their policy soon afterwards, and in 1684 the Bengal establishments were again placed under Madras. In the meantime, the differences between the English traders and the local Mughal officers had come to a head. "When Hedges reached Hughli in 1682, he found that the general trade was almost at a standstill.... The several affronts, insolences, and abuses daily put upon us by Balchand (the superintendent of customs at Hughli) being grown insufferable, the Agent and Council made use of divers expedients for redress of their grievances; but all means proving ineffectual it was agreed in consultation that the only expedient now left was for the Agent to go himself in person to the Nawab and Diwan at Dacca,.... to make some settled adjustment concerning the custom.'"

Arriving at Dacca on 25th October, Hedges spent a month and a half in negotiations and returned with promises from Shāista Khan, the subahdar, that he would procure a farman from the Emperor in favor of the English, take off the claim to 5 p.c. duty on all the treasure imported since 1679, and remove the interdiction of English trade throughout Bengal. But nothing practically resulted from this mission. The local officials at Hughli continued to stop the Company's boats and seize their goods. In vain Hedges offered large sums of money in order to be excused the payment of customs. [Hedges, Diary, ed. by Yule.]

At last the English traders lost all patience with the Mughal Government. "Experience soon showed that treaties were of no avail against the lawlessness of the local officials. It was not that the Mughal Government would not protect the foreign merchants against oppression and wrong. It could not. Whatever control it had, it was gradually losing." The Company, therefore, decided to protect itself by force, break with the Indian rulers, and seize and fortify some convenient place on the Indian coast where its trade would be safe from molestation. This war actually broke out in 1686.
§ 4. The grievances of the English traders examined.

The complaints of the English traders against the local agents of the Mughal Government were three:—

(i) The demand of an *ad valorem* duty on the actual merchandise imported, instead of the lump sum of Rs. 3,000 per annum into which it had been communted during the viceroyalty of Prince Shujâ, and also the enhancement of the rate of duty from time to time. The English also claimed that Aurangzib's *farmân* of 15th March 1680 entitled them, on the payment of a consolidated duty of 3½ p.c. at Surat to import goods and to trade absolutely free of customs and other exactions at all other places in the Mughal empire, even though these goods had not been imported *via* Surat and therefore not taxed at all.

(ii) Exactions by local officers under the name of *râhdâri* (road patrol charge or internal transit duty), presents (*peshkash*), writer's fee, and *farmâish* (supplying manufactures to order of the governor for which it was not customary to take the price.)

(iii) The practice of high officials (such as Shâista Khan and Prince Azim-ush-shân, subahdars of Bengal),—a practice sometimes resorted to by local faujdars also,—to open the packages of goods in transit and take away articles at prices capriciously fixed by them far below the fair market price, or what English records call "opening and forcing goods." Even this unfairly low price could not always be realised from these great men. Some governors (notably Azim-ush-shan) tried to enrich themselves by seizing goods at low prices and then selling them in the market at normal prices,—a practice called *sauđâ-i-khâs*.

As for the first of the above grievances, the question will become clear to us if we bear in mind the principles of taxation followed by Aurangzib during his reign. The general rule was to levy a duty of 2½ p.c. on the value of all goods imported. But evidently different rates were followed
at different places, and so on 10th April 1665 the Emperor issued an order that in all provinces there would be two uniform rates for customs in future, namely 2½ p.c. for Muslims and 5 p.c. for Hindus. A little later, the merchandise of Muslim importers was declared to be duty free from 9th May 1667 onwards.

In addition to this import duty, a poll-tax called jaziya was imposed on non-Muslims from 2nd April 1679. The Christians, both European and Armenian, objected to this last impost, but the Quranic law does not exempt Christians and Jews from it, though they are ahal-i-kitāb or believers in the Old Testament like the Muhammadans. The Mughal Government seems to have found it difficult to assess and levy the jaziya per head from the Europeans in the same manner as from the Hindus, and consequently it seems to have offered them a compromise by turning the jaziya into an addition to the import duty on their goods, raising the latter to 3½ p.c. [Farmān of 15 March, 1680 in Stewart’s Bengal].

§ 5. The Mughal rules of taxation of merchandise.

Now, for the fiscal relations of the Mughal Government with the English traders. In 1664, the gallantry displayed by the English (and Dutch) merchants of Surat in defending their factories against Shivaji and thereby saving the houses of some of their Indian neighbours, was rewarded by the Emperor who ordered a reduction of half a per cent on the normal import duty on the goods of these two nations for an undefined period in future, i.e., they had to pay 2 p.c. instead of 2½ p.c. customs. This concession* was withdrawn in 1679.

In 1665, a very reasonable order was passed that the

* Granted by a hasb-ul-hukm dated 14th March 1664, the language of which shows that the popular belief that the reduction was by one per cent is wrong. Its withdrawal was in Nov. 1679. Foster’s Eng. Factories, xi. 314-315.
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goods of "the Feringis and the Dutch" in Ahmadabad city were not to be taxed as they had already paid the duty at Surat. [Mirat i. 264.]

A farman of Aurangzib, dated 26th June 1667, informs the officials at Surat that in future the English traders there should pay only 2 p. c. *ad valorem* duty on all goods imported by them to that harbour, and that the governors, captains of guards, lieutenants of countries (*i.e.*, *faujdārs*), guards of passes and highways (*rāhdārs*)...should not stop on the way the merchandise which the English purchased in Bengal, Agra and other provinces and transported by way of Burhānpur and Ahmedabad for sale in the port of Surat, on the pretence of taking *rāhdāri* or other duties and *abwabs* abolished by the Emperor. This concession was granted at the prayer of the English merchants, backed by a letter from Ghiyās-ud-din Khan, the governor of Surat, to the wazir Jafar Khan, recommending the English as deserving of imperial favours. [Forrest, *Select. Bombay*, Home Series, i. 213.]

In the second Maratha sack of Surat, 1670, the three European nations, English, Dutch, and French, were suspected of having come to a secret understanding with the raiders, instead of resisting them. Hence no privileges were given to them this time. In 1679 the *jaziya* or poll-tax was revived, and the Christians were asked to pay it in the form of an addition of one per cent to the custom duty, at the same time that the reduction of ½ p. c. made in 1664 was withdrawn,—*i.e.*, they were subjected to a 3½ p.c. import duty.


Next, the claims of the English in Bengal (*a*) to escape the duty on the actual value of their imports by a fixed annual payment of Rs. 3,000 (as conceded by Shujā in 1651) and (*b*) to trade absolutely free in all other parts of India on payment of customs at Surat (in virtue of
Aurangzib's *farman* of 1680), are both false and indefensible on any reasoning. (See Appendix C at the end of this Chapter.)

Shuja was merely a provincial governor. He could, as he pleased, let off some favoured body of merchants on easy terms during his own viceroyalty, but his grant (*nishan*) could not bind his successors in office, unless it was confirmed by the Emperor and turned into an imperial charter (*farman*.) According to the practice of the Mughal times, every charter (even when issued by a king or Emperor) had to be renewed by his successor on the throne, otherwise it would lose its validity,—though the renewal, in most cases, followed as a matter of course, on the payment of the customary presents of congratulation at the accession of the new monarch.* A fixed sum of Rs. 3,000 a year might have satisfied Shuja; it was his personal lookout to take the legal amount of duty or less; and English trade in Bengal was of too small a volume in his days. There was no reason why later governors of Bengal should be content with such a small sum and not levy the legal rate of 2½ p. c. on the goods, especially when the volume of English imports into Bengal had multiplied several times since Shuja's days.

The English interpretation of Aurangzib's *farmān* of 1680 was equally wrong. Payment of duty on the goods landed at Surat could, by no exercise of ingenuity, exempt from duty a different cargo that had come from Home or China not through Surat but directly to Bengal, and which, therefore, could not have paid any duty at Surat. The English traders in Bengal had no reason to claim exemp-

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* The old Marathi grants for village headmanship of which thousands have been printed, prove that it was the custom in those days to question the validity of an old grant unless it was renewed by the new king or governor. At every change of authorities, the right of the grantee had to be established and a new order for respecting it had to be taken from the new governor.
tion from a law of the land, which merchants of all other nations had to obey. If at a later date (in Ibrahim Khan’s viceroyalty, 1691) Aurangzib’s representative in Bengal was content to accept a fixed annual payment of Rs. 3,000 from the English, instead of 2½ p.c. on the actual value of their imports, it was the result of a definite contract to that effect authorised by the Emperor.

There was another element, too, in this dispute. Judging from the fraudulent use of the right of issuing passes ("sale of dastak") to cover other people’s goods under the English flag, which was notoriously practised by the E. I. Co.’s servants in Bengal in the 18th century, we shall be justified in supposing that, with the relaxation of the Mughal administration in Bengal during Aurangzib’s absence in the Deccan (1680-1707), the English factors tried to evade the payment of the lawful duty. Hence their frequent collisions with the local revenue officers, who tried to prevent this fraud on the Exchequer.

§ 7. Exaction of illegal perquisites was universal though condemned by Emperor

As for the second and third grievances of the English, we must remark that the exactions here complained of had been declared illegal by Aurangzib and were practised only in disregard of his orders. Ráhdári had been abolished in the second year of his reign, while "benevolences" and forced presents were condemned in the general order abolishing abwabs issued on 29th April 1673.* The "forcing of goods" by his grandson Azim-ush-shan for his private trade called forth Aurangzib’s sternest censures, when it was brought to his ears (about 1703). He sarcastically called the practice sauda-i-kham or ‘very crude plan’ instead of sauda-i-khas or ‘the prince’s own business’ which title Azim had given to it, and he ended his letter by calling the prince a fool and a tyrant for practising such “plunder of

* J. Sarkar’s History of Aurangzib, iii. ch. 28, Mughal Adm. ch. 5.
the people." [Riyaz-us-salatin, Eng. tr. 246; I.O.L. MS. 3021 folio 53a.]

But the traders thus wronged by the local officers could have redress on those rare occasions only when their cries reached the ears of the old Emperor in the far-off Deccan, and the redress was merely an order on paper. As even the Indian historians of the age admit and as is illustrated by many instances cited in the Court bulletins and Aurangzib's letters,—in many places the local officers levied the forbidden cesses and presents, whenever they felt themselves sufficiently distant from the Emperor or backed by influential ministers at his Court, or if their victims had not sufficient influence and courage to convey their complaints to the Emperor's ears.

Purity of administration was impossible in a society devoid of public spirit and accustomed to submit helplessly to every man in power in public life as well as private. The Emperor could not look to everything; he could not be present everywhere; he had to act through agents, and these did not share his integrity and regard for his subjects. The quality of the administration is determined by the character of the official class and the intelligence, spirit, and power of union of the governed.*

§ 8. The English sack Hughli, 1686.

We shall now proceed to the history of the contest between the Mughal Government and the English traders in Bengal. The Indian merchants and brokers employed by the E. I. Co. at Qasimbazar (Bengal) made a large claim against Job Charnock, the chief of the factory there and his colleagues. The Indian judge of the place decreed the

* In England at that very time (reign of William III.) the highest officers, including the Attorney-General (Seymour) and the prime minister (Leeds) took bribes. But they were punished when detected, while in Mughal India the receiving of presents and perquisites was considered legitimate. [Macaulay's History, iv. ch. 20 and 21.]
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sum of Rs. 43,000 against the Englishmen (1684-85). On appeal the judgment was confirmed by the provincial governor, who, in default of payment, summoned Charnock to appear before him at Dacca. As Charnock refused to comply with the order, his factory was invested by Mughal troops (August 1685). But in April next, he escaped to Hughli and took the chief direction of English affairs in Bengal. The war began in six months' time from this event.

By October 1686 the English forces at Hughli had increased to nearly 400 men,—Englishmen, Portuguese half-breeds, and Rajput mercenaries, with two men-of-war and two frigates. Shaista Khan, the governor of Bengal on his part, had not been negligent. He had concentrated 300 horse and 3,000 foot at Hughli to guard the town from any surprise by the English, whose assembling of force had become known. Abdul Ghani, the faujdar of the town, stopped the trade of the English, forbade the supply of provisions to them, and placed the local market out of bounds for English troops. On the 28th of the month, three English soldiers, in trying to enter the market in defiance of this order, were wounded and carried prisoner to the faujdar. An advance made by Captain Leslie from the English factory (near Golghat) to rescue them was beaten back with loss, and the thatched huts surrounding the factory were set on fire to arrest their progress. The Mughal battery, midway between the faujdar's residence and the factory, opened fire on the enemy's shipping in the river. But reinforcements soon arrived from the English camp three miles down the river, took the battery spiking the guns, and advanced further, sacking and burning the faujdar's house and the town lying beyond it. In the evening the English ships came abreast of Hughli, captured a ship of the Mughal's, and "kept firing and battering most part of the night and next day, and making frequent sallies on shore, burning and plundering all they met with." Long before this the faujdar had fled away in disguise in a boat,
without making any attempt to defend the panic-stricken city or save the people from outrage. On the Indian side sixty soldiers were killed and four or five hundred houses burnt down together with a great number of barges and boats.

TheHughli faujdar sought the mediation of the Dutch (whose factory was at Chinsurā) and opened negotiations with the English in order to gain time for the arrival of reinforcements. The English agreed, and made use of this truce to pack their store of saltpetre and prepare for evacuating the place with all their officers and stores. But they continued to seize Mughal ships at sea and made an alliance with the Muslim zamindar of Hijli, who was in rebellion against the Delhi Emperor.

Shāista Khan, on hearing of the sack of Hughli by the English, decided to crush these disturbers of public peace. Vast detachments of cavalry were sent to Hughli and the English factors at Patnā were ordered to be seized. On 20th December, the English withdrew from Hughli with all their property, and falling 24 miles down the river halted at Sutānati (modern Calcutta), and from that base continued their negotiations with the subahdar at Dacca for securing land for a fortified trade-settlement and an imperial order allowing them to carry on their commerce free of duty! Shāista Khan temporised, and used the month's time thus gained to complete his armed preparations, and then threw off the mask.

§ 9. The English renew war and seize Hijli, 1687.

The war was renewed in February 1687. The English burnt down the imperial salt-warehouses near Matiaburuj and then stormed the forts at Thānā (modern Garden Reach, south-west of Calcutta). Sailing down the river they seized the island of Hijli, on the east coast of the Medinipur district (Contāi sub-division),—a swamp of deadly malaria, but rich in fruits, corn and game, and the
seat of salt manufacture by evaporating sea-water. At the end of February the English were established in this island, the local Mughal commandant having evacuated the fort without a blow. Here all the English land and sea forces in the Bay of Bengal were assembled.

Next March a body of 170 English soldiers and sailors landed at Balasore, took the Mughal fort, and burnt the two towns called Old and New Balasore, after looting them for two days. The Indian shipping in the docks were burnt, and two vessels belonging to Prince Azam and Shāista Khan were seized as prizes. [Martin, Mémoires, ii. 483.]

About the middle of May 1687, Abdus Samad, a lieutenant of Shāista Khan, arrived before Hijli with 12,000 men to expel the English. The invaders had been daily losing men from disease, both on land and in the ships, during the trying months of March and April, and their provisions had now run very short. From the mainland in the west the heavy Mughal batteries began to fire across the Rasulpur river upon the English position in the island and drove the English ships from their anchorage. On 28th May a body of 700 Mughal cavalry and 200 gunners crossed the river three miles above Hijli town, surprised an English battery on the island, and pushing further south seized that town itself and set it on fire. The English held only the small weakly-walled fort. Their losses in the meantime had been terrible: 200 soldiers had perished and only a hundred, weakened by fever, survived, while the forty officers had sunk to five only. Yet, for four days they held the fort, and the two batteries guarding the road to the landing place, against overwhelming odds, and in spite of their being hemmed round on all the three landward sides. On 1st June their reinforcement arrived, and next day they made a successful sortie, beating the enemy back from their guns.

On 4th June Abdus Samad sued for peace. On the 11th
the English evacuated Hijli fort, carrying off all their ammunition and artillery, their drums beating and their banners flying. But the indemnity and fresh commercial privileges which they had demanded and Abdus Samad had promised, were refused by the subahdar of Dacca. On 16th August Shāista Khan issued a letter in which he rebuked the English for their recent acts of violence, but permitted them to build a fort at Uluberīā (about 20 miles south of Calcutta) and renew their trade at Hughli. So, Charnock returned with his ships and halted at Sutānati (September 1687), where the first buildings of Calcutta were projected.

But in the meantime the English had also made war on the Mughal shipping on the Bombay Coast. Shāista Khan, on hearing of this fresh provocation, felt himself no longer bound to observe the terms which he had recently offered to Charnock. He ordered the English to return to Hughli, forbade any building at Sutānati, and demanded large sums as war-compensation. Charnock, however, sent an embassy to Dacca, seeking permission to remain at Sutānati and to buy land there for an English factory.

