Dowlah was not likely to make a brave soldier, or to inspire his troops with courage, besides which the army was divided against itself. The English gained a complete victory, and the Nabob's army fled in every direction.

Mir Jaffir was on the look-out for his own interests, though determined not to join the English till he saw that they had some advantage on their side. His conduct was not brave or praiseworthy, but he was not so utterly debased as the wretched Nabob. The English received him graciously, and saluted him as Nabob in place of Suraja Dowlah, who escaped in disguise with two servants. He was soon afterwards captured, and put to death by the order of Mir Jaffir's son. Had he fallen into the hands of the English, he would probably have been imprisoned for life.

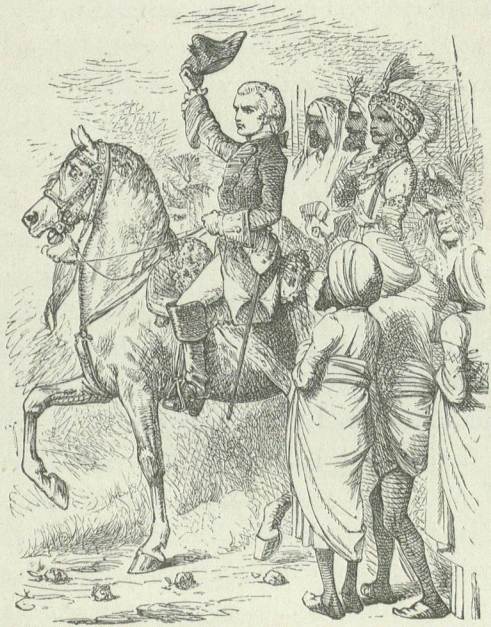
CHAPTER XX.

Lord Clive as Commander-in-Chief.

THE victory of Plassey established the fame of Clive as a general, and placed the English in a higher position than they had yet occupied in India. The Viceroy, Mir Jaffir, placed by their arms on the throne, was glad to be supported by friends so strong; a very large sum of money was paid to the victorious general and to his masters the East India Company. You may imagine how delighted the gentlemen who composed this Company in England were, when they heard that their general had not only got their people in India out of difficulties, but had made their name great over all the country.

From this time the English became the strongest power in India. The Emperors of Delhi had long been too feeble to exercise more than a mere nominal authority. The Mahrattas were much dreaded over the country, but they were rather wild soldiers than steady statesmen. The Rohillas, Jats, and Afghans were all ready with the sword, but they never seemed able to settle down, and think about making good laws, and

gaining wealth in any way but by the sword. At this time a number of them collected round Shah Alum the son of the Emperor of Delhi, and he thought he might with them be able to overthrow Mir Jaffir, and



LORD CLIVE.

make himself master of Bengal—unhappy country! whose rich lands and stores of jewels made it the coveted prize of many a rude oppressor. Mir Jaffir was in despair at the approach of Shah Alum's army,

and applied to Clive for aid, which was readily promised; but when Shah Alum heard that the famous English general was marching against him, he at once retired with his great force.

Soon after this Mir Jaffir began to get jealous of his English friends, and made some attempt to ally himself with the Dutch. His conduct was very foolish and wrong, particularly as he was very deceitful in the matter. But he had had a bad example, even among his English friends, who in those days too often thought they must meet deceit with deceit. I have not space, however, to tell you here of Clive's deception of Omichand, which was one of the greatest blots on his character. You may read a fuller account of him in Macaulay's *Essays*, from which I have taken this short narrative of his doings. Mir Jaffir's attempts to exchange his English allies for Dutchmen proved a failure; and Clive, having settled the terms upon which the Dutch East India Company were to remain in Bengal, returned to England.

Clive's countrymen in Bengal, left without his strong mind to rule their councils, and his strong arm to fight, fell into very bad habits, and thought of nothing but of hastening to be rich. They oppressed the poor people, and did everything to make their name abhorred. That was the worst period of English rule in India. Before that time they were hardly rulers. Now they

were strong, some of them had become rapidly rich, all were covetous, and this led them into great crimes. When the East India Company heard of these things, they were much distressed, partly because they knew that such bad ways must end in ruin, and partly because good men among them did not wish the poor natives of India to be oppressed by their strong masters. They could think of no remedy for these evils but sending out Clive, who was made Governor and Commander-in-Chief in India.

When Lord Clive arrived in India the third time, he found all in confusion, and the British name feared, but no longer respected. He immediately told the Company's servants that he could not allow them to go on receiving bribes, or presents, as they were called, and permitting all sorts of injustice to be practised in their name. Some of them were very angry, but Clive, who had faced thousands with hundreds in the battle-field, possessed moral as well as physical courage, and, without caring for their anger, he began the work of reform. Hitherto the Company's servants had traded on their own account as well as for their masters. Clive said they must do so no longer. It took up their time, and prevented attention to their duties as managers of the Company's large property. So large was this that, as I told you before, it had courts of law, and magistrates

and judges of its own. These men did not receive high pay, and they thought it quite fair to make a little extra money by trading for themselves and by receiving gifts from natives, who thus hoped to secure what they call "master's favour." The natives have always a strong desire to be under the protection of some one whose position is superior to their own; and many a poor native would try to scrape together enough money to give some powerful European a costly ring or jewel, thereby thinking to gain his support in difficulties. Clive felt that a stop must be put to all this. It was bad for Europeans and natives alike. But he said the pay of the Europeans must be raised, for what they then received from the Company was not enough to support an Englishman in India, where the climate is extremely trying to the health, unless a good house, abundance of good food, good servants, and other necessaries can be obtained. As he had full powers to make whatever changes he thought necessary, he began with these. He also entered into an agreement with the Emperor of Delhi, by which the English became the real governors of Bengal, Orissa, and Behar, while a pension of 1,600,000 rupees a year was to be paid to the descendant of Mir Jaffir, who was called Nabob, but was utterly unable to hold the reins of government. Thus the East India Company of merchants became in reality

merchant princes, ruling three large provinces. Whatever may have been the faults of their rule, the millions under them have never suffered the injustice, oppression, and wrongs by which they were ground down under previous Viceroys and Nabobs.

Lord Clive was soon obliged to return to England by failing health, and he was scarcely treated by his countrymen as he deserved. Many in India were angry because he had laid down good rules for the protection of the country and the natives, and they spared no pains to write false reports of him in books and newspapers, and some who ought to have known better believed these reports; and the name of Clive, which had been so honoured, became a sort of byword among the ignorant for all that was bad and oppressive towards India. Clive had his faults, but he had his virtues also; and by his virtues and great gifts of mind both his countrymen and the natives of India were rescued from great difficulties. All this was forgotten, and people who had never left their English firesides joined in the hue and cry against this man of might, whom many a poor feeble Indian would have rejoiced to see again on his sunny shores, knowing that some sort of justice might be obtained from him. The powerful mind which had borne up under unparalleled circumstances of difficulty sank under the ungrateful

treatment of his countrymen. Lord Clive became subject to distressing fits of melancholy, and in one of these he died by his own hands at the age of forty-nine.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mysore and Hyder Ali.

OUR Tales about India must carry us north, south, east, and west over that great peninsula, according to the events that occur in its various districts, once so constantly at war with each other, now united in one harmonious whole under the strong, beneficent rule of Queen Victoria. While the first five Mogul emperors ruled, the most stirring events were to be found in their camp and court. When the fiery Mahrattas rose against their task-masters, Western India became more important than Delhi, and her captains were to be seen making themselves princes from Tanjore in the south to Rajputana in the north. When the stately ships of Portugal under Vasco de Gama crossed the broad seas, we met them under the waving cocoa-nuts of the Malabar coast, and we have watched the English merchants at Calcutta changing into the great governing body, long known as the East India Company.

But while this change was going on, a strong man's head and hand were making themselves felt in the little kingdom of Mysore, and beyond that in all the neighbouring kingdoms of Malabar, Travancore, Tinnevelly, Tanjore and the Carnatic, and this man's name was Hyder Ali. Hyder's family were originally Punjabis, and his great-grandfather came as a Fakir to Hyderabad. By his religious profession he amassed a little money from the superstitious Hindus, for which his family quarrelled after his death, just as greater people quarrelled about crowns. Very little came to Hyder's grandfather, but his father obtained employment as a soldier, and early lost his life in the disturbances of the time. His widow and her two sons went to live with an uncle. Shabas, the elder brother, at an early age got the command of one thousand men, but Hyder was idle, and cared for nothing but amusement till he was about twenty-seven years of age. About this time he went as a volunteer to assist in besieging one of the strong castles of the Polygars. Perhaps he thought a little spoil, and even a little amusement, might be got by soldiering. However that might be, he took his part so well that he attracted the notice of Nunjiraj, the general and real governor of Mysore, for though there was a Hindu Raja, he was a weak, foolish man, and was entirely guided by Nanjiraj. Hyder Ali was raised to the command of fifty horse and two hundred foot, and

woe betide the unhappy man, woman, or child who should meet Hyder Ali and his robber soldiers! Travellers, villagers, or any one who possessed anything, would be seized by these marauders, and stripped of turban, earrings, bangles or scanty clothing; nothing was spared by Hyder's troopers, only they must give a share of their ill-gotten gains to Hyder himself. He could neither read nor write, but he managed to calculate by memory exactly what was due to him after a foray, and was very proud of his mental arithmetic. His talents soon raised him from the command of hundreds to that of thousands, and his ambition grew with his power.

The Raja of Mysore was anxious to free himself from the thraldom in which he was kept by his minister Nunjiraj, and perceiving Hyder Ali's talents, he endeavoured to avail himself of these to get rid of his too powerful servant; and Hyder Ali, to whom scruples and gratitude were alike unknown, readily joined in a scheme which would advance his interests, though at the expense of his first benefactor. The troops were easily incited to mutiny against Nunjiraj, and to place Hyder by force at their head. Nunjiraj was perhaps glad to retire with his life and a small present, while Hyder said he must have several districts assigned to him for the support of the army, a request to which the feeble Raja immediately acceded.

Hyder Ali now formed an alliance with Lally, a brave

French general, against the English, and obtained some advantage over them; but the Raja of Mysore and the Queen-mother tried very hard to make use of the opportunity the tyrant's absence gave them to get rid of his troublesome yoke, and engaged a Mahratta chief to help them.

When Hyder heard what was going on, he immediately returned to look after his Mysore interests. The Mahrattas were not famed for adherence to their agreements. Hyder soon bribed them to assist him instead of the Raja, but he still found it would be hard work to recover the power he had lost. He was a shameless fellow, for he turned in his need to his first benefactor, whom he had treated so ungratefully. He pretended great sorrow, as he threw himself at the feet of Nunjiraj, at whose house he arrived alone. He said he desired nothing so much as to restore the fallen minister; and if Nunjiraj would only help him with men and money, he promised all his skill as a soldier and all the men he could muster to make the general once more chief man in the kingdom.

