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OF
THE
MARATHAS
VOL. III

NEW HISTORY OF THE MARATHAS

VOLUME III

SUNSET OVER MAHARASHTRA
[1772-1848]

GOVIND
SAKHARAM
SARDESAI

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To
The
Memory
of

H. H. Sayaji Rao Gaekwad
G. S. S. I.
Maharaja of Baroda
Sena-Khaskhel Samsher Bahadur,
(1875 – 1939)

To whom I have given
all my life's years of service,
and who had led
my young steps into the
pleasant path of
History.

G. S. Sardesai

THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL

On reaching the end of this book, my first feelings are a sense of unspeakable relief at the completion of a long and laborious task, and a sentiment of silent gratitude to the friends whose support alone has made this achievement possible for me. Dr. V. G. Dighe has been very helpful in preparing my manuscript for the press, in reading the proofs and in various other ways. Every line in these three volumes has passed under the eyes of my lifelong friend Sir Jadunath Sarkar, in MS. and proof alike. We two have discussed,—sometimes warmly,—every problem and doubtful point in this work; and if in many cases I have in the end adhered to my own point of view, his arguments to the contrary have always had a chastening effect on the final shape of my conclusions. A large number of other scholars all over India have helped me with occasional suggestions and information, and if I cannot name them here individually, it does not mean that I am insensible of my obligation to them.

I have called this book a New History, but that title need not be taken to claim for it the rank of a definitive standard authority. My aim has been much humbler, to pour out to the sympathetic reader all that an ordinary son of Maharashtra has thought and felt, as he studied and pondered on the storied past of his life of more than four score years. In spite of the long list of my historical works, I do not claim to be a scholar or even a trained historian, but only an eager, tireless worker. Call this my final work, if you like, the table-talk of an ardent seeker after knowledge.

Kamshet,
Vijayadashami
12th October, 1948

G. S. SARDESAI

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Biographical Sketch

G. S. SARDESAI

Generations of Marathi readers will remember the name of GOVIND SAKHARAM SARDESAI with grateful respect; for it was he who gave Maharashtra its continuous history. He preferred to write history of India for nearly a thousand years, broadly classifying the period in three compartments: the Islamic, the Maratha and the British. Sardesai's books will continue to be read and studied for many years to come.

For a historian of that importance, Sardesai's childhood and education were not marked with any thing striking, any thing out of the routine. Born of a middle class family in a village in Ratnagiri district on the 17th May 1865, it was difficult for him to go to school because of the distance and the intervening streamlet, between his place and the village which housed the school. Brought up in hard circumstances, boy Sardesai performed all the rural functions of a peasant, acquiring some mastery incidentally. It was doubtful whether he could have attended the English school away from home at Ratnagiri. But some how it was arranged and Sardesai could complete his secondary education. In the meanwhile, a kindly soul appeared to take personal interest in the boy as a prospective son-in-law and Sardesai's college education too was arranged.

Dame Fortune seemed to favour him immediately after graduation. Without any loss of time, without having to search for, he was offered a job of a reader to one of the most enlightened rulers of his times, Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda. From the rustic surroundings of his early days to the palatial atmosphere, not only at Baroda, but at many places in and out of India, wherever the royal master stayed, was no doubt a great change; but Sardesai adjusted himself to the environment easily and discharged his duties honestly, sincerely and honourably. For 36 long years Sardesai continued in the service of the Gaekwad.

During his stay in royal surroundings, Sardesai was accidentally introduced to the Muse of History. His duties in

the palace did not remain confined to the readership of the Maharaja. He was a tutor to the younger generation also. As guardian-tutor, Sardesai had to travel to many hill stations in India and at times sail abroad in the royal retenue. Such an opportunity was no doubt welcome to a young aspirant and Sardesai made the best of every such occasion. His careful notes and methodical manner of keeping accounts of the tours, impressed Sir Sayaji Rao. That was the reason perhaps why Sardesai ended his career in Baroda as head of the Accounts Department.

Sardesai's introduction to the Muse of History was through a well wisher, who passed on to a publisher Sardesai's notes for his Royal students, which were made by him about Mughal period. That was how his *Mussalmani Riyasat* (2 Vols.) was born. There were two similar volumes covering the British period in India, while for the intervening years, Sardesai devoted *eight* bulky tomes and they form his main contribution to History. Marahta History after all, is a part of the larger history of India.

Sardesai's name is closely associated with that of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, a greater historian than whom is not known in recent times. The two remained united in solid and fruitful friendship which has no parallel; their joint output, besides their individual contribution, is staggering : 45 volumes of Marathi original historical papers and 16 of English documents from the Poona Residency Records, besides many stray volumes of state papers from Gwalior, Satara and other places. G. K. Devdhar, of the Servants of India Society, Poona, was responsible for bringing the two historians together during the first decade of the present century. Sir Jadunath was looking for a student of Maratha history, able to decipher *modi* documents. Although Sardesai seems to have been benefited considerably by his association with Sir Jadunath, he was not looking out for help and assistance from some one. His was the lone furrow and he would have remained content with his effort unaided. But contact with Sir Jadunath, at once raised Sardesai to a high level in academic and official circles and more and more of research work came his way which in its turn, raised Sardesai in scholarly estimate. Editing of the *Selections from Peshwa*

Daftar (45 vols.) which Sardesai did for the Government of Bombay (1929-34) was arranged for him by Sir Jadunath.

During their long period of friendship, Sardesai and Sarkar undertook many trips together to places of historical interest in and outside Maharashtra. They held joint meetings for discussion of some knotty problems; they studied together new finds of important documents and historical research as such progressed in India, in Maratha History, with their effort. Theirs was indeed a life fully devoted to serve the Muse of History. Nothing else attracted them, neither play, pictures, gossip nor music nor theatre. The life story of the one for over 54 years cannot be complete without the story of the other. So complete was the union—so firm was their friendship.

Sardesai did not belong to any school of thought—he was mostly an independent worker, pursuing historical studies merely as a spare time hobby. After retirement from Baroda, however, the study of history, reading and writing of it, became his full time occupation. Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas* when it was first published had had a mixed reception. While the official world welcomed it, unwittingly perhaps, in justification of the British take-over of administration of India, thinking Indians were pained at the gross mis-representation. May be the limitations of understanding of the *modi* documents or of adequately understanding the Maratha mind, were responsible for Grant Duff's shortcomings. But scholars were goaded to refute what Duff had written; they were prompted to afford convincing evidence to prove that Duff was not right. The establishment of the *Bharat Itihasa Samshodhak Mandal* in Poona may be considered as the culminating effort in the line. Many stalwarts from the high judicial chairs volunteered to correctly interpret Maratha History and critical examination of Duff's effort (it was now translated into Marathi also) was attempted. The campaign for search for historical documents is in fact the direct impact of Duff's life-long work.

Sardesai was indirectly influenced by Duff. His *Mussalmani Riyasat* (2 vols.) was of course an effort to help the students while the *British Riyasat* (2 Vols.) followed the same pattern more or less. Eight volumes of *Marathi Riyasat* however were differently planned and they follow the Duff pattern

of narrating the history of the Marathas. The Rajwade school honestly and sincerely believed that time was not ripe for writing of history; theirs was the task of gathering material for it. Labouring under this almost divine injunction, no serious attempt has *yet* been made in Maharashtra, of writing its own history. Sardesai's effort of providing a complete history of the rise and fall of the Maratha empire was at once ambitious and quite welcome marking a distinct departure. Only the orthodox did not fully appreciate this venture by an "outsider" —from Baroda in particular, regional feelings at that time being what they were. Sardesai's History on that account was not well received in the press generally, although students and readers purchased copies of it on an increasingly wider scale. Many editions of his books have been published and the difficulty in getting any complete edition speaks volumes for the reference value of his writings. No less a patriot than V. D. Savarkar has said :

> "Beginning with the Islamic rule and ending with the British administration, choosing the glorious Maratha period for a special and detailed treatment, Mr. Sardesai has presented the history of India in an authoritative narration. *There is no other book so informative* and telling the continuous story of India's past, in any language—not even in English."

The doyen amongst Marathi authors, N. C. Kelkar, however, paid an apt compliment to Sardesai when he wrote:

> "You have considered Study of History, as your son; and that off-spring is *immortal*."

Sardesai did need such an assurance from those who counted in the academic world. His was a miserable lot particularly during the latter part of his life. In the palace at Baroda, he was merged no doubt in the round of duties; but the atmosphere there was not quite congenial to his simple tastes. Here too, he was not fully happy; the constant bickerings and intrigues amongst the servants could not be pleasing. His stu-

dents too were not such as would give satisfaction to a *Guru* by their brilliance, by their devoted attention or by their respect.

Later in life, the sufferings of the Maharaja came to be shared by his faithful "reader" also; they had been closely associated for such a long time that Sardesai had, for all practical purposes, become a part of the Maharaja's personality, a part of the royal family and a confidante of all. All that however could not make Sardesai happy. More the responsibility devolved on him because of his faithful service and close trusted association, the more disgusted he became of the affairs at the court and longed for a peaceful, retired life some where amongst his kith and kin in Maharashtra. With great reluctance, perhaps with the greatest reluctance on the part of aging and ailing Maharaja, Sardesai retired in 1925 and arrived in Bombay to settle down on the banks of the Indrayani at Kamshet in a quiet cottage which his younger brother Dr Sardesai had built.

Sardesai longed for a peaceful evening of his life at Kamshet, but he was not destined to have it. While he was waiting for his brilliant son to return home from Germany after securing a Doctorate, Sardesai was served a cruel shock by his son's untimely death, far in Swiss Alps, on the surgeon's operation table. That proved a severe blow to Sardesai and the realisation that he was left childless in his old age seemed too much for the aged parent to bear. But devoting himself completely and fully to writing History, Sardesai recovered from the hard hit. Publication in a book form of his son's letters since his schooldays at Shantiniketan, (under Gurudev Tagore) proved a great relief to the forlorn father.

The editing and printing of the *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar*, kept him busy for the next few years. Here too he was harassed: the press and the legislature were used to carry on a campaign of hate and mud slinging against him and against Sir Jadunath. It is doubtful whether Sardesai alone would have stood the attack so well as he did, without the solid and unstinted support from Sir Jadunath. Their correspondence of the period shows how much of their valuable time was taken up by these pin-pricks. Petty jealousy alone could account for

the way in which the attack was launched.

Public appreciation however came to Sardesai after the completion of the publication of 45 volumes : reviews in the journals of the learned Societies appreciated the worth of the undertaking and paid handsome compliments to the Editor. Functions were held to honour Sardesai on the completion of his great project of making original material available to students from the rich collection known as the *Peshwa Daftar*.

Revision of the *Marathi Riyasat* for what in fact is the 3rd (and the last) edition was part of Sardesai's occupation. This time, the books were split to suit the life-time, first of the Chhatrapatis and then of the Peshwas. For the period upto 1707, five books including one for Shahji appeared, although the 2nd, devoted to Shivaji was the biggest of the lot. All were however equally important, being the ripe fruit of research of a life-long pursuit. The wealth of material dressed out and served, the suggested guidance for further reading and the mature judgement on men and matters make all the volumes unique. They are a constant companion to those studying Maratha History.

The revision of this 3rd edition proceeded upto the illfated Peshwa Narayan Rao (1773). As more and more material with contemporary records in other languages was available, the bulk of the later volumes was inevitable. For the Chhatrapati period, from 1600 to 1707, 634 pages were required; but for the period from 1707 to 1774, it took 1745 pages for completing the story. Not that the period was more eventful; but that more details were available in many languages.

Side by side, the revision of the *Musalmani Riyasat*, Volumes I & II, to its 4th edition was attempted and read in the proof form, although Sardesai did not live to see the new edition of the complete work. Students have found these volumes more helpful for a better understanding of their text. They rely more on Sardesai than on any other author. The *British Riyasat* however continues to sell the first edition. Being a hard and tireless worker all his life, Sardesai could produce staggering heaps of useful printed material. He wrote *Rajya-Katha*, stories from Maratha History and the idea proved quite catching. It ran into many editions. There is a selection

of letters arranged chronologically, *Aitihasik Patravyavahar.* Here no effort is made to weave any story around the documents. But each piece is printed as an independent state-paper. Notes for a better understanding of the inter-relation of persons and of the old, historical pithy expressions, were added. This book of Letters too has become popular, the 4th edition being current.

A biographical narration of Shivaji, primiarily for school boys was attempted as a past-time occupation by the fast aging historian. The publishers took great interest and put in a special effort to present the national hero's biography befitting his position, with many apt illustrations. The book, *Raja Shivaji,* won an award for excellence in printing in all-India competition sponsored by the Govt. of India. But these appear to be side dishes to the *magnum opus* already prepared that was for a long time under critical examination. Maratha History was written by Grant Duff in three volumes and Kincaid and Parasnis together had similarly written jointly three volumes of Maratha History. How could Sardesai, who had had such wonderful opportunities of study and research and of standing as it were on the shoulders of his predecessors like Duff and Kincaid, and of Sir Jadunath's close association, help and guidance all along, stay behind? He would not remain content with only his eight bulky tomes of *Marathi Riyasat.* He too must follow in the foot-steps of the previous historians of the Marathas and leave behind three authoritative volumes of history, work which had sustained him through thick and thin. Here then were in the making the three volumes of *New History of the Marathas.*

From the correspondence that is now available, it is clear, that Sardesai's original draft underwent changes from two expert hands : (*i*) Dr V. G. Dighe helped the old sage in the initial stages and (*ii*) Sir Jadunath saw to it that no flaw remained in the text. Those familiar with the editing quality of Sir Jadunath know it well how thoroughly his masterly blue pencil worked. While Sardesai was engaged on these volumes, the young Prince, grandson of Sardesai's hard task master, Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, was being crowned at Baroda in a grand and alas! the last ceremonial Durbar. On that happy occasion

Sardesai's full pension was restored and an award made for his crowning piece of historical writing. That is how these Volumes came to be dedicated to Sayaji Rao. It was no secret that immediately after Sardesai's retirement, much against the express wish of the Maharaja, the relations between the two were of a love lost type. Even during the last royal illness, Sardesai was advised not to call at the Palace lest the patient's temper be flared up. Under these conditions, the restoration of the full pension and the gift of a cash award, were significant royal appreciations for the loyal tutor, as Sardesai had come to be regarded in his later days at Baroda.

Sardesai's Patna University lectures were published as the *Main Currents of Maratha History* and that compact book has gone into three editions. His lectures at the Nagpur University too were published in book form (Marathi). For the *Sakal*, Poona, he wrote a series of articles regularly in a looking-back mood, narrating some of the less known happenings in Baroda. While he was thus serving the muse of history with full devotion, Dame Fate dealt a cruel and merciless blow to ailing and aged Sardesai in Feb. 1943. His wife, who had been his sole companion for three score years, left for the other world, leaving the lone husband to suffer the separation. But Sardesai seemed to have got over this great blow; he was fully engrossed in completing these three volumes.

The Punjab University presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar two Commemoration Volumes: one was styled *Life & Letters* and the other contained research papers by many hands. In the *Life & Letters*, corespondence between the two life-long friends. Sir Jadunath & Sardesai, is included in an edited form. Sir Jadunath's letters to Sardesai are 265, the first written on 18th June 1907 and the last on 19th April 1956. While letters by Sardesai to Sir Jadunath number 184, written between 3rd Feb. 1914 and 23rd July 1952. The gaps in the correspondence, particularly of those letters from Sardesai to Sir Jadunath, including the last letters between the two historians are collected for publication as they are.

They make an impressive and unique volume for many reasons. First, they are personal communications between two giants of Indian History and the two were exclusively devoted to the study of history as few others are. Together, they made

Indian history and historical studies richer than they had found them. Secondly, the individualities of both are strikingly brought out in these letters. The long and unbroken friendship, the high regard and respect each had for the other and their valuable co-operation bearing good fruit, are other merits of the letters.

Contrary to his usual practice of using post cards for formal correspondence, Sir Jadunath wrote a longish letter to Sardesai on 10th May 1958, (Sardesai's 92nd birthday). "If I enjoy my present health, I shall see 'these volumes' through the press, even when your eyes and brain are no longer available. Rely on me," assured Sir Jadunath.

At the time, Sardesai was ailing and Sir Jadunath seems to be confident of a longer life to himself. Actually, Sir Jadunath left this mortal world on the 19th May, i.e. 9 days after the letter was written, while Sardesai survived him by 19 months departing from this world on the 29th Nov. 1959.

The volumes to which Sir Jadunath makes a pointed reference were "*Selections from Kota Daftar*" which Sardesai had carefully sorted out and edited with notes and a brief summary in English on the style of the *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar*. The *Kota Daftar*, it can now be told, contains 23 bundles, making a total of 4407 papers, out of which 1756 were selected for printing by Sardesai. These papers throw more light on happenings at Mahadji's end, mostly in the North and when the writers report to him from Poona, they provide corroborative evidence for events at the Peshwa's court.

Some of the important bundles are :

Bundle-1-5 (1733-85). Out of 1600 documents, nearly a thousand were selected for printing. Early career of Mahadji, his exploits in the North including the capture of Delhi, Raghoba's flight to Surat, the affair of Bahirji Takpir (Mahadji's son-in-law), Moroba Dada's movements and many new details are reported in these.

Bundles-6-7 (1786-91) contain 358 papers, relating mostly to happenings in Rajputana, about Udaipur in particular, and add substantially to our knowledge. Of these, 211 were selected for printing.

Bundle-8 (1792): Scindia-Holkar conflict is described in

details and Mahadji's tactful handling of a delicate matter.

Personality of Mahadji is well brought out in 89 papers selected out of a total of 142.

Bundle-9 (1793) is an important find giving details of happenings in Poona, which are described no where else in Marathi. This is an important counter-part to volumes of the *Poona Residency Correspondence*.

Bundles-10-11 (1794-95), containing about 200 papers (only a hundred selected for printing) describe events at Poona and about the Kharda campaign. Details of the death of Sawai Madhav Rao also are strikingly fresh.

Bundles 12-15, 17, 18, 22, 23 have little additional information but they provide corroborative evidence for events described elsewhere.

Bundle 16: Out of 124 papers in this bundle only 8 are selected for printing. Lakhba Dada's brilliant letter: Datia and Jaipur: civil war in the North, are important topics.

Bundle 19: Thirty-four letters out of 110, describe the Anglo-Maratha war. (1803)

Bundle 20: Arthur Wellesley's clever tactics in war and peace are reported by an eye witness. Holkar's life can be reconstructed with the material from this bundle.

Bundle 21: Only a fifth of the papers from this bundle is selected for printing (21 out of 100) and they describe the conference of Maratha chiefs, collapse of Daulat Rao and services of Lalji Ballal.