These new negotiations spread over a year after the landing at Calcutta in September 1687. Next year Captain Heath arrived from England, replacing Charnock as Agent in Bengal. The new chief decided to withdraw from Bengal proper, and on 8th November 1688 sailed away from Sutānati with all the men and property of the Company, while the officers of the branch-factories in the interior of Bengal were abandoned to their fate.

§ 10. English atrocities at Balasore, 1688.

Sailing to Balasore with 300 soldiers, Captain Heath, on 29th November, stormed the Mughal fortification (called Point of Sand) at the easternmost point of Old Balasore, capturing its artillery and stores. Next day he seized New Balasore (further inland, to the west) and committed great
excesses, ill-treating Christians and non-Christians,* men and women alike. But before this the merchants and servants of the English factory, in the heart of New Balasore, had been seized and removed far inland by the Mughal faujdar, and Heath could not rescue them. After some time spent in indecision and halting peace talk, the Captain sailed away on 23rd December. Arriving before Chatgaon about 18th January 1689, he planned to wrest that fort from the Mughal officers and make it the safe and independent base desired by the English for their trade in Bengal. A council of war dissuaded him from this mad project, and at last in utter disgust Heath sailed away, for Madras (17th Feb.) abandoning all his Bengal projects.

§ 11. Negotiations with the Mughal Government.

We now turn to the action of the imperial Court during these years, 1687—1689. The sack of Hughli (28 Oct. 1686) and the seizure of Hijli (Feb. 1687) by the English had been duly reported to Aurangzib, then engaged in the siege of Golkondā. The next provocation by the English had been the attack on his shipping in the Western Sea by the Bombay fleet (under the directions of Sir John Child). The Emperor had immediately ordered the arrest of all the Englishmen, the occupation of their factories all over his dominions, and the prohibition of all trade or other intercourse with the audacious foreigners by his subjects. But the English were supreme at sea, and could stop the journey of pilgrim-ships to Mecca. The loss to his customs revenue through stoppage of their trade was also serious. Therefore, after a time he was inclined to come to terms with them. Shāista Khan had been removed from Bengal in June 1688, and his temporary successor, Khan-i-Jahan, sent (through the governor of Cuttack, on 1st Sep. 1688) a letter to the President at Madras “complaining much of Agent

* Martin, Mémoires, iii. 3.
Charnock’s irregular proceedings there and desiring some discreet person to be sent to treat with him, promising all just and courteous usage."

This letter was received by the Madras Council on 3rd January 1689, and they replied to it on 25th February, offering to re-establish the English factory in Bengal. Meantime, on 12th February, Henry Stanley and James Ravenhill, the imprisoned factors of Balasore, wrote to Madras, complaining of the ill-usage to which they were subjected by the Mughal faujdar in retaliation for the injury done by Heath’s squadron and begging the Madras Council to try for their release soon, as otherwise they would be sent to Dacca in chains, under orders of the subahdar.

A few months later Ibrāhim Khan,* a friend of the English, came to Bengal as permanent viceroy, and on 2nd July he wrote a letter to Madras (which was received there on 7th October), inviting the English to return to Bengal. Charnock praised the Khan (whom he had long known when governor of Patna), as a mild man of friendly disposition, whose word could be relied on, and he counselled the Madras authorities to re-establish the Bengal factory.

§ 12. Emperor again permits the English to trade, 1690.

In the meantime, the English prisoners lately set free by Ibrāhim Khan had again, under new orders from the Emperor, been placed under restraint. But in this the subahdar had merely made a show of harshness, to please his master.† At last in February 1690, peace was finally

* "The new Nawab was a man of peace. Without military abilities, he desired to administer justice with strict impartiality and to encourage agriculture and commerce." (Early Annals, i. 123.)

† "The Nawab has forborne to execute the Emperor’s severe orders for extirpating the English in this country and demolishing their factories in Bengal. He had lately released the English captives and said, ‘The late subahdar [Shaista Khan] wrote many stories against you [to the Emperor]….. You have many enemies, esp. the
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'concluded between the Mughal Government and the English on the West Coast. As Aurangzeb wrote on 22nd Feb. 1690, “The English [of Surat] having made a most humble, submissive petition,......and [promised] that they would present the Emperor with a fine of Rs. 150,000,......and behave themselves no more in such a shameful manner,......His Majesty hath pardoned their faults and agrees.....that they follow their trade as in former times.”

After this settlement, the Emperor also wrote to Ibrāhīm Khan, on 23rd April 1690, to let the English trade freely in Bengal as formerly, without giving them any further trouble. [Stewart's Bengal, App. vii and vi.]

On 25th July the Madras Council decided to send Charnock back to Bengal as Agent, and he arrived once more at Sutanati on 24th August. This was the foundation of Calcutta and of the British Power in Northern India. Ibrāhīm Khan's subordinates respected the traders, and on 10th February 1691 an imperial order (hasb-ul-hukm) was issued by the grand wazir to the diwan of Bengal, allowing the English to carry on their trade in that province without molestation on paying Rs. 3,000 a year in lieu of all custom and other dues. In the terms of this imperial rescript, Ibrāhīm Khan issued a circular letter (parwāna) to all revenue and other officers in Bengal to “take, instead of custom, but Rs. 3,000 of the English yearly, and in their buying and selling take not a pice more;......that ye assist their gumsahtas in their lawful and just business upon all accounts; and that no one, upon the account of rahdari, jamadāri or farmāish &c., be suffered to defraud or molest

Dutch.' “[Letter from Bengal, dated 25 Nov. 1689, recd. at Madras 23 Jan. 1690.]

On 13 Sep. 1689, under the general orders of Aurangzeb, his local officer in Telingana had seized the English factory at Vizagapatam, killing three of the factors and carrying off the rest to Chicacole. A little later, their Masulipatam factory was also seized. [Fort St. George Diary, 2, 7 and 10 Oct. 1689.]
them, it being forbidden by the Emperor." [Ibid, App. viii and ix].

This was the final settlement of the English in Bengal.


As in Bengal, so also on the Western Coast of India, the English traders suffered from the vexatious and illegal interference and greed of the local officers of the Mughal Government, which the Emperor could not check. In addition, they were threatened with a new tax in violation of the privileges enjoyed by them in the past. Thus, on 20th April 1680 the Surat factors write, "Not only we but the Dutch and French are grown so inconsiderable with these Moors that they fear not to push what they please upon us; for having demanded of us to pay the poll [i.e., the jaziya] as other inhabitants in the country, and we refusing, the king has some few days since sent down a positive order for all the natives to pay 3½ per cent custom as formerly, which will cost the Company little less than Rs. 20,000 yearly." [Orme MSS. 116, Bombay letters received.]

The friction continued; the local agents of the E. I. Co. were powerless to find a remedy. The island of Bombay had not yet become so well-developed and self-supporting as to enable the English to conduct their Indian trade from this centre and to close the facory at Surat which was constantly subject to Mughal oppression.

But Sir Josiah Child, the Chairman of the Company in London, was a man of fiery disposition and exceptional force of character. He decided on a policy of firmness, independence, and if necessary of reprisal, against the Mughal empire. Such a policy required three things, namely (a) the withdrawal of the English factory from Surat, which was really a "fool's paradise," (b) concentrating the Company's trade and officers in Bombay as "the Key of
India,” in order to be free from the intolerable restraints and indignities to which the Company’s servants were subjected at Surat, and (c) seizing the Indian shipping at sea in retaliation for the oppression done to English trade in the Mughal dominions.

In fact, the Home authorities of the Company decided on war and issued orders to their agents in India to carry out such a strong policy. Its unsuitability was pointed out by the Madras and Bombay officials, but the London Chairman was immovable. The war he desired was sure to end in failure in consequence of the weakness and incompetence of Sir John Child, the “General and Director in Chief” of all the Company’s factories in India.

We have already seen the results of this policy of aggression in Bengal and Telengāna from October 1686 to November 1689. On the West Coast, Sir John Child, in obedience to orders from Home, left Surat for Bombay on 25th April 1687, in order to be beyond the reach of the Mughals. The imperial governor of Surat disliked this retreat of the English to an independent position, as he thus lost the power of intimidating and fleecing the Company. Child’s departure was justly taken to be a preparation for war, and the governor put troops round the English factory, with the effect that Benjamin Harris, the chief of the Surat Council, and Samuel Annesley, his second in office, could not go outside. This greatly hampered the Company’s business.


The Mughal Government’s relations with the English continued in an unsettled and undefined state for more than a year afterwards. At last, on 9th October 1688, Sir John Child appeared with a fleet before Swally and sent to the governor of Surat a list of the grievances of the English, demanding compensation for past injuries and a new charter confirming and extending their privileges. The
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governor gained time by drawing the negotiations out, which could be authoritatively concluded by the Emperor only. But on 26th December, his preparations being complete, he threw off the mask and began open hostility by suddenly imprisoning the English factors and their Indian brokers, placing a guard over the English factory, and sending a force to Swally to seize Child. The latter escaped, and retaliated by blockading the mouth of the river below Surat and then sailing down the coast and capturing all sorts of Indian shipping indiscriminately. His prizes included 40 large ships, 4 smaller ones, and 36 ghurabs and gallivats, mostly laden with grain oil and other country produce. [Arnold Wright's Annals of Surat, 92-98, 125-127, superseding Bruce's Annals, iii.]

The Mughal Government’s reply was to put the captive Englishmen at Surat in irons, in which deplorable condition they remained for 16 months (Dec. 1688—April 1690).*At the same time, the Siddi of Janjirā, as Mughal admiral, delivered an attack on Bombay (May 1689) and landed on the island, occupying its outlying parts. Child’s supine administration and neglect of defensive preparations, as well as his incapable leadership and personal timidity, led to the English garrison being driven within Bombay fort and besieged there by a daily increasing mob of Muslims. They offered a stout defence and performed prodigies of valour, but suffered terrible losses from disease and desertion, without any chance of filling up the gaps in their ranks.

Governor Child, therefore, made an abject appeal for pardon, sending a mission to Aurangzib under G. Weldon and Abraham Navarro (10th Dec. 1689). At this time the

* “They were at times made to gratify the mob by parading the streets with chains suspended from their necks.” When Sir John Child made his submission in April 1690, they were released from the jail, but closely confined to their factory until 17th Oct. 1691. [Anderson, 243.]
credit of the English nation in India had been shaken by exaggerated Dutch reports of the flight of James II, the landing of William of Orange, and his assumption of the crown of England.

The Mughal Court was favourably inclined towards peace. "Neither the leading Court officials, nor the Surat [Indian] merchants, wanted to see the English ruined." In Bengal, too, the new governor, Ibrahim Khan, was eager for the return of the English traders. So, the Emperor granted his pardon to them, by an order dated 25th December 1689. The farman was received at Surat with due ceremony on 4th April 1690, the factors having been released by the governor a day earlier. The English were restored to their old position in the Indian trade on condition of paying a fine of one-and-a half lakhs of Rupees, and restoring the goods taken from Indian ships. [Wright, 130-143.]

The position of the English, however, continued to be very bad during 1691, 1692, and 1693, on account of dull trade, the lack of capital, the intrusion of interlopers of their own race, and civil discord in the Bombay Council. Early in 1694 Sir John Gayer arrived as governor of Bombay and chief agent in Western India, and in the May of the same year Annesley succeeded as chief of the Surat factory, on President Harris turning mad. [Ibid., 153.]

And then the situation was entirely changed by the appearance of a new element. The English interests in the Mughal empire were dominated for the next six years by the acts of European pirates in Asiatic waters.

§ 15. European pirates in Indian seas, early 17th century.

European piracy in the Indian Ocean had begun with the coming of Vasco da Gama at the end of the 15th century. It excited no moral reprobation in Christendom. "To prey upon Muhammadan ships was simply to pursue in other waters the chronic warfare carried on against Moors and Turks in the Mediterranean." [Biddulph's Pirates of
Malabar, 2.] Merchants and adventurers of all classes and nationalities flocked from Europe to the Indian seas in the 16th and 17th centuries, and with the growth of Indian trade there was a corresponding growth of piracy. In 1623 the depredations of the Dutch brought the English into disgrace; their warehouses at Surat were seized and the President and factors were placed in irons by the Mughal Government for seven months.

In 1635, Cobb, the captain of a ship licensed by Charles I, of England, plundered two Mughal vessels at the mouth of the Red Sea, though one of them had a pass from the Surat factory. In 1638, Sir William Courten, under a grant from the same king, sent out four ships which robbed Indian vessels and tortured their crews. For these misdeeds of their fellow-countrymen, the innocent servants of the E. I. Co. at Surat were kept in prison for two months, and released only on the payment of Rs. 1,70,000 as compensation. [Ibid., 2-6.]

In the second half of the 17th century an even more lawless race of men than the old Buccaneers appeared and extended their operations to the Indian Ocean, acting generally in single ships and plundering vessels of every nationality. "Of these men, chiefly English, the most notorious were Teach, Evory, Kidd, Roberts, England and Tew, with many others less known to fame." Roberts alone was credited with the destruction of 400 trading vessels in three years.... The chief cause of their immunity lay in the fact that it was the business of nobody in particular to act against them.... Their friends on shore supplied their wants and gave them timely information of rich prizes to be looked for, or armed ships to be avoided. Officials high in authority winked at their doings, from which they drew a profit.... Not only were the greater number of pirates of English blood, but pirate captains of other nationalities often sailed under English colours. The native officials, unable to distinguish the
rogues from the honest traders, held the E. I. Co.'s servants responsible for their misdeeds." (Ibid., viii-x).


In 1684, six Europeans,—four of them being English and the other two Dutch,—begged their passage in a Persian merchant's richly laden vessel bound for India. In the Gulf of Persia they killed the owner, his two wives and many other persons, including 26 lascars. Fifteen of the lascars leaped overboard and escaped in a small boat to Masqat. These pirates committed more atrocities, made their way to Goa, and cast six more lascars overboard tied hand and foot. But when they landed at Honore, they were arrested by the local governor. Their ringleader was supposed to be Terrell. [Orme MSS. 117, p. 291.]

In 1688 two ships under English colours seized vessels in the Red Sea worth six lakhs of Rupees. Next year a number of sea-rovers from the West Indies made their appearance and infested the Malabar coast, hoisted the red or black flag, and robbed Indian and European vessels alike. [Madras Diary.] There were besides, other European pirates in the Persian Gulf, at the mouth of the Red Sea, in the Mozambique Channel and some lying off Achen (Sumatra).

"As pirates and interlopers alike sailed under English colours, the whole odium fell on the English. In August 1691 a ship belonging to Abdul Chafur was taken by them near Surat with nine lakhs of cash on board." The Mughal Government immediately placed a guard on the English factory at Surat and forbade their trade in the country. But one of the pirate crew having been captured and proved to be a Dane, the embargo was removed. [Biddulph, 13.]

The most famous of these pirates was Henry Bridgman, who took the alias of Evory. On 30th May 1694, while acting as the mate of an English ship hired by the Spanish Government, he overpowered the officers, renamed his ship
Fancy and took to a life of piracy, with 46 guns and 150 fighters on board. After notable captures in the Gulf of Aden, he took off Socotra (Sep. 1695) the Fath Muham-
mandi, a richly laden ship of Abdul Ghafur, the prince of Surat merchants. A few days later he achieved his crowning feat, the capture of the Ganj-i-sawai. [Ibid., 16-25.]

§ 17. Plunder of the Ganj-i-sawai, 1695.

This ship belonged to the Mughal Emperor and was the largest vessel of the port of Surat. Every year it used to sail to Mokha and Jidda, carrying Indian pilgrims for Mecca and Indian goods for sale in Arabia. It had 80 guns and 400 muskets on board, but its captain, Muhammad Ibrāhim, was a coward.*

He was returning from Mokhā, at the head of an Indian merchant fleet of 24 vessels, assembled for mutual defence against pirates. Approaching the Indian coast his consorts dispersed, each to its own destination, leaving the Ganj-i-
sawāi alone. Between Bombay and Daman it was attacked by the Fancy, a second pirate ship and two boats. The artillery fire of the Europeans was most effective; in a short

* This is the estimate formed by Khafi Khan, (ii. 422) whose description of the plunder of the ship has been used by all writers hitherto. But this captain’s own description of the incident is given in I. O. L. MS., Persian No. 150 (Ethe 370) which I translate below. It has a Falstaffian ring and I have not been able to accept it. “We arrived in safety between Bombay and Daman. Suddenly four ships appeared in the distance...... They arrived near us. Artillery and muskets were fired on both sides...... For five or six hours shots were showered. During that period......the mir-dah of artillery and ......the mir-dah of musketeers, and others, 25 men were slain and 20 wounded. I was hurt by two cannon balls on the back and the head. Many of the enemy were sent to hell or wounded. Just then a gun on the imperial ship burst and set the ship on fire. Some men were killed by the flying splinters of the gun and burnt. Our men were distracted in extinguishing the fire. Then the English, who numbered 1200 men, boarded our ship on four sides...... They kept the ship for three days, plundering it.......” (Folio 19.)
time the Mughal vessel had lost 25 soldiers killed and 20 wounded. A gun on board the Ganj-i-sawāi burst, setting the ship on fire and killing or burning several of the crew. While the Indians were distracted by the fire and engaged in putting it out, the pirates boarded the ship from all sides. No resistance was made by the crew. The Captain hid himself in a lower cabin, after placing swords in the hands of the Turkish slave-girls whom he had purchased at Mokhā and whom he now bade to fight like men! [K. K.]