Nunjiraj believed him, and lent him men and money, by which Hyder once more got the Raja into his power. He then said: "The state owes me money; pay my debts, and I shall be happy to serve you with my men, or, if you prefer it, I will go away;" but nobody expected he would go away; and the Raja and Nunjiraj

both felt he was too strong for them, and they must take what terms he chose to give. So Hyder made over a certain sum of money to the Raja and a smaller sum to Nunjiraj, and said he would take care of all the rest of the public money, and pay the soldiers and the judges.

Thus Hyder Ali became in reality Raja of Mysore, and his name was heard with dread beyond the Western Ghauts, in Malabar and Travancore, where he tried to force Mahommedanism on the poor Náyars, and cruelly oppressed them; nor was he less feared in the Carnatic, where even the English quailed as the great marauder and his forces appeared in the neighbourhood of Madras. The Mahrattas, reduced by the battle of Panipat, met their match in their own style of warfare in Hyder and his victorious hordes.

Possibly he might have established a second great empire over all India, if a strong and able man had not been Governor-General of India. That man's name was Warren Hastings. He was not a good man, but he had a powerful mind, and it was good for India that some one was able to check Hyder Ali's career of conquest.

When Warren Hastings heard that Hyder Ali, at the head of ninety thousand men, was overrunning the Carnatic with fire and sword, inspiring soldiers and civilians alike with terror, and threatening Madras, he

said that all wars and business must give way to the one great end of compelling Hyder's retreat. Happily, a very able English general, Sir Eyre Coote, was at Calcutta, and he was put in command. His exertions, however, did not at once subdue the warlike Hyder, or his son Tippu Sultan, who, aided by the French, continued to overrun and threaten every province in Southern India.

Hyder Ali never liked the English, and on one occasion refused a proffered alliance with them. He always felt them to be formidable rivals in his attempt to get the power into his own hands, and there was little peace for them while the ambitious old chief lived. On shore he and his French allies obtained the upper hand; but at sea the British sailors held their own, and obtained several advantages over the French fleet. To the horror of the British residents at Madras, who were trembling from day to day lest the ruthless Mysoreans should invade and sack their town, the British Admiral, Sir Edward Hughes, at a most critical time chose to set sail for Calcutta. He had taken offence at something, and said he was responsible to the King, and not to the Madras Government; but it was cruel thus to leave his countrymen in their troubles. Madras never before or since witnessed such a scene of misery as that which followed the departure of Sir Edward Hughes and his fleet. A terrific storm burst on the coast, and many good ships were wrecked, and many precious lives lost,

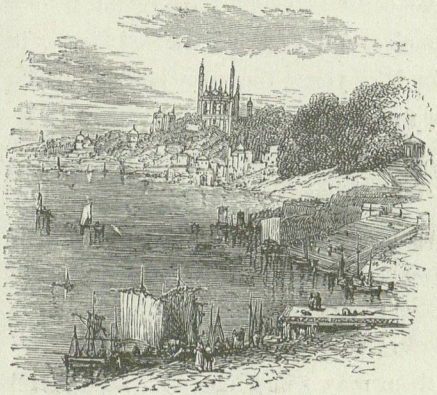
some by the storm, others by famine, for numbers of people had sought refuge in Madras from the dreaded soldiery of Hyder, who were scouring the country. These required food, of which the supply was much reduced, owing to thirty thousand bags of rice having been lost in the gale. Many starving people perished in the streets; it was difficult to find any one to bury the dead, who were carried away by hundreds in carts, and thrown into huge trenches dug for the purpose, as in the time of the plague. Even stout hearts failed before the pitiless soldiers on the one hand, and the scourge of famine on the other.

Relief came only in the death of Hyder, who died in 1782, more than eighty years of age. He possessed great talents, but none of the culture of the Mogul emperors. He was a mighty man of war, but he had not a spark of chivalry or nobleness of character. Even Sivaji fought for his caste and countrymen as well as for himself, but Hyder cared for nothing but himself, and perhaps for his children. To make himself rich and powerful, he fought, and robbed, and murdered, and lived a most inglorious life, though victorious in many a battle-field.

At this time the British possessions in the Madras Presidency were a Jaghir, or a very large tract of land round Madras, and the Northern Circars; in the Bombay Presidency they only possessed the island of Bombay;

in the north they had acquired Bengal, Behar, Orissa, and Benares.

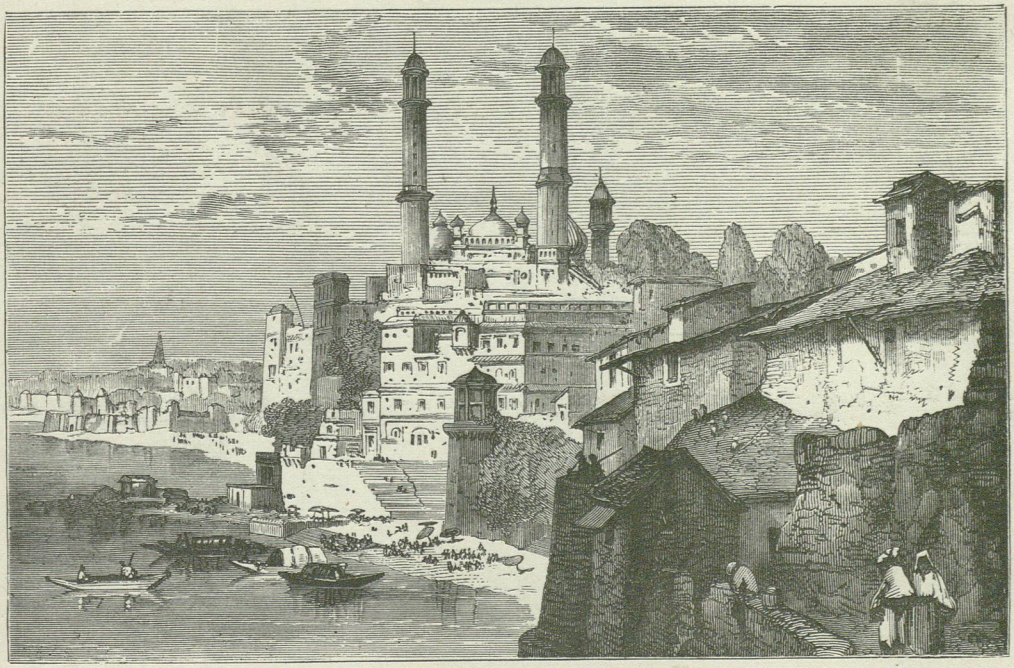
Benares is the most sacred city of the Hindus. Legends say it was built first of gold, and for the sins of the people the gold turned to stone, and then to clay. But the city itself is so holy, according to Hindu belief, that whoever visits it is sure of salvation.



DISTANT VIEW OF BENARES.

Some who have not been so fortunate as to go to Benares in life, request that their ashes may be conveyed thither and thrown into the Ganges after death. Many flights of stone stairs lead from the broad riverside to the narrow streets of the town, where may be met natives from all parts of India, besides Turks,

Tartars, Persians, and Armenians. To mortify the Hindus, Aurangzib built a mosque at Benares on the site of one of their temples, close to the sacred river, where the poor pilgrims think to wash away their sins. The mosque still rears its proud minarets in a conspicuous situation, but still more conspicuous are the signs of heathen worship. As yet neither the harshness of Aurangzib nor the persuasions of Christian missionaries have caused the idols of Benares to be thrown "to the moles and to the bats." It is, as it has been for hundreds of years, the very hotbed of idolatry, the favourite resort of Hindus. Travellers to Benares for the most part have a religious end in view. The place abounds with beggars of every description. Many of these beggars (like begging friars of olden time) belong to religious orders. They profess to work miracles, and to have the power of blessing and cursing, so a gift is often bestowed on them to secure their good-will. Among them may sometimes be found members of respectable Hindu families. They are perhaps rather more intelligent than the people who always remain shut up in their village homes, but they do not make themselves of any real use in the world; and it is to be hoped they will some day comb out their matted hair, put on clean garments, and become like ordinary people, instead of trying, as it seems to us, to look like savages.



AURANGZIB'S MOSQUE, BENARES

CHAPTER XXII.

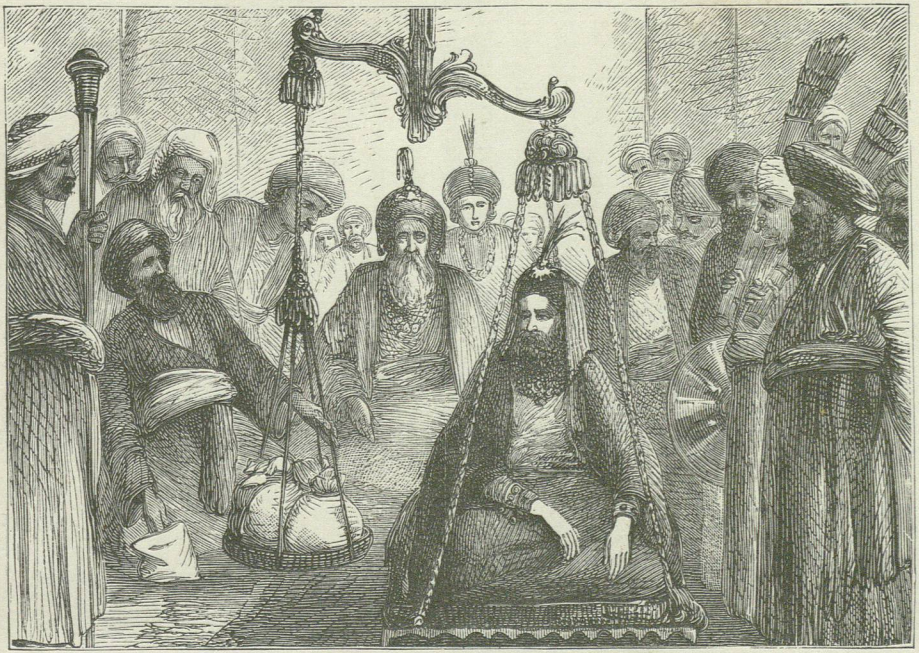
Travancore and Tippu Sultan.