This in brief is the material awaiting the light of the day, awaiting in fact for doing historical justice to the Maratha soldier and controller of Delhi, before it was taken over by the British. When two great historians, the greatest amongst us, had set their heart on publishing these, it is obvious that the departed souls of Sir Jadunath Sarkar and of G. S. Sardesai, are hovering over them. Those who can, must do something to get the volumes published so that the souls may rest in peace.

S. R. TIKEKAR

1774, April 18	Madhavrao II born.
1774, July	Sumersinh dies at Indore.
1774, Sept. 26	Ram Shastri re-instated.
1775	Md. Yusuf Gardi punished with death.
1779, Jan.	Kharagsinh executed.
1780	Tulya Pawar put to death.

Peshwa Narayanrao

CHAPTER I

THE NINE MONTHS REGIME OF NARAYANRAO

[1772—1773]

1 Eclipse of the Poona rulership.
2 Narayanrao becomes Peshwa.
3 Situation at Poona, the Gardis.
4 Irritation begins, Visajipant Lele.
5 The Nagpur succession and the Prabhus.
6 Plot to depose Narayanrao.
7 The tragedy acted.
8 Ram Shastri's enquiry and punishments.

1. **Eclipse of the Poona rulership.**—When we look back on Maratha history from the vantage-ground of our present knowledge, we cannot fail to notice that the death of the Peshwa Madhavrao I in 1772 introduced, at first unseen by any one, a profound change in the destiny of the nation. The next thirty years are marked by a revolution in the character of the Maratha Government, which, joined to the relative growth of forces outside, brought about the loss of Maratha independence and the break up of the solidarity of the Maratha dominions. Hitherto the activities of this race had flowed from the springhead at Poona and their central Government had always had a permanent head, legally entitled to the obedience of all; and that lawful head during four successive regimes had always been a hero, a born leader in war or diplomacy,—sometimes in both.

But with the accession of Narayanrao (November 1772) the State became headless. True, henceforth the Peshwa's seat was never vacant, but the Peshwa was a minor or a fugitive from his capital and country, unable to hold his own in an endless civil war. The guiding power in the administration inevitably passed on to a minister or a board of ministers. But no minister, however dictatorial, can exactly fill the place of a lawful master. For one thing, a minister is a servant, he merely exercises his master's authority by delegation, like sunshine reflected from a mirror. And a minister can be turned out by

that master any moment, whereas the ruler holds his sceptre for life.

Secondly, a minister is always beset by rivals, who dispute his authority and plot against him, openly or in secret, so that he has perpetually to devote half his time and attention towards such rivals, lest their plots should develop beyond his control. He cannot issue a clarion-call to the nation at large in his own name in a crisis, but only as the deputy of the sovereign when the sovereign is an infant and the minister is his lawful regent and guardian.

The weakness of even the greatest minister's status in comparison with that of a publicly recognized king, is clearly illustrated by the precarious position of Bajirao I during the first eight years of his tenure of that office, before Shahu had made the Peshwa the indisputable head of the administration. It is more forcibly, more tragically, demonstrated by the impotence and humiliation to which Nana Phadnis was reduced in his old age after Bajirao II's accession to the Peshwaship, in spite of the Maratha Machiavel's resounding success during the previous quarter-century and his unforgettable services to the nation. It has been truly said that war cannot be conducted by a debating club, and therefore Nana Phadnis's action in liquidating the Council of the Barbhais and making himself sole autocrat, was not a selfish measure, but step directed by the needs of the nation in the life and death struggle, with enemies all around Maharashtra and within it sapping its strength.

In 1772 Narayanrao came to the Peshwa's position as an immature fickle lad just turned of seventeen and he died only nine months later. Raghunathrao the next Peshwa, had to flee from Poona in less than three months after succeeding to the vacancy, and then followed a long regency which was ended only when Bajirao II after gaining the ancestral seat crushed Nana Phadnis. But even then he did not become the master of his own house in the sense that Bajirao I or Balajirao had been; that supremacy in internal affairs was gained by the head of the State only after his rebellious vassals had been scared away by the Treaty of Bassein (1802); but alas! the Jari-Patka was then flying at half-mast with the Union Jack proudly floating above it.

Within ten years of the death of Narayanrao, the centre of gravity of Maratha politics shifted from Poona to North India, and this change became unmistakably clear after the Treaty of Salbye and the death of Haidar Ali. The unity of the Maratha nation, with its arms far flung from the Krishna river in the south to the Ramganga under the shadow of the Himalayas, across the Indian Continent, was gone.

Thus in a long and dispassionate view of history, no fitter name can be given to the period embraced in this volume than 'Sunset over Maharashtra.[1]

2. **Narayanrao becomes Peshwa.**—Peshwa Madhavrao died on 18th November 1772 after having nominated his young brother Narayanrao to the Peshwaship and counselled him to conduct the administration by the advice of Sakharam Bapu and Nana Phadnis, the two ablest and most experienced servants of the State. Special directions were left in writing that Raghunathrao was to continue in confinement to keep him from doing mischief. R'rao had hardly the courage to openly protest against Narayanrao's nomination, in the presence of the dying Peshwa. He apparently acquiesced in the arrangement, which had been long and fully discussed in the presence of the whole court and solemnly declared with the family deity as witness. Only a short while before the Peshwa's death, Raghunathrao had indeed plotted and effected his escape from his confinement, but had been captured promptly and securely kept from mischief. The death of Madhavrao did not improve his prospects. Blinded by personal ambition, he could not reconcile himself to a subordinate position.

The obsequies of the late Peshwa were performed at Theur and the Court returned to Poona on 2nd December. As Nara-

1. In the parlance of political science, I think I am justified in calling the Peshwa *king*, because his status was really that of any one of the constituent princes under the Holy Roman Empire. It is not correct to call him a *Mayor of the Palace*, as the analogy of French history does not really go far. The Peshwa made war and peace himself, only reporting the accomplished fact to the sleeping nominal head at Satara as a mere form, and even that form came to be dropped after 1772, though the continuity of tradition was respected by his soliciting the robes of his office from the Chhatrapati.

yanrao prepared to start for Satara to receive the robes of office from the Chhatrapati, his uncle demurred to accompanying him, unless he was first granted an independent fief of 25 lacs annually for himself and his family. But under pressure of circumstances he was persuaded to give up this demand. Narayanrao received the robes at Satara from the Raja on the 13th December when Sakharam Bapu was invested with the office of administrator (karbhari) and the other officials confirmed in their respective posts.

Narayanrao, the youngest of Balajirao's three sons, born on 10th August 1755, was now seventeen years of age. He had been married to Gangabai Sathe when he was not yet eight, on 18th April 1763. He was much attached to Parvatibai, the widow of Sadashivrao Bhau, having been made over to her care to lessen the pangs of her distressful situation. Once in 1765 and again in 1769, Narayanrao had accompanied his brother the late Peshwa in his expeditions to the Karnatak. On the latter occasion he had received a wound in his wrist at the storming of fort Nijgal at the end of April 1770. He had been taught reading, writing and arithmetic with a working knowledge of the Sanskrit scriptures. During the last year or two of the previous regime, Narayanrao was associated with Sakharam Bapu in order to train him in the disposal of administrative work. His character and his performance of his duties had never satisfied his brother Madhavrao, who often expressed great fears about his future. Immediately on his accession the following opinion of his capacity was reported from the Poona Court. "The Shrimant is impatient and irritable, his levity becomes apparent ; he acts rashly upon the information conveyed to him by petty and irresponsible persons. He is yet a child and does not follow the guidance of Sakharam Bapu. The tiger is gone, now the jackals alone remain behind. God save the State."[2] At the beginning, however, the uncle and the nephew pulled well together for a time. Narayanrao soon began to imitate the stern ways of the late Peshwa and could not often restrain himself from showing open disrespect on occasions to Sakharam Bapu and other elderly officials about him.

Let us survey the political horizon as it was at this mo-

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2. Khare 1243.

ment. A momentary quiet seemed to reign all over India. Mahadji Sindia and the other Maratha chiefs were occupied in looking after the imperial concerns of Delhi and collecting revenues from the north Indian districts, where the Maratha power had just been established. Ghazi-uddin Imad-ul-mulk, a friend of the Marathas, was anxious to be re-instated in the office of the Imperial Wazir which he had once held. He was now a homeless wanderer, and in order to plead his cause, he personally repaired to Poona in December 1772 to persuade the new Peshwa to undertake a fresh plan for the management of the northern affairs.[3] The Emperor Shah Alam hated Ghazi-uddin bitterly as the murderer of his father and would not consent to show any favour towards this monster. But as an old friend who had materially helped the Maratha cause during pre-Panipat days, Ghazi-uddin's present indigence was severely felt in Poona, and Nana Phadnis in due course conferred a small provision upon him in Bundelkhand, in order to honour some specious promise which Narayanrao had probably made to him personally, before he was given leave to return.

The ex-Nawab Mīr Kasim was another important friend of the Marathas who at this time similarly craved for some maintenance, but it was beyond the Peshwa's power to satisfy him. In the south neither Haidar Ali of Mysore nor Nizam Ali of Haidarabad was in mood to worry the Marathas at this time, both keenly watching the situation at Poona to regulate their future policy. Thus Narayanrao had no outside tension to disturb the smooth working of his administration.

3. Situation at Poona, the Gardis.—But his position at home soon became too difficult for a raw youth like him to control. His first great trouble arose from his empty treasury. Madhavrao had drained away all his accumulations in paying off his debts. During his illness of some years his usual annual activities for bringing in funds gradually slackened and then came to a standstill. The situation became aggravated by the clamour of the Gardi sepoys, now employed on police duty about the palace and the city, for the accumulated arrears of their pay. The power of these mercenary foot-

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3. Purandare 3. 112; Khare 1242.

guards had become positively dangerous to the Government, and sufficient attention was not paid to it either by the Peshwa or his advisers. According to Bussy's regulations they worked only for their wages and had no personal attachment to the master they served. Their corps were composed mostly of north Indian men, Pathans, Abyssinians, Arabs, Rajputs and Purbias, each drawing Rs. 8 to 15 as monthly pay. Marathas being usually impatient of control, very few of them cared to join the disciplined bodies. Bussy and Ibrahim Khan had gone and there was no outstanding leader now among them, who could restrain these overbearing clamorous men and exact useful work from them. Their total number at this time did not probably exceed 5,000. Muhammad Yusuf, Sumersinh, Kharagsinh are the names of some of their leaders who had entered service some time about 1757. Yusuf was indeed a brave and able soldier, who had earned the late Peshwa's high opinion by capturing the fort of Shira in 1770. These leaders and their subordinates at this time were in charge of the person and the palace of the Peshwa, more or less like the Janisseries of Constantinopole. Muhammad Yusuf had been discharged a little while before for some dereliction of duty.

Another source of anxiety to the new Peshwa's Government was the presence at Poona of the British envoy Mostyn. In April 1772, when Madhavrao was on his death bed, the President of the Bombay Council received orders from the Home authorities to try to acquire from the Marathas some places on the mainland of India, like Salsette, Bassein, Elephanta, Karanja and other islands in the vicinity of Bombay and to station a British agent at Poona in order to gain that object. As Mostyn was already acquainted with the Court of Poona from his having led the British mission of 1767, he was deputed for a second time and arrived in Poona on 13th October 1772. From that day he continued there for full two years watching the course of events with a view to the acquisition of those places, and advising the Bombay authorities to take such steps as the situation in Poona suggested.

As soon as Madhavrao died, the British navy considering the moment opportune started a wanton aggression against the Maratha posts of Thana, Bassein, Vijaydurg and Ratnagiri on the west coast. Narayanrao took prompt action to prevent

mischief. He appointed Trimbak Vinayak to be the Sar-Subah of Bassein and the Konkan, and despatched him with necessary funds and naval forces to counteract the British moves. The Maratha naval officer Dhulap of Vijaydurg co-operated with Trimbak Vinayak and the two proved strong enough for a time to repel the British attack. But Mostyn remained at Poona watching for another opportunity which was not long in coming.

Like the British traders of Bombay the Siddi of Janjira was also keenly watching for an opportunity to profit by any weakness in the Maratha Government, particularly with a view to taking back fort Raigad, which the Marathas prized as the erstwhile capital of Shivaji's time, and which at this moment was in the nominal possession of the Chhatrapati. Even during the late Peshwa's lifetime Narayanrao had foreseen the danger and taken measures for the defence of that fort. These incidents reveal the kind of situation which Narayanrao had to handle at the commencement of his rule. Fortunately his relations with his uncle were at first cordial. On 7th February 1773 the marriage of R'rao's daughter Durgabai with Pandurang Babaji Joshi of Baramati was celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing, in which Narayanrao figured prominently supervising the arrangements.

4. **Irritation begins, Visajipant Lele.**—The first affair that led to an open rupture between the uncle and the nephew concerned one Visajipant Lele, a clever diplomat, efficient official and soldier of merit, who long held the post of the Governor of Bassein. He was the man who first exposed the British designs on Bassein and Thana and took timely measures to safeguard the Maratha interests there. He was high in the confidencee of Sakharam Bapu and had served him faithfully in several awkward situations demanding mutual support. Visajipant's corrupt practices were long known to Madhavrao whose regard he had consequently lost. Once it was reported to that Peshwa that Visajipant had misappropriated government property worth twenty lacs on account of the goods of a shipwrecked trading vessel, which he was bound in duty to credit to the public treasury. Madhavrao in his last days had for this offence dismissed the Pant from service. A few months

later when Narayanrao became the Peshwa, Visajipant approached him for reinstatement and was supported by Sakharam Bapu. Narayanrao, however, sternly rejected Bapu's recommendation and appointed Trimbak Vinayak to the Government of Bassein.[4]

This incident is only a typical instance of the way in which the new Peshwa found it difficult to establish his prestige in the Government. The Patwardhan Sardars had attained enormous power by their faithful service during the time of the late Peshwa, and were on that account an eyesore both to R'rao and Sakharam Bapu, who now made it their business to lower the prestige of the Patwardhans much against the inclination of Narayanrao. It soon became plain that the new Peshwa and Sakharam Bapu could not pull well together ; they decided to refer their differences for decision to the experienced voice of Gopikabai, now the only elderly member in the family. For this purpose Narayanrao, Bapu and Vamanrao Patwardhan (brother of the late Gopalrao and now the leading member of that family), repaired to Gangapur in the middle of March for a consultation with the lady, and spent a few days there in frank discussions without arriving at any definite solution.

In the mean time Raghunathrao, sulking at Poona at his impotence, took advantage of Narayanrao's absence to promote a fresh intrigue for getting out of the new Peshwa's control. He began to enlist troops of his own and wrote to Haidar Ali for support. Naro Appaji the officer responsible for peace and order in Poona, took prompt measures to prevent Raghunathrao's escape by placing guards to watch all the exits of the palace and the city. R'rao pitched his tents outside, declaring that he was going out on an expedition. The news of this move reached Narayanrao at Nasik and he hurriedly returned to Poona. He saw his uncle in his tents and on 11th April brought him back to the palace, where he employed additional guards to prevent his escape, with the result of further irrita-

4. Later on Visajipant paid a heavy fine of several lacs to the Peshwa's Govt. and was reposted to the charge of Bassein in June 1774. On this subject, see P. D. Vol. 35. 5 and the following ; Khare Nos. 1234, 1235, 1238 &c.

tion taking place between them. R'rao finding his situation unbearable appealed to the Bhosles of Nagpur for support.

5. **The Nagpur succession and the Prabhus.**—The death of Janoji Bhosle in May 1772 gave rise to the usual succession disputes in that family and civil war ensued between the two brothers Mudhoji and Sabaji. The former was supported by R'rao and Sakharam Bapu from Poona, and the latter by Narayanrao, Nana Phadnis and others, who all stuck to the policy of the late Peshwa. Sabaji in addition enlisted the sympathies of Nizam Ali and fought some indecisive actions with his brother in January 1773. This fratricidal war came to be temporarily composed through the mediation of some disinterested well-wishers and an agreement was arrived at, by which Mudhoji's son Raghuji was to be recognised as the ruler of Nagpur. In order to get this arrangement confirmed by the Peshwa, two agents, Vyankatrao Kashi Gupte of the Prabhu caste, and his brother Lakshman, were sent to Poona to obtain from the Peshwa the robes of the Sena-Saheb Subah for Raghuji. When these two agents arrived in Poona in the summer of 1773, they discovered a severe tension growing between the Peshwa and his uncle and were secretly incited to make capital out of it by the well-known wire-puller and diplomat of Nagpur, Devajipant Chorghode, the same person whose pride had been humbled by the late Peshwa Madhavrao, and who had long exhibited open sympathies with R'rao and Sakharam Bapu. These Nagpur agents now started their mischievous game at Poona, by espousing the cause of R'rao against his nephew.

The Prabhu caste at this time had been nursing a special grievance against Narayanrao, although the origin of the trouble was of an earlier date. The Prabhus claimed the rights of Kshatriyas in the performance of their religious functions, and insisted upon the use of the Vedic hymns for that purpose. A dispute on this practice had arisen in the days of Shivaji, whose confidential secretary Balaji Avji Chitnes, a Prabhu by caste, performed the thread ceremony of his sons at the same time as that of Shivaji himself, by using Vedic chants under the direction of the celebrated Gaga Bhatt. This practice had continued since then without interference from the orthodox Brahmans, as Shahu and his Peshwas judiciously avoided any irri-

tating innovation. But now Narayanrao rather imprudently took up the orthodox party's cause, probably under the inspiration of Nana Phadnis, deprived the Prabhus of their Kshatriya status, and forced them under severe penalties to adopt the practice prescribed for the Shudras, who had no right to use the Vedic hymns. For this purpose some of the prominent leaders of the Prabhu community of Poona were called together and under severe torture including starvation, compelled to sign an agreement of nine specific articles, purporting their acceptance of the Shudra status and renouncing that of the Kshatriyas. This action of the Peshwa made him lose the sympathies of that influential community, who in resentment readily joined the plot which Raghunathrao was now slowly and secretly forming. Some time during July R'rao became so exasperated with the restrictions imposed upon him, that he threatened to starve himself, his wife and his adopted son to death. In this predicament Narayanrao failed to adopt a cool and conciliatory course. He had no adviser in his confidence. Nana Phadnis had been already estranged for some time and he kept himself aloof from the current administration on account of the open want of confidence shown towards him. Nana disagreed with his senior colleague Bapu and avoided taking any direct part in the administration, except when absolutely necessary. This alone explains why Nana with his habitual circumspection did not notice the current reports of intrigues and plot then circulating in the town and take timely measures to suppress them. The little incident handed down in local tradition of the Peshwa removing the turban from Nana's head with his stick, was a bad joke characteristic of Narayanrao's freakish nature. He often vainly and carelessly talked of imitating the grand schemes and projects worthy of his famous ancestors, but possessed little capacity or perseverence to execute them.