For three days the pirates looted the ship at leisure, taking out of it five hundred thousand rial in cash, besides the property of the passengers and traders as well as the armament and instruments of the ship. As usual in such cases, the women on board, many of them belonging to the Sayyid and other respectable families, were outraged, and several of these victims committed suicide. Then Evory left the unhappy ship which was carried by its crew to Surat on 12th September.

The first news of the outrage had been brought to Surat some days earlier, by a hari boat of the Ganj-i-sawāi in which nine of its sailors had escaped by cutting their ropes at the first attack of the pirates. Immediately on hearing of it, Itimad Khan, the governor of Surat, had sent out the small Mughal flotilla of the port with four boats borrowed from the Dutch and the French, to assist the Ganj-i-sawāi. They had returned to Surat without being able to find out the unhappy vessel.*

When on 12th September, the Ganj-i-sawāi itself reached Surat and its passengers, stripped of everything, unfolded the tale of plunder and rape, the people of that port were roused to uncontrollable indignation. The attack on the Mecca pilgrims and Sayyid women gave to the act of piracy the odious colour of an outrage on the Muslim faith. The

sufferers ascribed the attack to Englishmen closely connected with Bombay.†

§ 18. English factors at Surat imprisoned, 1695-1696.

Itimad Khan, the governor of Surat (really collector of Customs), was a friend of the English and an officer of unrivalled uprightness and purity. Amidst the popular clamour he kept his head and by his judicious measures saved the local Englishmen from being lynched by the Muslim fanatics. An excited and daily increasing crowd assembled before the English factory, threatening death to the inmates. But the governor sent a party of regular troops under his lieutenant Ashur Beg to occupy the factory (14 Sep.), and confine the merchants there pending the receipt of the Emperor’s orders. Thus 49 Englishmen,—including not only President Annesley and other members of the Surat Council, but also interlopers like John Vaux and Uphill (who had been expelled from the E. I. Co.’s service) were imprisoned there. The number of captives was increased by the arrival of the Captain and some eight sailors of the Company’s ship Benjamin seized after landing at Swally. A similar fate overtook the English traders at

† “All the passengers of the Ganjisawai, as well as those of Mulla Abdul Ghafur’s ship, agree in charging the English with the piracy, and some of them say that at the time of the plunder they recognised some Englishmen [previously known to them.]” (Surat governor’s letter to Court, I. O. L. No. 26.) “During the plundering the pirates kept saying—We are thus avenging on you the injury that [Siddi] Yaqut and other imperialists had done to us at Bombay,—and they showed the wounds they had received at that time.” (Ibid., f. 19, Captain’s report.)

“The people publicly in the streets [of Surat] allege that they knew several Englishmen among the pirates whom they had seen in Surat with their servants and two small vessels which they had used to see in Bombay.....and that the pirates sent to the Castle of Bombay that from thence they might receive orders..... The wiser sorts give no credit thereunto.” [Surat news-letter received at Madras. Mad. Diary, 8 Nov.]

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Broach. The arms, including 18 brass guns, found in the factory, were taken away by the governor. [Madras Diary.] Iron fetters were put on the feet of the captives.* Their trade was totally stopped.

These harsh measures of Itimad Khan, however, saved the prisoners from a worse fate. As Annesley wrote, “We must confess our guard was no more than necessary to defend us from the rabble, for the whole mob was raised against us, demanding satisfaction of us even to our lives. The governor was very much in danger in contradicting the stream of their madness; and they once or twice entered into furious resolutions of assaulting his house. . . . . The Muhammadans stick not to call the governor a kāfīr (unbeliever) and say that the town is so defiled that no prayer can be offered up acceptable to God till justice is done.”
[A. Wright, 164, 169.]

During his captivity, Annesley with tireless activity sent off petitions to the Surat governor, to the agents and friends of the English in Aurangzib’s camp, and to the Emperor himself and his ministers,—asserting the innocence of the Company’s servants and demanding their release. Sir John Gayer, the governor of Bombay, was equally active; he wrote to Itimad Khan and to the Emperor, strongly protesting against the arrest of his countrymen and appealing for justice. “We are merchants and not pirates,” he repeated, and he reminded the Mughal Government of its long and friendly protection of the English traders ever since the days of Jahangir.†

* When a rumour came of another ship of Abdul Ghafur having been captured by a pirate in the Persian Gulf, “the English flag was struck, and the whole of the English factory, with the exception of the President, the two members of the Council, and Captain Browne, were confined in irons.” [Bruce, iii. 193.]

† All the original Persian letters in connection with this affair are preserved in the Surat factory’s letter-book, (I. O. L. MS. 150). I have given a description and analysis of its contents in the Pro-
The life of the prisoners at Surat was troubled by internal quarrels and a conspiracy against Annesley and the Council formed by the interlopers and the discontented sailors of the Benjamin. But Ashur Beg's friendly aid, heavily paid for, gave them relief. "By his connivance we had use of pen and paper, wine and provisions,—without which we should have died." [A. Wright, 180-187; Surat to Bombay, 9 Nov. 1696 in Orme MSS. 119.]

§ 19. Aurangzib's policy towards European traders.

Aurangzib deeply resented this flagrant offence against his flag and his religion by the foreign misbelievers. His first retaliatory measures were to confine the English factors and stop the trade of all the European nations throughout his dominions. But he was too wise a man to be swayed by his passions. He desired above all things to secure a regular escort of European war-vessels for the pilgrim-ships to Mecca, and this embargo on European trade was only an instrument for putting pressure on them to gain that end cheaply but effectually.* His order ran that so long as the three European races,—Dutch, French and English,—did not agree to this demand, their trade was to be stopped, their weapons taken away, none of them was to go out

ceedings of the Fifth Meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission (1923). The best account in English is A. Wright's Annesley of Surat, Ch. 8-11.

* As he wrote, though at a later date, "Let the Mir Atish (Chief of Artillery) ask the Feringis of the artillery department how the pirates can be chastised and the sea-route kept open for travellers to the Holy Cities and for traders,—whether by friendliness and conciliation or by force and fighting." And, again, "Write to Amanat Khan (the governor of Surat) to exert himself to the utmost to safeguard the way of pilgrims....and travellers to the Holy Cities. There is no union among the Feringis; many of them are without a head or chieftain. Try to secure the help of one tribe among them, such as the French, who, in return for being given a tenth of the custom duty [collected at Surat] may undertake to punish the hatmen pirates." (Kalimat-i-T. f. 133a and 81a.)
armed in the city or keep any gun or musket in their houses, they were to destroy the gun platforms and embrasures constructed in their factories, their buildings were to be broken down to a low height, their flags were to be taken down, and no bell was to be rung in their churches. [I.O.L. MS. 7b, 1b.]

The Dutch offered to clear the Indian seas of the pirates and to be responsible for the safety of the pilgrims to Arabia if they were given the exclusive right of trading in the Mughal empire free of duty. This was declined by the Emperor. Then Sir John Gayer offered to send two armed English vessels annually to patrol the seas, if the Emperor would exclude the interlopers from his realm. Annesley wrote to the Mughal Government undertaking to supply convoy for the Indian vessels in the Arabian Sea or stand responsible for their safety, on condition of the English being granted the sum of four lakhs of Rupees which the Emperor annually paid to the Siddi for the same service, though the Siddi had clearly failed to do the work. [I.O.L. MS. 61b; Bruce, iii. 189-191.]

The Emperor refused to accept these proposals. He also haggled hard over the amount to be paid for each escorting ship,—the actual running cost for the double voyage being Rs. 40,000 for a large European ship and Rs. 30,000 for a smaller one, while the Emperor offered to pay only half of these amounts. At last on 6th January 1696, Annesley signed a bond for supplying escort, and after more delay due to red tape* the prisoners were set at liberty on 27th June.

* Isa Quli, (the Armenian Christian agent of the English in Aurangzib’s camp), produced the Emperor's order for releasing the English; but it being procured by Yar Ali Beg, without Asad Khan’s assistance, Asad Khan found a way to render it insignificant by letting it go without his seal. [Madras Diary, 31 Oct. 1696, quoting a letter from Bombay of 18 May.]

But this relief was not destined to last long. In that very year appeared a more formidable scourge of the sea, "the grand villain Sivers (or Chivers)," a Dutchman, and next year a still more dangerous pirate William Kidd.

In 1696 a syndicate of English noblemen had fitted out the *Adventure*, a very strong 30-gun vessel, to act as a privateer against the French and at the same time destroy the pirates in the Indian Ocean, the cost being recovered from the profits of privateering. Its captain was William Kidd, "destined to blossom into the most redoubtable pirate who ever besmirched the honour of England." Arriving off Calicut early in 1697, he took to a life of piracy, shamelessly describing his robberies as legitimate acts of privateering authorised by the king of England. [A. Wright, 191-198.]

Kidd's success drew many restless English seamen into his party, including the mutinous crews of the E. I. Co.'s frigate *Mocha* and a smaller ship the *Josiah.* "Distributing his forces with the skill of a sea-strategist," Captain Kidd dominated the Indian Ocean, with his munitions and stores drawn from a base in Madagascar. "All told the pirate fleet mounted 120 guns, and was manned by not less than 300 Europeans, of whom the great majority were Englishmen. . . . A more formidable menace to peaceful shipping in the East could hardly have been created in that day." [Wright, 200-1.]

Besides taking many of the E. I. Co.'s ships, he captured on 2nd February 1698, the *Queda Merchant*, 400 tons, bound from Bengal to Surat with a rich cargo worth 4 lakhs of Rupees belonging to Mukhlis Khan, one of the great nobles of the empire. But, by bribing the news-writer of

Aurangzeb would at first allow only Rs. 15,000 for the hire of a large convoying ship of the Europeans to Mokha and Rs. 10,000 for a small one. Later, he rose to Rs. 40,000 and 30,000 respectively, but the Surat Mughal governor would pay only half of these sums. [Bruce, iii. 212, 236.]
Surat, Annesley for a time averted the Emperor's wrath on account of this piracy. Late in 1698, Chivers captured a fine ship with a cargo worth 14 lakhs belonging to Hasan Hamidân, a merchant of Jiddâ and Surat.


The English merchants of Surat could not escape any longer. The wise and upright collector of the port, Itimad Khan, had died in Feb. 1697 and had been succeeded (6 May) by Amânat Khan, an unscrupulous and rapacious tyrant. "It was useless to assert that the English were not to be identified with pirates, when......many English seamen of the piratical craft were actually recognised by reliable native sailors as former servants of the E. I. Co.; it was equally purposeless to maintain that the marauders were merely outlaws......when the pirate commander [Kidd] sailed, under the English colours and possessed authentic credentials" [from the Home Government.] (Wright, 209).

The Mughal Government, therefore, again applied strict coercion to the Surat factory. On 23rd Dec. 1698, a force of five or six hundred soldiers sent by the governor surrounded the factory and gave Annesley the ultimatum either to yield to the Emperor's demand for giving a bond to guard the sea against pirates or to leave the country in ten days. The Dutch and the French were similarly treated. Mean-while the factories were segregated, and Indians who tried to communicate with them were bound and flogged by order of the governor.

The Queda Merchant included in its cargo two lakhs of Rupees worth of goods, the private venture of the governor of Surat. Its capture naturally turned his heart against the English. In August 1698 came an imperial order that the English, French and Dutch would be held responsible for all losses at sea and that the three nations should pay total
damages amounting to 14 lakhs,—the English alone being charged two lakhs for the *Quedā Merchant*.

"Sir John Gayer wrote to the governor of Surat, refusing to pay anything for the past piracies or to engage the English alone to make good all future losses caused by the robbers at sea. But he offered to furnish convoys for Mokhā ships as he had already done. The Dutch threatened to abandon the Surat trade rather than pay the damages."

"Finally, the English, French and Dutch agreed to act in concert to suppress piracy and signed bonds by which they jointly engaged to make good all future losses...." On receiving the agreement, Aurangzib withdrew his embargo on European trade in the Mughal dominions, and he wrote to the Surat governor to settle the matter in his own way. In the terms of this agreement, "the Dutch convoyed the Mecca pilgrims and patrolled the entrance to the Red Sea, besides paying Rs. 70,000 to the governor of Surat, the English paid Rs. 30,000 and patrolled the South Indian seas, while the French made a similar payment and policed the Persian Gulf." [Madras Diary, 25 Apr. 1699; Wright, 232—239; Anderson 311; Biddulph, 51-53.]


The cup of misery of the E. I. Co. was soon to be filled to overflowing. On 8th April 1699 a new English Company was established at Surat, with Sir Nicholas Waite as President. The old Company's prestige with the local governor and trading class was lowered by the misrepresentations and unscrupulous intrigues of the agents of its rival, who stooped to every kind of meanness and dishonesty.

Sir William Norris was sent out from England as the English king's ambassador to the Mughal Court in the interests of the new Company, in the hope of his repeating
the success of Sir Thomas Roe’s celebrated visit to Jahangir in 1615. Norris visited Aurangzib in the siege camp before Panhala (April 1701); there was an exchange of presents between the two Governments, but nothing was secured by the ambassador in return for his very expensive mission* and waste of sixteen months (27 Jan. 1701—18 April 1702). Aurangzib had demanded, as the price of a farman for the new Company’s factories, that the English should give an undertaking to clear the pirates from the seas, while Norris knew it to be an impossible task.


Meantime, in February 1701, Sir John Gayer had been seized and imprisoned by Amanat Khan at Surat, through the machinations of Waite, who had procured an order from Aurangzib to that effect by bribing the Surat news-writer. Poor Gayer was kept in confinement for six years with only occasional intervals of liberty, and his enforced absence gained for Sir Nicholas Waite the governorship of Bombay of which he had been made the reversionary under orders from Home. “A return prepared in January 1702 showed that the captives numbered 109 persons, including 21 English officials of the Company......and 15 seamen. Their imprisonment varied in rigour according to the caprice of the governor.” [Wright, 260-282.] Gayer’s captivity ended only with his dismissal from the now united Company’s governorship after the death of Aurangzib. (Ibid., 293-297).

On 28th August 1703 two ships of Surat, one belonging to Abdul Ghafur and another to Qasimbhai, when returning from Mokha were captured by the pirates off Surat. The news of the outrage reached Surat on the 31st, and the governor, Itibar Khan, seized all the Indian brokers of the European Companies, and blockaded their factories, cutting

* Mission of Norris: Wright, 263-270; Akhbarat, 4 Apr., 28 May, 1 June, 1701; Storia do Mogor, iii. 298-307.
off their food supply and every kind of communication with outside. The brokers of the French and of the new English Company were released, but those of the old English Company (Vittal and Keshav Parekh) were barbarously tortured. Three lakhs of Rupees were extorted by the governor from these two men, and three lakhs more from the brokers of the Dutch.

In October 1703, seven Dutch ships arrived and blockaded the port, until February 1704, when the governor was glad to make an accommodation. The guards were withdrawn from the factories on 15th March.

In this the governor had merely enforced the indemnity-bond which his predecessor Amanat Khan had extorted from the Europeans in February 1699 to the effect that they would stand security for any losses caused to Indian shipping by the pirates. Aurangzib, on hearing of it, disapproved of Itibar Khan's action and superseded him by Nejabat Khan. An imperial order was received on 8th March 1704, setting aside the agreement extorted in February 1699. A "letter by order" from the Court (dated February) closed the dispute, and the Indian merchants of Surat gave a written discharge of all their claims on the Europeans. [Storia, iii. 487-491.]

But in truth there was no peace for the Europeans. The captivity of Sir John Gayer and his Council continued with the usual relaxations, under fresh orders from the Mughal Court in July 1704. The Dutch made reprisals by capturing a rich vessel bringing Indian pilgrims back from Mecca. Among them were Nur-ul-Haq (a son of the late Chief Qāzi Abdul Wahāb) and Fākhr-ul-Islām (evidently his nephew). Both were held in high veneration by Aurangzib, the former being regarded as "a great saint." "Without ill-treating them, the captors sent a message to the governor of Surat calling on him to repay the money he had taken from them by force. On being paid, they would restore the ships." [Storia, iv. 62-63.]
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Aurangzib at last realised how helpless he was at sea and that he must make an unconditional surrender to the Europeans if his subjects were ever to make pilgrimages to Mecca. He instructed Nejābat Khan to secure the release of these two holy men and the other captives on any terms that he could get and forbade him to take indemnity-bonds from the Europeans in future. [Inayetullah’s Ahkam, 17a.]

APPENDIX C.

The legal rights secured by the English East India Company for trading in the Mughal Empire can be learnt clearly from the original Persian grants, copies of which have been now traced and translated into English in Foster’s English Factories in India 1655-1660, pp. 109-112 and 411-416.