ON the Southern Malabar coast you will find Travancore, perhaps the fairest province of Southern India, and one of the one hundred and fifty-three feudatory states which retain their own native government, while they acknowledge the Queen of England as their Empress. The power of these feudatory states varies. An English gentleman resides at each court, as the representative of the British Government. In Travancore this gentleman is called a Resident, and several other Englishmen have official employment in that country. Measures of importance are talked over with the Resident (who is generally a member of the Madras Civil Service), so that the Raja and his Prime Minister, or Dewan, may know what their allies think about them; and if the Resident thinks the general welfare of the country is being neglected, he points it out to the Raja and his Dewan, as well as to his own Government. Travancore pays an annual tribute to Great Britain for protection, without which protection this beauteous "Land of Charity," as it is sometimes called, would doubtless have

fallen a prey to Hyder Ali's son, Tippu Sultan, and his Mysorean hordes.

Till Hyder's time Travancore had escaped almost untouched, while wars raged beyond her rugged Ghauts. Her customs resembled those of Malabar, and differed in many respects (in some not for the better) from those of other parts of India. Her Náyar soldiery were not aggressive, like the Mahrattas. They could fight sometimes for their homesteads, buried among the waving cocoa-nut trees, but they did not like at any time to leave their forests and streams for the more barren lands beyond the mountain range. Sometimes, perchance, a pilgrim skirted or passed through her dominions, bearing the holy water of the Ganges to the shrine at Cape Comorin, or some weary soul might think to get rid of his sins and sorrows by carrying them far away to the holy city of Benares. Beyond this, the intercourse of Travancore with the outer world was scant indeed. The "charity" for which the land was famous was bestowed on idle Brahmins, for whose support large tracts of land were set apart; and whenever a new Raja began to reign he was expected to have himself weighed, and to give the weight in gold away among the Brahmins who came to assist at the ceremony. To the present day this old custom prevails in Travancore.

The soil of the country is productive, and from early times pepper, cardamoms, and other spices were



WEIGHING THE RAJA OF TRAVANCORE.

exported from Travancore to the west. The principal merchants were Christians. You may remember that Marco Polo saw and conversed with some Christian natives on the Malabar coast who claimed the Apostle St. Thomas as their founder.

Pepper and cardamoms are still among the most important exports of Travancore; but to these in late years abundance of coffee has been added. The soil and climate of the Travancore hills have been found well adapted to the culture of this useful plant, and many a broad acre of jungle which formerly harboured only tigers and their prey has fallen under the coffee-planter's axe, and been converted into a coffee-garden. Here and there a few tea-plants may be seen, but tea is not yet a common article of export from Travancore.

We find here, as in Malabar, Namburi Brahmins who like to live much apart from their fellows, a few Kshatriyas, many Náyars and Elavars, and many Pulayars, who are a very low caste. There are also many tribes on the hills, who wander from place to place living on roots, honey, or on the produce of their bow and arrow. A good many Araans, who were formerly very wild and uncivilised, have become conscientious and real Christians. In India, as well as in England, there are too many who call themselves by Christ's name, but do not follow His teaching.

The Travancore hills and forests formerly abounded

in elephants, tigers, and bisons. The last is an enormous species of cow of a very dark-brown colour, sixteen or eighteen hands high. It is untamable, and no specimen has as yet reached the Zoological Gardens in London. These animals, together with bears, wild dogs, black cheetas, and the beautiful sambur deer, are still to be found and shot in jungles, but not in such profusion as of old. The elephants, when caught young, are tamed, and made use of in many public works. On state occasions, elephants in magnificent trappings take part in the ceremony, and look extremely grand and dignified. Fortunately, most of the wild animals have an inclination to escape when they hear or see a man approaching; but we still have occasionally sad stories of poor travellers seized by man-eating tigers, or trampled on by rogue elephants. The man-eating tiger is supposed to have tasted human blood, and to find it better prey than anything else. The rogue elephant is generally supposed to be a mad beast, driven away from the herd for his misdemeanours.

The reigning Raja of Travancore towards the middle of the last century was Wanje Marthanda Vurma. He was an abler Raja than many of his predecessors had been, and is rather a favourite with the few native historians who have written about Travancore, but he was a cruel, treacherous man. There was and is an

old custom and law in Travancore, by which, when a king or landowner died, his house and property were not inherited by his children, as is usual in Europe and most parts of India, but by his brothers and sisters, or nephews and nieces. Now it happened when Wanje Marthanda Vurma's uncle died that he left two sons and a daughter, and these two sons were rather brave and spirited, and their mother was from the north of India. Perhaps she told them that in other countries sons inherited their fathers' property, for when the Raja died of small-pox these two young men got a large party together, and said they would sit on the throne, if only for three days. Their cousin Wanje Marthanda Vurma found them very troublesome; but, after some fighting, they entered into a treaty with him, and went quietly to their own property to live. Wanje Vurma, however, was not to be satisfied without their death, and he enticed the eldest Thumbi[1] to visit him at a place called Nagercoil. Entering into conversation with the young man, the Raja got possession of his sword by admiring its workmanship, and, seeing him defenceless, he and his servants fell upon him and killed him, though he struggled bravely for life. The second brother was also massacred, and Wanje Marthanda Vurma felt himself secure on the throne; but he had a troublous reign, threatened by foes within and

[1] The Travancore Raja's sons are called Thumbis.

Hyder Ali without. When he died he recommended his heir to be as friendly as possible with the English.

It was in the reign of his successor, Rama Vurma, that Tippu Sultan made a desperate attack on Travancore. He had long cast covetous eyes on this fair province, the possession of which would give him sovereign power from the Mahratta frontier to Cape Comorin. So he drew near its border with a large army in the year 1789, and sent a haughty message to the Raja, accusing him of harbouring his enemies, and desiring him to give up all claim to the forts of Cranganore and Jeycottah, which, Tippu declared, belonged to the Cochin territory, and were tributary to him. But Cochin had long ago made over these places to Europeans, who again had sold them to the Raja of Travancore; and he firmly declined making over these or other parts of his dominions to the Mahommedan tyrant, whose soldiers were even then desolating the country close to the fortified wall which defended the little kingdom of Travancore.

Tippu's first attack on these fortifications was repulsed with loss, and he narrowly escaped with his own life, so well did the Náyar soldiery fight. A warrior of Tippu's character, however, backed by his Mysorean hordes, was not likely to be turned by the first repulse, and, in spite of a remonstrance from the English, who were now preparing for war, he again

attacked the Raja's territories, and possessed himself of Cranganore, desolating the surrounding country.

But Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General, had perceived the danger of Tippu's growing power, and had entered into an alliance against him with the Mahrattas, who were always ready for the field. The Nizam of Hyderabad also joined them, so that Travancore had some very stout friends on the alert, though for the time she was oppressed by Tippu's neighbourhood. Tippu Sultan knew very well that he would find these three allies troublesome foes; and he was anxious to explain away his breach of treaty, or, as he expressed it, "to remove the dust by which the upright mind of General Medows, the Governor of Madras, had been obscured." To this the Governor replied: "I received yours, and I understand its contents. You are a great Prince, and, but for your cruelty to your prisoners, I should add an enlightened one. The English, equally incapable of offering an insult as of submitting to one, have always looked upon war as declared from the moment you attacked their ally, the King of Travancore. God does not always give the battle to the strong nor the race to the swift, but generally success to those whose cause is just. Upon this we depend."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Tippu's Fall and Death.

AFTER this the war raged between the English and Tippu Sultan with varying success for two years. In 1791 the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, determined to take the command of the army himself. He was a brave and able soldier, but it required all his skill and sagacity to outgeneral Tippu, who was his equal in daring, if not in intellect. Tippu was clever, but wild and eccentric, so that when carried away by his passions he sometimes acted like a madman.

The first siege of Seringapatam, the capital of the Sultan's dominions, began in 1792. The town is situated on an island in the River Cavery, and was formerly one of the most important cities of Southern India. Tippu was proud of it, and of his large and handsome palace, the gardens of which contained many rare and beautiful plants, and many pleasant walks shaded with cypress trees. The palace was soon taken, and was converted into a hospital for the sick, and the garden trees were cut down for the siege operations.

Hitherto the varying fortunes of war had been sometimes in favour of the English and their allies, and sometimes in favour of Tippu and his Mysoreans. Now the tide seemed turning in favour of the English, and Tippu, unable to bear the sight of his ruined gardens, became anxious for peace. Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, officers of the English army, were his prisoners, and he now sent them with letters to Lord Cornwallis, expressing a wish for peace. To this request Lord Cornwallis was quite ready to attend, provided Tippu Sultan would agree to the terms offered. These were not very favourable to the Sultan; but his proceedings had so long kept the South of India in a blaze, that it was now felt necessary to keep him from doing more mischief.

At last Tippu, seeing it hopeless to save Seringapatam, agreed to what Lord Cornwallis proposed, namely, that the Sultan should cede half his dominions to the allies, pay a large sum of money, and send two of his sons as hostages till the two first conditions had been complied with. His second and third sons were sent, aged ten and eight years respectively. Poor little fellows, it was rather hard on them to have to go among the strange English; and the lamentations of the ladies of the household are said to have delayed them when the time came for their departure. Crowds of people stood in the fort as they went on their way;

their father himself watched them from the ramparts, and no doubt some tender feeling stirred in his hard nature as he saw the procession marching slowly into the English camp. First there were some men on camels, and standard-bearers carrying small green flags followed by "100 pikemen with spears, inlaid with silver." They were followed by horse and foot soldiers. Lord Cornwallis received the boys kindly at the door of his tent, and led them in. One of their attendants then said: "These children were this morning the sons of the Sultan my master. They must now look up to your lordship as a father!" Lord Cornwallis spoke some kindly words, and said they should not want a father's care. He then presented each boy with a watch, and they left him with brightened countenances.

Tippu Sultan was pleased with the reception his sons had received at the hands of the British; but when it came to paying the promised money and ceding the promised lands, all his angry feelings returned. Nevertheless, lands and money had to be made over, and from that time the British became lords of Malabar, the Baramahal, and the district round Dindigul. The Mahrattas and the Nizam likewise received portions of territory, the former extending their boundary to the River Tungabhadra, and the latter becoming possessor of the country between the Krishna and the Pennar.

The treaty of peace with Tippu Sultan took place in 1792, but his proud spirit rebelled against its terms. When his sons were restored to him, a hope was expressed that more friendly relations would now exist between him and the English; but the Sultan received the message coldly, and doubtless thought only of revenge. In 1798 he sent ambassadors to the Governor of the Isle of France, proposing an alliance against the English.

Now you will remember that England and France were at this time at war with each other, and Lord Mornington, who had succeeded Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General of India, was very naturally alarmed at the idea of two such powerful enemies as the French and Tippu Sultan combining against us in the East. Tippu would have been wiser if he had accepted graciously the friendly expressions of the English, when they restored his sons. Such overtures as he made now could not be trusted, and came too late. War was declared, and Seringapatam again besieged. Tippu was surrounded by flatterers, who told him that the fort was too strong to be taken; and he would not listen to the counsel of one of his best officers, Syed Goffar, who fell in the defence. Tippu spent most of his time with his favourites, and in religious ceremonies, and consulting astrologers; but when at last the city was taken by storm, he fell fighting bravely.