6. Plot to depose Narayanrao.—The Nagpur agents Vyankatrao Kashi and his brother Lakshman came to Poona primarily to obtain the Peshwa's sanction to the succession of Raghuji the son of Mudhoji, to the Chiefship of Nagpur and thus put down the pretensions of Sabaji to that office. Narayanrao, however, supported the claim of Sabaji and sent

armed reinforcements under Khanderao Darekar to assist him against his brother. Mudhoji got wild at this rebuff and wrote to the two agents to stay on in Poona and organize a strong opposition to Narayanrao. Mudhoji wrote, " It is no use any longer to put up meekly with the Peshwa's high-handedness. You may use your discretion in whatever way you think best for gaining our object by supporting R'rao's power." This was indeed a vague direction ; but it certainly authorized the agents to join in any intrigue that might be set on foot against the ruling Peshwa.

The agents could not mature and plan unless they had a full and direct talk with R'rao ; but he was strictly guarded against any outside communication. In this predicament the Nagpur vakils consulted Sakharam Hari Gupte, a devoted partizan of R'rao, who had already been extremely offended by Narayanrao's action in imposing social restrictions upon the Prabhu caste. They together managed to obtain a secret interview with R'rao, in which a plot was hatched for seizing and confining Narayannao and placing Raghunathrao on the Peshwa's seat. For the success of the plan it was necessary for R'rao to be free and to organize an armed force. One dark night in August Raghunathrao tried to escape leaning on the arm of Lakshman Kashi. He was detected by the guards and taken back to his custody. Lakshman Kashi managed to escape capture and ran out of Poona to save his life. This incident was reported to Narayanrao, who thereupon increased the rigour of his uncle's confinement and ordered that he should not be alliwed to step out of his room. All his necessaries were provided within a circumscribed area. It was R'rao's practice as part of prayer, to stand in the open and gaze long at the sun. This practice came to be disallowed, which made the uncle so furious that matters began to head towards a crisis. His lavish expenditure was at the same time severely curtailed.

Cases of similar irritation in the late Peshwa's time had not been rare, but Madhavrao had carefully avoided exasperating the uncle beyond the limits of endurance, while Narayanrao lacked the necessary prudence. Madhavrao usefully employed Sakharam Bapu, Sakharam Hari, Chinto Vithal,

Gangadhar Yeshwant, Visaji Lele, Abaji Madhav Sohoni and other avowed partizans of his uncle and prevented any concerted action on their part. But Narayanrao neglected this precaution. These discontented elements now found a common platform for their hostile activity and the gratification of the revenge, which they had long nursed against Narayanrao. In addition to these helpmates, R'rao succeeded in enlisting the sympathies of Appaji Ram, the resident ambassador of Haidar Ali at Poona. Appaji entered into R'rao's plans and persuaded his master to extend his support to his unfortunate member of the Peshwa's family. James Forbes who later lived with R'rao and his party in Gujarat, writes, "Narayanrao's duplicity and ill-treatment at length occasioned Raghoba to concert measures with Haidar Ali's Ambassador to effect his escape, which being known to the young Peshwa he confined him in his palace, suffering no friend to visit him nor any of his own servants to attend him. Whether from weariness of life or to intimidate his nephew, Raghoba now entered into a solemn vow to starve himself, when his death being attributed to Narayanrao's cruelty, the nation would stigmatize him as the murderer. Thus resolved he put his vow into execution and for the space of eighteen days took no other sustenance than two ounces of deer's milk each day until, when he was nearly exhausted, Narayanrao relented and promised he should have the government of a district with five castles and a jagir of twelve lacs of rupees per annum, provided some of the great chieftains would become surety for his future conduct."[5]

Narayanrao getting disgusted with the intrigues of the two Nagpur agents, in exasperation issued prompt orders recognizing Sabaji Bhosle as the Sena-Saheb Subah and commanding the agents to proceed post-haste to Nagpur along with the third agent Bhavani Shivram who had just arrived. The orders appointing Sabaji to the Nagpur headship are dated 16th August, that is, two weeks before the murder of the Peshwa. This date thus marks the beginning of the storm that was gathering. A very influential personal servant of R'rao and Anandibai named Tulaji Pawar, now became the moving spirit of another plot which is skilfully hatched and fearlessly executed. The ori-

5. *Oriental Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 301.

ginal plan was to seize Narayanrao, put him in confinement, liberate R'rao and make him the Peshwa. It was this Tulaji who organized the subsequent plot or murder. He was found to be the chief culprit in the enquiry into the affair. He long escaped capture and when in 1780 his evidence came to be recorded, he said, that the plot "had started in the days at Theur," meaning that the decision was taken by R'rao, while the late Peshwa was at Theur, to secure the Peshwaship for himself after he was dead. This resolution on the part of the uncle was never lost sight of, although under the circumstances he could not immediately carry it out. Looking at the affair at this distance of time and from the recorded evidence that has accumulated, one is sadly struck with the utter neglect or incapacity of Narayanrao to take the most ordinary precautions for self-protection, which for a ruler of his position would have been easy. He possessed a sour temper, which often turned his best friends into enemies.

Sakharam Bapu's policy was to smoothe matters by compromise, to avoid extreme steps and to reconcile conflicting interests. When Raghunathrao and his wife Anandibai often bitterly complained to him about the harsh treatment that they were receiving from the Peshwa, Sakharam Bapu had a delicate task to perform as the responsible administrator. He probably had no knowledge of the conspiracy for murder that was being hatched.

From 16th to 30th August was a period that witnessed an unprecedented stir in Poona with secret talks and concealed discussions among the various partizans of Raghunathrao, but as these had been a normal occurrence at the Peshwa's palace, no responsible official paid any serious attention to them. The annual Shravan charities to Brahmans passed off as usual on 25th July. Next came the ten days of the Ganapati festival when the administration had a holiday and all officials and staff were fully occupied with the various details of the celebration, the daily worship both morning and evening, Vedic recitations, music, dance, Durbars, feasts, and processions. This festival commenced on 21st August and was to have ended on 31st, the Anant 14th of Bhadrapad. The murder of the Peshwa took place on 30th August shortly after midday.

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Sakharam Bapu's policy was to smoothe matters by compromise, to avoid extreme steps and to reconcile conflicting interests. When Raghunathrao and his wife Anandibai often bitterly complained to him about the harsh treatment that they were receiving from the Peshwa, Sakharam Bapu had a delicate task to perform as the responsible administrator. He probably had no knowledge of the conspiracy for murder that was being hatched.

From 16th to 30th August was a period that witnessed an unprecedented stir in Poona with secret talks and concealed discussions among the various partizans of Raghunathrao, but as these had been a normal occurrence at the Peshwa's palace, no responsible official paid any serious attention to them. The annual Shravan charities to Brahmans passed off as usual on 25th July. Next came the ten days of the Ganapati festival when the administration had a holiday and all officials and staff were fully occupied with the various details of the celebration, the daily worship both morning and evening, Vedic recitations, music, dance, Durbars, feasts, and processions. This festival commenced on 21st August and was to have ended on 31st, the Anant 14th of Bhadrapad. The murder of the Peshwa took place on 30th August shortly after midday.

During these Ganapati celebrations Tulya Pawar began his activities in right earnest. He approached the Gardi leaders and sounded them as to their attachment to the Peshwa and his uncle. Possessing a peculiar dash and an audacious desire to see his master placed in the highest position so as to avenge a real or fancied wrong he had suffered from Narayanrao and possibly from Madhavrao himself, Tulaji strained every nerve to put into a definite shape the vague and scattered bits of a plot that were in the air, select instruments for its execution and assign to them the parts that they were expected to play. Being a personal servant of long standing and familiarity in the palace, he could not have been abruptly dismissed, even if he had come to be suspected of some deep-laid plan. He had ready access to his master and could well arrange the details of the plot in consultation with R'rao and his wife Anandibai in the palace and the Gardi chiefs outside. The initial idea of the conspirators having been only to confine Narayanrao and put R'rao in his place, the latter cautiously fathomed Sakharam Bapu's attitude towards the intended project. Possibly Bapu honestly believed R'rao to be in no way inferior to his nephew : he was certainly not enthusiastic on behalf of Narayanrao and as no personal harm was intended to him, Sakharam Bapu took no active steps either to promote or prevent the project.

Moroba Phadnis was also a member of the executive Government, but he shared the indifferent attitude of his senior colleague Bapu. Haripant Phadke too shared the apathetic spirit of his friend Nana. Thus if one bears in mind the divergent views of these several responsible councillors, one need not wonder why the murder was not prevented. Sumersinh was the Gardi officer appointed by Narayanrao to be in immediate charge of his confined uncle and as such the man had free access to him. He was won over by Tulaji to join the conspiracy along with Muhammad Yusuf, Kharagsinh and Bahadur Khan, so that the plan proved easy of execution. To confine Narayanrao appeared as the only means of easing the agonies of Raghunathrao. "You four chiefs have each a thousand men under you," urged Tulaji, "and you can easily execute this task." Sumersinh replied, "This is a venture in which our lives are at stake in case of failure. So we must obtain some substantial

reward." It was thereupon agreed that a cash reward of three lacs should be paid to the Gardi chiefs if they accomplished the object. A written order by R'rao was procured and delivered to these four chiefs, purporting that the Peshwa should be "seized". This word came to be later scratched and replaced by the word 'slain' by Anandibai, says the *Peshwa-bakhar*. But who indeed made this change has ever remained an unsolved mystery. Anandibai all along averred that she had no hand in the affair. The *Nagpur bakhar* says that Lakshman Kashi delivered to the Gardi chiefs a written promise by R'rao offering them a reward of three lacs upon their placing N'rao in confinement. Thus the plot came to be arranged by R'rao with the Gardis through the instrumentality of Tulaji Pawar and Lakshman Kashi. Duff says that Ram Shastri made a full enquiry of the affair, when the paper with the word "seized" scratched and replaced by "slain", was produced before him. That note is now nowhere to be traced. It seems that when the Gardi chiefs undertook the venture at the instance of R'rao, they discovered that in the process of the arrest it was quite possible that the Peshwa might come to be slain, if he on his part offered armed resistance. They, therefore, represented this difficulty through the mediators and were absolved by R'rao from any responsibility for murder, if the Peshwa came by his death in the course of the encounter. Hence came this change in the material word of the contract.

7. **The tragedy acted.**—From 16 August 1773 onward the plot began to thicken. Narayanrao remained fatally incautious during this momentous period. Raghuji Angre of Kolaba had come to Poona and called on the Peshwa. The latter had to pay a return visit which he fixed for the morning on Monday 30th August. Accompanied by Haripant Phadke Narayanrao rode to Angre's residence outside the city at about ten in the morning. During their conversation Raghuji drew the Peshwa's attention to the crop of rumours he had been hearing, and cautioned him to be on his guard against danger to his life. When the visit concluded, the Peshwa and Phadke proceeded directly to the Parvati temple where their breakfast was fixed for that day along with some guests and invitees. The meal being over, the Peshwa rode back to his palace along

with Haripant. During their ride the Peshwa communicated to Haripant what he had heard from Angre and asked him to take immediate steps to prevent mischief. Haripant assured the Peshwa that he would attend to the affair after finishing his midday meal which he was going to have with a friend. The Peshwa reached his palace and retired to his room for rest. Tulya Pawar somehow got scent of the Peshwa being forewarned and immediately reported to the Gardi chiefs that unless they executed their plan immediately, they would all be undone, as the secret had leaked out. At this intimation a body of about five hundred Gardis headed by their four chiefs, immediately rushed into the palace through an opening of a hind gate then being widened. They cut down the few men on duty at the gate and demanded payment of their long delayed salaries.

It was about one o'clock in the afternoon. The clerks and servants on duty harangued the mutineers saying that they must not raise a clamour and disturb their master's repose ; and that their grievances would be listened to in the office. At this the protesting clerks were cut down; when one of them took shelter behind a cow, that used to be kept on the premises always for fresh milk, the Gardis hewed down the animal and the man, closed the front gate and proceeded to the Peshwa's room upstairs with drawn swords and deafening shouts. The palace resounded with the cries of horror and grief raised by the inmates, but none could oppose the unruly attack. Narayanrao in fear of life and entirely unarmed, escaped through a back-door of his room into his aunt Parvatibai's apartment. She directed him to go to his uncle and seek his protection. He then ran to the spot where R'rao was performing his worship and clasped him, begging to be saved and imploring him to become the Peshwa if his own life were spared. Sumersinh and the Gardis who in the meantime had closely followed the Peshwa there, pulled him away from his uncle. Tulya Pawar dragged him out violently and Sumersinh hacked him to pieces. Narayanrao's servant Chapaji Tilekar fell upon his master's body to save him along with some maid servants and they were all cruelly cut to pieces. A little later after this first rush, one Naroba Naik, an old and trusted man on palace duty, came forth and roundly censured R'rao for allowing such foul deeds

to take place in his presence. The enraged Gardis thereupon slew that innocent man too. Thus within the short space of about half an hour eleven persons came to be murdered in cold blood in that famous palace, seven being Brahmans, two Maratha servants, two maids, besides one cow, no less sacred a life, all in the heart of a Brahman city. Forbes corroborates these details, saying, "The accounts of this catastrophe are variously related. The Peshwa family and a large part of the nation accused Raghoba of the murder ; some of the Maratha Chiefs and numerous partisans asserted his innocence. When we consider his ambitious character and his peculiar situation at the time, it is difficult to exculpate him."

Haripant Phadke upon hearing the news ran out and surrounded the palace with his troops and artillery ; but not knowing what exactly was happening inside, he could not open fire upon the building. In the mean time Sardars, officials and others including Nana Phadnis met in conference at the Budhwar Police Station and deliberated upon the measures to be adopted. Bhavanrao Pratinidhi, Maloji Ghorpade and other influential persons went to the palace to obtain correct news of what had happened. The Gardis were guarding the palace and admitted these gentlemen to R'rao presence on laying down their arms outside. When they came in, they found R'rao seated in the court-yard of the ground-floor surrounded by the Gardis with drawn swords. In the mean time some of them plundered the furniture, utensils, both of the kitchen and the chapel, gold and silver plate, and other articles with whatever they could lay their hands on. The visitors blamed Raghunathrao for allowing such atrocities and pacified the clamouring Gardis with the help of some city bankers. It was nearly midnight before the Gardis allowed the dead bodies to be removed and the funeral rites to be performed. The mangled parts of the Peshwa's body were collected and carried away in a bundle for cremation, after R'rao had been proclaimed by the Gardis as the master of the State and joined by the officials of his choice. Sakharam Bapu felt the shock so severely that he did not care to take any part in the new administration. Indeed he was so overcome and distracted that he roamed away from the city stung by the idea that he was unable to fulfil the

solemn pledge he had given to Madhavrao and Ramabai to protect Narayanrao. He feared the Sati's curse.

Nana Phadnis too withdrew himself from office and kept away from the new arrangements made by R'rao, who had no liking for him. It seems that Ram Shastri as the supreme judicial authority immediately started an enquiry into the affair in spite of R'rao's opposition to that course. The investigation lasted for some six weeks and decisions were taken by the ordinary process of judicial inquiry. R'rao had begun to administer the State with the help of Chinto Vithal and Moroba Phadnis in the absence of the old ministers. As there was no other male member in the Peshwa's family to claim the succession, most people acquiesced in the new administration out of sheer necessity, though unwilling at heart to submit to a murderer's rule.

This dreadful event at Poona at once incited the enemies of the Maratha State all over India to rise against its power and take advantage of the confusion at home. A wave of sensation ran through the country causing immediate danger to Maratha rule in all quarters. Fortunately no one undertook a direct attack upon Poona itself. The Peshwa's mother at Nasik felt utterly wretched at the death of her son. She had borne three good sons ; the eldest Vishvasrao lost his life at the age of 19 on the field of Panipat ; Madhavrao after a brilliant career succumbed to a fatal disease at the early age of 28, and now came this murder of her only surviving son. She felt so stricken with grief that in a frenzy she gave up all comforts of life and took up a half coconut shell as a bowl begging alms from door to door. This practice she continued for over a year and she recovered her normal peace of mind only at the importunities of the ministers after they had succeeded in driving away the murderer from Poona, and when happily a new heir was born to Narayanrao's wife Gangabai.

R'rao himself had never shown any courage or power of decision and for long hesitated how best to organize his party and secure his position in the midst of the sullen opposition and agitated atmosphere. "Indeed," Forbes writes, "he became timid, indolent and suspicious ; his understanding seemed clouded by superstition and his mind weakened, either by the severities he had lately suffered or the distractions of a wound-

ed conscience." Mostyn was then in Poona and frequently called on R'rao offering British help, if he needed it.

The two Nagpur agents remained steadfast in their attachment to R'rao. On the day of the murder he despatched Lakshman Kashi with a letter of friendly terms to Mudhoji Bhosle inviting him expeditiously to Poona with all his forces. The other Nagpur agent Vyankatrao remained in Poona to manage R'rao's concerns so as to strengthen the latter's hold on the administration. The usual Dasara celebration occurred on 25th September, when R'rao went to live in tents, intending to meet the possible danger that was threatening the State from Nizam Ali and Haidar Ali. During the interval he was mainly occupied in settling the vexatious demands of the Gardi chiefs, who practically held all power and whose sole aim now was to get from R'rao as much money and reward for their services as they could. For the time Bhavanrao Pratinidhi acted as R'rao's agent in settling the Gardis' demands and after severe altercations succeeded in getting rid of these unwelcome friends from the palace, having paid them first the stipulated amount of five lacs, and in addition, three lacs more in lieu of the three forts which they had wanted for their safe resort. During these negotiations the Gardis went so far as to threaten R'rao that they would raise Ali Bahadur (son of Shamsher Bahadur) to the Peshwaship if their demands were not granted. They also wrung from him a written promise that he would protect them thereafter in all circumstances of danger to their lives. R'rao had now no strong adherent or support except such second rate men as the Gardi chiefs, and Sakharam Hari, Sadashiv Ramchandra, Vyankatrao Kashi, Abaji Mahadev, Tulya Pawar, Moroba Phadnis, Maloji Ghorpade, Govindrao Gaikwad, Manaji Phakde and Mudhoji Bhosle, who will be met with in the narrative of what followed. One strong follower of R'rao named Gangadhar Yeshwant died on 20th February 1774 and this considerably weakened his party.

There prevailed in Poona and outside a strong general feeling against R'rao holding his post of the Peshwa if he was proved to be the author of the murder, "there being no instance of one member of the sacred Brahman order taking away the life of another : the Hindu annals had never before recorded the murder of a Brahman ; and the dagger directed

by a near relation of the same sacred caste dreadfully increased the heinous character of the deed."[6]

This resolution of non-recognition of the murderer was secretly confirmed on the 10th day (8th September) when the relatives and officials gathered at the cremation ground to render their last homage to the departed soul by offering the sesamum and water. It was at this moment that the first signs of opposition became visible and Sakharam Bapu, Nana, Haripant, the Patwardhans, the Rastes and others took up a decision not to join Raghunathrao if the inquiry which Ram Shastri was conducting, proved his guilt in the murder.