I. Farmān of Shah Jahan, dated 3 Nov. 1637 runs thus:—“As the English merchants of Surat and Broach pay there the customary duties and they hold a farmān from His Majesty to the effect that no one shall make any other demands in respect of their goods in any place,..... the officers of [Tājganj] Agra were forbidden to demand the same payments from them on their goods brought from and taken to Purab [i.e., Bengal] as are paid by other merchants. They must be allowed to pass freely over the Jamunā ferry at Agra and other places.”

II. Farmān of Shah Jahan, dated 11 August, 1650 runs thus:—“All officers in charge of roads between Agra and Bengal and between Agra and Surat are hereby ordered that the English, having paid the usual customs duty at Surat, Broach and Lari Bandar, are not to be troubled with any further demands. This injunction is to be considered as perpetual.”

III. Prince Shujā’s nishān, dated 13 August, 1651, was merely an executive order giving effect to the imperial farmān of the preceding year. Sir W. Foster rightly holds, “the obvious intention of the imperial farmān was merely
to release the English from the payment of road-dues [?
rahdāri] on their goods collected in Oudh, Agra &c. and
sent down to the West Coast for shipment; it could not
have been intended at Delhi to excuse them from paying
the usual customs duties on goods shipped from the Bengal
ports. Nevertheless, Bridgman succeeded by giving a pre-
sent of Rs. 3,000, in obtaining a nishān from Sultan Shujā,
which adopted the English contention that the imperial
farmān had freed them from all demands in Bengal.”

IV. Prince Shujā’s nishān, dated 6 April, 1656, ad-
mittted the principle that the old imperial farmān exempted
the goods of the English Company from duties throughout
His Majesty’s dominions. (This nishān is given in Streyn-
sham Master’s Diaries, ii. 21 and the Appendix to Stewart’s
History of Bengal, and in a new translation in Foster, this
volume, p. 111).

V. Mir Jumla (subahdār of Bengal)’s parwānah, dated
9 Feb. 1660, granted to J. Trevia states,—“The goods of
the English Company are by imperial farmān free from all
duties. [Therefore] all officials in Bengal and Orissa must
refrain from demanding anything from the English on this
account.”
It is neither necessary nor possible to give here the history of every subah of the Mughal empire during this reign. The historian is concerned with those provinces only whose affairs assumed an imperial importance by influencing the course of events in other parts of the country and thus modified the Emperor's policy and the destiny of the empire.

BENGAL

§ 1. Bengal: its natural wealth and recuperative power.

Among all the provinces of the Mughal empire, Bengal was the one most lavishly favoured by Nature. Its copious rainfall makes the labour of artificial irrigation unnecessary. The annual flood of its countless rivers not only waters its 'wet' crops, but also fertilises the fields by spreading over them every year a new layer of mud which dispenses with manuring. One may almost say of Bengal that here the peasant has merely to sow the seed, go away, and reappear on the scene only for reaping the harvest, while all the intervening agricultural processes are done for him by Nature. Its numberless rivers and tanks with their abundance of fish and its fruit-laden orchards spreading a green veil round its homesteads, richly supplement the corn-fields. The climate alone is vile and justifies Aurangzib's epigram that this province was "a hell full of bread."

Such a country only needed peace to be full of wealth and population. The most fearful ravages of war, pestilence or natural calamity could be completely repaired in a
single generation of orderly beneficent government and uninterrupted growth. Such peace and good government were supplied to Bengal by the Mughal empire throughout the 17th century.

§ 2. Mughal conquest and its benefit to Bengal.

In the 16th century Bengal had been an unhappy scene of anarchy and desolation from the decay and dismemberment of its independent provincial sultanate. The misery of the people can be guessed not only from the bloody annals of the ruling houses of Gaur, but also and more vividly from the social back-ground on which the new religion of Chaitanya (1485-1533) appeared as a welcome healing balm to the stricken hearts of millions. The evil was aggravated by the Mughal conquest of Delhi and Jaunpur and the crowding of the defeated Pathans into Bengal. The middle 16th century was darkened by rapid changes of kings, disputed succession, local independence, and the annihilation of wealth and culture through political turmoil.

In the midst of this internal decay and exhaustion of the old order, its conquest by Akbar came as a blessing to the province. But it took twenty years to complete the change of masters, and therefore during Akbar’s reign Mughal rule in Bengal was more like an armed occupation than a settled administration. His viceroys had to content themselves with the nominal submission of the old independent Afghan princelings and Hindu ruling zamindars, and to leave the actual government of the province to them. The Emperor’s subahdars merely received the tribute, but did not establish direct imperial administration over the people, except in the district round the capital and the strategic cities held by their assistants, the faujdars. Over most of the country zamindars and humbled scions of ancient sultans ruled as before, though not with the title and pomp of kings. The Mughal governor’s writs did not
run beyond the capital city and its environs. The huge though irregular armed forces under the various zamin-
dars remained quiescent but undestroyed. They only wait-
ed for some weakening of the Emperor’s power, some cata
trophe at Delhi, to assert their independence once again. Such an explosion might occur any day. The Mubā-
rak Shāhi, Iliyās Shāhi, Muhammad Shāhi, Abyssinian, Sharifi, Sur and Karrāni dynasties had each ru'ed over
Bengal for its brief day and then gone. Who could say that
the upstart Turki house of Bābur would last longer?

§ 3. Mughal peace prevails in Bengal throughout the 17th
century.

The repeated victories of Mān Singh and, even more
than these, his spirit of moderation in victory and natural
desire to spare old houses, had maintained peace in Bengal
during Akbar’s last years. But with the accession of
Jahāngir (1605) and the recall of Mān Singh from Bengal
(1606) a change in the situation became inevitable. The
change was, however, precipitated and intensified by the
character of the Emperor’s new viceroy, Islām Khan, who
governed the province for full five years (May 1608—11
August 1613). A most ambitious active and high-spirited
noble, he gave himself royal airs and could not brook the
least insubordination in any zamindar. By a series of
campaigns, which have been most graphically described in
the memoirs of his general Mirzā Nathan Shitāb Khan,—
he crushed all the independent zamindars of Bengal, de-
stroyed the last remnant of Afghan power in Mymensingh,
Sylhet and Orissā, and imposed full Mughal peace and
direct imperial administration upon all the parts of Bengal.
This revolutionary and beneficent change was completed
by the year 1613. Thereafter Bengal enjoyed profound
internal peace for nearly a century and a half, because the
wars with Kuch Bihār, Kāmrup, and Assām were all out-
side the province, the rebellious incursion of Prince Shāh
Jahan (1624) was a quickly passing blast, and the piratical raids from Chatgāon in the rivers of the Delta and the contest between Aurangzib and Shujā (1659-1660) touched only the southern and western fringes of the province.

Islām Khān’s successors pushed back the frontiers of the independent Mongoloid Rajahs of the Kuch and Ahom families to the eastern bank of the Bar Nadi (by annexing Hājo) and thus protected Bengal from raids on that side. Under Mughal peace, as fully and finally imposed in 1614, Bengal recovered wealth and population, trade expanded by rapid strides, industries developed, and a great indigenous literature grew up in the hands of the Vaishnava sect.

The Arracanese, and subsequently their agents, the Portuguese pirates of Chatgāon, were a pest to the riverside districts of East Bengal; but this evil was removed early in Aurangzib’s reign (1666) by Shāista Khan, and thereafter there was nothing to check Bengal’s natural power of recuperation, except occasional calamities,* which were however purely local in their effect. This peace and prosperity, the gift of the Mughal empire, was fully utilised by the European merchants, especially the English and the Dutch, whose trade grew by leaps and bounds from the middle of the century onwards and whose factories and purchase-agencies stimulated production and wealth in the country.

§ 4. Miserable condition of Bengal at Aurangzib’s accession.

Prince Muhammad Shujā, the second son of Shāh Jahan, was governor of Bengal for 21 years, from Feb. 1639 to May 1660, out of which period he was absent from this province for two years. The viceroyalty of Orissa was added to his charge in 1648 and that of Bihar in 1658, and thus the single political unit of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa

* E.g., a water-spout (hati-shunra) in August, 1668, [M. A. 74.]
which held together from 1733 to 1911, first came into being though for a brief while only, under Shujā. During these twenty years Bengal enjoyed profound peace,*because the subahdār's position as the Emperor's son awed intending rebels into submission and prevented his jealous rivals from obstructing him or intriguing at Court for his overthrow. This peace led to the growth of wealth, and trade and industry rapidly increased, especially the commerce of the Dutch and (to a much lesser extent that of the English) East India Companies.

Shujā himself lived at Rājmahal on the Bihār frontier, as the climate of Bengal did not agree with him, and his deputy at Dacca governed the province for him. His eyes were fixed on Dehli and his supreme object was to accumulate a large fortune in this rich province, which would help him in winning his father's throne. The administration was very well conducted by a number of highly cultured and efficient Persian officers, many of them emigrants through the port of Hughli, whom he gathered round himself and cherished by honourable treatment. Shujā's health was impaired by his twenty years' residence in Bengal; a peaceful life, constant devotion to pleasure, and the easy administration of a soft province like Bengal made him weak, indolent, incapable of sustained effort or vigorous action. The army lost its efficiency through long peace and the navy (*nauvwāra*) so necessary for the defence of the Bengal delta, at last fell into decay and disrepair through official parsimony or peculation.

When the head of the province threw himself into the war of succession with Aurangzib (Oct. 1658), the administration broke down and disorder again raised its head. The mischief continued during the viceroyalty of Mir Jumla (1660—1663) with his hopeless entanglement in Assam, and the interregnum between the death of Mir Jumla (31 March 1663) and the arrival of a substantive subahdār, Shāista Khan (8 March 1664), which we can best liken to

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the reign of mice in a neglected barn. The result was a great deal of popular misery, as the administration had grown slack and corrupt through the want of superior control and supervision and the absorption of the head of the province in war for years together. Disorder, oppression and illegal exaction had become widespread, and the sufferers could find no redress. This misery is graphically,—if also in a querulous and exaggerated form,—set forth in Shihâb-ud-din Tâlish’s memoirs, in the following language: “The mansabdars were given jagirs scattered over several parganâhs, and this multiplicity of partners [in the land revenue] led to the oppression of the peasants and the ruin of the villages. Large sums were wasted [in the cost of collection]......It was not good for the same place to have two masters (viz., the jâgirdâr’s and the Government collectors)......Mir Jumla had confirmed in his own jâgirs many men celebrated for piety and some holding imperial farmâns, for the enjoyment of rent-free grants of land or pensions. All other men who had been enjoying such grants &c., in the Crownlands or the fiefs of the jagirdars......had their grants cancelled by the Sadr. It was ordered that these aimadârs should take to cultivation and pay revenue for the lands they had been enjoying [like ordinary peasants]. In enforcing this harsh order, these poor creatures were not given any respite......So, the land has become waste, and the aimadârs impoverished and distressed.” [Continuation, f. 118.]

Another cause of popular suffering was the defenceless condition of the province on water. During the late interval of confusion and anarchy, the flotilla (nawvâra) of Bengal had been neglected. “During Prince Shujâ’s governorship, the extortion and violence of the collectors ruined the villages (yielding 14 lakhs a year) assigned for the support of the flotilla. Many naval officers and workmen holding jagir or cash stipend, were overcome by poverty and starvation....Many naval officers and men perished in the
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Assam expedition of Mir Jumla; so that at that nobleman’s death the nawwāra was in utter ruin... Its only remnants were a few broken and rotten boats.” [Ibid. 112a.] This unprotected condition of the Bengal sea-board increased the audacity of the half-breed Portuguese pirates of Chatgāon, and the riverside tracts of Noākhāli and Barisāl, and even Dāccā were ruthlessly devastated by them year after year.

§ 5. Shaista Khan’s achievements as governor of Bengal.
With the coming of Shaista Khan as governor the scene happily changed. His first viceroyalty of Bengal extended over 14 years (1664–1677). During this unusually long period of office in one province, he first ensured the safety of the Bengal rivers and sea-board by destroying the pirates’ nest at Chatgāon, won over the Feringi pirates and settled them near Dacca, and pushed the imperial frontier southwards to Ramu, beyond Chatgāon fort, as we have seen in Chapter 32.
His internal administration was equally mild and beneficent. He immediately stopped the resumption by the State of the old rent-free lands which the local officers had begun during the interregnum. He ordered the new Sadr of the province to confirm all the charitable grants and stipends, lying in the Crownlands, for which documentary evidence could be produced. As for the rent-free lands in the fiefs of the jagirdars, they were asked to respect the rights of the grantees if the total land thus alienated did not exceed one-fortieth of the extent of the fief, this proportion being regarded as the charity-tax (zakat) enjoined by the Qurānic law. Within his own jagir he made many new gifts in charity. These orders were promptly carried out by his hard-working, honest and polite civil officers.*


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Every day he held open Court for administering justice and redressed wrongs very promptly. This he regarded as his most important duty. In his own jagir he ordered that everything collected by the revenue officers above the fixed rent should be returned to the cultivators. Again, "the former governors of Bengal used to make monopolies of all articles of food and clothing and other things and sell them at fanciful rates, which the helpless people had to pay." Shāista Khan restored absolute freedom of buying and selling, and also abolished two illegal exactions of his predecessors, namely, a tax of one-fortieth (zakat) on the income of merchants and travellers, and an excise duty (hāsil) from every class of artificers and tradesmen "from the rose-vendor down to the clay-seller, from the weaver of fine linen down to that of coarse stuff." Aurangzib had issued orders for abolishing the zakat and hāsil in the Crownlands, and left to the jagirdars free choice in respect of them within their fiefs. "But this just, God-fearing benevolent subahdar abolished the hāsil, yielding 15 lakhs of Rupees a year, which used to be collected in his own jagirs... Thus, the peasants and the merchants were freed from oppression and fiscal innovations... Shāista Khan's profuse charity so thoroughly removed poverty and need from Bengal that few labourers or workmen could be had for hire to do any work." [Continuation, as tr. in my Studies, 170-177.]

In foreign affairs, too, his term was prosperous. In 1669 he suppressed the rising of a bogus Shujā in Morang (a hill State north of the Purniā district), and conquered it in 1676. [M.A. 84, 150.] In the latter year the province of Orissā was added to his charge. The long interval of peace thus secured to Bengal was employed by him in adorning his capital Dacca with many fine buildings (especially the Kātra), as well as in constructing bridges and sarais all over the country. On the whole, he was a generous noble-
man of the grand old style. The English, Dutch and French greatly improved their trade in his time.

After the short regimes of Fidai Khan entitled Azam Khan Kokah, a grasping tyrant, (less than a year) and Prince Muhammad Azam (one year), Shaiesta Khan was sent back to Bengal again, and reached Dacca in January 1680. His second term covered the nine years from 1680 to 1688; the most noticeable event of this period was the war with the English E.I. Co. which has been described in Ch. 60.* The popular tradition is that during his governorship rice sold in Bengal at the incredibly cheap rate of eight maunds to the Rupee or 658 lbs. for 2s. 3d. He repeatedly sent rich presents, including the rare products of Bengal, to the Emperor. [M.A. 109, 167; Storia ii. 117].

He was the first subahdār of Bengal to send a tribute (five lakhs) regularly every year to the imperial treasury, and he paid his master, in addition, very large sums as a loyal gift at the end of his term. His family and court at Dacca lived in a style of luxury and splendour surpassing that of the puritanical Aurangzib. Such extravagance could be maintained only by squeezing the people. His subordinates were left free to raise money for him by every means that they could think of: merchandise was stopped at every outpost and ferry and custom duty charged over and over again, in disregard of official permits; cesses (ābwābs) abolished by imperial decree continued to be levied in practice. In addition, the Nawāb conducted a monopoly of the sale of salt, betel nut and some other prime

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* Shaiesta Khan in Bengal: Talish, as translated in my Studies in Aur. Reign, (best); Rivas-us-Salatin, tr. 227-228 (very meagre); Stewart's Bengal, sec. vi; Martin's Mémoires, ii. 483, dates in M.A. His bogus will is given in the Proceedings of the Ind. Hist. Records Commission, 1928. Fidai Khan died at Dacca on 25 May 1678. Azam entered Dacca on 29 July 1678 and left it on 6 Oct. 1679; his only achievement was the recapture of Gauhati, [Ch. 32 § 4.] Shaiesta Kh. died at Agra in April 1694, aged 92 lunar years. (Storia, ii. 322.) For details, History of Bengal (Dacca University), vol. ii.
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necessaries of life. Thus by grinding the masses, he amassed a vast treasure, besides building costly edifices at Dacca, the memory of which still lingers.