His family, shut up within the palace, were told that if they surrendered immediately, their lives would be safe. Major Allen, with a white flag of truce fastened to a sergeant's pike, was sent to the palace with this message. To reassure the poor frightened inmates, he took off his sword, and placed it in the hands of a native official. At this time Major Allen was not aware that poor Tippu had fallen in the fight, nor was this known to his family. Confusion and fear reigned everywhere. Major Allen was advised by his companions to resume his sword, as they thought treachery was intended, in spite of the flag of truce, the bearer of which ought always to be respected. The gallant officer, however, refused to show this want of confidence, but sent an urgent message to the princes to see him, warning them that he could not long keep back the impatient troops. After a slight delay, he was conducted into the presence of the royal family. It was a sad day for them. Major Allen seems to have been touched by their situation. "The recollection," he says, "of Moizad Dien, whom on a former occasion I had delivered up with his brother as hostages to Marquis Cornwallis, the sad reverse of their fortunes, their fear, which, notwithstanding their struggles to conceal it, was but too evident, excited the strongest emotions of compassion in my mind."

Major Allen now asked for their assent to opening

the palace gates; but they said they could not give this without their father's consent. Poor young fellows, the soldiers were only too impatient to open the gates roughly for themselves without anybody's leave. Major Allen explained to them that their real safety consisted in assent, as he would then place a guard over them and the other inmates of the palace, so that their lives would be secure from attack. After some hesitation the young princes consented to what really could no longer be refused. The gates were opened, and the princes conducted into the presence of General Sir David Baird. Now this gentleman had been, with others of his countrymen, Tippu Sultan's prisoner for nearly three years, and chained to his keeper, a method of treating prisoners which shows Tippu's rude, savage nature. But the kindly Scotchman would never triumph over a fallen foe, and he received the princes with great courtesy.[1]

No one knew at this time that Tippu's wars were over. The palace was searched in vain, and Major Allen was told that the Sultan had last been seen in life at the northern gate of the fort. Thither he went, and there the Sultan's body, wounded in several places,

[1] When Tippu's way of securing prisoners became known at home there was general grief and indignation, but Major Baird's mother, an old Scotch lady, remarked, "Eh, sirs! Pity the man that's gotten our Davie." If this indicates some shortness of temper in Davie's youth, history tells us he became an able and gallant officer in maturer years.

was found beneath a heap of slain. It was buried the next day with military honours.

Tippu Sultan was about fifty years old when he was killed. He was not so able a man as his father, Hyder Ali; indeed, his want of judgment sometimes amounted to madness; but we have seen that he was strong enough to give the English a great deal of trouble. He was possessed with the idea that if he and the French joined together, he could completely overthrow the English power; and so perhaps he might have done, if the French had not had plenty of wars already on their hands.

A descendant of the old Hindu Raja of Mysore, who had been turned out by Hyder Ali, was now restored to the sovereignty; but the English took possession of all Tippu's territory on the Malabar coast, as well as of the district of Coimbatore. The kingdom of Mysore continues nominally under its own Hindu Raja, and an English Commissioner resides at his court to advise and exercise a controlling power, if necessary. The present Maharaja is still a boy, and is receiving a very good education under the guardianship of an English gentleman. With the advantages he enjoys, he ought to turn out the best ruler Mysore has ever had. He is said to be a fine bright boy, quick at his lessons, and fond of cricket and boyish sports.

Mysore is a mountainous country, and contains forests

of teak, blackwood, and other valuable timber. There are many curious solitary hills, called Doorgs, scattered throughout the country. On the tops of the steepest and least accessible of these, the petty chiefs used to build forts, some of which are still in good preservation. One of Mysore's chief towns is Bangalore, a favourite resort of Europeans in India. It is situated on a table-land 2,000 feet above the sea; so the air during the greater part of the year is quite cold and bracing, and those whose lot is cast on the hot plains are very glad to get, now and then, a holiday in the cool climate.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Decline of the Mahratta Power.

IN 1798 Marquis Wellesley became Governor-General of India. He found the country a scene of anarchy and confusion, and devised a scheme for reducing it to order, which met, like many great schemes, with a good deal of opposition. His plan was rather a bold one for that period. It was briefly this, that each native prince should retain in his service a British force to assist him to keep order at home, and to preserve his frontier from the attacks of foreigners. But if such a force

were received, the British would have a right to remonstrate, if they saw the country going to ruin through the crimes of its rulers. They would have a right to interfere if either chieftain or people provoked foreign invasion.

Although all the petty chiefs would have been glad to accept British assistance when their subjects or their enemies were troublesome, several were unwilling to accept British advice or control. The Governor of Oude accepted our assistance, and promised to listen to our advice, a promise his successors did not keep. The Raja of Tanjore accepted a pension, and resigned his right to govern in favour of the British. For some time the Mahratta princes would not listen to Lord Wellesley's proposals; but in 1803 the Peishwa agreed to them. To this he was partly driven by a great defeat he had just sustained at the hands of Holkar.

The last of the Peishwas, Baji Rao Raghunath, never grasped the reins of government very securely. He succeeded his childless cousin, Madu Rao, in 1796, and was then young, handsome, and accomplished, with a pleasing manner, which interested people in his behalf. Too many found, to their cost, that this polished exterior covered a revengeful, cunning, and deceitful character. A large party were anxious to prevent his becoming Peishwa. Some were inclined to put an end to the power of this dynasty, and to bring the Raja

(a descendant of Sivaji) out of his retirement at Sattara. The state of affairs as regarded the Rajas had long been absurd. Though they were kept like state prisoners, no Peishwa thought his title secure unless confirmed by the Raja.

Baji Rao's chief opponent was a powerful Brahmin, named Nana Farnawis, who had always been his enemy. After various plots and counter-plots, however, matters were arranged by Baji Rao becoming Peishwa, and Nana Farnawis his prime minister. To him the young Peishwa professed the utmost devotion in the following words: "In the presence of my God, and from the inmost recesses of my heart, have I rooted out every vestige of any former act; let all your future conduct be guided by the principles of good faith. I will never injure you or yours by word or deed, by any inward thought or outward act; neither will I allow any other person to do so; on this point I will be inflexible, and will pay no attention to the suggestions of others. I will not allow your reputation to be sullied; and should any one attempt to instil anything of the kind into my breast, I will point him out to you."

These were fair promises of favour, but Baji Rao, in his secret treacherous soul, had determined to ruin the old minister. For this purpose he sought the aid of a bold, wicked man in Scindia's camp, whose name was

Ghatgey Rao. Nana Farnawis, with a promise of safe conduct, was induced to pay Scindia a visit; he soon found he was a prisoner, while the rough soldiers of Ghatgey plundered his house and those of many of his friends in Poona. Treachery of this sort was very common among the Mahrattas. The wonder is how anybody ever trusted them.

Baji Rao had now got rid of his minister, and the next thing was to lessen the power of his vassal, Doulat Rao Scindia, whose force of character, together with a strong army, enabled him to dictate in some affairs to his master. But Scindia was not easily to be put out of the way, and after a time, finding Baji Rao's intrigues troublesome, he released Nana Farnawis, as the best way of keeping the Peishwa in order. Ere long the minister was reinstated, and an outward show of friendship restored between him and the Peishwa; but Nana Farnawis knew better than to trust again to the professions of Baji Rao. Nana Farnawis was a great statesman, and his death in 1800 greatly weakened the Mahratta power; even Baji Rao, who had been so jealous of his influence, sighed for the old minister's wise counsel when strong enemies attacked him.

Holkar was another thorn in the side of the Peishwa. The British had offered Baji Rao protection and a subsidiary force, but this for some time he declined. At last,

sorely pressed by Holkar, he reconsidered their offer. Jeswant Rao Holkar was now chief of that family. He was a bold, unscrupulous soldier, a favourite with his men, and the dreaded scourge of his enemies, but his character had no redeeming touch of chivalry or softness, such as sometimes sheds a light on the dark pages of history. In 1802 Holkar met the combined armies of the Peishwa and Scindia near Poona, and there obtained a complete victory over them. The Peishwa fled to Mhar, and despatched a letter asking the protection of the British power. From Mhar he proceeded to Bassein, where he was met by Colonel Close, the British Resident at his court. The treaty which the Governor-General had long desired to make with Baji Rao was now concluded. A British force was to be maintained by the Peishwa to assist him in all defensive warfare; and in future negotiations with other powers the British Government were to be consulted.

I do not suppose Baji Rao would have entered into the treaty of Bassein, if he had not felt himself powerless in the hands of his vassals, especially of Holkar, who had captured and was plundering Poona. The vassals of course objected to a treaty which crippled their power. A general war broke out, Holkar and Scindia were daring soldiers, but they had now to contend against English troops under Lord Lake and

General Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington). Before long Scindia was glad to make peace, and become a party to the defensive alliance formed between the British and various native powers. Scindia ceded all his territory between the Jumna and the Ganges to the British and their allies, and received Major Malcolm as British Resident at his court.

But Jeswant Rao Holkar would not yet give up his liberty to wage war as he pleased, and he tried hard to persuade Scindia to break off his alliance with the British. In this, however, he failed. At one time he had rather coveted an alliance with the British for himself, but not on such terms as they could offer or accept. He was at heart a freebooter, and, as he himself expressed it, "his country and his property were on the saddle of his horse; to whatever side the reins of his brave warriors should be turned, the whole of the country in that direction should come into his possession." These were bold words to address to Lord Lake, and they were accompanied by some extravagant proposals, to which the general replied that it was not customary with the English to boast of their power, but that Holkar would find, in the event of a rupture, he had much overvalued his own. If he expected complete success in the war which followed this attempt at negotiation, he was mistaken. But

it was not without many a reverse to our arms, many a march and counter-march, that we succeeded in bringing the haughty chief to terms.

The weary struggle might have gone on longer, but for the return of Lord Cornwallis to India, with instructions to make peace at almost any price. To carry out his instructions was not then very difficult, for the British arms were victorious, and the feudatory chiefs were glad to listen to proposals they would not formerly have accepted. Holkar retired to his own territory in Malwa, where the last years of his life were passed in hopeless insanity. A regency was appointed during the minority of his little son, Mulhar Rao Holkar; but the regent, Tulsi Bai, was a very wicked woman, and probably the country had never before suffered so much from bribery, violence, and corruption, as it did in her time.