One cannot account for the delay R'rao experienced in securing the robes of Peshwaship from the Chhatrapati. He sent Amritrao to Satara, obtained the robes on 10th October and accepted them not ceremoniously in a full Darbar at Poona, but at Alegaon near the river Bhima on the last day of October. At this time he prepared his own seal from which he purposely omitted Ram Raja's name as being inauspicious.

Narayanrao had before his death sent orders of recall to his large forces employed in north India. Visaji Krishna accordingly returned after clearing the accounts and outstanding affairs of his expedition and reached Poona just after the Peshwa's murder. He brought with him a treasure amounting to 22 lacs of rupees in cash, in addition to jewelry and other valuable articles, which Raghunathrao greedily seized and which certainly relieved him from his immediate monetary difficulties.

8. **Ram Shastri's enquiry and the punishments.**—In the meantime Ram Shastri completed his inquiry into the murders that had taken place on 30th August. It would be clear from the foregoing narrative that the Peshwa's murder was a deliberate cold-blooded affair, for which long and secret preparations had been made by several followers of R'rao, although their original intention was only to have the Peshwa confined. Ram Shastri found Raghunathrao as the main culprit and in addition about fifty persons more or less responsible for the crime, (49 males and one female servant). Of these 49 again

6. Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs* I, p. 303. The boast of the Peshwa was "our people are not given to treacherous deeds." Hingne Daf. 1. 117.

thirteen were Gardis, eight of whom were Hindus and five Muslims. In addition to these 13 there were 26 Brahmans, 3 Prabhus and 7 Marathas proved to be culprits. The 26 Brahmans were mostly clerks, who had acted as agents in arranging the details of the plot and its final execution. Vyankatrao Kashi, his brother Lakshman, and Sakharam Hari Gupte were the three Prabhus who were declared to have taken a prominent part in maturing the plot.

Nana Phadnis, it seems, believed both Sakharam Bapu and Moroba Phadnis to be more or less implicated in the main structure of the plot and had them punished later by imprisonment, when he came into power, although other offences against them were at the time alleged. Nana Phadnis also all along considered Anandibai to be equally responsible with her husband ; but no mention of the name of this shrewd and cautious lady occurs in any document declaring her offence. Possibly as she was a lady (then 25 years old) of the Peshwa's own household, her name was purposely excluded, but Nana Phadnis ever after treated her as a detested criminal and had her imprisoned throughout the remaining years of her life.

As R'rao now came to power and as it formed his function to execute the punishments, they long remained suspended and were carried out piecemeal later during the stress of the Anglo-Maratha war. When Raghunathrao assumed the Peshwaship, Ram Shastri approached him (propably at Alegaon) for the execution of the decrees he had passed. R'rao urged that the murder was a private personal affair and that the Shastri had no concern with it. But the intrepid judge fearlessly argued the point personally with him, and told him to his face that he was himself found to be the chief culprit and as such deserved the capital punishment. Thus once in a way both R'rao and the public realized what power the silent judiciary possessed in a well-governed State, and what support it lent to its preservation. But R'rao dismissed the eminent judge from his position. Ram Shastri coolly retired to his native village and even when after more than a year the Government of the Barbhais called him back to his post, he refused to accept it until he received from them a written promise on solemn oaths, that they would never interfere with

his duties and that they would faithfully execute whatever decrees he passed in the capacity of a judge.[7]

In a letter which the Barbhais afterwards addressed to the king of England, they openly declared that R'rao was the murderer of his nephew and requested the British power not to support a criminal. This letter was forwarded to the king by the G. G. Warren Hastings on 5th November 1777. It would thus be seen that there was no machinery for punishing the criminals immediately. As soon as Ram Shastri declared R'rao to be the chief offender, many of the administration and the public refused to accept him as the legal head of the State. A council known as the *Barbhais* (twelve comrades) soon came to be formed, who expelled R'rao from his position, a step which brought on the war with the British, known as the First Maratha War, which lasted for 8 years from 1774 to 1782.

It was to bring to justice R'rao the principal author of the murder and save the State from British aggression, that the long and costly war was undertaken, with the result that his person and family were ultimately secured and punished, although he did not long survive his surrender. He confessed his guilt when shortly before his death he underwent a penance at Nasik for his sin. He on that occasion declined to confess that he had directly brought about his nephew's murder, but acknowledged his responsibility in it to the extent that he had absolved the Gardi chiefs in writing, if in the attempt to put Narayanrao under arrest, he came to be assassinated. This same story is corroborated by Muhammad Yusuf in his evidence. He deposed that " there was no plot or intention to murder the Peshwa. Their object was only to put him in confinement." Anandibai must have known what was going on, but did not try to prevent the murder.

Of the prominent offenders one was Tulya Pawar, R'rao's personal servant, and the four Gardi and three Prabhu chiefs. R'rao shielded them for a long time with all his power. They all followed him during the war and served him with devotion. But he soon found himself unable to protect them and recommended them to the shelter of the neighbouring

7. See S. P. D. 5. 49, 54, 57. The last document is dated 26th Sept. 1774

powers. He sent Muhammad Yusuf to the care of Mudhoji Bhosle, and Tulya Pawar and Kharagsinh to Haidar Ali. Sumersinh was similarly despatched to Indore, where he died in July 1774. On 18th April the murdered Peshwa's wife gave birth to a son who came to be invested with the robes of Peshwaship, an event which at once dislodged R'rao from his position and compelled him to become a wanderer for life, confirming the rule of the Barbhais over the Maratha State. It was then that most of the offenders were captured and punished. Mudhoji Bhosle was compelled by the Barbhais to withdraw his protection from Muhammad Yusuf, who for a time remained concealed in the forests of the Central Provinces. But he was discovered, captured and put to death in 1775. Kharagsinh and Tulaji Pawar were handed over by Haidar Ali to the Government of Poona in 1780 and were then tortured to death. Vyankatrao Kashi and Sakharam Hari suffered imprisonment for life. Most of the other offenders were discharged after having worked their terms of imprisonment. Nana Phadnis could thus rightly boast that he had fully avenged the death of Narayanrao after labouring incessantly for eight long years.

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CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER II

1773,	Sept. 17	The English capture Tanjore from Raja Tulaji.
„	Oct.	R'rao leaves Poona for Karnatak.
„	Nov. 18	R'rao and Nizam Ali meet near Bidar.
„	Dec. 2	The British expedition starts against Thana.
„	Dec. 8	Mostyn reaches Bombay from Poona.
„	Dec. 13	R'rao leaves Bidar for Arcot.
„	Dec. 28	Thana falls into British hands.
1774,	Jan. 9	R'rao arrives on the Tungabhadra.
„	Jan. 18	Gangabai reaches Purandar, hostilities started against R'rao.
„	Feb. 17	Proclamation issued declaring R'rao usurper.
„	March 3	Pethe, Sabaji and Nizam Ali meet at Gulbarga and concent plans against R'rao.
„	March	R'rao leaves the Tungabhadra for Miraj.
„	March 26	Battle of Kasegaum, Pethe wounded.
„	April 2	Pethe dies : R'rao fleeing north.
„	April 18	Son born to Gangabai.
„	April end	R'rao reaches Indore.
„	May 28	Madhavrao II receives robes of Peshwaship.
„	July	R'rao with Sindia & Holkar crosses the Narmada back for Poona.
„	Oct.	R'rao arrives at Burhanpur.
„	Oct. 26	Warren Hastings becomes G.G.
„	Nov. 24	Bapu and Nana leave Purandar for Burhanpur.
„	Dec. 10	R'rao decamps to Dhar.
1775,	Jan. 3	R'rao reaches Baroda via Godhra.
„	Jan. 26	Battle of Panchgaum, Sabaji Bhosle killed.
„	Feb. 17	Battle of Adas, R'rao routed, flees to Combay.
„	Mar. 6	R'rao reaches Surat.
„	Mar. 8	Hastings declares treaty of Surat unauthorized.
„	Mar. 15	R'rao leaves Surat with British forces for Cambay.

1775,	Mar. 28	Indecisive action on the Mahi : the two armies retire for rains.
„	July 10	Hastings deputes Upton to Poona to negotiate peace with the Ministers.
„	Oct.	Bombay Govt. despatch Taylor to Calcutta.
„	„	Upton leaves Calcutta.
„	Dec. 28	Upton reaches Poona, starts negotiations at Purandar.
1776,	Feb.	Pretender Sadashivrao set free at Ratnagiri.
„	Mar. 1	Treaty of Purandar concluded.
„	June 18	Haripant returns to Purandar with his forces.
„	June 19	Peshwa receives leaders in a full Darbar.
„	Nov.	Pretender captured by Angre.
„	Dec. 18	Pretender punished with death.

CHAPTER II

WANTON BRITISH AGGRESSION

[1774—1776]

1 The Council of the Barbhais.
2 The murderer becomes a fugitive.
3 Mostyn's mischief. Thana captured.
4 The battle of Kasegaum.—Pethe killed.
5 Birth of Madhavrao Narayan.
6 Battle of Adas, treaty of Surat.
7 Upton's Embassy to Poona.
8 The treaty of Purandar.
9 The end of the Pretender.

1. **The Council of the Barbhais.**—With no other male member in the Peshwa's family available for being placed at the head of the administration, there was every chance for R'rao, however tainted with his nephew's blood, to have established himself in unquestionable ascendancy, if he had possessed a conciliatory spirit and diplomatic tact. But he lacked capacity and was inordinately obsessed by a blind thirst for revenge. During the two months following the murder, he found himself fairly settled at the head of the normal administration with no cause for immediate friction with his neighbours, Nizam Ali and Haidar Ali. The only disturbing factor was the war that was raging at Nagpur between the two brothers Sabaji and Mudhoji, the former having been joined by Nizam Ali's forces, commanded by his youngest brother Ruknud-daula and his able general Ibrahim Khan Dhausa. Sabaji seized the whole power of the Nagpur State on the strength of the title of Sena-Saheb Subah conferred on him by the murdered Peshwa. Mudhoji sought redress against Sabaji by appealing to R'rao through his agent Vyankatrao Kashi then in Poona. It thus became necessary for R'rao to march against Nizam Ali in order to put down Sabaji's aggression.

In the meantime Appaji Ram the trusted agent of Haidar Ali was not idle in Poona. He reported the occurrences at the Maratha capital to his master and urged him not to lose the present opportunity of retrieving his position in the Karnatak by taking advantage of the disorders in the Maratha Govern-

ment. Haidar Ali immediately acted on the hint. He easily expelled the Maratha garrisons guarding the estates of the Patwardhans and the Rastes. R'rao strengthened by the funds brought by Visaji Krishna from north India, organized an expedition and quickly marched into the eastern Karnatak cautiously feeling his way to all appearance both against Nizam Ali and Haidar Ali, but secretly trying to secure the help of both in case he found his position insecure in his own government. He was destined never again to see his ancestral capital which he now left about the Dassara time of 1773. When a little way out on his march from Poona, R'rao received the first premonition of the coming danger, when Ram Shastri pronounced to him the result of his investigation of the murder, in which Raghunathrao was declared to be the principal participant. This proved an indirect call to the various disaffected elements to disown his power and rally round the widowed Gangabai, now known to have advanced a few months in pregnancy. As plots against her life were discovered, she made pathetic appeals to Bapu, Nana and others to protect her. This gave rise to a movement for organizing an opposition to R'rao's rule. Sakharam Bapu had already lost his regard and attachment for R'rao, and to save Gangabai from harm became now the pressing problem for him and for all the well-wishers of the Peshwa family. The Chhatrapati of Satara and the Patwardhans of Miraj were in turn requested to offer shelter to the lady ; but no one would undertake the hazard as it involved an opposition to R'rao's power.

Mudhoji Bhosle joined R'rao with his forces at Alegaum whence the two proceeded together to Naldurg. Here Nizam Ali's vakils on 5th November met R'rao ; through them he tried to persuade Nizam Ali to recall his troops, that were fighting on behalf of Sabaji Bhosle and now marching directly upon Poona under Sabaji's leadership. Nizam Ali refused to comply with R'rao's request. Trimbakrao Pethe was at this time in command of the Peshwa's troops. As Sabaji was threatening Poona, R'rao despatched Pethe to oppose Sabaji and himself proceeded towards Bidar to have a personal meeting with Nizam Ali. They met about 18th November and negotiated a treaty of friendship, R'rao wasting a precious month in ceremonial visits and dilatory discussions. On 23rd December he

left Bidar and marched in the direction of Arcot with the object of restoring Tanjore to the Maratha Raja, who had been recently deprived of his patrimony by the Nawab Muhammad Ali.[1] But before R'rao could proceed far, he was compelled to retrace his steps.

When about the beginning of November R'rao left the vicinity of the Bhima for Bidar, the general discontent that had been nebulous so far, began to crystallize into definite opposition to his administration. Nizam Ali soon after broke his word with R'rao and made friends with Sabaji Bhosle, the news of which reached R'rao when he was near the Tungabhadra early in January 1774. He, however, proceeded to Raidurg and called Murarrao Ghorpade to his presence from Gutti. Here R'rao heard the first rumble of the gathering storm. He began to receive reports of secret intrigues carried on in his camp by the Karbharis, principally by Sakharam Bapu working then as the sole executive officer and by Krishnarao Kale, the resident Maratha ambassador at the court of Nizam Ali. The plot was thus set on foot by Sakharam Bapu who at great personal risk took the bold lead in undermining R'rao's power. For nearly two months Bapu and Krishnarao together secretly negotiated an alliance with Nizam Ali, outwardly to bring him over to R'rao's side but secretly to encourage his overthrow. The same game was being played in the camp of Sabaji Bhosle; to win him over Trimbakrao Pethe had already been working secretly. Bapu was in close contact with the administration in Poona, where Nana Phadnis appears to have been in charge, so that what was mooted as a dim idea on the 10th day after the late Peshwa's death, gradually took shape and became matured by the end of the year. Sakharam Bapu weighed the possibilities of the situation and dexterously manoeuvred a scheme of protecting Gangabai from harm; if a male child was born, the problem would be easy, but in case of a female coming forth, the name of Ali Bahadur for the Peshwaship was contemplated, as he was a direct descendant

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1. The reader is advised to study the complicated affair of the loss and restoration of Tanjore. It was seized by Md. Ali on 17th September 1773 and restored to Raja Tulaji on 11th April 1776 by a special order from the Authorities in England.

of the valiant Bajirao. Bapu carried weight with most of the Maratha chiefs and heartened those who were found wavering, husbanding every resource, without rousing the suspicions of his timid master. Having prepared the ground while in R'rao's camp during September and October, Bapu returned to Poona some time in November pretending illness. Here he gradually seduced the Patwardhans and other leading chiefs and organized what later came to be termed the Council of the Barbhais. Nana Phadnis, Haripant Phadke, Sakharam Bapu with Trimbakrao Pethe, Moroba Phadnis, Babuji Naik, Maloji Ghorpade, Bhavanrao Pratinidhi, Raste, Patwardhans with the later addition of Mahadji Sinde and Tukoji Holkar, were the original members of the party, who were all made to swear oaths to execute the coup. Most of them were only nominal agents, Bapu and the two Phadnis brothers being active members and operational heads. A few years later when Moroba Phadnis and Sakharam Bapu came to be imprisoned, Nana Phadnis alone remained to conduct the Maratha administration in the name of the growing Peshwa.

2. **The murderer becomes a fugitive.**—The steps taken in Poona were duly communicated to Krishnarao Kale then residing in R'rao's camp. He acted promptly and seduced most of the chiefs there from their loyalty to the reigning Peshwa. R'rao did not fail to notice these developments while camping near Bellary in February. He immediately put Bhavanrao Pratinidhi and Ramchandra Ganesh under arrest ; but hearing shortly afterward that Trimbakrao and Haripant were fast moving against him from different directions with a large force of some 50 thousand, R'rao in consternation marched back at the beginning of March towards Miraj, devastating on the way the possessions of the Rastes, the Patwardhans and of the others whom he supposed to be hostile to him. Raghunathrao's object then probably was to seize Satara and the Chhatrapati in order to strengthen his position against the Barbhais. A letter addressed by Nana Phadnis to his Satara agent Baburao Apte on 3rd Feb. 1774 says, "Bapu and I with Moroba Dada have decided to serve the master whose salt we have been eating for four generations. We have gained the support of Trimbakrao, Sabaji Bhosle, Vamanrao Patwardhan, and of the Huzarat

troops with the object of protecting Gangabai's person. We have brought her for safety to the Purandar Fort and propose to go to Satara soon. Sakharam Bapu is entirely in our scheme and you must entertain no suspicion on his account." On 17th February the following proclamation was issued in the name of the Chhatrapati :—

"Raghunath Bajirao has committed the gross sin of bringing about the ruin of the Peshwa Narayanrao, and of forcibly exacting robes of that office from us. He has now been deprived of that position and a force has been despatched against him under Trimbakrao Pethe. Every one is called upon to collaborate in this sacred task." Similar letters were addressed to all prominent Maratha Chiefs.[2]

Baburao Apte had long lived with the Chhatrapati at Satara and now promptly thwarted every move of R'rao for reaching Satara and taking possession of the Chhatrapati's person. Both Bapu and Pethe repaired to Satara to counteract R'rao plans. Fort Purandar became the headquarters of the Maratha Court from February onward with the Barbhais conducting the administration, after proclaiming R'rao as deposed and announcing their policy of punishing the perpetrators of Narayanrao's murder. It certainly took a long time to secure the principal offenders ; but the smaller ones were quickly dealt with during February and March, when the families and relations of the culprits were summarily arrested and removed to different forts for confinement. To bring the offenders to justice thus formed the first task of the Barbhais and its execution brought on a relentless war against the principal author and his coadjutors.

At first Raghunathrao's position was much stronger than that of his enemies in several respects. He was absolutely his own master and was enthusiastically served by the Gardi chiefs. The Barbhais were often woefully divided and mutually suspicious. The fighting part of the programme was managed by Trimbakrao and Haripant, both able in their own way and thoroughly loyal, but Pethe had a quick temper which lost him the love of the rank and file. Haripant, however, was liked by all for his suave tongue and obliging disposition. But

2. *Patre Yadi*, 230.

their greatest difficulty was want of funds. R'rao desperately seized whatever he could lay his hands on.

Sabaji Bhosle was approached by both parties. R'rao could recklessly promise him any terms. Sakharam Bapu exerted his utmost influence with Devajipant Chorghode, to secure the whole strength of the Nagpur State for the Barbhais' cause. On March 3 Trimbakrao met Sabaji and Nizam Ali near Gulbarga. They urged that unless Bapu and Nana both came without delay and resided in the camp personally, the war could not be successfully conducted, nor would the various measures be properly co-ordinated with authority and responsibility. But this proposal, however beneficial at first sight, could not be accepted. Purandar itself was so insecure and exposed to any unexpected raid by R'rao, that unless both Bapu and Nana were on the spot, the game would be lost at once. Pethe and Haripant when near Gulbarga, learnt that R'rao had directed his march towards Satara and at once spread out their forces in a line extending from Gulbarga to Satara with a view to barring his way to the Chhatrapati. At this strategy R'rao found himself confused and in his usual timorous way sent his agents to Purandar asking terms for an accommodation. This was, however, a mere ruse on his part for extricating himself from an immediate danger to his person. He cleverly threw off his pursuers and marched upon Satara. But the Poona forces quickly gained upon him and so opposed his march, that he was compelled to turn towards Pandharpur, where Trimbakrao Pethe came closely upon his track. But just then the British agent Mostyn, residing at Poona, created fresh trouble.