The English merchant W. Clavell wrote in Dec. 1674, "Shāista Khan obtained Hughli as part of his jāgir. His officers oppress the people, monopolise most commodities, even as low as grass for beasts, canes (i.e., bamboo), firewood, thatch &c. Nor do they want ways to oppress those people of all sorts who trade whether natives or strangers, since whatever they do (at Hughli) when complained of to Dacca, is palliated under the name and colour of the Nawāb's interest." S. Master, the English agent, reported his daily income as two lakhs of rupees and the Maāsin-ul-umārā (ii. 705) tells some marvellous stories about his accumulated stores. F. Martin, the French governor of Pondicherry, in his Mémoires (ii. 483) records examples of the cruelty and exactions of Shāista Khan's local agents, against which appeals to him were of no avail. The high praise given by the historian Shihābuddin Tālish to Shāista Khan for abolishing the trade monopolies of his predecessors and ābwās in his charge, is true only of the early years of his first viceroyalty, because this historian left his book incomplete in 1666 and the European testimony to Shāista Khan's covetousness and extortions (especially after 1680) is unassailable. Foster's English Factories in India 1661–64, p. 396 testifies to his "covetous griping disposition" even in Sep. 1664.

Shāista Khan was already 63 when he first came to Bengal, and his 22 years' residence in this climate as well as his life of lordly ease completely sapped his health and vigour. In Bengal he was a tired old man, who left campaigning to his subordinates. In 1683, the English merchant W. Hedges described him as old and very feeble. But his viceroyalty showed no weakness or neglect in the administration; he ruled the province and extended his power along the frontiers through his four exceptionally
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gifted sons, who held the military and administrative charge (faujdari) of the main divisions of the country. The crowning act of his tenure was the conquest of Châtgaon by his eldest son.

§ 6. Ibrahim Khan’s supine rule.
Shâista Khan was succeeded by Khan Jahan Bahadur (a brother of Azam Khan Kokâh) for a few months (1688-1689), and then came Ibrâhim Khan in June 1689, as permanent subahdar. He was an old man of mild disposition and sedentary habits and a great lover of books. Without strength of purpose or capacity for action, he let matters drift, till the administration of the province entirely broke down, and every one did what he liked. But Ibrâhim Khan’s character had some redeeming features too; the English traders call him “the most famously just and good nabob,” and the Muslim historian records that “he did not allow even an ant to be oppressed.” He personally administered justice, was free from venality and caprice, and promoted agriculture and commerce. [Riyaz, text 223.] His first act after coming to Bengal was to make terms with the English and invite them to settle in Bengal again. [Letter dated 2 July 1689, in Madras Diary, 7 Oct.]

But Bengal in the late 17th century was no place for a bookworm. During the closing years of Aurangzib’s reign, as reports came of the Emperor’s increasing difficulties in the Deccan and of disasters to his arms here and there in that far-flung battle line, the lawless elements in Bengal, as elsewhere, seized the opportunity presented by Ibrâhim Khan’s supine administration and slothful unmartial character. The many Afghans settled in North Orissa brooded over their lost empire in Hindustan and were ever ready for a rising. The storm burst in 1696 and for the first time broke the deep peace which Bengal had enjoyed ever since the days of Jahangir.
§ 7. Rebellion of Shova Singh and Rahim Khan.

Shovā Singh, the zamindar of Cheto-Bārdā in the Medinipur district, rebelled, and in alliance with Rahim Khan, the chief of the Orissā Afghans, began to plunder the lands of his neighbour Rajah Krishna Rām, a Panjabi Khatri settled in Bengal and then serving as the farmer-general of the revenue of the Bardwān district. Krishna Rām advanced against them with a small force, but was defeated and slain (Jan. 1696), and his wife, daughters and entire property and the town of Bardwān itself were captured by the rebels, while his son Jagat Ray fled to Dacca.

Ibrāhim Khan at first underrated and neglected the danger. He merely ordered Nurullah Khan, the faujdar of West Bengal and the imperial officer nearest to the scene of disturbance, to march against Shovā Singh. But their initial success had greatly swelled the rebels’ ranks and heightened the terror of their arms. Nurullah* whose principal business had been money-making by private trade, timidly shut himself up in the fort of Hughli, where the rebels soon blockaded him. He slipped out of it at night with his bare life, but all his wealth and the fort (includ-

* Shova Singh’s rebellion: Salimullah’s Tarikh-i-Bangala, I. O. L. MS. 2995, Eng. tr. by Gladwin as Transactions in Bengal (full); Kaeppelin, 339 (best); Riyaz (derivative); Stewarts’ Bengal (useful addition from Eng. factory records); Orme MSS. 119, Surat to Bombay 23 Oct. 1696, Sutanati to Bombay, 3 Sep. 1696 and 24 Nov. 1697 (most authentic); Akhbarat year 42. Cheto is a mistake for Jatra, 27 m. n. e. of Medinipur and 40 m. s. w. of Bardwan. Burdah is 9 m. e. of Jatra and 5 m. w. of Ghatal. Chandrakona is 5 m. w. of Jatra, and 25 m. n. of Medinipur. [Rennell’s Bengal Atlas, sh. 7.] These three places are close to Radhanagar and Ghatal. The last battle took place not in the environs of Bardwan (as Salimullah implies), but near Chandrakona (as we learn from the victor’s despatches). Chandrakona continued as a rebel centre for some time longer, as Murshid Quli Khan had to conduct an expedition against it about 1702-3. [Inayet’s Akham, 221b.] History of Bengal, pub. by the Dacca University, ii. 393-395 (best).
ing its commandant) fell into Shovā Singh's hands. (22 July.)

On the outbreak of the rebellion, the three European nations in Bengal had enlisted Indian soldiers to guard their property and obtained the subahdar's permission to put their factories in a state of defence. This was the origin of the forts round the three commercial settlements of Calcutta, Chandernagar and Chinsurā, and these were the first defended places which the Mughal Government had suffered foreigners to build on the Indian soil. These places at once became the only havens of refuge amidst the general disturbance in Bengal.

The rout of the imperial faujdār and the capture of Hughli fort crowned the rebels' success. They now lost every check or fear, and boldly sent out parties to plunder the rich. All who could, fled to the European settlements for shelter. After some time the newly arrived Bakhshī of the province entreated the Dutch of Chinsurā to help the Government. They sent 300 European soldiers and Malays to attack Hughli on the land side, while two of their ships bombarded the ramparts from the river. At this the rebel garrison (200 horse and two to three hundred foot) escaped by the back door, c. 31 July, 1696. [Sutanati to Bombay, 3 Sep. 1696 in Orme MSS. 119.]

§ 8. Rahim Khan’s war with the Mughal Government.

Shovā Singh's next step was to detach Rahim Khan with the main part of his army to take the rich cities of Nadiā and Murshidabād, while he returned to his headquarters at Bardwān. Here he was popularly believed to have been stabbed to death by a daughter of Rajah Krishna Rām, upon whose honour he had tried to make an attempt. His brother Himmat Singh succeeded him. But the rebel army chose Rahim as their chief, and he now crowned himself with the title of Rahim Shah. By this time all Bengal west of the Ganges had passed into the hands of these men,
while Ibrāhim Khan lay inactive at Dacca, vainly hoping that the enemy would soon disperse of themselves when gorged with plunder.

Rahim’s army had now increased to 10,000 horse and 60,000 infantry,—a vast medley of vagabonds and adventurers of all kinds. Near Murshidabad he was attacked singlehanded by Niamat Khan, a small jagirdar, who was slain and his property plundered. Then, defeating a Government force of 5,000, the rebels plundered Makh-susabad (Sept.). The neighbouring city of Qāsimbāzār escaped this fate in consequence of its merchants paying a blackmail. [Surat to Bombay, 23 Oct. 1696, in Orme MSS. 119.] Smaller bands spread all over the country, looting, burning and forcing people to join them. By March 1697 Rahim had taken Rājmahal and Māldā.

Immediately on hearing details of this rising and Ibrāhim Khan’s negligence, the Emperor dismissed him from the viceroyalty of Bengal and appointed his grandson, Azim-us-shān to the post (middle of 1697, M.A. 387). The prince was then in the Deccan, and pending his arrival Zabardast Khan (the son of Ibrāhim and faujdār of Bardwān) was ordered to take the field against the rebels, with all the available imperial forces in those parts. Equipping an army as quickly as the previous neglect and administrative derangement of his father’s rule would permit, Zabardast marched from Dacca with his artillery and infantry against Rahim, who issued from Murshidabad and formed an entrenched camp on the Ganges at Bhagwān-golā. Detachments of Zabardast Khan’s cavalry made a rapid detour and recovered Rājmahal and Māldā.

At Bhagwān-golā Zabardast attacked the rebel position by land and water. His artillery, well served by Feringis, made havoc in their crowded ranks and silenced their guns. After a two days’ fight the Afghans were routed and their camp captured (May 1697). But the victors were too exhausted and too much encumbered with their wounded to
give chase immediately. After a short stay he resumed his
march and drove Rahim successively out of Murshidabad
and Bardwān into the woods.*

Shortly afterwards, Prince Azim-ush-shān reached Patnā
and, envying the martial fame already gained by Zabardast
Khan, sent him positive orders not to engage the rebels
again before his own arrival. The rainy season (June—
Sept.) now put an end to the operations; Zabardast Khan’s
army encamped at Bardwān and the prince’s at Monghyr
for this period of enforced inactivity.

In November 1697 the prince arrived near Bardwān:
Zabardast welcomed him on the way, but was received with
so much coldness and slight after all his great services that
he resigned his command in disgust and left Bengal with
his father for the imperial camp in the Deccan (January,
1698). The prince halted at Bardwān for many months.
Zabardast’s defection weakened the Mughal forces in Bengal
by 8,000 choīce cavaḷry and a great general. The rebels,
who had gone into hiding in the woods after their late
defeat, now reappeared and renewed their activity on all
sides.

Rahim, after plundering the Nadiā and Hughli districts,
arrived near Bardwān to confront the imperial army. Here
he treacherously slew Khwājah Anwār, the prince’s chief
minister, at an interview, and then delivered an impetuous
attack on the imperial army, but was killed.† Their leader
being gone, the rebel army melted away. The prince gave

* Rennell’s Bengal Atlas, sh. 7, marks the country north-west of
Medinipur as “impenetrable woods.”

† Akhbarat, 11 Sep. 1698, records that on that day a despatch
was received from Prince Azim stating “Rahim Afghan and Shova
Singh, rebels, were living in fort Chandrakona and robbing the
imperial dominions. I took horse against them, arrived there, fought,
and defeated them. The Afghan was slain.” This contemporary
official record proves that the story of Shova Singh having been
stabbed to death in 1696 cannot be true, at least as regards its date.
Salimullah (1763) is the only authority for it.

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a general amnesty; some of Rahim's soldiers were taken into Mughal service and the rest dispersed to their homes and returned to tillage.

After a long stay at Bardwān, Azim-ush-shān went to Dacca, the environs of which city he caused to be cleared and beautifully laid out.

§ 9. Bengal under Murshid Quli Khan.

Murshid Quli Khan was born a Brāhman. As a boy he was sold to Ḥāji Shafi Isfahāni, who made him a Muslim with the name of Md. Hādi and brought him up like a son. This Shafi rose to be diwan of the Deccan and Diwān-i-tan of the Empire, and under him Md. Hādi received the best training in financial management. After his patron's death (about 1696), Md. Hādi attracted Aurangzib's notice by his extraordinary ability and integrity and was appointed (in 1698) diwān of Haidarabad under the Emperor's own eyes. In this post he further enhanced his reputation, so that when the Emperor was in sore need of a highly capable officer for reforming the revenue administration of Bengal, he sent Md. Hādi there as diwān, raising him to the peerage with the title of Kār Talb Khan (Nov. 1700). In Bengal the new diwān rapidly forced himself upwards by sheer merit and defeated all the plots of his jealous rivals and the obstruction of refractory subordinates by the unbounded trust of the Emperor which he justly enjoyed. In addition to the Bengal diwāni, he was given the diwāni of Orissa in August 1701 and the subahdāri of that province in January, 1703, with the title of Murshid Quli Khan. In Bengal his offices were multiplied in an amazing manner; besides being provincial diwān, he was also magistrate and commander (faujdār) of its most important divisions (sarkār), and manager of the estates of the subahdār, Prince Muhammad Azim-ush-shān. Finally, in 1704 even the diwāni of Bihār was added to his charge. Thus he became the one supreme financial authority of three
provinces and also the civil governor of two of them. It was however, only after Aurangzib's death that he became the deputy subahdār of Bengal (1707 and 1713) and full subahdār of Bengal and Orissa in 1717,—with the official title of Jafar Khan Nasiri, Nāsir Jang.

Aurangzib's admiration for Murshid Quli's ability was boundless. He wrote in 1704, "One and the same man is diwān of Bengal and Bihār and nāzim and diwān of Orissa, with undivided authority, I myself have not the capacity for doing so much work; perhaps only a God's Elect is gifted with the ability necessary for it."

Murshid Quli, conscious of his own ability, power, and dignity, refused to let Azim-ush-shān interfere with revenue matters in any way. The foolish prince instigated a plot of some troopers to mutiny and murder the diwan. The conspiracy was defeated by Murshid Quli Khan's presence of mind, courage and tact. But, to guard against further attempts on his life, he removed the revenue office from Dacca, where the prince lived as governor, to a more centrally situated village on the bank of the Ganges, whose name of Maqsudabad he changed to Murshid-abad in honour of himself. Here a city sprang up round his newly built mansion, which was destined to be the capital of Bengal for half the 18th century.

Aurangzib, on hearing of the incident, grew very angry, and ordered the prince to remove to Bihar, which had been added to his charge in January 1703. For the next three years (1704-1707) Azim lived at Patna, which he was permitted by the Emperor to name Azimabad after his own name. [Ināyet's *Akham, 116b.*] His son, the boy Farrukhsiyar, remained behind at Dacca as his deputy in Bengal.

Murshid Quli Khan repeatedly sent to the Emperor large sums as the surplus revenue of the province;—the amount in one year being 2 kror 33 lakhs in Rupees and 16848 gold coins, and 90 lakhs of Rupees in another. [Ināyet's *Akham, 220b, 219a.*] The money came most opportune to
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Aurangzib, whose other resources had been exhausted by the endless war with the Marathas. The faithful diwan of Bengal was highly rewarded, and the Emperor assured him in writing that all his prayers would be readily granted and nobody's complaints against him would be heard. [Inayet's Ahkam, 217b-222b.]

In fear of Murshid Quli, the ruling chiefs on the frontiers of Bengal began to pay their due tributes punctually. They all felt that a strong master had come to the province. He collected the revenue by his own agents directly and thus saved the profits which middlemen or zamindars used to make. "He did not go to the expense of maintaining a provincial militia or [large] regular army. Two thousand cavalry and five thousand infantry were sufficient for all his purposes. . . . The orders of Murshid Quli Khan were so absolute that the most refractory men trembled in his presence, and his commands were so implicitly obeyed that it was sufficient to send a footman to sequester an estate or to punish an offender at a distance. He did not allow the inferior zamindars even public audience, nor permit the Rajahs to be seated in his presence. Two days in the week he administered justice in person, and was so impartial in his decisions and rigid in their execution that no one dared to commit oppression. . . . He did not place absolute confidence in his accountants, but himself examined the daily accounts of the receipts, expenditure and balances and then signed them." Defaulting zamindars were put to unspeakable kinds of torture in order to make them pay the Government dues. [Gladwin.]

Murshid Quli's revenue system.

When Murshid Quli first came to Bengal, he found that the Government itself received no income from the land revenue of the province as all the country was allotted to the officers as jāgīr in lieu of pay. He adopted a twofold plan for increasing his master's income: First, to turn all
the officers' jāgirs in Bengal into Khālsa, directly under the Crown collectors, and to give the dispossessed officers in exchange jāgirs in the wild unsubdued province of Orissa. Secondly, to give contracts for the collection of the land revenue on a commission basis, instead of getting it from the old hereditary zamindārs who paid only a fixed sum. His system was called māl-zāmīni or ijārā. He also planted new zamindārs in the uncivilised frontier areas, such as north Pābna and Mymensingh on the two banks of the Brahmaputra, where population, civilisation and revenue were created in consequence, and the State's gain went on increasing from generation to generation, till a new class of hereditary zamindārs arose, who gained permanence under Lord Cornwallis. His method of work is thus described by Salimullah,—"The prudent management of the new diwān soon raised Bengal to the highest degree of prosperity. Particularly careful in the choice of his officers, he obtained through their means complete information about the actual capacity of the lands and the amount of custom duties.....The diwān took the collection into his own hands, and by preventing the embezzlements of the zamindārs and jāgirdārs, augmented the annual revenue." [Tārikh-i-Bangāla, tr. by Gladwin.]

Under him Bengal entered on a career of peace and marvellous material prosperity, which was interrupted only by the follies and crimes of his unworthy successors. [Full study of his career and references, in History of Bengal published by the Dacca University, vol. II. 397-421.]

MALWA

§ 10. Malwa: races forming its population; its importance in Mughal times.