Baji Rao, by his alliance with the English, was restored to power; but his great desire was to exercise that power after his own vicious inclination. He was utterly false and unprincipled, and the faults of his character were increased by his intimacy with Trimbakji Danglia. This man was of low origin, but had made himself useful to the Peishwa at the time of his flight from Poona, and had continued by flattery and other arts to gain an influence over him. He often told the Peishwa that what former Peishwas had won

by their swords, Baji Rao would regain by his wisdom. Trimbakji scrupled at no crime by which his interests could be advanced, and was hated and feared by his more respectable countrymen. The British alliance could not be agreeable to a man of this kind, being some little restraint on the crimes and follies of his master and himself. Agents were sent to the courts of Scindia and Holkar, and even to the wild Pindaris, for the purpose of forming a secret alliance against the British, and instigating an outbreak, if opportunity should offer.

The Pindaris were a class of the lowest freebooters who lived solely by plunder. It was the regular custom of these marauders to assemble as soon as the heavy annual rains of the west coast had ceased, and when the flooded rivers had resumed their usual flow to start off for some peaceful village, where by fire and sword and torture they would extort all they could from the wretched inhabitants. An invasion of the Mahratta soldiery was bad enough, but the Pindaris were a still more fearful scourge. So they were not very respectable allies for Baji Rao. But any respectable person was rejected, or got rid of, or ill-treated by him and his favourite Trimbakji.

At last, however, they went so far as to cruelly murder the minister of the Gaekwar of Baroda, who had been sent to settle some claims on "chout" put

forward by the Peishwa. This minister, whose name was Gangadhar Shastri, came under the special safe-conduct of the British Government. Baji Rao and his minister did not find the Shastri so pliable as they had hoped, and being affronted by his firm bearing in several matters, they determined on his death, professing at the same time the utmost friendship. He was invited to join the Peishwa in a pilgrimage to Punderpore, a very holy place in Hindu estimation. One day, after he had dined with the Peishwa, he was invited by Trimbakji to meet them at the temple in the evening. He had been warned of the danger, and at first he declined the proposal. But he was over-persuaded, and the agreeable manners of Baji Rao had thrown him off his guard. He went to the temple, and there saw and talked with the deceitful prince and his companion. On his way home he was assassinated in the street, and cut to pieces. The crime among the Hindus was looked upon as a hideous one, for the murdered man was a Brahmin, and the place where the dark deed was done was to them holy ground.

The British Government were indignant at the insult offered them in the murder of an innocent man who was under their protection, and who was the minister of their ally the Prince of Baroda.

The voice of the people declared the real murderer

to be Trimbakji, and they insisted on his being given up to them. He was confined in the fort of Tanna. His master doubtless deserved confinement as much as he did, but it was more difficult to bring the crime home to him.

Baji Rao spared no pains in trying to release his favourite from prison, and the escape was very cleverly contrived in the following manner. The English, naturally anxious to keep so important a prisoner securely, placed over him a guard of English soldiers only. Natives might have been tempted to convey messages between the prisoner and his master. But the stolid sentry, as he kept his silent watch, little dreamt that Trimbakji was being instructed in his hearing how to elude him. Every day a stable boy passed singing carelessly in Mahratti, as he exercised his master's horse. The song must have been music indeed in Trimbakji's ears, for it told him friends were at hand to aid him, if he could but scale the wall. Vigilance was wanting in the guard, and a curious disguise of bamboo wicker-work was provided for Trimbakji. Field labourers use this covering in rainy weather. It is like a large basket, and covers the head and most of the body, but is fastened so as to leave the arms free. On a dark night at the beginning of the rainy season, Trimbakji went as usual to bathe, and having taken off his clothes, he scrambled through

a small window, near which his friend had placed the basket. The fort gates were still open, and who was to suspect that under the basket-work walked the clever, wicked Trimbakji, instead of a poor workman? When the sentry bethought him that his prisoner was rather long over his bath, and went to look for him, the bird had flown.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Gaekwars.

IT has been mentioned already that Gangadhar Shastri, the victim of Trimbakji and the Peishwa, was the minister of the Gaekwar, or Prince of Baroda. The Gaekwar family rose to power in the reign of Raja Saho, the grandson of the famous Sivaji. The word Gaekwar means a herdsman. Many an Indian prince traces his origin to the herdsman caste. You have read of the cowherd who became Zamorin, or "Lord of the Rajas" in Malabar, and of Holkar, who took care of his uncle's flock; but there is no romantic tale regarding the rise of the Baroda Gaekwars. The founder of the dynasty was a bold soldier, named Damaji, and he was succeeded by his nephew, Pilaji. In the general scramble for wealth and power, this man

succeeded in adding to the fortune and honours of the family. He was made chief minister in the province of Guzerat, and received a title signifying that he was "Leader of the Sovereign's Tribe." Of course he had many enemies. Who had not in those times? One of his enemies, named Abi Singh, pretended to wish for a treaty of peace. The men sent to arrange this treaty were told to murder Pilaji. One evening they sat talking till dusk, and then took leave, but, on pretext of having forgotten something important, one man returned, and went forward to whisper in Pilaji's ear. In a moment he stabbed the listener to the heart.

Abi Singh did not gain much by his treachery, for Pilaji's brother and son came with their troops, and occupied many important places in Guzerat. In 1751 Tara Bai invited Damaji Gaekwar (not the founder of the family, but another of the same name) to save her grandson, Ram Raja, from the increasing power of the Peishwa. The latter, finding Damaji rather a troublesome foe in the field, enticed him by fair promises into a dangerous place, where without scruple he took him prisoner. Damaji, by promising to give the Peishwa half his territory and a large amount of tribute, obtained his liberty. He died about 1769, leaving four sons, who immediately began to dispute regarding the succession.

Syaji Gaekwar, the eldest son, was an idiot, so his youngest brother, Fatih Singh, wished to get him elevated to the "gadi," or throne, and himself be appointed minister, whereby all real power would be in his hands. The Peishwa consented to this arrangement, which of course was very much disliked by Govind Rao, another brother, younger than Syaji, but the son of the first-married wife. The Peishwa was rather glad to foment the family quarrels, hoping thereby to lessen the influence of this powerful tributary. On Fatih Singh's death in 1789, his younger brother Manaji stepped into his place, taking charge of poor senseless Syaji. To this Govind Rao objected. He said, next to Syaji he was the elder brother, and begged the Peishwa to make him regent. Manaji, however, by paying a large sum of money, kept the guardianship of Syaji in his hands.

The Gaekwars of Baroda have not been remarkable as a race for ability or worth; indeed, among them there have been some very great scoundrels; perhaps the greatest was the last, who, among many other hideous crimes, attempted to poison Colonel Phayre, the British Resident at his court. Poison was given to the servants, who were bribed to mix it in Colonel Phayre's sherbet. Fortunately, the last dose gave the sherbet so unpleasant a taste that the Resident did not drink it.

In consequence of his many misdeeds, the Gaekwar was dethroned, and is now in captivity at Madras. The "gadi" has been bestowed on a native prince, who is young enough to receive a good education. Let us hope he will be wise enough to profit by it.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The End of the Peishwa's Dynasty

IN 1817 the Marquis of Hastings became Governor-General of India. On making inquiry into the state of the country, he found the Pindaris giving great trouble and anxiety to all the peaceably-disposed people. Associated with the Pindaris was another band of plunderers, the Patans, a tribe of Afghan origin. They were generally better armed than their lawless brethren; but any man who could beg, borrow, or steal a horse and spear was welcomed by each band of robbers, and their numbers were rapidly increasing.

The Peishwa and Scindia professed themselves willing to aid the British in putting down and dispersing the Patans and Pindaris; but the Peishwa in reality increased his army in the hope of turning it against his allies. His real designs were not quite unknown to

Mr. Elphinstone, the Resident at Poona, to whom the Peishwa spoke in his usual silky manner with warm expressions of regard. Meanwhile he was endeavouring to find an assassin who should take the Resident's life during his morning ride. But Gokla, his minister, would have nothing to do with this plan. To corrupt the sepoys he was quite prepared, but not to take in cold blood the life of a man who had once befriended him.

A great Hindu feast, called the Dassara, is observed annually about the month of October. It was after this feast that the Pindaris and Patans generally set out on their forays; and the Peishwa had promised that his troops should then join the British in dispersing the brigand bands. But the Resident and his advisers had reason to suspect that the Peishwa's troops were ready to attack instead of aiding the British. Several natives gave them warning of the Peishwa's treachery. The Resident had not a strong force with him in Poona, but he knew that European troops were marching as fast as they could towards him, and that it was best to keep quiet till their arrival, unless in self-defence he might be obliged to fight. The last days of October, 1817, were anxious ones for those in power at Poona. On the night of the 29th there were ominous sounds in the Peishwa's camp, unheard by many quiet sleepers in Poona, but listened to with intense anxiety by those in

the Residency. Towards morning the noise and bustle died away. In Baji Rao's camp some were for an attack at once on the British, and others were inclined to wait for a larger force. And their numbers were increasing every day. But they did not know how near the European regiments were approaching, or but few English would have been found alive in Poona on the morning of the 30th. On that day the European regiments arrived.

During all this time the Peishwa declared no open war; and one English officer, Captain Ford, was quite surprised when an old native, called Moro Dixit, came to him and said: "If you will only not bear arms against us in the coming war, your life is safe, and your family will be protected." Of course Captain Ford replied, "he should do his duty as a British officer, whether he saved or lost his life." Then Moro Dixit said: "Well, if we are victorious I will try to save your family, and if you are victorious will you try to help mine?" To this Captain Ford readily agreed; and it so happened, in the battle of Kirkee, which was fought a few days later, that Moro Dixit was killed by a shot from a gun commanded by his friend Captain Ford. It is to be hoped Captain Ford after the battle remembered his promise.

On the afternoon of November 5th, the Resident heard that the enemy was approaching, and preparing for an attack. An eye-witness from a neighbouring hill

thus describes their approach: "It was towards the afternoon of a very sultry day; there was a dead calm, and no sound was heard except the rushing, the trampling, and the neighing of horses, and the rumbling of the gun-wheels. The effect was heightened by seeing the peaceful peasantry flying from their work in the fields, the bullocks breaking from their yokes, the wild antelopes, startled from sleep, bounding off, and then turning for a moment to gaze on this tremendous inundation, which swept all before it, levelled the hedges and standing corn, and completely overwhelmed every ordinary barrier as it moved." This force was commanded by Bapu Gokla, a brave soldier, with many generous feelings, one who was worthy of living and dying in a better cause than that of his cunning, deceitful master. Even when all was ready for battle, Baji Rao was afraid of what he had done in not keeping faith with the English, and sent a message to Gokla not to fire the first shot; but Gokla, before his master's message reached him, had ordered his guns to open fire, and so began the battle of Kirkee, which was fought very desperately on both sides, and ended in the defeat of the Mahrattas.