3. **Mostyn's mischief, Thana surprised.**—Nobody suspected that Mostyn's presence in Poona was in any way harmful. But ever since the last days of Madhavrao I, Mostyn was keenly watching the position of affairs at Poona with the sole object of weakening the Maratha Power by supplying valuable day-to-day information to the Bombay Council and urging his countrymen to profit by the difficulties of the Maratha Government. He advised his masters to seize the fertile Maratha territories in the vicinity of Bombay. For this purpose Mostyn suddenly left Poona and visited Bombay on 8th December 1773. Hornby was then the President of the

Bombay Council, and he well knowing that the administration of Poona was distracted by serious troubles, planned, under the advice of Mostyn, an immediate attack upon the fort of Thana, the principal post commanding the whole Salsette region. This sudden and unprovoked aggression on the part of the English, when most amicable relations existed between the two States, embarrassed the Ministers intensely and afforded a welcome chance to R'rao to extricate himself from instant capture. No warning or excuse was given by the English for their wanton and sudden action, but the Ministers readily took up the challenge and adopted quick measures to defend Thana. The English forces left Bombay on 2nd December, some by land and some in ships and fell upon the slender garrison while it was entirely unguarded. Visaji Krishna was despatched from Poona in hot haste, but could not bring the succours in time. Anand Ram Bivalkar the commandant of Thana made the utmost exertions to defend the place with courage and judgment, till at last finding further resistance hopeless and having lost the greater part of his men, he surrendered the place on 28th December and was himself carried to Bombay with all the honours of war. Under him worked the Killedar or local defence officer named Bhavanrao Kadam, who had received bribes from the English and offered to hand over the fort to them. This treacherous move had been detected in time and Kadam placed under arrest. A little later when the fort was formally surrendered, the English instead of protecting Kadam, blew him from the mouth of a gun, thus inflicting upon him a well deserved punishment.[3]

Although Thana was temporarily lost, the ministers were not slow in retaliating on the English for their wanton aggression. They blocked the British coastal trade and stopped supplies reaching Bombay from outside. In a short time the English found themselves so crippled by the Maratha activities, that they not ony relinquished further hostilities but hastened to re-establish friendly relations with Poona. Many well known figures of later Maratha history such as Raghuji Angria,

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3. P. D. 35. 128. and fol.; Forrest Vol. I. p. 204; *Peshwa Diaries* VI, 416-417. Anand Ram was subsequently released by the English. He was the son of Ramaji Mahadev of Tulaji Angria's days.

Anandrao Dhulap, Shivaji Vithal Vinchurkar, Visaji Keshav Lele, Visaji Krishna Binivale and others not only co-operated in the defence of the coast, but rendered valuable service by land, although in naval warfare they showed a woeful lack of skill. The English justified their attack on Thana by explaining that the Portuguese had planned a strong naval attack on that post, and the English simply anticipated them, instead of letting the fort fall into the Portuguese hands. The affair was, however, closed within the space of two months.

4. The battle of Kasegaum, Pethe killed.—The Poona Ministers were at this moment being hard pressed in all directions. There was every likelihood of R'rao making a sudden raid upon Gangabai at Purandar. Haripant was hard put to it to defend both Satara and Purandar from that desperate fugitive. The Patwardhans and Raste were already on his track, trying to encircle him and capture his person. For a moment R'rao found his position extremely precarious.

In order to throw Pethe off his guard, R'rao addressed him a note offering to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the dispute that had now developed. After this ruse R'rao delivered a sudden attack on Pethe near Kasegaum eight miles south of Pandharpur. Patwardhan, Raste, Naro Shankar, Vithal Shivdev all immediately made hurried marches to succour Pethe in his dangerous situation. But exhausted by their long journeys, these could not arrive in time, and on the first moon day of Chaitra, March 26, 1774, Raghunath effectively concentrated his artillery fire on the slender force of Pethe, who was routed and captured after being severely wounded in a desperate action. A week later he died of these wounds.[4] Muhammad Yusuf similarly routed the Patwardhans. Kasegaum, though a short but sharp action, in no way proved decisive in its results ; it only served for a time to damp the enthusiasm of the Ministerial party and prolong the hostilities. The capture of the best Poona General in itself was sufficient to awaken the *Barbhais* to their danger. Haripant immediately hastened from Satara and arrived in time to retrieve the situation by putting fresh courage into the disheartened ranks and organiz-

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4. P. D. 5. 43 explains how Pethe was kept incautious.

ing them for a fresh engagement, after being quickly joined by the forces of Bhosle and Nizam Ali. But R'rao did not dare to face the combined armies and took the only means he had of escape by running away as fast as he could towards the north. His victory over Pethe availed him nothing. Purandar remained safe.

Haripant immediately took charge of the situation and began a vigorous pursuit. It soon became evident, however, that the struggle would prove long and tenacious, against the sanguine expectations to the contrary. R'rao now exhibited extraordinary alacrity in running away with his Gardi comrades before his numerous pursuers, thereby earning the unforgettable title of *Ragho-bharari* "Ragho the runaway." Devoid of all moral principles, he resorted to intrigues and treachery, caring little for the honour or good of his State. He seduced the military staff of his opponents, established contact with foreign powers including the Rajput and Muslim potentates of the north, the Siddis and the Portuguese of the west and Haidar Ali and Muhammad Ali of the south, in fact all those enemies in overcoming whom his ancestors had split their blood through generations. To gain his purpose R'rao employed a host of spies throughout India. Crossing the Godavari in the middle of April he fled via Burhanpur to the Narmada hoping to engage the sympathies of Sindia, Holkar and Gaikwad, who had all served him long and personally as co-workers, and who could not naturally be inclined to lay violent hands on him.

5. Birth of Madhavrao Narayan.—R'aghunathrao's hopes of remaining the legitimate Peshwa were soon shattered by the birth of a son to Gangabai at Purandar on 18th April 1774. The happy turn of this eagerly expected event alone changed the political situation. It raised the hopes of the Barbhais and the nation behind them, as much as it destroyed the strength and plans of R'rao. An unprecedented wave of relief and joy spread through the land. People superstitiously believed that the late Peshwa Madhavrao had taken a new birth in the newly born child, to fulfil the part which his premature death had prevented from fruition. Bapu and Nana became the idols of the nation, receiving unbounded congratulations from all quarters. In equal measure they expressed their grate-

fulness to the Almighty God by a free distribution of presents and offerings to the various shrines.

Raghunathrao did not scruple to proclaim his suspicion that the child was not genuine and that it was a substituted article ; but such unwarranted rumours came to be finally dispelled by the British embassy of Colonel Upton who came to Purandar two years later and entered into negotiations with the Ministerial party only after having convinced himself by a searching enquiry that the newly born child was genuine and not spurious. Anandibai herself has fully acknowledged the legitimacy of the child by writing letters to Bapu and Nana in that connection, and advising them to soften their rigour towards her husband, who, she averred, would not shrink from ruining the State if driven to desperation. The Chhatrapati offered his own heartfelt congratulations for the providential event and readily granted the robes of Peshwaship to the infant, with which he was invested on the 40th day of his life, at a special Darbar at Purandar on 28th May 1774.

6. **Battle of Adas, treaty of Surat.**—Haripant could easily have overtaken the flying ex-Peshwa, had not his movements been severely impeded by the slow marches of his two allies, Sabaji and Nizam Ali. Haripant established his base at Burhanpur and seduced a number of R'rao's followers, who now began rapidly to desert him after the birth of the new Peshwa. In the last week of April R'rao reached Indore with about 3000 men. He could no longer take the offensive and quickly lost the initiative he had gained at Kasegaum. His only concern now was how to save himself. Tukoji Holkar and Mahadji Sindia met him near Ujjain and at his instance undertook to negotiate terms with the Ministers at Purandar.

Holkar and Sindia, by no means entirely friendly between themselves, could now easily assume the position of arbiters, threatening to join any side as suited their personal interest. To prevent these powerful chiefs from joining the rebel, the Ministers hurriedly despatched their trusted agent Mahadaji Ballal Guruji to Indore with sufficient powers and full instructions for encompassing the fugitive. But this capable diplomat could not accomplish much either by way of shortening the war or securing the fugitive. The two chiefs were asked to cap-

ture and send him as a prisoner to Poona. They evidently could not decently lay violent hands on one whom they had long served as their master and who had now sought their protection. In addition, both Sindia and Holkar had their own personal troubles, having just returned from their duties in the region of Delhi, with their troops clamouring for pay.[5]

R'rao had now become entirely callous and would go to any enormity in a fit of revengefulness. Mahadji's son-in-law Devji Tapkir who was proceeding to his village in the south, was suddenly captured and made prisoner by R'rao on his way to Indore. R'rao wrote and behaved as the rightful Peshwa, and styled the Barbhais as rebels and enemies of the State. Murarrao Ghorpade actually warned the triumvirate of Purandar against further exasperating R'rao, and advised them to avoid extremities and conciliate him by all possible means. But such a course could not appeal to Nana who was bent upon punishing the murderer ; his two colleagues, Bapu and Moroba, on the other hand, entertained softer feelings. Nana relentlessly pursued and punished not only the actual perpetrators of the murder, but all those who either out of compulsion or self-interest joined R'rao's cause. Mahadji Sindia usually supported Nana, Tukoji had his predilections for the opposite side. Raghunathrao now sent from Indore emissaries to Calcutta and Surat soliciting British help for regaining his lost position ; he also tried to secure as many northern allies as he could.

Sindia and Holkar did their best to dissuade R'rao from the rebellious course he was following. They argued, "You must give up your claim to the Peshwaship ; recognize the newly born child as the master and manage the State in his name till he comes of age. If you wish to make war, you have enough field outside ; if you accept our advice, we shall guarantee that Bapu and Nana would support and obey you." But R'rao was adamant. He urged, he had been all along trying to rule as Peshwa ; with the same motive he had demanded a half share in the State from the late Madhavrao ; with that object only he had adopted a son and even made an attempt to remove Narayanrao from his position. The months of May

5. *Ait. Pat. Vy.* no. 142 gives Mahadaji Ballal's eloquent report.

and June were wasted at Ujjain in useless talks of a settlement being negotiated by Sindia and Holkar. Against their wholesome advice R'rao despatched his agents to Shuja-ud-daula and to Warren Hastings, requesting armed help from them. Sindia and Holkar succeeded after a great effort in persuading R'rao to turn back and have a personal conference with the Ministers in the vicinity of Burhanpur. But he was an adept trickster ; while he promised to return and meet the Ministers, he suddenly marched north towards Bhopal, but was pursued by Sindia and Holkar and brought back forcibly. Together they slowly returned to the south and crossed the Narmada at the end of July.

Having encamped near Dhulkot the Sardars invited the Ministers from Purandar to a personal conference. In the meantime R'rao first demanded a big sum to pay off his troops. He was compelled to send away his Gardi chiefs. Haripant acted with wisdom and circumspection. The ex-Peshwa's adopted son Amritrao was in Poona spreading all manner of rumours to damage the Barbhais' cause. All was not well at Purandar either. The wet climate of the place affected the child Peshwa's health ; R'rao's secret agents made attempts on his life ; the Ministers, therefore thought it risky to leave the child alone and go to meet R'rao. After long hesitation Bapu and Nana accompanied by large forces left for Burhanpur in the last week of November, consigning the care of Purandar and the child to Purushottam Daji Patwardhan, whose boldness and intrepidity made his name a household word in the annals of Poona. At Burhanpur earnest negotiations were conducted for a time, in the course of which R'rao suspecting that he was going to be immediately seized, suddenly decamped on the night of 10th December and made for Gujarat. The bird had escaped to create fresh trouble.

It was his friend Mostyn who came to his help at this dangerous crisis. Even since the murder of the late Peshwa, Mostyn was in touch with R'rao, preparing the ground for his gaining British support. When R'rao arrived at Burhanpur to negotiate with the Ministers, he sent his agents to Mostyn at Poona in October 1774 and to Robert Gambier at Surat to negotiate terms for armed help. But before the transaction could be completed, he ran away from Burhanpur in December,

first to Dhar where he left his wife Anandibai under the care of Khanderao Pawar, and himself proceeded under British escort via Godhra to Baroda. His negotiations with the English were conducted so secretly that the Ministers had no inkling of them. Sindia and Holkar could have prevented his flight, but did not like to take the odium of laying hands on a member of the Peshwa's house. On the contrary they purposely prevented Haripant from closing upon R'rao on the ground that he was in fear of his life and should be considerably dealt with. This pretext served to give a chance to R'rao to escape and launched the Barbhais on a long, costly war, for which Nana Phadnis held the two chiefs alone responsible in all his future dealings with them.

Haripant along with Sindia and Holkar immediately pursued the fugitive ex-Peshwa to Baroda, where Govindrao Gaikwad had sheltered him. Bapu and Nana returned from Burhanpur in mortification to Purandar, and earnestly took up the two-fold task of conducting the war and the administration. They conciliated Nizam Ali by restoring the fort of Daulatabad to him, one of the many heavy losses the ministerialists were compelled to incur in this crisis. If the Pawar of Dhar and the Gaikwad of Baroda had not sided with R'rao, he could have been easily placed under restraint. This want of cohesion among its various members had been the greatest bane of the Maratha State.

R'rao reached Baroda on 3rd January 1775, where he learned that Haripant with Sindia and Holkar were on his heels. He at once moved to the north with Govindrao Gaikwad's help. At the crossing of the Mahi he opposed the ministrial army near the present railway station of Wasad. For nearly two weeks the two forces stood facing each other in the midst of negotiations, which that wily fugitive had never abandoned. Haripant and Vamanrao Patwardhan did not at once attack their enemy, as no auspicious day for that purpose could be discovered. Haripant waited till the 17th February, when a severe action was fought in which the stars rewarded Haripant with victory. R'rao's army was utterly routed. Sakharam Hari and Manaji Phakde among his followers received severe wounds. Most of R'rao's property, all his artillery, elephants and horses and even his own standard fell into

the victor's hands.[6] Darkness alone prevented the capture of R'rao himself; and he precipitately ran with only a few followers and a crowded zanana of his concubines to Cambay, where the Nawab refused to admit him. There was, however, present at that port Mr. Malet, agent of the British factory, whom R'rao implored for shelter and safe transport to Surat.

Mostyn had already prepared the ground and instructed the various British workers for extending hospitality to the fugitive Maratha Prince. Malet enabled R'rao to travel by land to the harbour of Bhavnagar whence English ships conveyed him to Surat on 23rd February.

R'rao was all along negotiating with Mostyn and Gambier for the terms on which the British were to reinstate him at Poona. These as ultimately agreed to by both on 6th March 1775 and known as the treaty of Surat, were :—

1. A Military Contingent of 2500 men should be placed at the disposal of R'rao, of which at least 700 were to be Europeans with sufficient artillery ;

2. For the expenses of this body a sum of Rs. one-and-a-half lacs was to be paid every month in advance ;

3. Rs. 6 lacs or an equivalent in jewellery should be deposited in British hands ;

4. In addition R'rao was to cede to the English in perpetuity all the Bombay islands including Thana, Bassein, and Salsette and the Talukas of Jambusar and Olpad near Surat.

Raghunathrao mortgaged his jewellery worth six lacs with the Co., which after many vicissitudes were returned to his son in June 1798.

In pursuance of this agreement a British force left Bombay under the command of Col. Keatinge and reached Surat on 28th February, i.e., five days after R'rao had arrived there. James Forbes was deputed to accompany this force as a civil officer.[7]

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6. This battle is variously known after the several villages of the region, Napar, Anand-mogri and Adas, all in the vicinity of the railway station of Wasad on the northern bank of the river Mahi.

7. He afterwards wrote his famous work "Oriental Memoirs" Vols. 1—4, which contains among other topics the author's impressions and experiences gathered from close personal contact extending over some five years with Raghunathrao and his followers. Some of these are pertinent

The British force with R'rao left Surat for Cambay on 15th March by sea to put down the ministerial armies then camping in Gujarat and eventually to reach Poona.

Haripant anticipating what was coming, had employed the interval in organizing his forces and resources and in settling the differences between himself and Mahadji Sindia. The latter was suffering from want of funds and the pay of his troops had long been in arrears. When he was called to account for his dereliction by the Ministers, he took offence and retired to Ujjain leaving Haripant alone to oppose the coming enemies. Holkar also left Haripant, following the example of Mahadji and marched to Malwa. The withdrawal of these two chiefs was interpreted by R'rao as their desertion of the ministerial cause and espousal of his own. He conveyed this inference to the English, who felt extremely annoyed when it was later discovered that these two chiefs had no intention of helping him.

Col. Keatinge found his task most irksome and invidious, R'rao could never make regular payments either to his own troops or to his allies. They reached Cambay about the end of March, but found it difficult to wrest the initiative from Haripant's hands. The latter resorted to guerilla tactics which extremely harassed the English. For a month the two parties tried to get some decided advantage in the region north of the river Mahi, and had several light skirmishes. On 28th May, however, a severe action took place nearly on the same field as the battle of Adas in February last. Haripant made a sudden dash upon the English and cut down some three hundred of their European troops, of whom 11 were officers of high rank. But the encounter did not prove decisive for either party, and as the monsoon approached, R'rao and his allies pitched their camp at Dabhoi ; and Haripant retired to Songad. Hari Bhide, one of R'rao's trusted officers was detected by Col. Keatinge practising some treachery and was on that account blown off the mouth of a gun, against protestations and remonstrances by Raghunathrao.

to the history of this period. Those who entertain exalted notions of Raghunathrao's character and capacity will be sadly disillusioned when they read in Forbes's pages what a filthy life he led. These are reports from an unprejudiced foreign pen.

7. **Upton's Embassy to Poona.**—It thus became evident that the war so light-heartedly undertaken by the Bombay authorities on the advice of Mostyn, was not going to be a short and easy affair, as they had expected ; it served, on the contrary, to give rise to other unforeseen complications, owing to a change at this time in the character of the Co.'s administration.

Hastings was at first only the Governor of Bengal but had become the Governor-General or the Supreme head of the three Presidencies by the recent Regulating Act of the British Parliament. He took charge of his new position on 26th October 1774, but Hornby the President of Bombay was not disposed to acknowledge Hastings' authority over him and acted independently. Further complications resulted from the appointment of a council of four members controlling the action of the Governor-General. Three of these members arrived fresh from England, and serious differences arose between them and Hastings, which created a confusion unprecedented in British Indian history.