The Mughal province of Malwa* extended from Garhā-Mandlā to Bānswara and from Chanderi to Nandurbār, or

* The best and most detailed account in Dr. Raghuvir Sinh's Malwa in Transition.
roughly speaking north to south between the Jamunā and the Narmadā rivers. West of it, across the Chambal, lies Rajputana, and east of it Bundelkhand, from which the river Betwā separates it. The most notable element of its population are the Rajputs, divided into an immense number of petty clans or minor branches of famous clans, and not organised in compact tribal States as in Rajputana proper. But their number and importance were not so preponderant as to throw into insignificance other races of inhabitants, such as the Jats who were spread over the northern side, and the Gonds concentrated in full strength in the south and the south-east,—besides a strong infusion of Muhammadan immigrants (mostly Afghans) settled in definite centres. The undeveloped primitive races which had taken refuge in out of the way corners and among the hills and jungles, were too uncivilised and too much divided to count for anything, though in mere number they formed the largest substratum of the population.

Uniformity of administration, the regular advance of civilisation, and the effective and easy maintenance of order were impossible in a province with such a diversified population. But Malwa was rich in agricultural wealth,— producing large quantities of the higher crops, such as opium, sugar-cane, grapes, musk-melons and betel-leaf, besides sheltering large herds of elephants in its forest tracts. In industries it occupied the first rank among the Mughal subahs after Gujarat. "Cloth of the best texture was woven here," notably the chintz and white muslin of Sironj, which commanded a ready market throughout India and even beyond seas in the 17th century [Ain ii. 195-202; Tavernier, ii. 5.]

Malwa had been the foremost centre of Indian culture from before the age of Christ. In Mughal times its importance was enhanced by the fact that all the great military roads from the northern capitals, Agra and Delhi, to the Deccan passed through this province. Mughal armies had
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to cross some part of Malwa in order to be able to strike at Rajputana or the Gond country, Berar or Gujrat. Any disturbance in Berar or Gondwana, Bundelkhand or the Eastern Rajput States would immediately spread by contagion to Malwa. While Aurangzib's attention and forces were occupied in holding the Maratha land in the closing years of his reign, Berar and Khandesh became the happy hunting ground of roving Maratha bands, and these penetrated into Malwa almost as a matter of course, in concert with the rebel Bundelâ and Gond chieftains of the neighbourhood.

A preponderantly Hindu province with a sturdy Rajput population, was not likely to take Aurangzib's policy of temple destruction and poll-tax on the Hindus with tame submissiveness. They often fought the agents of Islam in defence of the seats of their religion, as we have seen in vol. iii. ch. 34, Appendix V. Again, in January 1703, when a Muslim tax-collector visited the zamindari of Devi Singh (son of Brahma-dev Sisodiâ) to demand the jaziya, the men of the zamindar turned him back after plucking out his beard and moustaches. [Akhbarat, 28 Jan.]

But, on the whole, the disturbances in Malwa during the first half of this reign were all on a small scale and confined to a few localities, (see Ch. 26 § 7). The raids of Chhatra Sâl Bundelâ, Bakht Buland Gond and others touched only the north-eastern and south-eastern fringes of the province. With these few exceptions, Malwa continued to enjoy peace and uneventful administration till near the end of the 17th century. But after Rajaram's return home from Jinji began a movement which was destined in less than fifty years to completely change the political geography of the province.

§ 11. First Maratha incursion into Malwa, 1699.

In November 1699, a Maratha band crossed the Narmadâ and raided Malwa up to the environment of Dhâmuni.
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It was led by Krishna Sāvant, of whom we have no other mention in the Persian or Marathi sources.* Bhimaen alone mentions the event, and he describes it thus: "When Aurangzib set out to conquer Satara, Krishna Sāvant, a Maratha general, at the head of 15,000 cavalry, crossed the Narmadā and ravaged some places near Dhāmuni and returned. Since the time of the early Sultans the Marathas had never crossed the Narmadā till now. He plundered and returned to his home unmolested." [Dil. ii. 129a, 142a.]

The path thus opened was never again closed, till at last in the middle of the 18th century Malwa passed into regular Maratha possession. In January 1703, as soon as the Emperor became involved in the siege of Kondānā, "the Marathas crossed the Narmadā again, and caused disturbances up to the environs of Ujjain. Some Afghans of that district also engaged in lawlessness. Nasrat Jang was sent to punish them. Some months later another band, after plundering the environs of Burhanpur, looted the city of Khargon, 52 miles north-west of it and a part of the subah of Malwa lying south of the Narmadā. [Dil. ii. 144b, Akh. 11 Feb. 1703.]

§ 12. Nimaji Sindhia's raid into Malwa, 1703.

When the campaigning season opened in October 1703, Nimā Sindhia† burst into Berār, defeated and captured

* Except that Bakht Buland, the Rajah of Deogarh, captured him in April 1699 [Akhbarat.]
† "Who did not co-operate with Dhana and other Maratha generals, being prompted by self-will" &c. [Dil. ii. 148b.] Manucci says (iii. 426) that the Marathas plundered Sironj most fearfully, having crossed the Narmada in two bodies, totalling 50,000 horse. And again (iii. 501), "In January 1704, the Marathas crossed the Narmada, penetrated the forests of Mandu, plundering and ravaging several provinces, as well as the town of Sironj. They went further and going through the hill-passes of Narwar, they entered the province of Calabad (? Kalpi), close to Gwalior, a three days' journey from Agra." The two accounts seem to refer to one and the same
Rustam Khan the deputy governor of the province (on behalf of Firuz Jang); and then raiding the Hushangabad district and crossing the Narmadā he advanced into Malwa at the invitation of Chhatra Sāl. After plundering many villages and towns, he laid siege to Sironj, but the chaudhuri of the place gallantly held out. The Emperor had (on 31st October) sent orders to Bidār Bakht, then in Aurangabad, to go out against these raiders. The prince was too distant from the threatened place, and could not begin his march in time. Then Firuz Jang, who had entered Berār in pursuit of another Maratha force, was given this duty. Leaving the frontier of Berār on 12th Nov. and depositing his heavy baggage and camp at Burhānpur, he hastened with light equipment on the track of the raiders, overtook them near Sironj, and immediately delivered his attack. Scattering the Maratha vanguard, he forced his way to the elephant ridden by Nimā, who leaped down and fled away on horseback. Many of the Marathas and their local Rajput and Afghan allies were slain or wounded; the flags, kettle-drums, elephants, camel-swivels &c. plundered from Rustam Khan were seized by the imperialists. The followers and cattle of Rustam, whom Nimā was dragging along with himself, were released. The broken enemy fled eastwards into Bundelkhand, wishing to reach home by way of the Gond principality of Garhā. Firuz Jang kept up the pursuit. [Akh. 11 March 1704.]

The general’s despatch of victory, following the spy’s report by three days, reached the Emperor, then sitting

raid. The unhappy Rustam Khan,—this being his second capture by the Marathas—was suspected by the Emperor of cowardice and collusion with the enemy, and degraded by a hazar zat (7 Jan. 1704). But on 7 Feb. the general’s Court agent submitted to the Emperor that in the fight with Nima in Berar, Rustam had 2000 men (including his son-in-law) slain on his side, and that the spy’s report charging him with cowardice was false. The Emperor ordered an enquiry, after which Rustam was reinstated. [Akh.] Bhimsen also charges him with shirking battles. [Dil. ii. 146b.]
down before Tornā, on 13th March, 1704, and he rewarded Firuz Jang by an increase of 2,000 troopers in his mansab and the title of commander-in-chief (sipah-sālār)—to the intense disgust of his rival Nasrat Jang.* All the officers of this army were highly favoured and promoted. The brave Chaudhuri of Sironj was also rewarded.

On 10th February 1704 Firuz Jang, following up his success, set out from Bhāmgarh against Chhatra Sāl, by way of Chanderi and Dhāmuni, towards Garhā. After marching 24 miles he halted in the jungle of Dhāmuni. His vanguard under Khanjar Khan issued from the jungle and surprised Nima’s army, which was off its guard, slaying many and recovering much booty. There were heavy losses on the Mughal side too. This victory removed famine from Firuz Jang’s camp, where grain began again to sell at 20 seers a Rupee, against 1½ seers during the height of the raid. The victorious general reached Burhanpur on his return on 8th April.†

It was a great deliverance for the Mughals. The Maratha activities in Berar had held up the reports of newswriters, official letters and baskets of fruits sent for the Emperor by the governors of Kabul and Kashmir, for 3 or 4 months on the bank of the Narmada, as the couriers durst not proceed further south and the faujdars on the road could not supply them with sufficiently strong escorts. We read that early in March 1704, some 355 bags of letters and 55 baskets

* M. A. 481; Akhbarat, 14, 20, and 24 March 1704. It is amusing to read how Bhimsen, the literary champion of Firuz Jang’s rival, tries to prove that this victory was mythical, [Dīl. ii. 148b]:— “Reaching Sironj quickly, he reported to the Emperor details of his victory, without having fought any battle.... When the Emperor learnt the truth, he ordered that the title and favours granted should be withheld.”

† Akh. 16 March. The date of his return is given as 14 shahar-i-Shawal, which I correct into shahar-i-hal (i.e., Zihijja) [Akh. 24 April 1704.]
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of fruits, liberated by Firuz Jang’s victory, at last reached the Emperor. [Akh. 8 March.]

Meantime, the discomfiture of Rustam Khan at the hands of Nimā Sindhiā had struck such terror among the imperialists that the governor of Malwa (Abu Nasar Khan, a son of Shāista Khan) lay sheltering himself in the fort of Ujjain, without venturing to take the field against the invaders. Similarly, Nawāzish Khan, the faujdar of Māndu, a very important fort guarding the Deccan highway, had run away from that fort and taken refuge in Dhār. The result was that Firuz Jang in campaigning against Nimā in Malwa received no support from the local officers. The Emperor issued stern reprimands† followed by orders of dismissal to the two officers.

§ 13. Prince Bīdar Bakht as governor of Malwa, 1704–1706. Nawāzish Kān was at once dismissed from the faujdari of Māndu (Jan. 1704), and sent to Khāndesh. A month later he was reinstated, but Dhār was taken away from his

† A letter “by order” of the Emperor was sent to the subahdar of Malwa: “In spite of the going of Firuz Jang, rightly so named, in pursuit of the thieves [i.e., Marathas], why are you sitting down in your fort gazing at the show? If you wish to remain in my service, then, now that Firuz Jang, after defeating Nīmā near Sironji, is chasing him and the latter is fleeing towards Bundelkhand and Garha [Mandla], you should issue forth, take the militia, assemble the faujdars and the captains posted there, and attack, expel, slay and bind the scattered bands of the enemy roving without leaders and the rebel Afghans,—who, seeing the field empty [of imperial troops], are molesting the peasantry. Send Nawazish Khan to Burhanpur. Take Mandu as your own jagir and entrust Dhār to the [new] qiladar appointed.”

Nawazish Khan was addressed thus, “At the request of Naṣrat Jang (the imperial Paymaster), you have been retained in service, but you have not been your own self. What do you mean by vacating Māndu and hiding your self in Dhar? Come to Burhanpur and serve under Bīdar Bakht. I shall give you jagirs in the Deccan or an annual stipend of Rs. 20,000.” [Kalimat T. f. 44a–45a.]
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charge, and in August Mandu also. [Akh. 3 Feb., 28 Mar., 8 Aug. 1704.] Abu Nasar was judged too weak to hold a province like Malwa. The danger from which Malwa had just escaped, through Firuz Jang’s courage and activity, brought home to Aurangzib’s mind the gravity of the situation. He felt that a subahdar of the highest rank and armed strength must be posted in Central India if the Maratha peril was to be kept out of Northern India. Prince Bidâr Bakht, a brave and skilful general, then acting as governor of Aurangabad and Khândesh, was appointed viceroy of Malwa in addition to Khândesh, on 3rd August, 1704. A year later his task was lightened by withdrawing Khândesh from his charge. He continued to govern Malwa till March 1706, when he received urgent orders to go to Gujrat and take charge of its defence, as that province had been exposed to Maratha attack by reason of his father’s journey from it to the Emperor’s side and the delay in the arrival of his successor. Khan-i-Alam was appointed subahdar of Malwa vice the prince, in April 1706. [M.A. 483, 496, 498, 512; Akhbarat, 3 Aug. 1704.]

A large number of letters written by Aurangzib to Bidâr Bakht during his nineteen month’s government of Malwa have been preserved. They cover folios 27 to 116 in Inâyetullah’s Akhām (Rampur MS). The prince’s favourite lieutenant was the young gallant Jai Singh,* the new Rajah of Jaipur, who had gained his good opinion by his conspicuous services when both of them were posted together outside the Konkani gate of Khelnâ in April 1702, and also later as his subordinate in Khândesh (1703—4). When the prince was about to march from Malwa to Khândesh he proposed to leave Jai Singh there as his deputy governor;

* In 1704 Bidar Bakht recommended Jai Singh for the grant of kettledrums and the parganahs of Chatsu, Deosa, Muizzabad and Rewari, on condition of his keeping a strong contingent. But the Emperor demurred to it on the ground of the Rajah being too young and dependent on others. [Inâyetullah’s Akkam, 295].

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but Aurangzib vetoed the proposal, as he had made a rule that no Rajput should be appointed subahdar or even faujdar. [Inayet, 68a, 72b.]† Khan-i-Alam was appointed deputy governor and became full subahdar in 1706, when the prince was transferred to Gujrat. [M.A. 512.]

§ 14. Effect of disturbances on the condition of the country.

In October 1704, Nimā Sindhiā was reported to be again advancing towards Malwa, and Bidār Bakhī was warned to be ready for the danger. [Akh. 20 Oct.] In February 1700 Nasiri Afghan was out with 2000 followers. In this year and the next Gopāl Singh Chandrāwat’s rebellion disturbed some parts of the province. [Akhbarat.] Another rebel was Gopāl Chaudhuri of Sironj. [Ch. 59 § 6.] Nawāzish Khan, faujdar of Māndu from about 1700 to 1704, had to conduct many small campaigns against local rebels and Maratha bands from beyond the Narmadā, as we learn from his letter-book.* Abbās Afghan was reported as raiding the highways and stopping the mails. Umar (another Pathan) broke out of his prison in Sholāpur and reached Kotri Parāyā to take to plundering again. [Akh. 5 July 1699.]

In fact, the local disturbers of peace in Malwa in the closing years of the reign were too many to be counted. An official report states, “Marathas, Bundelas, and Afghans out of employment are creating disturbances in the province” (1704). And, again, “It has been repeatedly reported to the Emperor that from Burhānpur to Sironj by way of Handia and up to Ujjain by the Akbarpur route, the infidels have desolated the villages and very little habitation is now left.” The result is summed up in Aurangzib’s own

† Jai Singh was further ordered to hold office sitting on a cloth (ṣuzani) spread on the ground and not on an elevated pillow (gādi).

* A MS. of this work was purchased by me in Lahor in 1914. No other copy of it is known to exist.

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words: "The province of Khândesh has been totally desolated... Malwa too is ruined." [Inayet, 15a, 61a.]

BUDELKHAND

§ 15. Chhatra Sal Bundela’s early life: as a Mughal captain.

When the rebel and general robber Champat Rao Bundelâ was hunted down by order of Aurangzib (1661), he left five sons behind him. The fourth of these, named Chhatra Sāl,* was then a boy of eleven only, but he lived to defy the imperial Government with success for half a century, keep his own province in constant turmoil, invade Malwa, and finally to carve out an independent principality with its capital at Panna. His long life of 81 years ended in 1731 with the complete effacement of Mughal rule from Bundelkhand.

For some years before his death, Champat had robbed the territories of other Bundelâ chiefs as freely as the Mughal dominion. His orphans were, therefore, left utterly friendless and found no honourable career open to them anywhere. Chhatra Sāl and his elder brother Angad re-

* Chhatra Sal: (M.U. ii. 510—512 useless and incorrect); service with Jai Singh (H.A. Paris MS. 111, Ben. MS. 64a, 73a); Chhatrapraakash, cantos 10 (Deogarh expedition), 11 (interviews with Shivaji and Sujan Singh), 12 (meeting with Ratan Shah, 13 et seq, war against the Mughals). In M.U. Chhatra Sal Bundela has been confounded with the founder of the Ratlam State, namely Chhatra Sal Rathor (son of Ratan Singh), a loyal servant of Aurangzib and qiladar in the Deccan, who rose to be a commander of 1500 in 1703. The mistake originated in the news-writers of the imperial Court, in their hurry, giving the latter’s title as Bundela in some places (and Rathor in others), though his father’s name is given as Ratan Singh Rathor, M.A. using one such wrong Akhbarat called the qiladar C.S. Bundela; M.U. and Irvine’s Later Mughals repeated the error, from M.A. It is only the study of the mass of original Akhbarat that has enabled me to detect and rectify this mistake. C.S. Bundela never served under Aurangzib between 1670 and 1704.
repeatedly entreated Mirzā Rajah Jai Singh to befriend them and give them employment and the chance of distinction in the Emperor’s service by taking them with him to the war against Shivaji (1665). Jai Singh moved cautiously and first employed the two brothers in his own contingent, promising to recommend them for enlistment in the imperial army only if they did good service. The two youths did distinguish themselves at the siege of Purandhar, and Jai Singh kept his promise by getting (3rd Aug. 1665) for Angad and Chhatra Sāl the mansabs of hazāri and 3-sadi respectively. They also followed him in his invasion of Bijapur (Dec. 1665—Feb. 1666). Chhatra Sāl was next employed in the Mughal attack on Deogarh by Dilir Khan.* Here he fought heroically and was severely wounded, but we must reject his Court-poet’s hyperbole that the Mughal victory was solely due to a charge made by Chhatra Sāl single-handed, while the rest of the army hung back in fear! Whatever grain of truth the story may have contained, the young Bundelā prince felt that he was not being rewarded as he deserved, and that a subaltern’s career in the Mughal army did not offer full scope to his soaring ambition. He dreamt of taking to a life of adventure and independence in imitation of Shivaji, which meant a defiance of the Mughal Government.