The Peishwa fled to his friend Trimbakji Danglia, and wandered about for some time, trying in vain to get the English to treat with him. The time for treaty with such a man was past. No reliance could be placed on his

word; while professing peace he had made every preparation for war, had attacked his allies, hoping to find them unprepared, and had issued cruel orders for the destruction of their lives and property. The life of one man only was to be spared if the Mahrattas were victorious. He was Dr. Coats, who had attended Baji Rao in a long illness, and had been useful to many people around. One spark of gratitude seems to have existed in the Peishwa's dark and deceitful heart.

Baji Rao had by his treachery brought ruin on himself. The Marquis of Hastings annexed his dominions to British India, but the annexation was not effected without trouble. The forts of Singarh and Purandar, though strong, as Mahratta forts generally were, did not make a stout resistance. But some romance attaches to the capture of Wassota, where two young cavalry officers were confined, as well as the wives and families of some of the Indian princes in the British camp. Cornets Hunter and Morrison had been made prisoners by Gokla at the beginning of the war; and the commander of the fort of Wassota was specially charged by this brave native officer to treat his prisoners with kindness and courtesy. Upon the whole they were well treated during their captivity; but it was a very tedious time for them, during which they knew stirring events were going on around, although particulars were not suffered to penetrate the prison walls. The fort of Wassota was

surrounded by mountains and jungles, through which any troops except the Mahrattas must have found it difficult to make their way. But the reduction of the Mahratta country had to be completed before peace and order could be restored; and over many a hill and dale General Pritzler caused his artillery to be brought, with an amount of labour which can hardly be imagined by those who have not travelled in those almost pathless regions. The commander of the fort refused to surrender. Perhaps he thought the European officers, knowing their brethren were confined within, and the Indian princes, knowing their wives were there, would alike at the last moment give up the idea of bombarding. But it was not so. With anxiety for the fate of their friends the attack began, and lasted for twenty hours, when the commander capitulated.

The British officers had not known at first what the firing meant, and it was with great joy, you may be sure, that they found themselves released from their dreary prison.

In 1818 Baji Rao became a pensioner of the British Government, with an allowance for life from them of eight lacs of rupees a year. Many people thought this a great deal too much for a man who had behaved as he had done. The pension was given for life only; but, many years after, Baji Rao's adopted son thought he had a right to succeed to it. The British Government

thought differently, and this difference of opinion, together with some other matters, led to some very serious and sad events in India, which are known as the Indian Mutiny; but in these Tales I do not intend to go beyond the annexation of the treacherous Peishwa's dominions, of which Mr. Elphinstone became Commissioner, or Governor. His justice and moderation soon won for him golden opinions from Europeans and natives alike, and something like peace and order began to reign in the disturbed Mahratta country.

Meantime the Pindaris had been dispersed and subdued. Many fell by the sword, but many also surrendered, and were put in the way of becoming peaceful citizens. Their old power was destroyed, and the villagers, finding themselves supported by regular troops, no longer fled in panic, but rose against their oppressors. Finally their most daring chief, Chitu, fled to the recesses of the Vindhya Mountains. Fierce and bloodthirsty, he would have nothing to do with terms of peace, but while he lived there was still a rallying-point for his wild companions. He was pursued, but pursuit was unnecessary, a tiger, or some other forest-king, had already subdued the wretched man, whose horse, clothes, and sword were found all stained with blood. With Chitu's death the Pindari power received a final check.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How the English Govern India.

THIS will be a very dry little chapter. If it came at the beginning of the Tales, I am afraid everybody would have been inclined to throw the book aside; but now that you have heard a little of how the English came to India, and how in various ways their power has grown and strengthened there, it may be just as well for you to know a little about their way of governing India.

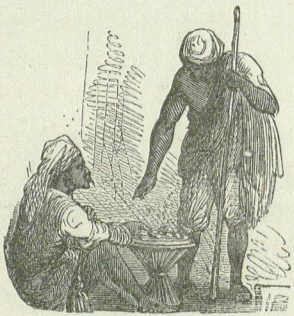
The three chief seats of government are Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. At Calcutta the Viceroy, or Governor-General of India, resides, and he is assisted by a Council in making laws and regulations for the government of British India. There are Governors at Madras and Bombay, who are also advised and assisted by a Council. The whole country is divided into Collectorates, each under a magistrate, who may best be described as a sort of local governor, and who has a very great deal to do, for his authority generally extends over a tract of land of from three to ten thousand square miles.

If a murder or any other great crime is committed, the collector must inquire into the case, and take care that the criminals are brought before the judge. If a new bridge, hospital, school, or road is required, the want is made known to the collector, who must see whether it is really worth while to begin the work, and whether there will be public money enough to carry it on. Public money is derived from taxes, and the chief tax in India is the land-tax. Government is the great land-owner, possessing the immense estate called India, and the people are the tenants, their rent the taxes. This rent or tax the collector "collects" or receives. Poor people at home sometimes get behind-hand with their rent, and poor people in India do the same, and beg very hard for a little delay or a little reduction, and the collector must inquire whether it be through laziness and idleness or a bad season that such petitions are made, and deal with them accordingly. Such inquiries are often best made by travelling through the district, and many pleasant journeys are thus made. At each stage the Tahsildars bring in their report. Each collectorate is divided into small portions or Taluks, under Tahsildars, or petty magistrates; under them again are head-men, who settle small disputes in the villages; these officials also gather information for the collector regarding any crime that may have been committed, the wants of the country, and the general condition of the

people. It is of great importance to find trustworthy men for these posts.

Each district has one or two European judges, who try the cases committed by the collector, and hear appeals from the smaller courts.

For a long period after our conquest in India, the natives only held subordinate appointments under European gentlemen; but now any native who passes the East India Civil Service Competitive Examination can rise like other civilians to the highest appointments. But the moral standard of India has for ages been lower than that of Europe, and though people may pass very good competitive examinations, they want moral as well as mental power to enable them worthily to fill positions of great trust. The Hindu civilians, however, have as yet had but a short trial.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

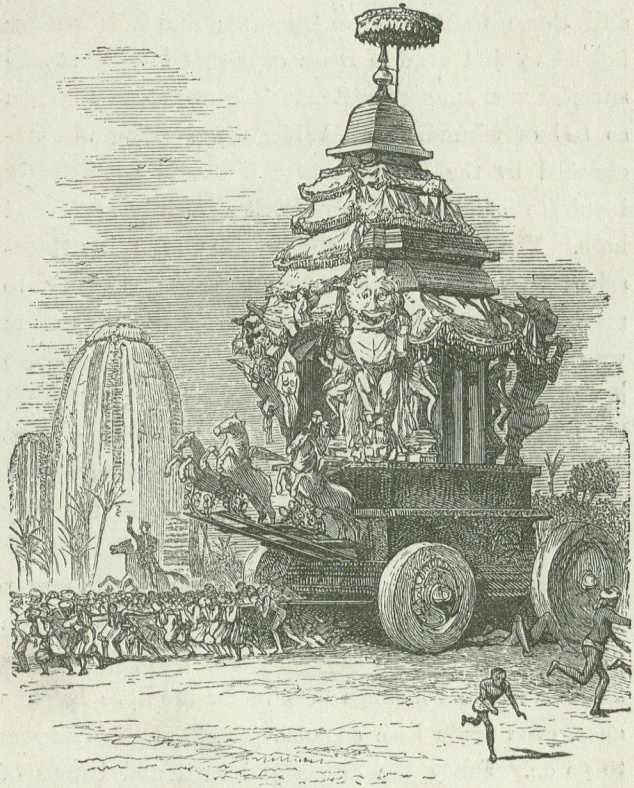
The Religious System of the Hindus.

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile;
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strewn;
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone."

IN judging of the moral condition of India, we must not forget that her people have been for ages "tied and bound by the chain" of a mighty superstition. Many Europeans make too little allowance for a people whose religion does much to develop evil, and little to develop such latent sparks of good as may exist in "God's image darkened and defiled."

There are three chief Hindu deities: Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer. These three are worshipped in different parts of the country under various names; and besides these three the Hindus worship thousands of so-called gods, or demi-

gods. Rivers, trees, bulls, fishes, birds, snakes, and stones come in for a share of adoration.



CAR OF JUGGERNAUT.

Brahma is represented with four feet and four hands, riding on a swan; Vishnu as a blue man riding on a

snake; the blood-thirsty Siva with three eyes riding on a bull, covered with ashes, and his son Ganesa with an elephant's head. The actions of these monsters are still worse than their appearance; and it is strange indeed to find even in these days that intelligent and superior men among the Hindus can commend a system so full of wickedness. While its working was unchecked by the British power, if it did not actually inculcate suicide and murder, it certainly applauded both. You have read of Hindu widows burning themselves with their dead husbands, hoping thereby to reach heaven. Among the brave, heroic Rajputs (whom we cannot but admire in their struggle for independence) it was quite common to kill little baby girls; because if these little girls grew up, it would be thought a great dishonour if they remained unmarried, and an almost equal dishonour if they married a person in the very least degree beneath their fathers' rank, and also because the marriage ceremonies were so expensive that a family was almost ruined by them. So there were sore hearts in Rajputana when a baby girl was born, for fathers and mothers had feelings of love for the little helpless ones, even while base customs permitted these horrors to go on. Fancy the dukes and earls and barons of Europe having their baby girls killed, because they might not, when they grew up, be able to marry dukes and earls and barons.

I must, however, say for poor Malabar and Travancore, that though they had some very bad customs of their own, I never heard that the Namburi Brahmins burnt their widows, or sacrificed their female children.

To do the Mahommedans justice, they were as much shocked as the Europeans were at some of the idolatrous practices of Hindustan. In some respects their religion is better than the idolatry of the heathen. They worship one great and glorious God, but they have almost deified their false prophet Mahommed, and his blood-thirstiness equals that imputed to the goddess Kali.

In these debased religious beliefs we find the secret of the low moral standard of the natives of India; for if the gods of India are false to their word, selfish, licentious, thievish, and murderous, is it surprising that there is perjury and injustice and wickedness throughout the land? It is true that in their Dharma Shastra, or code of laws, many very good moral precepts are to be found about honesty and truth, and such things; but they have never had before their eyes the life of one who perfectly fulfilled the Law—the God-Man Jesus Christ—and have never experienced the regenerating power of the word and Spirit of God.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Missionaries.