The Bhosle brothers Mudhoji and Sabaji fought a severe action at Panchgaum ten miles south of Nagpur on 26th January 1775, in which Sabaji was killed, causing a severe setback to the fortunes of the Poona Government whose cause Sabaji had espoused. The victor Mudhoji was a partizan of R'rao and employed all his strength in sustaining that criminal's cause.

As soon as Hastings assumed supreme power at Calcutta, he communicated the change to the Bombay authorities, but the slowness of communication in those days created unforeseen difficulties. Hornby received Hastings' despatches in Bombay on 7th December 1774 just at the moment when a naval expedition was starting against Thana, and when there was serious embarrassment in the administration of Poona. Thana was captured on 28th December, but no news of that event was sent to Calcutta till the 31st March following, or three months later, without any notice being taken of the changes brought in by the Regulating Act, according to which the capture of Thana was unauthorized. But before the official communication reached Calcutta, the news of that incident and of the forces sent to R'rao's support was in the possession of

Warren Hastings, who on 8th March addressed a strong remonstrance to Bombay, reminding the President that he had acted without authority by contracting the treaty of Surat in violation of the existing relations with the Maratha Government, and calling upon the Bombay authorities to withdraw their forces and stop the war which they had started. Bombay received this remonstrance on 21st May at a time when the two hostile forces were locked in a deadly combat in north Gujarat. The Bombay authorities took no notice of these orders of the Supreme Government and in open defiance of them continued the war on their own account. The Calcutta council became furious at this flagrant disobedience of their commands and wrote another strong protest to Bombay on 31st May. It said, "our duty imposes upon us the painful necessity of declaring that we wholly condemn the measures which you have adopted, that we hold the treaty which you have entered into with Raghoba invalid and the war which you have undertaken against the Maratha State, impolitic, dangerous, unauthorized and unjust ; both are expressly contrary to the late Act of Parliament. You have imposed on yourselves the charge of conquering the whole Maratha Empire for a man who appears incapable of affording you any effectual assistance in it ; the plan which you have formed instead of aiming at a decisive conquest, portends an indefinite scene of troubles, without an adequate force, without navy or certain resources to extricate you from him ; nor have you the pleas either of injury sustained from the party which you have made your enemy or any prior obligation to defend the man whose cause you have espoused. We solemnly protest against you for all the consequences and peremptorily require you to withdraw the Company's forces to your own garrison in whatever state your affairs may be, unless their safety may be endangered by their retreat. We expect your punctual compliance with our commands. It is our intention to open a negotiation with the ruling party of the Maratha State at Poona as soon as possible."[8]

Hastings on 10th July wrote to the Poona administration the purport of his Council's letter to Bombay and added that

8. Forrest, *Maratha Series*, p. 238 ; *Mahadji Sindia* by Natu, p. 280, Secret Committee's Vth Report, p. 80.

he was soon sending to Poona a trusted and competent agent of his own to stop the war and negotiate a friendly understanding with the Marathas. Upon this Sakharam Bapu wrote a conciliatory reply to Warren Hastings on 29th July acknowledging his letter and its cordial tone, and declaring that R'rao was a rebel guilty of the murder of his nephew, and that a legal heir to the murdered Peshwa had been born, in whose name the Maratha Government had now been formed. Bapu fully exposed the injustice and enormity of the action taken by the Bombay authorities.[9]

Hornby and his Council at Bombay highly resented this interference from Calcutta and despatched a special agent Mr. Taylor to explain matters personally. He reached Calcutta in October 1775 and exhaustively cleared in personal talks and writing the position of affairs in the western Presidency. The Bombay authorities, however, defied the commands of Calcutta and referred their complaints for decision to the home authorities in England, a step which only served to create further complications. The Calcutta Council itself became a hot-bed of division and quarrel.

At the behest of Warren Hastings Col. Upton left Calcutta in October 1775 with a gorgeous train of about 1500 followers, besides elephants, palkies and other paraphernalia, befitting the greatness of the British Power. Sakharam Bapu had given him passports to travel through the Maratha territory of Bundelkhand and Malwa. Hastings had supplied him with letters of introduction to the various chiefs on the way. Upon Sakharam Bapu's enquiry Hastingss assured him that full powers had been granted to Col. Upton for negotiating the terms of peace, and that whatever he would settle would be faithfully carried out by both Calcutta and Bombay. At this time R'rao also had sent his representatives to Calcutta bitterly protesting against Upton's embassy and demanding the execution of the treaty of Surat.[10] Hastings was at great pains to reconcile the conflicting interests and bring about a peaceful solution of the disputes that embittered the Bombay-Maratha relations on the

9. Persian letters B. I. S. M. No. 19.

10. See correspondence on this subject reproduced in the *Persian Calendar* Vol. IV, Nos. 1916-2041.

west coast. The Bombay authorities requested Upton to visit them first before proceeding to Poona ; but he wisely declined to comply with this proposal. Upton crossed the Jamuna at Kalpi in November and reached Poona on 28th December where a grand reception was offered to him by the Peshwa's Government. On 31st December he was received below fort Purandar, in a full Darbar, presided over by the child Peshwa, then about 20 months old. At this time the opposing armies of R'rao and Haripant were camping in the vicinity of Songad on the border of Gujarat and Khandesh. Upon Upton's arrival they were asked to suspend their operations.

The Ministers in Poona were so annoyed by the diversity of policy between the British authorities at Bombay and Calcutta, that they tried to direct approach to R'rao for a peaceful settlement. But the lafter had not the sense or the mood to accept any compromise, nor were the Bombay authorities less vexed with the turn of events. Although they practically held Gujarat in their possession, the expenses of the protracted campaign had now assumed proportions far beyond their power of meeting. Haripant was not slow to further embarrass their situation by starting an offensive immediately after the rains. Thus while both the Marathas and the British had to suffer a severe strain on account of this war, the only two potentates that reaped the greatest advantage were the Nizam of Haidarabad and Haidar Ali of Mysore, who both quickly seized whatever they could lay their hands on, in their respective spheres.

Raghunathrao's ingenuity created no small difficulties for the Poona Government. He excited the Kolis of Khandesh to rebel ; encouraged Gulzar Khan of Ranala to commit depredations against the Maratha Government in the same region. Thus the Barbhais suffered immeasurable harassment on all sides. Manaji Phakde, Trimbak Suryaji and a number of other partizans of R'rao, ruthlessly carried on mischievous activities to cripple the Poona Council. In actual results, however, all this wanton mischief in no way helped R'rao's object. He was in the sorest of straits. On 23rd January 1776 he thus writes from the English camp, " I am awfully distressed at my present plight. I am starving, have no money ; my troops are all rebellious ; the number of my English allies is too small to achieve anything. I once had strong confidence in their

strength ; but I am woefully undeceived in this respect ; Haripant can capture me any moment." R'rao's most ardent supporter, Sakharam Hari, also wrote in the same distressful strain.

8. **Treaty of Purandar.** Upton's arrival at Poona brought no relief to the situation. A long and vexatious process of discussion and argument after reaching a deadlock continued through three long months. Sakharam Bapu, Nana and Krishnarao Kale were the spokesmen of the Poona Council ; both parties were bound to secrecy on sacred oaths. The sittings were fixed to every afternoon in a tent below fort Purandar in the village of Kodit and often continued till late in the evening. Upton had an assistant to help him in addition to an interpreter, so that the deliberations progressed very slowly. Upton soon after his arrival first made a minute enquiry into the circumstances of the child Peshwa's birth ; and it was only when he was fully convinced that the child was not spurious, that he recognized the Poona Government for the purpose of the negotiations.

Upton tried his utmost to reap some substantial advantage for the E. I. Co. throughout his negotiations. He demanded the permanent cession of Bassein, Salsette and Broach before consenting to withdraw British support from R'rao. The British were bent upon having an undisputed possession of the long stretch of the Bombay coast in the same way that they had long owned the coastal regions of Madras and Calcutta. But the Maratha Government would on no account agree to part with Bassein, a rival to Bombay, so vital to their existence as an independent power. Upton felt serious disappointment at this unbending attitude of the Poona Government.

Another point of serious difference between the two parties related to the position and future maintenance of R'rao. Upton insisted that as the Peshwa was a little child, R'rao should be made his guardian with the sole power of management. The Ministers justly refused to yield on this point, urging that R'rao was a murderer and rebel, and must on no account come back to Poona ; he could not be trusted with the life of the legitimate child. They on the contrary demanded the complete surrender of R'rao to their own hands. Upton urged

that R'rao was their guest and not prisoner ; the only thing they could do was to withdraw their support from him, but they would not surrender his person. The Poona Council might deal with him as they liked when the British ceased to protect him. While Upton did not dispute the reasonableness of the claims put forth by the Ministers, the Bombay authorities were altogether unyielding both on the points of Bassein and the surrender of R'rao. Upton sent his own special agents to Bombay to explain the position. This only protracted the negotiations. R'rao had incurred heavy debts and owed large amounts to the British themselves. Upton demanded repayment of these loans amounting to fifty lacs, which the Ministers refused to pay. Thus after more than a month's discussion the negotiations came to a breaking point, and in the first week of February Upton declined to hold further conferences, obtained his leave to depart and even wrote to Warren Hastings that no peace could be arranged with the Poona Government. Haripant Phadke was instructed to start the offensive at once. Thus the Barbhais came fully to realize that it was no use relying on the sweet will either of Upton or of Warren Hastings. They saw that military pressure alone could lead diplomatic moves to success. On 7th March Hastings issued fresh orders to resume the war.

At this critical moment an incident occurred which induced the Ministers to relent in their terms and conclude peace almost at any cost. A pretender calling himself Sadashivrao Bhau, who had been confined since 1765, suddenly escaped from the fort of Ratnagiri on 18th February 1776 and raised a revolt. This outbreak started such troubles in an expected quarter that the Poona Council relaxed in their old demands. They renewed their overtures to Upton and concluded a treaty on 1st March on the following terms :—

1. The fort of Thana with the island of Salsette to remain in English possession.

2. Twelve lacs to be paid to the English in cash for the expenses they had incurred on account of R'rao ;

3. R'rao to receive an allowance of 3 lacs and 15 thousand annually for his maintenance, and to withdraw completely from the State affairs ;

4. The English to retain the territory they had conquered in Gujarat and to cease to interfere with the Gaikwad's affairs.

This is known as the treaty of Purandar, a business which came to be quickly concluded owing to the complexity of the situation, and which was at once reported by Upton to Bombay and Calcutta, calling upon the former to stop their warlike operations. He was anxious to leave Poona but stayed on for a good long time at the pressing request of the Ministers, in order to have the terms of the treaty executed in their proper spirit. A wrong report went out that Upton was being forcibly detained.

This treaty of Purandar after all was a patchwork of compromises and not an agreement heartily assented to by either party. It was vague in several essentials and created such irritation on both sides that within a short time it became apparent that the war had not come to an end. R'rao was the first to take offence at an arrangement to which he had not agreed; and possessing an unbounded power of mischief, he refused to accept it on any account. The Bombay Government equally disliked the treaty as they gained practically nothing in return for all their expenditure during the last two years. But how to control R'rao was the immediate problem. He started his usual game in all directions, writing, protesting, appealing not only to the British authorities of Bombay, Calcutta and London, but even seducing powerful Maratha chiefs such as Sindia and Holkar, from their allegiance to Poona. The whole Indian Continent seemed to be suddenly hurled into chaos. The mischief could have been easily prevented if the Bombay authorities had wished it. But exasperated at the interference of the Supreme Government with their long cherished plans, they refused to control R'rao's activities and execute the terms of Upton's treaty; instead they referred the whole dispute to the authorities in London over the heads of the Governor-General and his Council. Col. Keatinge commanding the British contingent in the vicinity of Surat protected R'rao against any attempt by the Poona armies to capture him. R'rao feigned to surrender to Phadke and pretending to arrange the details despatched his agents Sakharam Hari and Manaji Phakde to him. But Haripant manag-

ed to win over these two agents to his views. The season had advanced and R'rao had become practically innocuous with absolutely no following or resources. Haripant, therefore, gave up further pursuit and returned to Purandar on 18th June, concluding that the war was now over. Col. Keatinge could not think of an offensive as the rains had started. For all practical purposes hostilities had thus come to an end. R'rao was deserted by all, and the child Peshwa now over two years old was accepted as the master of the Maratha nation.

An ingenious political plan was adopted by the Ministers at this time near Purandar. They on 19th June held a grand reception in a huge open tent where all chiefs and stipendiaries were invited and asked to swear allegiance to this new master, their Peshwa, and pay him their humble obeisance, receiving the customary leaf (pan) from his hands. For three hours the little boy bore the strain with remarkable patience and impressed one and all with his sweet playfulness. Manaji Phakde, Sakharam Hari, Sadashiv Ramchandra, all ardent followers of R'rao were also asked to attend the function, but were received in a separate visits lest they should practise some secret mischief if they came in the general assembly. Mudhoji Bhosle also came all the way from Nagpur for this function. Old Sakharam Bapu delivered an eloquent address to the assemblage recalling the services of the Peshwa's house to the State and demanding from each fresh exertions and renewed effort in its present sore trial. This impressive event served a double purpose : it closed the Maratha ranks for the time and singled out R'rao as an uncompromising enemy without any following or credit for his cause. His British friends had also become fully disgusted with his vain boats and resourceless position. But the Ministers persisted in demanding his person from the Bombay authorities, which he interpreted to the British as a hint that they would put him to death as a punishment for the murder attributed to him. The English considered it a point of honour to afford protection to a fugitive and a disgrace to give up a guest who had sought their shelter. They replied to the Poona Government that they had already withdrawn their support from R'rao, that under the terms of the treaty of Purandar they were not bound to hand him over, and that it was the task of the Ministers to secure

him in any way they liked. Nana Phadnis' influence in the Poona administration was steadily growing and his insistence upon securing R'rao's person led to fresh trouble.

9. **The end of the Pretender.**—The activities of the pretended Sadashivrao Bhau demanded the serious attention of the Poona Government, they having now been freed from the concerns of the war. Ramchandra Naik Paranjpe the guardian of the fort of Ratnagiri and a trusted officer of the Maratha Government, set the prisoner at liberty in February for reasons of his own. Although R'rao was well aware that the man was an impostor and not the real Bhau, he took advantage of the latter's activities in order to cripple the Ministers. The rebel collected a large following consisting partly of R'rao's adherents and partly of those who for one reason or another bore a grudge against the existing government. He himself never crossed the mountain barrier from the Konkan up the ghats, but a few of his followers who ventured to proceed as far as Sinhagad were completely defeated by Haripant, when their leader Ram-chandra Paranjpe's son was killed. Mahadji Sindia and Bhiv-rao Panse were despatched to track the Pretender, who was trying to reach Bombay via Kolaba and Pen. At the instance of R'rao Hornby extended to him a helping hand ; but before the Pretender could escape to Bombay, Raghuji Angre succeed-ed in securing him early in November and delivered him to Mahadji Sindia who had arrived then at Kolaba. The rebel's followers were easily dispersed by Panse below the Bor ghat. Mahadji and Raghuji brought the prisoner with his helpmates under a strict guard to Poona by the route of Talegaum. A council of eminent men of Poona including Ram Shastri, Haripant, Krishnarao Kale, Babuji Naik with several mer-chants and citizens of Poona sat for a week trying the offender and recording depositions. He narrated the story of his early life and later activities, giving out the names of those who had led him into the foul plan. He was pronounced guilty and sen-tenced to death. After being paraded through the streets of Poona for all folks to have a full view of him, he was put to death on the afternoon of 18th December, 1776. Some light punishments were inflicted upon those who had helped his cause.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER III

1775, Jan. 10	Raghunathrao's son Bajirao born.
„ „	Nelson visits Bombay and inspects some harbours on the west coast.
1776, July 4	American Independence declared.
„ Aug.	R'rao leaves Surat, seeking Portuguese shelter.
„ Nov. 11	R'rao leaves Tarapore in a British ship for Bombay.
1777, Jan.	Anandibai and son captured and kept at Mandleshwar.
„ „	Mahadji Sindia proceeds against Kolhapur.
„ March	Mostyn reaches Poona and relieves Upton.
„ March 15	St. Lubin lands at Cheul and proceeds to Poona.
„ „	Haidar captures Gutti and carries away Murrarao prisoner.
„ July 12	Gangabai dies at Purandar.
„ Sept. 15	Ramraja adopts Shahu II.
„ Dec. 9	Ramraja dies.
1778, March 23	Hastings declares war upon Poona.
„ March 26	Moroba Phadnis wrests power at Poona.
„ March 30	Mahadji concludes operations at Kolhapur and starts for Poona.
„ „	Col. Leslie captures Kalpi and advances into Bundelkhand.
„ June 12	Mahadji and Sakharam Bapu meet near Poona.
„ July 10	The British capture Chandarnagar.
„ July 11	Moroba Phadnis arrested and confined for 20 years.
„ July 12	St. Lubin leaves Poona finally.
„ Oct. 16	The British capture Pondicherry.
„ „	Col. Leslie dies and Goddard takes his place.
„ Nov. 24	R'rao with British forces leaves Bombay for Poona.

1778, Dec.		Goddard crosses the Narmada with all his troops.
1779, Jan.	1	Mostyn dies.
„	Jan. 4	Capt. Stewart killed at Karla.
„	Jan. 8	R'rao and the British reach Wadgaon.
„	Jan. 9	R'rao and the British surrounded.
„	Jan 14	British agents ask for terms of capitulation.
„	Jon. 16	Convention of Wadgaon signed.
„	Jan. 17	R'rao surrenders with all his staff to Mahadji.
„	Feb. 24	R'rao starts for Jhansi.
„	Feb. 27	Sakharam Bapu confined for treason.
„	April 21	The Peshwa's thread ceremony and entry into Poona.
„	„	R'rao at the Narmada kills his keepers and escapes to Surat.
1781, Aug.	2	Sakharam Bapu dies at Raigad.

CHAPTER III

THE BRITISH CHALLENGE

[1776—1779]

1 The task before the Barbhais.
2 International factors in Indian politics.
3 Moroba Phadnis's treachery.
4 British discomfiture at Wadgaon.
5 Mahadji on the scene.
6 Raghunathrao's wiles renewed.