* Here the Chhatraprakash (canto 10) presents several difficulties: (1) The Mughal general is called Bahadur Khan (Kokah or foster-brother of Aurangzib); but we know from official records that both in 1667 and 1669 it was Dilir Kh. who commanded the Mughal forces in Deogarh, (2) Chhatra Sāl is said to have been detached to Deogarh by Jai Singh, though the latter died on 28th Aug. 1667. (3) The Mughals are said to have fought a severe battle before the Deogarh Rajah was compelled to submit; but we know from the Alamgirnamah that the expedition of 1667 resulted in no fighting, as the Deogarh Rajah submitted in fear. In 1669 there was some fighting, but that was long after Jai Singh’s death.
§ 16. Chhatra Sāl aims at independence.

Young Chhatra Sāl with his wife left the Mughal army under the pretext of hunting, and made a perilous journey to the Court of Shivaji, under whom he begged for employment. But the Maratha king advised him to return to his own country and use his local influence to promote risings against Aurangzib, so as to distract the Mughal forces. Meeting with disappointment at the Maratha Court, Chhatra Sāl next paid a visit to Subh-karn Bundelā, a loyal officer and favourite of the Emperor, then serving in the Deccan at the head of a large contingent of his clansmen. This general held Chhatra Sāl's plan of a national rising against the Mughals to be a wild and futile dream; his own loyalty could not be shaken, he was contented with Mughal service, and merely offered to beg the Emperor for a high command for Chhatra Sāl. The latter refused it and returned home.

It seemed to all that Chhatra Sāl, without troops, treasure, stronghold or even country, could not attack the mighty Mughal empire with success. But just at this time Aurangzib's blind fanaticism played into the hands of the young Bundelā patriot. The policy of temple destruction on which Aurangzib launched in 1670, created an opening which Chhatra Sāl at once improved. The Hindu population of Bundelkhand and the adjoining province of Malwa took up arms in defence of the altars of their gods. An attempt of Fidāi Khan, the governor of Gwalior (1670) to demolish the famous temple of Urchha led to his defeat and repulse by the Bundelās under Dharmāngad. The feelings of the entire clan were outraged by this wanton attack on their religion, and even those Bundelā chiefs, who had been so long loyally serving the ungrateful Mughal Government, now gave their secret sympathies to their rebel brethren, and could not be ordered out against them.

The people in Bundelkhand sighed for a bold leader who would repeat Champat's spirited defiance of the Mughal
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Emperor and protect their religion. Chhatra Sāl was. therefore, hailed as the champion of the Hindu faith and Kshatriya honour. Even Sujan Singh, the loyal Bundelā Rajah of Urrchhā, sent him a secret message of praise and good wishes.

But an attack on the great Mughal power required long and careful preparation. And therefore Chhatra Sāl next set about to find allies. He first visited Baldev (called in the poem, the diwān) at Aurangabad, and induced him to be his partner in the projected war with the Mughals. Baldev agreed and held himself ready to join the movement when the time for action would come.

§ 17. Chhatra Sāl's early war with Mughal Government.

Then crossing the Narmadā, Chhatra Sāl re-entered Bundelkhand (1671) to fight the greatest monarch of the age. He was a youth of 21, with only five horsemen and 25 foot-soldiers at his back! His own brother, Ratan Shah (of Bijauri*) though entreated for 18 days to join him, shrank from a contest with Aurangzib as a hopeless task.

After leaving Bijauri, Chhatra Sāl was joined by Baldev with his men at Bhichuré, and then they began the war. “The news of Chhatra Sāl’s advance was grateful to Bundelā ears.” He was joined by Bāqi Khan, who is called a Bundelā in the Hindi poem, but whom I take to be an Afghan brigand chief settled in the district and a natural enemy of the Mughal, and indeed of every orderly Government. The rebels elected Chhatra Sāl as their leader and the king of all the Bundelās, with a right to 55 per cent of the booty, while Baldev was to get the remaining 45 per cent. The new monarch’s army mustered 35 horse and 300 foot at this time.

But he soon received large reinforcements. The hope of plunder drew vast numbers of recruits from this martial

* Bijaur, 20 m. south of Chhatrapur (Ind. Atlas, 70 N.E.)
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tribe. Champat, during his lifetime, had been the captain of a numerous band of brigands and soldiers of fortune, and these men had so long remained without work; they now hastened from all sides to the standard of his son. Hindus in general flocked to join the enemy of Aurangzib. Many petty chiefs, living along the path of the advancing rebel, could offer no resistance and saved themselves by joining him. The few who opposed were easily routed and their lands plundered.

In the earlier part of his career, Chhatra Sāl's raiding activities were mostly directed against the Dhāmuni district, which barred the path of his advance south-westwards, and against the rich city of Sironj which lay 65 miles west of it. He looted the villages of these two regions year after year. Successive Mughal faujdars of Dhāmuni resisted him with indifferent results; they were usually defeated by him and could boast of victory only on rare occasions.*

In a short time Chhatra Sāl's repeated successes decided the waverers. His brother Ratan Singh and many other petty chiefs joined him, and even Durjan Sāl, the Hādā usurper of Bundi, allied himself with the rebels of Bundelkhand. Chhatra Sāl followed the Maratha system of sparing

* Among these local officers, Khaliq was captured in battle and held to ransom for Rs. 30,000; Kesho Rai Bundela, the collector of revenue in Bansa, was killed in single combat; Randaullah Kh. (probably a mistake of Lal Kavi for Ruhulah Kh., the faujdar of Dhamuni in 1673) with a loyal Bundela contingent (evidently the troops of Rajah Jaswant Singh of Urmia, who was ordered against the rebels in Sep. 1678), could effect nothing; nor could Mukhtar Khan (the subahdar of Malwa from 1697 to 1701) with his Turkish (Rumi) retainers gain better success. The names of the other vanquished opponents of Chhatra Sal are given in Chhatrapraksh, cantos 13—23. Several of them were faujdars of Dhamuni, Mandesor, Dhar or Mandu in Aurangzib's closing years, as we know from Persian sources. In July 1688, Dilawwar Khan, the faujdar of Dhamuni, was reported to have defeated "the sons of Champat" with heavy slaughter. (Akhbārat, 9 Aug.) The letters of Hamid-ud-din refer to raids by Chhatra Sal c. 1677.
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the places that paid him a blackmail of one-fourth of their standard revenue (chauth) and plundering those that refused or resisted.

Years passed on, and he remained still unsubdued. Then, as Aurangzib became more and more deeply entangled in the Deccan, his local agents, in Northern and Central India grew weaker and more helpless, and Chhatra Sāl achieved more brilliant triumphs, including the capture of Kālinjar and Dhāmuni and the loot of Bhilsā. The range of his raids was greatly extended and reached Narwar in the northwest and even beyond it, while southwards he joined forces with Nimā Sindhiā who periodically invaded Berār. The whole of Malwa from the Jamuna to the Rajput border and the Narmadā was his happy hunting ground, and he became a nucleus round which all lawless men of this region assembled.

§ 18. Chhatra Sāl's later career and success.
Leaving out of consideration the exaggerated and jumbled account of his career given in the epic of his Court-poet Lāl Kavi, we can reconstruct Chhatra Sāl's history during the last years of Aurangzib's reign on the safe basis of the information supplied by the Court news-letters, though with many gaps caused by the loss of records.

In March 1699, Sher Afkan Khan, the faujdar of Rānod (70 m.n. of Sironj), marched against him, and attacked him near Suraj-Mau* where he was then living. After a severe battle, Chhatra Sāl fled into the fort, which the Khan besieged, but the Bundela chief escaped from it. In this campaign the Khan lost 700 men besides exhausting his private means in keeping up a contingent of 6,000 troopers and 8,000 infantry. Soon afterwards, Chhatra Sāl's follower Chhatra-Mukut Bundela went over to the Mughals. [Akh. 21 and 25 Apr., 28 June, 1699.] Sher Afkan next

* There is a Mau, 36 m. e. of Jhansi, and another Mau 26 m. s. e. of the former Mau, and 10 m. n. w. of Chhatrapur.
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conquered the pargana of Gāgron, which had been held for 20 years by Chhatra Sāl's son Gharibdās, and he was highly rewarded by the Emperor for these successes, being appointed faujdar of Dhāmuni, Rānod, etc., and given the above pargana as well as a large cash reward. [Akh. 26 July.]

But Chhatra Sāl had his revenge next year. On 24th April 1700 Sher Afkan Khan attacked him near Jhunā and Barnā, slew about 700 of his men, and dispersed the rest after wounding Chhatra Sāl himself. But the Khan was mortally wounded by a musket-shot and carried off by Chhatra Sāl. The latter very chivalrously wrote to Jafar Ali, the son of the Khan, "Your father has a little life left. Send your servants to take him away." The son sent a palki, but it arrived too late. [Akh. 12 and 21 May, 1700.]

Another son of the deceased, named Ali Quli had evacuated the fort of Shahabad (in his father's jurisdiction) and it was seized by Devi Sing, son of Shāhman Dhamdherā. But in October the faujdar of Gwalior recovered it from the rebel. [Akh. 11 June, 23 Oct. 1700.]

The campaign against Chhatra Sāl after Sher Afkan's death had been entrusted to Khairāndesh Khan, the faujdar of Rānod and Dhāmuni. In April 1701 he laid siege to Kalinjar, where Chhatra Sāl's family was then living. But the attack evidently failed.

In 1705 Firuz Jang induced the Emperor to make terms with the irrepressible Bundelā. Chhatra Sāl was created a 4-hazari in the Mughal peerage and induced to visit the Emperor in the Deccan. Here he lived in peace for a year and a half, and then, on Aurangzib's death, returned home to renew his career of independence, as the fullest success was now assured by the decay of the imperial power under the unworthy successors of Aurangzib.*

* Dil. 157b; M. U. ii. 512. The full history of Chhatra Sāl's later career, based upon original Persian and Marathi sources, is given in my edition of Irvine's Later Mughals, ii. 227—241.
GONDWANA

§ 19. The Gond people and their mediaeval kingdoms.

The old highway from Agrā to Khāndesh and Berār passed through the country of the Gonds, a primitive people of nomadic habits and predatory instincts. This land of Gondwānā covers much of the modern Central Provinces, and stretches from Bhopāl in the west to Sambalpur in the east, and from Bundelkhand to the Paingangā (the northern frontier of the Nizam’s dominions), on both sides of the Vindhya range and its eastern prolongation. In the northern half of this region a great kingdom had been established in the 16th century by the Gond Rajah of Garhā. But Akbar’s generals dismembered the kingdom and sacked its capitals Garhā and Chaurāgarh. The later Rajahs made submission to the Mughal Emperor and reigned at Chaurāgarh, with diminished power and territory. Here Prem Narayan, the ruling chief, was killed and his treasure plundered by Jhujhār Singh Bundelā, in 1634; but the Rajah’s son Hardeo Shah killed Jhujhār and recovered his capital, with Mughal help (1635), as we have seen in vol. i. ch. 2.

The dynasty now rapidly declined, petty intrigues divided the royal house and weakened its power, and the succeeding chiefs confined themselves to an obscure life within the narrow limits of Mandlā and a small territory round it. The country north of the Narmadā ceased to have any strong Gond power.

The predominance among the Gonds now passed to the chiefs of Deogarh, in the centre of Gondwānā and south of the Narmadā river. This city stood on the southern slopes of the Sātpurā range, some 60 miles north of Nāgpur, and faced the plain country stretching southwards to the Deccan plateau. But its territory was extended by vigorous rulers in the late 17th century far to the right and left. Eighty-five miles south of Nāgpur lay Chāndā, the seat of another Gond Rajah, who was the constant enemy and rival of the house of Deogarh. These were the only Gond States that
Some Provinces During Aurangzib's Reign

counted for anything in the reign of Aurangzib, and their accumulated treasure, herds of elephants, and collection of gems locally quarried, made them objects of cupidity to the Mughal Government.

§ 20. Early Mughal relations with Gond Rajahs.

A ready excuse for invasion was supplied by the fact that they had not sent any present to the Delhi Emperor. In 1637 a Mughal army, released from operations in the Deccan, entered Gondwānā, levying contributions from the local chiefs. It stormed Nagpur, the seat of the Deogarh Rajah Kukiā, who had refused to pay any tribute. The fort was restored to him on his agreeing to pay a large cash indemnity and an annual tribute of one and one-third lakhs of Rupees.

But the tribute fell into arrears, and in 1655 a Mughal army marched into Deogarh territory and forced the Rajah (Kesari Singh) to make an abject submission. He joined the imperial army in the Deccan with a body of his retainers and did excellent service in the war against Golkondā and Bijapur.

The tribute was withheld during the disorder caused by the war of succession; the arrears amounted to 15 lakhs at the end of 1666. But Aurangzib was now firmly settled on his throne, and had just become free from his wars with Shivaji and Bijapur.

§ 21. Invasion of Deogarh and Chanda by Aurangzib.

So, an army under Dilir Khan marched into Gondwānā in January 1667. Manji Malār,* the Rajah of Chāndā, had

* His name according to Alamgirnama, p. 1022. In the list given in the C. P. Gazetteer (p. 142), Bir Shakh reigned over Chanda from 1647 to 1672. Malar may be a copyist's error for Ballal, which was affixed to the names of several Chanda Rajahs. Mandura is probably Pandhurna, 26 miles south of Deogarh, and in the Chhindwara dis-
been refractory and done some acts of lawlessness. But on the arrival of the Mughal army at Mandura on his frontier (Feb. 1667), he offered submission through his wazir Nagia, and then waited on the Khan, appearing before him like a captive, unarmed and with a chain tying his neck to his waist. He presented Dilir Khan with a thousand gold coins, Rs. 2000, two horses, and an elephant for his own sake, and paid a fine of 7,000 mohars and 5 lakhs of Rupees to the imperial Government, and also promised a war contribution of one kror of Rupees payable within two months, partly in cash and partly in kind (especially in the form of gems and elephants), besides five lakhs of Rupees payable to Dilir Khan as fee for his mediation! The annual tribute was fixed at 2 lakhs. The Rajah further agreed to destroy the forts of Manik-durg (his strongest place) and Bhanauli (on the Deogarh frontier). Dilir Khan stayed there for two months, during which he realised 77 lakhs of Rupees out of the promised contribution. But as the peasantry had fled away and the land turned desolate from the residence of the invaders, so that the collection of more money out of the country became impossible, Dilir Khan was induced to move (29 April 1667) from Chandah territory into Deogarh. [Alamgirnamah, 1022—1027.]

Kuk Singh,* the Rajah of Deogarh, was frightened by the fate of the Chandah chieftain. He came to the Mughal camp and humbly waited on Dilir Khan, agreeing to pay three lakhs as fine, and deliver 18 lakhs within a fixed period, out of which six lakhs were to be paid in two months. He further promised to pay his annual tribute (of one lakh of Rupees) regularly without delay. But before

trict. Nandura, 20 m. e. of Malkapur in Berar, is unlikely. Manik-durg, now Manikgarh, 24 miles south of Chanda, and in the Nizam’s territory. Bhanauli is probably Maniali, 35 m. e. of Amraoti.

* The name given in Alamgirnamah, p. 1027. He was a different person from the Kukia Gond who was reigning in 1637 and who had been succeeded by his son Kesari Singh in 1640.
the money could be collected, Dilir under urgent orders from the Emperor, left the country (on 17th September) and marched to Aurangabad to join Prince Muazzam in an attack on Adil Shah. In the meantime the Chândā Rajah had paid 8 lakhs more. [Alamgirnamah, 1027—1030.]