WHILST wars and rumours of wars were heard over India, while the lust of gold and power absorbed the minds of leading natives and foreigners, some few persons—too few, alas—looked with sorrow on the people wholly given to idolatry, and longed to do something for their spiritual benefit. First there was Francis Xavier, who came with some of the early Portuguese adventurers. While they sometimes fought with and sometimes made friends with the natives, seeking wealth and honour and glory, he sought for the priceless jewels of which God says: "They shall be Mine." There are many great and grievous errors in the religion of the Roman Catholics, but I hope some of the poor people who were taught by Xavier learnt something about Jesus and His great love in dying for sinners, and dwelt more on that blessed truth than on the errors which have crept into their religion. Had all Roman Catholics been like Xavier, and had all Protestants been like Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau,

who sailed for India from Denmark in 1705, India had before this "stretched out her hands unto God."

The first Protestant missionaries were sent to India by the King of Denmark, and in 1706 they landed at Tranquebar, on the south-eastern coast of the peninsula. They met with many who opposed their desire to tell the sweet story of old among the heathen, and they had to give much time and trouble and attention to learning the languages of the East, without which they could not be of use to the ignorant heathen. They had no nicely-bound, nicely-printed grammars and dictionaries to help them. They had to make these for themselves; but industry and energy soon conquered these difficulties. Far more difficult was it for them to make the heathen see the beauty and value of the Christian religion, as compared with their own hideous errors. And this difficulty arose partly because many so-called Christians lived so little like Christians that the poor natives were inclined to say, as their countrymen had said to Sir Thomas Roe: "Christian religion, devil religion; Christian much drink, Christian much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others." Alas that such things should be!

But the lives of such men as Ziegenbalg, Plutschau, and Swartz, who came out a few years later, were not spent in vain. They were blessed with many converts, and the heathen and Mahommedan, and

even the careless Christian, were roused by these "living epistles." You have read of Hyder Ali, who made Southern India tremble, who himself feared neither God nor man. Yet even he was touched by what he heard of the single-hearted Swartz; and when the Government of Madras wished to treat with him, he said he would receive no one but Swartz as their ambassador. The missionaries had of course kept as far as possible from the din of war and the ambitious schemes of those who were fighting against each other; but when Swartz was begged by the Governor of Madras to undertake this mission, he could no longer refuse, feeling that as a peacemaker at such a time he would be acting truly as a disciple of the Prince of Peace.

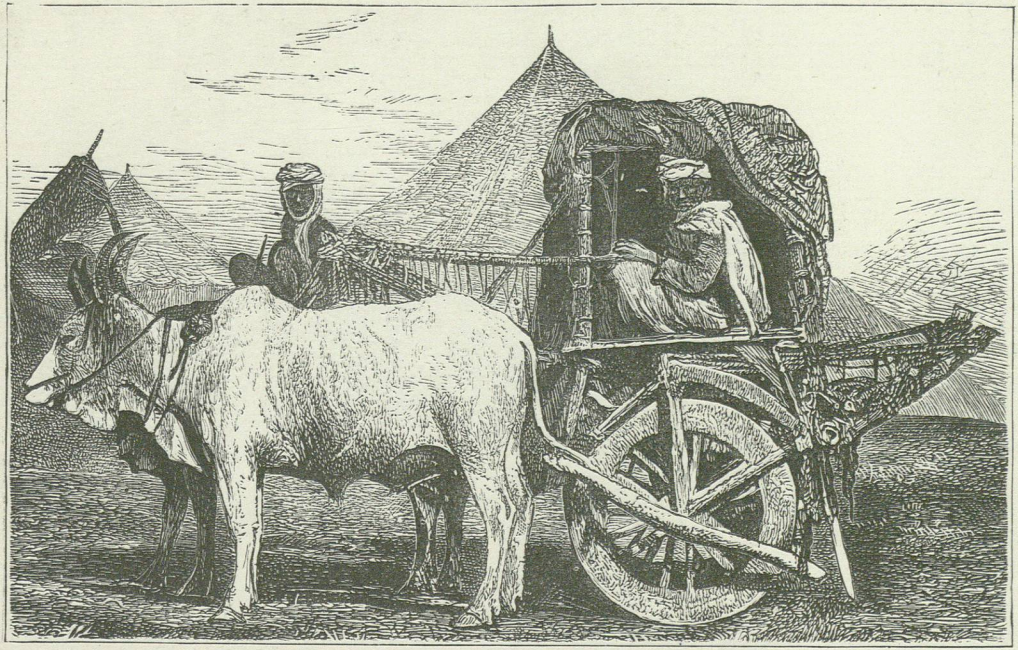
The European Christians in India had not behaved well to the missionaries; yet, strange to say, in their hour of peril, a missionary only could stem the torrent of ruthless Hyder's anger. The long journey from Tranquebar to Mysore was taken by Swartz; and it would be difficult to find a greater contrast than between the two men who met and talked over the affairs on which depended the lives of thousands. The particulars of that conversation are not known. But Swartz pursued his homeward journey under Hyder's special safe-conduct. All officials on the road received the order to "permit the venerable Father

Swartz to pass unmolested, and show him respect and kindness, for he means no harm to my government."

These feelings of regard, however, did not prevent Hyder's overrunning Tanjore, where Swartz was labouring. Then again the authorities who had looked coldly, if not with actual opposition, on the missionary turned to him in their extremity. It was necessary to supply the town of Tanjore with provisions for a siege. But the country people refused their grain, or any help whatever without immediate payment, and money for large supplies could not immediately be procured. The Raja and the British officers implored Swartz to persuade the natives around to help them in their need, on a promise of future payment. And Swartz sent letters by his native Christians to all parts of the country, telling the people if they would give help now they should certainly be paid when better times came; and immediately hundreds of bullock-carts with stores of grain were sent to the needy capital. The East India Company had foolishly and blindly opposed the work of missionaries in India. They thought that the heathen might not like people who spoke bravely against idol worship and many bad customs, and that it would interfere with their trade and comfortable settlement in the country. That people calling themselves Christians should

have such thoughts is very sad, and how false these thoughts were, the anecdotes I have told you about Swartz must show. Few persons admire real Christianity more than the natives of India. Only here and there are they persuaded to embrace it; but their respect for it, when shown in the lives of true Christians, is like that of King Agrippa for Saint Paul. Their own religion is utterly corrupt and bad, though here and there a very faint glimmering of truth may be found in it.

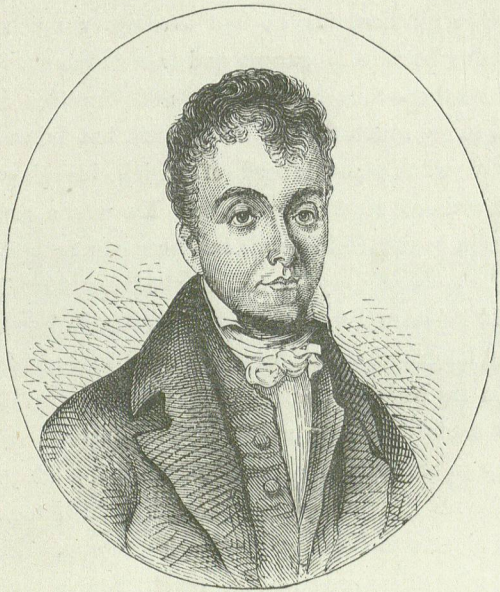
The first English missionaries were Carey, Marshman, and Ward. Carey was a shoemaker, but as he sat at work one day, he thought of the millions who knew nothing of the Saviour's unsearchable riches, and he longed to go and teach them. It seemed unlikely that his wish would ever be realized. Marco Polo in his journey to Cathay, or Vasco de Gama in his adventurous voyage round the Cape, had not greater difficulties to strive with than Carey, Marshman, and Ward had on their way to their mission work. When at last they found themselves at the Danish settlement of Serampore, their arrival must have seemed little short of a miracle. They had to take refuge with the Danes, because the East India Company would not allow them at that time to attempt to convert the natives in their dominions. Amidst many trials they laid the foundation in Bengal of a Native Christian



INDIAN BULLOCK CART.

Church; and as time wore on the great opposition to the spread of Christianity wore away.

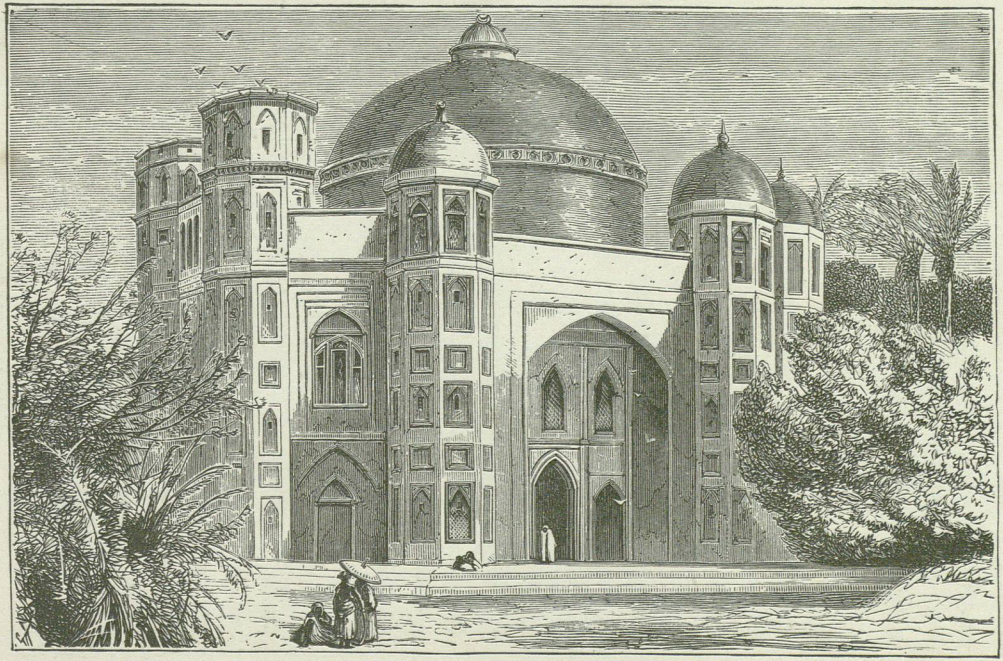
Among those most anxious to make known the blessings of Christianity to the heathen was Henry Martyn. He was one of the Company's chaplains,



HENRY MARTYN.

who had been fired by hearing of Carey's works, and anxiously desired to become a missionary. Yet it was with many a pang that he set sail for India. He was often ill, and often in low spirits, and had dear friends

he did not like to leave, and his heart almost failed him as he "thought of the roaring seas which would soon be rolling between him and all that was dear to him on earth." But Martyn was a hero—courageous, and devoted to his Captain. So he sailed for India in 1805, and there laboured for more than six years. Like other missionaries, he had to employ much time in learning Eastern languages, and translating the Scriptures into those tongues. He was not permitted during his life to see much fruit of his labours, but he was one of those who planted seed of which his short life passed without seeing the flower. He was a constant sufferer in health and spirits; but he never turned aside from the path of duty he had marked out for himself. In 1810 he started for Persia, to improve his knowledge of that language, which is much used by the Mahommedans in Northern India, and also because failing health made a change needful. This last voyage and journey seems to have been one of the happiest periods of Martyn's life. On board the ship which took him from Calcutta to Bombay, he met Mountstuart Elphinstone, who afterwards had so much trouble with the Peishwa Baji Rao. Together they visited the tomb of Francis Xavier at Goa, and here Martyn, who was ever severe on himself, felt remorse at thinking how little he had done in comparison to Xavier. But Martyn did far more than he was aware of.