1. **The task before the Barbhais.**—The English protectors of Raghunathrao felt so highly disgusted with his life and manners, that they restricted his movements and guarded him as an undesirable prisoner. Once he abducted a Gujarati merchant's girl at Surat, creating a serious row and bringing odium on the English. Raghunathrao thus found his life at Surat most irksome, and believing that his English friends might at any moment deliver him into the hands of the Poona Council, he sought the protection of the Portuguese Government of Goa. With this object he left Surat in August 1776, and travelling via Daman and Tarapore, suddenly found his way blocked by a Poona force under Ganeshpant Behere. In his extreme danger he wrote in November a humble letter to the Poona Ministers through the mediation of Tukoji Holkar, offering his submission and imploring their compassion and provision for his comfortable residence on the banks of the Narmada. At this moment Mahadji Sindia was near Bombay in pursuit of the pretended Sadashivrao Bhau and tried to seize Raghunathrao also. In mortal fear Raghunathrao made his way to Bombay on 11th November in a British ship sailing from Tarapore, accompanied by his son Amritrao. His wife Anandibai was then besieged at Dhar, where she bravely defended herself against her Poona opponents. At Dhar she had given birth to a son on 10th January 1775, who later became the Peshwa Bajirao II, and who completed the final destruction of the Maratha State. In the beginning of 1777 Anandibai and her son were captured by the Poona forces at Dhar and allowed to reside at Mandleshwar under Ahalyabai's

guarantee. The latter lived at Maheshwar about 12 miles to the west. Anandibai joined her husband in 1779 after his surrender to the Ministerial party at Talegaon.

Col. Upton stayed at Poona for a full year after the treaty of Purandar had been concluded : the Ministers not allowing him to leave the place until all the engagements of the treaty had been performed. Once he threatened to leave abruptly, and then the Ministers asked for a responsible substitute to be sent in his place. Thereupon the Bombay Chiefs again sent Mostyn to Poona in March 1777. Upton being thus relieved travelled back to Calcutta *via* Haidarabad and Masulipatan.

The treaty of Purandar was expressly signed in the name of the young Peshwa Madhavrao Narayan, whom thereafter Raghunathrao could not legally ignore. In his correspondence with the British and the outside Powers, he persisted for some time in styling himself the Peshwa. By the beginning of 1777, the Ministers became free to attend to their normal administration, while Raghunathrao remained quiet at Bombay as the guest of the British. To meet their financial difficulties the Poona Councillors first organized the work of revenue collection, introduced methods of peaceful life and imposed fresh taxation. They also directed their attention to Haidar Ali who had worked havoc in the Karnatak during the last few years. He had humbled Murarrao of Gutti, now entirely exposed to his tender mercies. Early in 1777 Haidar Ali levelled Gutti to the ground, captured Murarrao and consigned him to rigorous imprisonment in the fort of Cabaldurg. When this news reached Poona, Haripant was hurriedly despatched to Murarrao's relief, but this proved too late.

We have already seen how the Council of Ministers at Poona came into being and how it achieved success against heavy odds. The quick development of events altered the original composition of the body so that only Bapu and Nana remained as its permanent members. Of these two Bapu was fast losing his hold on the affairs of the State and power soon came to be gathered in the sole hand of Nana. Bapu's policy of compromise and concession clashed with the stern and unbending ways of Nana, particularly in connection with the punishments to be inflicted upon the adherents and associates of R'rao. Bapu advocated forgiveness and mercy. Nana was rigorous

and implacable, with the result that old sores ever remained open. Nana relentlessly traced every one of the offenders and punished him along with his family and relations.

The treatment meted out to Sakharam Hari furnishes an apt illustration. He was a brave and experienced captain, but being loyally attached to R'rao, refused to bend his neck before the Ministers, to whose service he had formally returned in June 1776. He soon came to be suspected of treachery and was imprisoned with severe restrictions upon his liberty during a period of three years (October 1776 to November 1779). His wife and children were also made to suffer severe indignities and privations. He ended his life in prison with curses on his lips for his captors and loyal expressions towards R'rao till his last breath.

There were many other similar suspects, Chinto Vithal, Manaji Phakde, Abaji Mahadev and Sadashiv Ramchandra being some of the prominent ones. Manaji managed to succeed in saving his skin but persisted in his loyalty towards R'rao and his family. The Gardi leaders were similarly hunted down. Raghunathrao's personal servant Tulaji Pawar was sheltered for a while by Haidar Ali, but when the latter concluded a friendly alliance with Nana Phadnis in 1779, he delivered the criminal into that Minister's hands, and he suffered death after severe tortures. Kharagsinh who had remained all along with his master at Surat and Bombay, came to be similarly dealt with when he surrendered at Talegaon in 1779.

It is necessary to remember in this connection that Nana Phadnis did not spare from punishment even his own colleagues Bapu and Moroba, for having tried to effect some lasting arrangement with R'rao by conciliation and compromise. Such a vindictive course, apart from its questionable justice, only served to alienate several powerful factors in the State and concentrated all authority in the hands of one person. If Nana's policy had been tempered with mercy and forgiveness towards old enemies, his own path would possibly have been made smoother, and he would have been able to serve the State better. Anandibai and R'rao constantly dreaded a terrible fate at Nana's hands and tried their utmost to protract the war and create trouble for the Poona Government. So long as Bapu

was in power, the various conflicting elements were wisely reconciled and restrained, often by friendly encouragement, persuasion and explanation urging them to work for a high national ideal irrespective of personal interests. Nana's natural temperament, secretive, exclusive and often vindictive, his exacting and stern methods, his insistence more upon the form than the essence in a thousand and one matters of administration, did in the long run great harm to the Maratha State.

2. International factors in Indian Politics. When in the month of November 1776 the Ministers learnt that the Bombay authorities in open violation of the solemn treaty extended their full support to R'rao, they wrote an emphatic protest in the name of the Peshwa Madhavrao Narayan to Col. Upton. This document clearly sets forth the essential points in which the Bombay Government openly set at naught the articles of the treaty of Purandar in the very presence of the ambassador who had contracted it.[1] But these protests and remonstrances proved of little avail. R'rao represented the two powerful chiefs, Sindia and Holkar as the enemies of the Poona Government, thereby lowering the latter's prestige before the outside world. The treaty of Purandar practically settled no question at issue. It had thrown a heavy financial burden on the Poona Council and had involved a sacrifice of their legitimate interests. They had to cede large territories to conciliate Nizam Ali. Haidar Ali had seized large tracts of the Karnatak. The Raja of Kolhapur, the Pratinidhi, local chiefs like those of Surapur and Kittur, the Kolis of Khandesh and a number of other vassals of the Maratha State, rose in all directions, undermining the power of the Government and endangering its position. Mahadji Sindia alone stood loyal at this time and helped to save the situation. Otherwise the Maratha Government was at the point of extinction at that critical moment. Thus the two years following the treaty of Purandar mark the tremendous efforts R'rao made to destroy the power of the Poona Ministry without any gain to himself. He wrote strong and frequent letters to Warren Hastings and to the King and the home authorities of Britain. He incited the jealous propensi-

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1. Forrest : *Mar. Series.* I, p. 286.

ties of the Maratha chiefs and of foreign Powers like the Portuguese, the northern Rajput and other potentates. In Poona itself he so worked on the sentiments of Bapu and Moroba Phadnis that their sympathies began to cool towards the main object.

R'rao reached Bombay about the end of 1776 and was welcomed and supported by the Bombay authorities. They formed a definite plan of carrying out the original treaty of Surat even by means of open hostilities. They had already sent a strong representation to the Home Government protesting against the interference of Hastings and his Council and requesting definite orders to carry out the treaty of Surat. The Calcutta Council, as the reader knows, was torn by personal jealousies, and Hastings was carrying out the administration merely on the strength of his own casting vote.

There were also at the time international factors affecting the East India Company's concerns in India. The American colonies of England declared their independence on 4th July 1776 and started a war in which France joined on the side of the Colonies against England. Towards the end of 1777 England sustained a severe defeat when General Burgoyne had to surrender with all his forces to General Gate of America. The news of these disasters reached India in the early months of 1778 and fired Hastings' ambition for retrieving the lost fortunes of England by creating a new empire in India. In the meantime, the E. I. Company's home authorities after receiving the representations of the Bombay Council, decided to over-rule the objections of the Calcutta Council and to seize this opportunity of acquiring some Maratha territories on the mainland opposite the Bombay island, which were absolutely necessary for ensuring the supply of grain, cattle and fuel to their settlement.

The Poona Council realized the trend of these events and prepared to meet the changed situation with courage and fortitude. The credit for this goes to Nana Phadnis. He bitterly resented the tortuous character of British policy, their open violation of solemn treaties and their wicked ambition. Nana was well posted with what was passing at Bombay and Calcutta. Learning that France had declared war upon England, he decided to make friends with the French as an offset to British

aggression. A certain Frenchman named St. Lubin declaring himself as an accredited agent of the French King, had landed at Cheul (near Bombay) on 15th March 1777 with a large cargo for sale and asked facilities from the Maratha Government to proceed to Poona for opening trade relations. Nana Phadnis at once grasped this chance of establishing friendship with France, which Haidar Ali also had already done, and welcomed St. Lubin with open arms and lavish demostrations. It was just at such a moment (March 1777) that Mostyn arrived at Poona and relieved Col. Upton. Mostyn's arrival was not noticed and his reception was so cold that it presented a strange contrast to the warm welcome extended to the French emissary. Nana Phadnis made special preparations to welcome the Frenchman. Passports for the latter's journey were quickly issued, conveyances and facilities for travel were readily supplied, and the goods he had brought were admitted without charging the customs duties. A decorated elephant with a hauda on, a large escort to troops, and some prominent officials were despatched to meet the guest at the Bore Ghat and bring him on to Poona with special marks of respect. He was taken to Purandar and received by the boy Peshwa in open Darbar, welcomed St. Lubin with open arms and lavish demonstrations. the scene of the last Peshwa's murder, which called for an outburst of grief and drew tears from some of the spectators. The painting had been executed in France and brought all the way here by the Frenchman.

St. Lubin stayed in Poona for over a year and endeavoured to obtain the cession of the port of Cheul or Revdanda with the adjoining forts of Rajgad and Korlai. He proposed to Nana Phadnis a defensive alliance with France and offered in support of the Poona Ministry's war against the British, to bring in a body of 2500 Europeans equipped with military and marine arms and stores and in addition to train ten thousand Indians for war on the western model. Nana well knew that Lubin was not an accredited ambassador but used him as an instrument to intimidate the English.

Mostyn's long stay in Poona had given the Ministers ample proof of his normal tendencies and now when he arrived to relieve Upton, he was anxious to disown the treaty of Purandar and carry to completion the unfinished design of reinstat-

ing R'rao at Poona. This result Nana Phadnis felt himself bound to prevent and for that purpose found in St. Lubin's arrival a fresh lever to strengthen his own position. With what mortification Mostyn, then chafing under the deliberate neglect shown at his reception, must have witnessed these developments, can be easily understood. He prepared a counter move to Nana's project by seducing Moroba Phadnis. The crisis came to be fully developed during the summer months of 1778. St. Lubin's transactions in Poona and the setback in the American War so influenced the views and policy of Warren Hastings that he not only now gave up all his former friendly views towards the Poona Ministers, but went to the other extreme of declaring an open war on them, even setting aside the instructions he had received from the home authorities not to undertake fresh operations in favour of R'rao. These instructions dated London 4th July 1777 ran thus :—

"So long as Raghoba is with you, you must prevent him from forming any plan against the ministerial party at Poona : and we hereby positively order you not to engage with him in any scheme whatever for retrieving his affairs without the consent of the Court of Directors. At the same time you must protect his person from violence."[2]

In spite of these orders Warren Hastings set aside the treaty of Purandar and authorized the Bombay Council on 23rd March 1778 to conduct R'rao to Poona, place him as their own nominee in the Peshwa's seat, and seize the Maratha possessions on the west Coast. Against the advice of his Councillors Francis and Wheler, Hastings ordered the Bombay Presidency to renew the war that had been closed by the treaty of Purandar, and at once despatched for that purpose a special well equipped army by the overland route from Allahabad through Bundelkhand. Col. Leslie was appointed to command this force. On 26th February 1778 Hastings wrote to Bombay "For the purpose of granting you the most effectual support in our power, we have assembled a force near Kalpi with orders to march by the most practicable route to Bombay. We are exceedingly alarmed at the steps taken by the French to obtain a settlement on the coast of Malabar, to establish a political

2. Forrest I. p. 314.

influence in the Maratha State, the object of which must be the overthrow of our Bombay settlement. As we have no property in the Fort of Cheul, we cannot authorize you to prevent the French from forming an establishment at that place. You must not on any pretence become the aggressor by commencing direct hostilities." Hastings, however, captured the French possession of Chandarnagar, on 10th July 1778 and Pondicherry on 16th October following. Thus he found in the Anglo-French War a convenient excuse for opening hostilities both against the Marathas and the French.[3]

It will be noticed that the history of the period covered by the first Anglo-Maratha War (1774-1782), fully illustrates the restless ambition first of Hornby and Mostyn in Bombay and then of Warren Hastings in Calcutta. It was to satisfy this ambition for dominion, this desire to make up for the loss of the American colonies by fresh acquisitions in India, that the fugitive Peshwa R'rao was harboured and supported by the British authorities. The family dissensions of the Marathas were not confined to the house of the Peshwas only. The Bhosles of Nagpur and the Gaikwads of Baroda had also similar domestic disputes, and the British were not slow in interfering in the affairs of these also. They coveted for their trade the region of Surat which belonged to the Gaikwad ; and their two eastern presidencies were inconveniently separated by two blocks of territory, Orissa belonging to Nagpur and Ganjam belonging to the Nizam. In order to make the whole line of the east-coast contiguous for British communication, they found excuses for interfering in the affairs of these chiefs also. British politics moved warily and lost no opportunity of expansion. It is not perhaps so well known that Horatio Nelson the future antagonist of Bonaparte, visited Bombay just during the time of this first Maratha War in 1775 and, in consultation with Hornby and Mostyn, examined for several months the naval possibilities of the west coast, with a view to strengthening England's maritime position in this region.

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3. The battle of Plassey, the Seven Years' war, the War of American Independence, Lord Wellesley and his brother's Indian conquests are links in this long chain of Anglo-French rivalry. They deserve to be studied from the perspective of European politics.

3. **Moroba Phadnis' treachery.**—The Poona Ministry was originally intended to include the best talents in diplomacy and war, but it never functioned as a workable cohesive body, having had no organized constitution. Nana and Bapu were the only two members that conducted the affairs for long and orders and communications were issued in their joint names. Nana's cousin Moroba, nearly of the same age, who had long worked as the confidential secretary of the late Peshwa Madhavrao, now found himself left in the lurch, and was known to be sulking for being excluded from the present administration on account of his well-known sympathy towards R'rao. But to keep him from mischief, he was recently given a place on the Council, and the names of three instead of the two began to appear on official papers. The change was notified to Calcutta also, whence the incoming communications began to be addressed to the three Ministers separately. But this step proved disastrous. Mostyn, when he arrived in Poona a second time, fully won over Moroba, convincing him by specious arguments how the war could be easily closed if only the obnoxious Nana were removed from the ministry. Moroba lightheartedly agreed to the suggestion, considering the British motives and professions honest and pure. The two formed a secret project for conciliating R'rao and removing Nana from the ministry by confining him as a life-long prisoner.

R'rao's ardent partizans Chinto Vithal, Sadhashiv Ramchandra, Manaji Phakde and even Tukoji Holkar were all too eager to seize power out of spite for Nana. Nana was conscious of his own weakness in not being a soldier, and had wisely secured Mahadji Sindia's willing co-operation in any dangerous eventuality. Moroba's intrigues had long been well known to Bapu and Nana. Once R'rao employed agents to have Bapu and Nana secretly murdered. Moroba was privy to this plot, but as no proof was forthcoming against him, he could not be punished. It proved a mistake on the part of Bapu and Nana to have admitted Moroba into the Council.

During the year 1777 the Poona Council were engaged in putting down the intrigues and aggressions of the Raja of Kolhapur, who in conjunction with Haidar Ali had conducted a campaign against the Peshwa's Government, at the instigation of R'rao, so that in the beginning of 1778 Poona was altogether

defenceless. Haripant was then occupied in the Karnatak along with the Patwardhans. Moroba Phadnis found this a welcome opportunity for the execution of his project. He visited Tukoji Holkar at Jejuri and won him over by paying him five lacs. Tukoji promised to help Moroba in seizing the Poona Government and the person of the boy Peshwa, whose mother Gangabai had died the year before at Purandar (12th July 1777) after a short illness of a malignant fever. Nana Phadnis alone was on the spot with no one by him to face the imminent danger. Sakharam Bapu had recently lost interest in the administration and had no inclination to support Nana. R'rao was to leave Bombay and arrive at Poona in time to seize power in 1778, with Moroba and Tukoji ready to welcome him.

Mostyn hurriedly went to Bombay to arrange the immediate return of R'rao with British forces. Nana felt extremely nervous when he learnt the details of this secret plot. He sent urgent messages to Haripant and Mahadji to repair to Poona expeditiously. Sakharam Bapu took up an indifferent attitude, probably waiting to join the winning side. He agreed to help Moroba in removing Nana, but not in bringing R'rao from Bombay. Bapu well knew that he would be the first victim to fall to the vengeance of R'rao, should he arrive on the scene. Moroba, therefore, decided to seize the supreme power for himself, take charge of the boy Peshwa, and set aside Nana. During February Nana had been absent from Purandar having gone to his country residence at Menavli for the Shivaratri celebration, when Moroba made an attack on Purandar, but it failed of effect, as Nana hurried back and took steps to defend the fort till Mahadji and Haripant should return. He lulled Moroba into a temporary truce to avoid bloodshed, himself offering to retire from politics altogether, provided R'rao and the British were not admitted to Poona. Thus Moroba was installed in power on 26th March at the fort of Purandar in the presence of Bapu, Chinto Vithal and Bajaba Purandare (the last two partizans of R'rao). A Darbar was held at the foot of the fort, where nazars were offered to the Peshwa in evidence of the new order, in the presence of Parvatibai as the eldest residential member of the Peshwa's family. Moroba took charge of the treasury and the office records at Poona and

started his regime with evident satisfaction and enthusiasm.

The origin of the trouble which occasioned this change in the administration was indeed Nana's action in entertaining the French agent St. Lubin at Poona. Mahadji was shrewd enough to perceive that the presence of this man caused unnecessary irritation to the British, whose power, he knew, was too firmly established in India to be easily shaken off ; while the French power was too weak to maintain its footing. Mahadji, therefore, counselled Nana to dismiss the French agent and thus remove the root cause of the trouble. Nana admitted the force of this advice and allowed Moroba to send away St. Lubin, declaring in no uncertain terms that he had made no commitments to the French nation and that he would never in future seek their friendship. St. Lubin was given his final leave on 25th June 1778 and left Poona on 12th July, after having been supplied with carts and labourers to enable him to reach the Portuguese port of Daman.