The Deogarh Rajah, however, did not keep his promise, and in August 1669 Dilir Khan had to repeat his invasion. The Mughals overran Deogarh, the Rajah fled, and was captured after an arduous chase. The conquerors occupied the country, wishing to annex it and bring it under the direct rule of the imperial Government. Mughal garrisons were placed in Nāgpur (now renamed Bhāgpur), Katanjhar, and Deogarh (renamed Islāmgarh). A qāżi, mufti, sadar, mīr adil, clerks of the chabutra of justice, and other officers of a regular province of the empire were ordered to be sent to Deogarh from the Deccan: As for the land revenue, Aurangzib wisely ordered that first the ravages of war should be healed, cultivation restored, and the peasants conciliated, and then the old assessment of the Gond times enforced. The campaign had been a severe one; large numbers of horses had perished of hardship. The Emperor promoted the chief officers and presented 200 horses to this force. [Akhbarat, 4 and 5 Sep. 1669.]*

Early next year Dilir Khan received urgent orders to settle the business of Deogarh quickly on some satisfactory basis and hasten to the viceregal camp at Aurangabad, as Shivaji had again raised his head in the Deccan [Akh. 26 Jan., 1670.] The Gond Rajah with his entire family (two brothers and one sister) embraced Islām,† as the price of

* Chatraprakash, canto 10, describes this campaign, but calls the Mughal general Bahadur Khan and attributes his victory solely to a single charge made by Chhatra Sal Bundela alone!

† According to Akhbarat, 9 May 1670, he took the name of Islamyar on conversion, and Deogarh was ordered to be designated in future as Islāmgarh. He was a different man from Bakht Buland, who was made Rajah of Deogarh in March 1686. [M. A. 273.]
restoration to his kingdom, and on 29th March Dilir Khan left Nagpur for the south. [Akh. 20 April 1670; M. A. 102.]

But the attitude of the Gond Rajah was not changed with this change of religion under temptation. He continued refractory; and at the end of the year Khan-i-Zamān had to make a rapid march to Deogarh and warn its ruler to be more loyal or he would be punished. [Akh. 10 Jan. 1671.]

A petty Gond chieftain, Bhupāl Singh, who held Chaukigarh (40 miles s. s. e. of Bhilsā) rose in 1669, and gathering together some 8,000 horse and foot defeated Rāi-bhān the faujdar of Bhilsā-Chaukigarh, and began to plunder. We find him still in rebellion in January 1671. The Emperor tried to weaken his power by offering the zamindari of Chaukigarh to his brother Murādās (Jan. 1670) and later on to Pur-zor Singh and Shyām Singh (Jan. 1671) on condition of their turning Muslim. [Akh.]*

In March 1686, one claimant to the State of Deogarh was converted to Islam with the title of Rajah Bakht Buland and given the throne. (M. A. 273). He lived to extend the area, power and prosperity of his kingdom very largely, and to give the greatest trouble to Aurangzib in the last years of his reign.

§ 22. Later history of Chāndā, 1667-1701.

We now resume the history of Chāndā from 1667. Bir Shah, the Rajah who had made peace with Dilir Khan in 1667, was killed by a Rajput retainer in a private brawl, probably in 1680, as we find his successor Rām Singh visiting the Emperor on 30 Nov. 1681. This Rām Singh was deposed in October 1683 and the throne given to Kishan Singh. But the old Rajah refused to yield possession to his

* Chaukigarh henceforth continued in the hands of Muslim Gond chieftains, e.g., on 9 July 1694, Talamand (originally named Nawal Gond) succeeded his brother Daulatmand on its gadi. His brother Husain, is reported on 27 May 1695 as raiding villages in Husangabad. [Akhbarat.]
rival. So, a Mughal force under Itiqād Khan invaded Chândā, and defeated Rām Singh, who fled to the hills with 200 horsemen, leaving his family behind. The Mughals entered his capital on 2nd Nov. 1684, and installed Kishan Singh. On 19th November Rām Singh returned with three men and tried to force his way into the palace, but was killed by the guards. [*M. A. 216, 239, 250.*]

Rajah Kishan Singh continued to serve in the imperial army with his contingent for many years, and loyally assisted the Mughal forces in their operations against the rebel chief of Deogahr. [Akh. 12 Jan. 1693, 12 May 1695, 9 April 1696.] He died in July 1696, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Bir Singh, then 20 years old, on the same annual tribute as before. [Akh. 22 Aug. 1696.] In August 1700 Bir Singh was summoned to the Emperor's camp as his tribute had fallen into arrears. A civil officer named Brindaban, who was sent to Chândā to realise the imperial dues, took bribes from the Rajah and neglected his duty. So, Aurangzib ordered Bir Singh to be arrested (27 Nov. 1700) and sent to him. The arrest was effected by the governor of Berār in January or February 1701. [Akh. 16 Mar. 1701.] He reached the Emperor's camp on 27 April 1701 and paid one lakh into the Berār treasury.

§ 23. Bakht Buland of Deogarh asserts his independence.

In June 1691, Bakht Buland was deposed by the Emperor, and the throne of Deogarh was given to another Muslim Gond named Dindār, who was in the imperial camp at the time (M. A. 340). For some years after, Bakht Buland was kept under surveillance, first in charge of the imperial Paymaster (1693), and later in that of the provost (kotwāl) of the camp, on a daily allowance of two Rupees.

* Hari Singh, the brother of Chhatra Singh, the zamindar of Garha-Mandla, visited the Emperor on 9 May 1683, and a robe was sent to him on 3rd Dec. 1684, when he is designated as zamindar of the place, evidently in succession to his brother.
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(1694). On 25th August 1695, he had audience of the Emperor and recovered his freedom by giving security for his future conduct, though the Emperor remarked, "He will run away; keep a watch on him." The guard round his tent was removed and we find him serving in the Emperor’s army in the Deccan as late as April 1696. His son, Muhammad Ali, came from Deogarh, and was presented to the Emperor on 23rd March of that year.

At this time trouble began again in Deogarh. Dindar proved defiant, and a Mughal force under Sadr-ud-din (the faujdar of Punar, 42 m.s.w. of Nagpur) with the help of the Chand Rajah Kishan Singh, captured Deogarh and drove Dindar into flight (March 1696). Kan Singh, the second son of Kishan Singh, secured the throne of Deogarh by turning Muslim (under the name of Rajah Neknam) and promising to pay up Dindar's arrears of tribute, besides a present of 17 lakhs of Rupees. [Akh. 15 April 1696.] We find Neknam welcomed at the imperial Court in November 1700 and married to a captive daughter of Raja-Ram, the late Maratha king, in January, 1704, [Akh.] by order of Aurangzib.

Bakht Buland now lost all hope of his restoration. The time was opportune for a bold stroke, to test fortune by a throw of the dice, as Deogarh and Chand had both changed their rulers in the same year (1696), and their new Rajahs were mere lads. Besides, the old Gond nobility of Deogarh were not likely to take kindly to the junior prince of the rival house of Chand placed by the Emperor on their throne.

Bakht Buland, therefore, slipped away from the imperial army, returned to Deogarh, and raised the standard of rebellion with remarkable pertinacity, resourcefulness and success. The Emperor, in impotent anger, ordered his name to be changed from Bakht Buland ('Fortunate') to Nagun Bakht ('Luckless'). [K. K. ii. 461; Akhbarat.]

The rebel's activity spread over a wide area. In October
1698 we find him roving and levying blackmail in Berār, his nearest hunting ground,—and writing to the zamindars of Hushangabad (who were Mughal vassals) to pay him revenue, otherwise he would raid that district. In April 1699 he was reported to have captured a rival raider named Krishna Sāvant in Berār.

Firuz Jang was ordered to move from Berār and punish the rebel. A detachment from his army under his brother Hamid Khan Bahadur defeated Bakht Buland and captured Deogarh (June). Rajah Bir Singh of Chāndā was ordered to go to Deogarh with his retainers and re-establish his younger brother Neknam on the throne. [Akhbarat, 5 and 6 July, 1699, M.A. 404.] The rebel escaped from his doomed capital and entered Malwa with a vast force. Passing through the Dhamuni district, he marched to Garhā, whose Rajah Narendra Shah (the great-grandson of the murdered Prem Nārāyān) had been dispossessed by his Afghan vassal Abdul Hādi. Bakht Buland routed Hādi's forces, slaying 500 of the Afghans, captured his son, occupied the kingdom, and restored Narendra Shah to his ancestral throne at Garha. [Akh. 2, 6, and 12 July, 5 Aug. 1699.]

But the Mughals kept up the pursuit. [Akh. 5 Aug.] In July the governor of Khāndesh seized the family of Bakht Buland's supporter, Sādat Afghan, and thus forced the last-named to submit. In November 3,700 of the Gond rebel's troopers came over to the Mughal service. [Akh. 5 Aug., 4 Dec. 1699.]

Meantime Bakht Buland had been trying to repair his losses. In July he sent Rs. 30,000 to Chhatra Sāl with a request to recruit a body of the famous Bundela musketeers for him. In October, he sent two envoys to Rajaram in Satara fort, to invite him to Deogarh, in order to create a diversion in Aurangzib's rear; but the Maratha king declined under the advice of his generals. [Akh. 18 Aug., 25 Oct.] In January 1701 Aladād, who is described as a depos-
ed zamindar of Deogarh, fled from confinement in Purnār and joined Bakht Buland, by whom he was lodged in his capital. [Akkh. 12 Feb.] Early in the following March, Bakht Buland and his uncle Nawal Shah, the zamindar of Jāmgarh, in concert with the Marathas assembled a force of 4,000 troopers and 12,000 infantry, and attacked Ali Mardān Khan, the governor of Berār. They were defeated with great slaughter, Nawal Shah being killed and Bakht Buland wounded, while the Mughals lost 200 killed. [Akkh. 16 March.] The subahdar took up the pursuit of the rebels by way of Kolāpur (16 m. west of Amrāoti), and fought another sharp battle defeating the Maratha allies of the enemy near Dariāpur, 28 miles west of Amrāoti. [Akkh. 5 May, 1701.] Risings by Bakht Buland's Muslim allies are reported in February 1703 (near Ujjain under Abbās) and January 1704 (under Sayyid Abdul Qādir).


"During Bakht Buland's reign the rich lands to the south of Deogarh, between the Waingangā and Kānhan rivers, were steadily developed. Hindu and Muhammadan cultivators were encouraged to settle in them on equal terms with Gonds, until this region became most prosperous." [Eyre Chatterton, Story of Gondwana, 46.] "He employed indiscriminately Muslims and Hindus of ability to introduce order and regularity into his immediate domain. Industrious settlers from all quarters were attracted to Gondwānā, many towns and villages were founded, and agriculture, manufactures, and even commerce made considerable advances." [C. P. Gaz. lxxxiv. and 68.]

Aurangzib could not subdue him, and still less could that Emperor's degenerate successors. On the death of Aurangzib, the Deogarh chief extended his kingdom; the Seoni district was ceded to him by Narendra Shah as the price of his aid against the latter's cousins who had called the Marathas in. He also annexed the ancient historical
Gond principality of Kherlā. [C. P. Gaz. 284, 302.] The glory of Deogarh departed on the death of his successor Chānd Sultān (1739), and the Maratha house of Nāgpur secured the kingdom.

KASHMIR


The province of Kashmir had been conquered by Akbar in 1586. Its delightful climate and romantic scenery attracted him and his successors for three generations. Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan paid repeated visits to this country and Aurangzib one (in 1663) after his recovery from a severe fever at Delhi. To the ladies of the palace, a journey to the Happy Valley on richly caparisoned elephants, with all the comforts of royalty, and a succession of pleasure-parties in gardens and pavilions near charming fountains,—was the finest of all recreations. But such journeys did not always end in pleasure. Sometimes an elephant would take fright and stampede down the narrow and rough path, killing the attendants and porters and causing indescribable confusion and alarm on the way. Sometimes unexpected rough weather and the breakdown of transport arrangements would force the queens to walk on foot over the snow to some shelter. The descendants of Timur and Bābur had so far degenerated in the Indian plains that at last the hardships of mountain travel and the cold of Kashmir excited only their fear and repulsion. After his first and only visit early in his reign, Aurangzib vowed never to go to Kashmir again; and none of his successors visited it even once.*

The Emperors treated Kashmir merely as a pleasure resort. They did not try to improve the face of the land or the condition of the people. The cultivation of saffron was

* My account of Kashmir in Aurangzib’s reign is almost entirely based on Tarikh-i-Azami, I. O. L. MS. 1429.
known there before the Mughal conquest, and it became a
source of profit to them afterwards. Of the shawl industry
the wool (and sometimes the yarn) were supplied by this
province; but shawl-weaving was successfully transplanted
from it to other centres, such as Lahor.

§ 26. Ignorance and poverty of the Kashmir people.
The common people of Kashmir were sunk in the deepest
ignorance and poverty; many of the villagers lived in
primitive simplicity and went about almost naked for want
of clothing; they merely wrapped a blanket round their
bodies for warmth. Long distances and lack of roads made
it impossible to import grain from outside and every valley
had to be self-contained in the matter of its food supply;
and when a natural calamity like flood or heavy snowfall†
cut off communications, the inhabitants perished helplessly
of famine in thousands. They had no savings, no economic
staying power. The province was off the routes of the civi-
lised world; difficulty of transport raised the cost of
marketing its produce. Hence, even in the case of its most
valuable products, such as saffron and fine woollen yarn,
their high sale price was mostly swallowed up by the
middleman and the grasping landlord, while the feeble pea-
sant or shepherd, though their actual producer, gained
only a remuneration as poor as that of the cultivator of the
commonest crops of the plains, and much less than that of
the grower of opium or indigo. The province had no local
industry. Even shawl-weaving was mostly a Government

† E.g., in the reign of the Hindu Rajah Tunjin, “When the fields
were covered with the autumnal rice crop...unexpectedly there fell
heavy snow. Under this snow, which resembled the grim laughter
of Death...there sank the rice crops, together with the people’s
hope of existence. Then came a terrible famine...While the routes
over the mountains were closed by impassable snow-drifts, the people
were helpless like birds when the opening in their nest is closed.”
[Rajtarangini, ii. 18—38.]
monopoly, and the people earned from it only the wages of
daily labour at the State factories. The fine Kashmiri paper
was consumed only by the Court, and made to order.

So backward were the people in civilisation that even
the upper classes of Kashmiris were deemed unfit to be
employed in the imperial service as mansabdars, till near
the end of Aurangzib's reign. We learn that it was only in
1699 that the Emperor was first induced by the then
subahdar to appoint people of Kashmir as mansabdars in
any appreciable number.

True, there were some Muslim scholars and saints in
Kashmir who enjoyed the patronage of the Mughal nobility,
—but this was not the class from which civilian servants
and army captains were recruited. No Kashmir Hindu
gained any office under the Mughal empire, and as for the
common Muslims of the province, if they were villagers,
they were despised as ignorant savages, and if townsfolk,
as lying flatterers and cowardly cheats. In this universal
closing of honourable and responsible careers to talent,
the intellectual cleverness of certain classes of the natives
developed into glibness of tongue, low cunning, and skill in
treachery's intrigue,—so that, in Mughal India a Kashmiri
came to be a by-word for a smooth-spoken rogue, as the
Græculus was in the early days of the Roman empire.
Ignorance, poverty, and the feudal organisation of
society,—which kept the masses in a servile condition, also
accounted for their Mongoloid disregard for the chastity
of their wives and daughters.

§ 27. Popular superstition and fights between sects.
The ignorance of the people was only equalled by their
superstitiousness. A huge parasite class of Muslim saints
and their disciples flourished in this charming climate and
exploited the credulity of the people. Renowned Shaikhs
and Pirs from outside also paid periodical visits to the
Happy Valley and reaped a golden harvest by initiating the
people into the circle of their disciples. Many of the local holy men (bābās) were illiterate; but it did not matter at all. They had the power of falling into mystic trances and working miracles, and could compose Sufi verses extempore, which brought them immense popularity.

In the cities of Kashmir, the sectarian bitterness between the Shias and the Sunnis often led to fierce rioting and even civil war, and the strong arm of the governor (when he did not happen to be the partisan of either sect) could only maintain an armed truce among the local population. The Shias, who were a minority, naturally congregated in wards of their own in the cities. But the two sects could not help coming together in the course of business, travel or litigation. Any conflict of material interests between them was quickly turned into a theological quarrel. The disputants abused each other’s religion; the Shia was accused of having reviled the first three Khalifs, the Sunni qāzi condemned him to death for blasphemy, and the orthodox Aurangzib confirmed the sentence on the heretic.

Quarrels between individual members of the rival sects quickly passed into mass conflicts; the Sunni mob of the capital, roused by the qāzi’s harangues, plundered and burnt the Shia quarter, in defiance of the governor’s authority and massacred every Shia whom they could catch. Sometimes there were pitched battles in the streets between the armed rioters and the governor’s troops. Even the viceroy’s residence was not safe from the Sunni mob and soldiery, if he was suspected of harbouring any Shia whom they wanted to lynch.

§ 28. Miserable life of the people of Srinagar.
The villagers were half-naked boors, living in abject poverty, ignorance, and filth. The townsmen, too, had not a much happier lot, though for a different reason. The sudden and dangerous floods to which the lake is subject, forced them to build their homes in the cramped high