ENGLISH CHURCH, LAHORE, ONCE A MOSQUE.

It was a great comfort to him to complete the translation of the New Testament into Persian, which he accomplished at Shiraz. Soon after leaving that place he became dangerously ill, and obtained leave to start for England by land. He travelled by Erivan, Kars, and Erzeroum, and was kindly welcomed by the monks of an Armenian monastery, where he spent some pleasant days. But the journey was too fatiguing for him, and it is sad to read in his journal of all its inconveniences, knowing how much they must have hastened his death. He had a rough, disagreeable guide, named Hassan Aga, who would sometimes make the poor invalid gallop as fast as the horses could go, sometimes storm at him, and in every way made his last journey most painful.

A few days before his death he wrote: "Sleep had refreshed me, but I was feeble and shaken, yet the merciless Hassan hurried me off. The munzil, however, not being distant, I reached it without difficulty. I was pretty well lodged, and felt tolerably well, till after sunset, when the ague came on with a violence I had never before experienced; I felt as if in a palsy, my teeth chattering, and my whole frame violently shaken. Aga, Hosyn and another Persian, on their way here from Constantinople, came hastily to render me assistance if they could. These Persians appear quite brotherly after the Turks. While they pitied me, Hassan sat in perfect indifference."

Hassan was, as usual, anxious to go on, though Henry Martyn's sufferings might have moved a heart of stone; but, to his relief, horses for their journey could not immediately be procured. During the day or two of rest thus obtained, Martyn made the last entry in his journal: "No horses being to be had, I had an unexpected repose. I sat in the orchard, and thought with sweet comfort on my God, in solitude my Companion, my Friend, my Comforter. Oh! when shall time give place to eternity, when shall appear that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? There shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth, none of that wickedness which has made men worse than beasts, none of those corruptions which add still more to the miseries of mortality shall be seen or heard of any more." What happened after we know not. I wonder if Hassan Aga had any remorse when Henry Martyn died about ten days after at Tokat, aged 31 years. He was one who, like Saint Paul, counted "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," and for the sake of making this knowledge known to others, and his name has deservedly obtained a place among Indian heroes.

With the sketch of this hero, I gladly close my Tales about India.

GLOSSARY.

Abbreviations—A, Arabic ; C, Canarese ; M, Mahratta ; H, Hindustanee ; S, Sanscrit ; T, Tamul.

Ab (H) water ; *e.g.*, *Doab*, two waters ; *Trimab*, three waters ; *Punjab*, five waters.
Abad (H), dwelling or city, as Allahabad (God's house).
Adawlut (H), court of justice.
Ameen (H), a native judge.
Ameer or *Amir* (H), noble or chief.
Amil and *amildar* (H), a native collector of revenue.
Ayeen (H), government laws or regulations, in distinction to those of the Koran or sacred tradition.

Bagh (H), a garden ; also a tiger.
Bahadur (H), title of rank.
Bajra (H), a kind of millet (*panicum spicatum*).
Begum (H), a princess (Mohammedan).
Bhang (H), an intoxicating preparation of hemp.
Brahm (S), the Divine essence.
Brahma (S), the personal Creator.
Brahmin or *Brahman* (H), the first of the four Hindu castes.
Bund (H), a dyke or bank.
Byragees (H), religious mendicants, worshippers of Vishnu.

Cadhi, *Cazee*, or *Qazee*, a Mohammedan judge deciding both civil and criminal suits by the Koran.
Caliph or *Khalifa* (H), the successors of Mohammed.
Chowt or *chout* (H), a fourth part of the government collections demanded by the Mahrattas as the price of forbearing to ravage the country.
Circar (H), a district.
Cot and *cotta* (H), a fort.
Crore (H), ten millions, a hundred lakhs.

Deccan (H), the south.
Deen or *din* (H), religion, especially the Mohammedan.
Desmook (M), a hereditary native officer of police and revenue.
Dewan (H), the chief minister of finance ; also a court or council (Divan).
Dharma (S), law divine.
Dharma Shastra, the Hindu code.

Doab (H), two waters; a tract of land between two rivers.
Droog (H), a hill fort.
Durbar (H), the royal court or levee.
Dwarpar Yug (S), the third age of the world.

Emir, corruption of ameer.

Fakir (H), a Mohammedan religious mendicant.
Firman (H), a mandate; grant or patent.
Florikin, a small species of the bustard.

Ghaut (H), a mountain pass; also a landing-place or flight of steps on a river.
Gossain (H), a religious mendicant, worshipping Mahadeo (or Siva), and wearing yellow or orange, his emblematical colour; the term is also applied to vagrants in general.
Guru (S), a spiritual teacher.

Hadji (H), a Mohammedan who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca.
Hegira (A), the flight of Mohammed from Medina.

Islam (H and A), the Mohammedan religion.
Istan (H), a termination signifying country, as Afghanistan, the country of the Afghans.
Jaghir (H), a fief or grant of the revenue and government of a district for a time or for life; sometimes renewable to the heir on payment of a fine.
Jemadar (H), a native subaltern officer.
Jowar (H), a kind of millet (*holcus jorghum*).

Kali Yug (S), the fourth, or present age of the world.
Kalpa (S), the day or period for which Brahm assigns the universe to the sacred triad.
Koran (A), the book; *i.e.*, the supposed revelation to Mohammed, collected by the Caliph Omar.
Kshatriya (S), the second or military caste of the Hindus.

Lakh or *lac* (H), a hundred thousand.

Mir or *Meer*, see Ameer.
Monsoon, the trade wind; also the period for which it continues.
Moslem, *Mussulman*, *Muslim* (H), a believer in Islam or Mohammedanism.
Moulavie, *Moulvie*, or *Moollah* (H), a Mohammedan lawyer or judge; deputy of the Cadhi.
Mufti (H), a Mohammedan law officer or scribe.
Muntra (S), a prayer; a magical formula.
Musjid or *Mosque*, Mohammedan place of worship.

Nabob, English corruption of nawab.
Naib (H), deputy or viceroy.
Namaz (H), prayer (Mohammedan).
Nawab (H), plural of naib; used honorifically as a title of rank (Mohammedan).
Nazim or *Nizam* (H), viceroy, or chief administrator of criminal laws (Mohammedan).
Nuggur (H), a town.
Nullah (H), a watercourse, rivulet, or ravine.

Omrah (H), plural of ameer; *ameer-ul-omrah*, chief of the nobles; sometimes "commander-in-chief."

Padisha or *Padshah* (H), a king (Mohammedan); title of Mogul emperors.

Padre (Portuguese), common term in India for a Christian clergyman.

Pagoda, Portuguese word for heathen temple.

Patan, a term applied to the old *Afghan* Mohammedans, as distinguished from the *Moguls*.

Peishwa (M), chief minister of the Mahratta court.

Pergunnah (H), a district or province; less than a zillah.

Perwanah (H), a permit or pass.

Polygar (T), an independent chieftain.

Pundit (S), a Brahmin learned in the Vedas and other Shastras.

Pur, *poor*, or *pore* (S), a town or city, mostly used in composition, as *Sir-ram-pur*, vulgarly *Serampore*.

Purana (S), old; the especial designation of the eighteen books of Hindu traditions and legends.

Raggi (C), a grain, a kind of *panicum*.

Raja and *Rai* (H), a king, a prince (Hindu); given as a title by Mohammedan governments.

Rana (H), corruption of raja.

Ranee (H), feminine of raja.

Rupee (H), a silver coin, worth about two shillings, formerly bearing the impress of the Emperor Shah Alum and other native authorities; but in 1835 the "Company's rupee" was issued and made current through British India, bearing the effigy of the British sovereign.

Ryot (H), a peasant.

Sastra or *Shastra* (S), scripture.

Satya Yug (S), the first age of the world.

Shah (H), a king, a prince (Mohammedan); used as a title.

Shahzada (H), son of a king.

Shastree, a Brahmin learned in the Shastras.

Shias or *Shiites* (H), one of the great Mohammedan sects; "followers" of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, and esteeming the three caliphs, Abubeker, Omar, and Osman as usurpers. To this sect belong the Persians generally, the royal family of Oudh, and most of the lower orders of Mussulmans in India.

Sirdar (H), a chief.

Sirdeshmooki (M), the claim of the desmook, ten per cent. on the revenue exacted in addition to the chout.

Sirkar (H), the state or government.

Soonnees (H), "followers of the traditions," who maintain the lawful succession of the three caliphs before Ali, and pay great deference to the traditions of Islam. The Arabs, Turks, Afghans, and most of the educated Mussulmans of India are of this class, and style themselves *orthodox*, the Shias being regarded as heretics.

Stan, see *Istan*.

Subah or *soubah*, a province or government.

Sudder (H), chief, as *sudder adawlut*, the Company's supreme court of justice.

Sudra (S), the fourth, or servile, caste of the Hindus; now vaguely applied also to all the mixed castes.

Sultan (H), a sovereign prince (Mohammedan); also a title borne by the younger members of the royal family, especially Delhi.

Sunnud (H), a grant or diploma.

Syed, Syud, or *Said* (H), a descendant of Husein, son of Ali, and grandson of the prophet.

Tahsildar (H), a native collector of revenue.

Talook (H), an estate usually smaller than a zemindarry, but in north-west provinces presents various peculiarities.

Tank, a term applied in India to an artificial lake or reservoir, large or small.

Treta Yug (S), the second age of the world.

Vaisya (S), the third of the Hindu castes

Veda (S), "the book," or the Hindu sacred scriptures; properly four, or some say three, but the term is extended to other works.

Vedanta (S), a system of pantheistic philosophy founded on scattered texts of the Vedas.

Vizier (H), the principal minister in a Mohammedan sovereignty.

Vizierut (H), the office of vizier.

Zemindar (H), a landholder; also a collector of revenue for the government over a large district.

Zillah (H), a large district.

The spelling of Indian names is very unsettled. For instance, Ghazni or Ghuznee, Rajpoot or Rajput, Tippoo or Tippu, Bundelcund or Bandelcand, are used by different writers or by the same writer at different times. Our young readers must not think that the spelling is wrong because it is unlike what they have been accustomed to.

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