As soon as Moroba seized power at Poona, he sent hurried and repeated calls to R'rao at Bombay to come at once and occupy the Peshwa's seat. But the Bombay authorities had not sufficient forces then at hand to escort R'rao to Poona. There was another difficulty, viz., the President of Bombay under orders both from the home authorities and the Governor-General, was strictly prohibited from making any engagement with R'rao, unless a formal written invitation to that effect had been received from the first Minister Sakharam Bapu alone or jointly with the others. Sakharam Bapu flatly refused to sign such an invitation to Bombay, which would have been a clear evidence to prove his treason ; and Moroba's single invitation was not considered sufficient by the Bombay authorities. The force of Col. Leslie travelling from Bundelkhand had not yet arrived, and as the season had advanced, R'rao could not leave Bombay in time to support Moroba's plan at Poona. This was an unforeseen hitch which ruined Moroba.

For some three months and a half from 26th March to 11th July, Moroba Phadnis exercised full power of administering the Maratha State, when Bapu remained indifferent and Nana almost a prisoner at Purandar along with the boy Peshwa. Nana however, managed to send repeated oral messages to Mahadji at Kolhapur and Haripant in the Karnatak, explain-

defenceless. Haripant was then occupied in the Karnatak along with the Patwardhans. Moroba Phadnis found this a welcome opportunity for the execution of his project. He visited Tukoji Holkar at Jejuri and won him over by paying him five lacs. Tukoji promised to help Moroba in seizing the Poona Government and the person of the boy Peshwa, whose mother Gangabai had died the year before at Purandar (12th July 1777) after a short illness of a malignant fever. Nana Phadnis alone was on the spot with no one by him to face the imminent danger. Sakharam Bapu had recently lost interest in the administration and had no inclination to support Nana. R'rao was to leave Bombay and arrive at Poona in time to seize power in 1778, with Moroba and Tukoji ready to welcome him.

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ing the situation at Poona and urging them to come immediately to the young Peshwa's relief. Although R'rao did not arrive on the scene, Moroba was not likely to be dislodged from the ministry without recourse to war, which once started, no one could control. Sakharam Hari and other adherents of R'rao were liberated from prison and employed in vital posts. The general Maratha sentiment, however, was in no way favourable to R'rao's assumption of power.

At the end of April Mahadji closed his operations against Kolhapur and started for Poona, cautiously feeling his way and gathering individual sentiments without giving the least sign of how he was going to act. Apparently he assumed an entire unconcern about the Poona administration, and thus lulled Moroba's suspicions as his powerful arm was alone the decisive factor. Moroba had despatched Chinto Vithal to Bombay for bringing R'rao to Poona without further delay. By the beginning of June Mahadji reached the environs of Poona and was joined by Haripant Phadke and Parashuram Bhau returning from the Karnatak. Most of the prominent gentry of Poona became anxious to meet Mahadji, each trying to secure his support. Moroba, Bapu, Tukoji all in turn tried their utmost to meet Mahadji and earn his good graces. But Mahadji, having been well posted with every detail of the situation, studiously avoided meeting any body, not even disclosing the route he was taking in his journey to Poona. Along with Bapu, Moroba advanced to Jejuri where Mahadji was expected to arrive. But the latter went to Morgaum and avoided meeting Moroba. Bapu alone saw him on 12th June and begged his pardon for having joined Moroba's conspiracy against the Peshwa. Bapu implored Mahadji to receive Moroba's call. Mahadji flatly refused, but the next day himself paid a formal call on Moroba without exchanging a word.

Tukoji Holkar was the only chief with a fighting equipment, not at all friendly towards Mahadji. Mahadji called on him without previous intimation and held a long personal expostulation, gathering his views and explaining how they two alone were responsible jointly to the boy Peshwa as his hereditary servants, how for years past they had kept away R'rao at great personal cost and sacrifice, and how, if he were now allowed to become their master, the British would seize all power.

Tukoji realized the force of this appeal and promised his whole-hearted co-operation to Mahadji in whatever step he would take. Thereafter Mahadji brought Bapu and Nana together for a secret meeting in his presence and arrived at a definite plan in which they were all to co-operate sincerely in supporting the boy Peshwa. Mahadji at once committed the whole plan to writing and compelled Bapu and Nana to sign it under solemn oaths. These preliminaries were completed by the middle of June. Similar oaths of fidelity and co-operation were exchanged at Mahadji's instance between Sakharam Bapu, Haripant and Parashuram Bhau, thus binding for the moment all the prominent members of the defunct Barbhai Council, with the two military leaders Mahadji and Tukoji backing the project with their armed strength. Mahadji also managed to rigidly exclude evil spirits like Chinto Vithal, Naro Ganesh (Holkar's secretary) and others, who had sympathies for R'rao. This grand stroke of policy was secretly delivered by Mahadji to control a situation which was full of the dangerous potentialities of a bloody civil war. He disclosed a masterly grasp and remarkably long views on the future of the Maratha State, thus thwarting British ambitions effectively by keeping away R'rao.

Moroba now began to quail. He had no party behind him. His mere assumption of power was no crime deserving of punishment ; but proof was found sufficient for incriminating him and dealing with him as he deserved. During the previous year Moroba had plotted to depose Mahadji from his Sindian estate by raising Manaji Sindia to that position and with that object he had despatched an autograph letter inviting Manaji to Poona with all haste, from his service with Haidar Ali. Parashuram Bhau secured this letter and gave it to Mahadji, who thus became fortified in his move against Moroba, with a serious ground for exacting personal revenge, which Moroba in his shortlived power had carelessly supplied. Depriving Mahadji of his patrimony was a bad turn which he was not likely to forgive. Moroba thus called down upon himself severe retribution both from Nana and Mahadji. He clearly foresaw his fate and in his extreme embarrassment implored Tukoji to save him from punishment. But Tukoji was no longer his friend, and Moroba to save himself ran away secretly from Poona. He was

immediately pursued, seized on 11th July along with Naro Ganesh, Bajaba Purandare and others implicated in the plot. Moroba was at once cast into prison and Nana resumed his former charge of the administration along with Bapu. Thus a serious danger to the nation passed away quickly and easily, thanks to Mahadji Sindia who had saved the State in a delicate and perilous situation. Moroba sighed out the next 22 years of his life in various prison-forts, although Nana did not stint him any personal comforts. He obtained release from his confinement, though not from his miseries, only after Nana's death in 1880.

4. **British disaster at Talegaon.**—Although R'rao lost the chance of regaining his power at Poona owing to the failure of Moroba Dada's scheme, his hopes again revived when Warren Hastings himself earnestly renewed the war by sending troops, money and supplies from Bengal and even ordering the Madras authorities to join in the effort. He also allowed full power of action to Hornby at Bombay. Mahadji alone realized the import of Hastings' moves and the implications of the Anglo-French rivalry in India.

Warren Hastings was earnestly trying to overcome the Marathas through as many channels as came ready to his hand. Ramraja the Chhatrapati of Satara was on his death-bed and Warren Hastings in his zeal to any how control the Maratha State, tried to make Mudhoji Bhosle of Nagpur the Chhatrapati, and thus establish a direct influence at the centre of the Maratha Power. Bapu and Nana at once countered Hastings' move by bringing to Poona Mudhoji's young son Raghuji, now the head of the Nagpur State and securing his support against British intervention. At the same time the Ministers managed to have their own nominee, Vithoji Bhosle, son of Trimbakji of the Wavi branch, adopted by Ramraja. The adoption took place on 15th September 1777, the name Shahu being given to the new incumbent. Ramraja died soon after on 9th December. Hastings, however, continued his efforts to induce Mudhoji to go to Satara under British protection and claim the throne, but the latter wisely rejected this wild plan.[4]

4. To conciliate the Bhosla Raja of Nagpur and detach him from his allegiance with the Maratha Government, was indeed a long game

Warren Hastings also tried his best to seduce Mahadji Sindia from his allegiance to Poona. His unscrupulous diplomacy shines through the voluminous correspondence which he carried on with the authorities in England, Bombay, Madras, the Ministers of Poona, R'rao and the individual members of the Maratha State, Nizam Ali and other potentates of India. These records when read together supply a curious mixture of truths, half-truths and falsehoods.[5] In order to have a second string to his bow in case no success were attained by the Bombay expedition leading R'rao to Poona, Hastings had invested Goddard with plenary powers, when the latter was on the Narmada, to arrange for a favourable peace with the ministerial party at Poona. Goddard accordingly deputed his own agent Lt. Watherstone to Nagpur to induce Mudhoji Bhosle to mediate with the Poona Court on behalf of the English. But before any tangible result could be secured, the Marathas inflicted a crushing defeat upon the British forces at Talegaon and Hastings' schemes fell through. The British authorities in India at last realised that they were backing the wrong horse in taking up the cause of R'rao[6]. Hastings himself thus writes to Elliot :—

"You are already well acquainted with the general system which I wish to be empowered to establish in India, viz., to accept the allegiance of such of our neighbours as shall sue to be enlisted among the friends and allies of the King of Great Bri-

of British policy, started by Clive in 1766, who sent his representative Scott to Nagpur to negotiate an independent alliance. No substantial results were obtained from this or the subsequent embassies. Their reports are now only historically important and disclose the evil trends of British policy. Will's *Nagpur ; Persian Calendar ;* Nana Phad. letters, Raj. 10 197, 199.

5. Illuminating reports of Alexander Elliot (1778) and David Anderson (1781) disclose with what assiduity Hastings pursued his Nagpur schemes. Dodwell, *Letters of Warren Hastings ;* also a full letter to Alexander Elliot—12 Jan. 1777 in Keith's Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy Vol. I. p. 82 and letter to Lawrence Sullivan p. 66.

6. About R'rao's capacity and character various views and opinions are held, possibly without any solid evidence. The opinion that R'rao's close contemporary Nizam Ali recorded will dispel any doubt on the subject. On 23rd July 1778 Nizam Ali thus wrote to Warren Hastings : "Lately Col. Upton saw me while going back from Purandar. I discussed with him the treachery and villainy of R'rao and my renewal of the treaty with the Pandit Pradhan." Per Cal. V, 1080.

tain. It is impossible to reconcile the different orders which the Court of Directors have given us for our conduct towards the Powers of India. They desire us upon no account to enter into any wars however advantageous to the Company, and they at the same time direct us to co-operate with the Presidency of Bombay in keeping possession of the islands which Raghoba ceded to them by treaty. The first is an absolute prohibition to interfere in the politics of India, the last is a positive order to interfere and to engage in a war with the first power in India."

Hastings considered, the best way of preserving peace was to be ever ready to undertake war and he acted on that principle. Ahalya Bai Holkar well gauged the methods of British policy and compared them to the tricks of a shaggy bear, who kills his victim by hugging him too hard and not by direct blows.

Let us now trace the course of the Bombay move to conduct R'rao to Poona. His wife Anandibai was at this time living at Mandleshwar and while helping her husband's projects with whatever means she possessed, she was shrewd enough to offer sound advice to Bapu and Nana in personal letters drawing their attention to the British endeavours to destroy the Maratha State, if they would not any how conciliate R'rao, with whose reckless ways they were, she urged, as fully familiar as she herself was.[7] Even after Moroba's fall Mostyn in Bombay continued to urge upon his superiors that there was every chance of the British influence being established at Poona if R'rao could be taken there immediately after the rains, escorted by the Bombay Contingent, now going to be strengthened by the timely arrival of the Bengal force and its junction with them before reaching Poona.

Bapu and Nana made timely preparations to meet the danger. They protested to Hastings against British troops coming through Maratha territory against their usual practice of taking the sea route from Calcutta to Bombay. When Bapu granted passports to these troops, he was on friendly terms with Hastings. Col. Leslie was opposed at Kalpi by the Marathas, but he captured the place in May 1778 and as he proceeded south he suffered terrible difficulties from want of water

7. See Anandibai's letters, *Itihas Samgraha* Ait. Tip 1. 19 and 33.

and food, and lost many of his troops by death and starvation. Leslie himself died in October, and his next in command Col. Goddard heroically facing difficulties and privations, proceeded to Hoshangabad, where having been opposed by the Bhosle of Nagpur, he lost two months in securing a passage across the river. It was the beginning of December by the time Goddard was able to proceed further south in compliance with urgent calls from the Bombay Government now escorting R'rao to Poona. But before Goddard could reach Burhanpur, he received the distressing news of the small British army of Bombay having been routed at Talegaon in January 1779. R'rao had surrendered his person to the Barbhais, Mostyn was dead and the whole plan of the Bombay authorities had fallen to the ground. Goddard, therefore, wisely proceeded to Surat from Burhanpur with a view to crippling the Marathas in Gujarat by concerting fresh measures with the Bombay authorities. He reached Surat at the end of February having accomplished a grand feat of military genius, cutting across the Indian continent through hostile elements with a small military force equipped with artillery and successfully defying all opposition on the way. Mahadji Sindia took the lesson to heart and henceforth made it his first concern to introduce western methods in Indian warfare against the British rivals competing for Indian supremacy.

Raghunathrao prepared to leave Bombay with an army of his own numbering about seven thousand in addition to the Bombay force consisting of 500 Europeans and about 2000 Indians. On 24th November 1778 a fresh agreement was concluded with him by the president, in which Madhavrao Narayan was acknowledged as the legitimate Peshwa and head of the Maratha Government, but R'rao on arrival at Poona was to act as the Regent during the boy's minority, who was to be kept strictly under the guard of English sentries at Purandar and Poona. The command of the expedition was given to Col. Egerton who was to act in political matters on the advice of two civilians attached to the party, John Carnac and Thomas Mostyn. They left Bombay harbour the same day, 24th November, and took a month to reach the top of the Khandala ghat *via* Panvel. The Poona Ministers prepared to meet the attack by guerilla tactics, hovering about the enemy and cutting off

their supplies, but keeping out of the range of their guns. As the British troops began to ascend the ghats, large Maratha bodies attacked them from the rear and tried to capture R'rao who usually kept himself behind.[8]

The English force advanced from Khandala for Poona on 30th December, practically by the same route which the present railway line takes, *via* Karla and Talegaon. The Marathas pressed their attack from all directions. They burnt the markets and villages on the way including the important grain emporium of Talegaon. Nana Phadnis vacated the whole city of Poona, compelling most of the residents to repair to their country houses and filled large edifices with hay and combustibles in order to burn the whole city down rather than surrender it to the enemy. On 4th January 1779 Capt. Stewart, as he was reconnoitering from the top of a tree near Karla, was killed by a stray shot. Col. Kay was similarly wounded and returned to Bombay. The Chief Commandant Col. Egerton became seriously ill and returned after making over charge to Cockburn. These losses in the top command greatly discouraged the small British force already much thinned by constant harassment. After leaving Karla they found every step forward severely contested. Bhivrao Panse, the officer in charge of the Maratha artillery with Noronha as his expert Portuguese gunner, did great execution in the English ranks. They reached Khadkala (the present railway station of Kamshet) on 7 January, and Wadgaon the next day, arriving at Talegaon on the 9th. This journey had proved so costly to the English throughout, that they began to find their project of reaching Poona a mad venture. Not a leaf or a blade of grass could be seen on the way. R'rao and Mostyn had given specious assurances that most of the leading Maratha chiefs would join the British expedition as soon as they ascended the ghats ; but not a single soul from the Poona party deserted their ranks ; on the contrary, the British found their own life insupportable on account of want of labour, supplies and residential conveniences. Even water

8. Mostyn's assistant, Lewis was in Poona all the while and kept the English Commander well posted in all essential matters. Mostyn himself was with the expedition but he became ill at Khandala, returned to Bombay for treatment and there died on 1st January 1779 at the age of 48. This loss proved a great blow to the British plans.

became scarce, the big tank of Talegaon was found emptied of all its contents, so that the British found their position grave between Wadgaon and Talegaon. Their Committee of war held a conference at Talegaon for two full days, 10th and 11th, and discussed measures for extricating themselves from their dangerous situation. The next halt was to be at Chinchwad, which was reported to be prepared for being set on fire.[9] The British decided to march back secretly and save what they could ; but even this became impossible. When they fell back two miles upon Wadgaon, they found themselves completely surrounded on all sides. Five of the British guns were lost in addition to more than two thousand small arms. In the meantime Maratha parties became boldly aggressive down the ghats between Panvel and the hills ; the whole country was aflame and the return of the British troops could not be effected. Nana and Mahadji acting in perfect concert directed every detail from their station on a hill near Wadgaon. They starved the entrapped British force into submission. The British Committee were compelled by extreme distress to open negotiations through Sakharam Bapu for a free passage back to Bombay.

At this moment the supreme authority rested with Mahadji Sindia, who had not much faith in Sakharam Bapu. R'rao wrote a personal appeal to Tukoji Holkar imploring him to save his life and those of the British force. Mahadji did not accept Tukoji's mediation and demanded the unconditional surrender of R'rao before any negotiation could begin. There was no way out of the situation and R'rao agreed to give himself up into Mahadji's hands. To arrange the terms of capitulation, Mr. Farmer was deputed to meet Mahadji and Nana. Farmer was conveyed blindfolded in a palanquin to the presence of the two chiefs on 14th January. They demanded the surrender of R'rao and agreed to allow the British force to march back to Bombay under Maratha escort and with the supply of rations. Farmer after several interviews with Mahadji finally secured the following terms :

9. R'rao had no courage to face the Committee and felt entirely unnerved, about saving his own life. The terrible straits of the British forces may be studied in *Persian Calendar* Vol. V. Nos. 1449 and the following.

(1) The surrender of R'rao ;

(2) Return of Salsette, Thana and the territory captured by the British in Gujarat ;

(3) The force from Bengal to be ordered back ;

(4) Two Englishmen to be placed as hostages in Maratha hands until the terms had been fully and faithfully executed.

This treaty of Wadgaon was to be finally ratified by the Governor-General.

During the time that the negotiations were going on, the English tried to steal away secretly under cover of their artillery, but they were foiled by the surrounding Maratha force on the morning of the 14th when an engagement took place in which fifty Europeans and four hundred Indians were killed. On the 16th, Farmer brought a blank paper duly signed and sealed for the victors to put down whatever terms they would choose to dictate. Mahadji behaved in a moderate and dignified manner, replying that when R'rao and the hostages arrived, all matters would be arranged in a friendly spirit without any rancour being exhibited to the vanquished. On the 17th the formal drafts of the treaty were exchanged ; R'rao and the two hostages Farmer and Stewart arrived in the Maratha Camp on the 18th January. Plentiful supplies were immediately made available to the British force and they all returned to Bombay with twenty thousand Marathas escorting them. This striking magnanimity towards a fallen foe was later highly extolled by the British themselves.

The treaty of Wadgaon was never accepted by the British authorities of Bombay and Calcutta. Hastings refused to carry out the terms, saying that those who contracted them had no authority to do so. The British writers choose to call the treaty a convention. Mahadji followed a soft yielding policy in his treatment of the British and in order to save a lot of trouble and expense, severely checked the rigour advocated by Nana and the other chiefs present at Wadgaon. Mahadji urged that the British power was not to be trifled with and that no wanton irritation should be offered to it. He was highly impressed with the British discipline, the execution of their artillery and their orderly methods, which exhibited a glaring contrast with the disorderly behaviour of the Marathas in war and he

evinced a keen anxiety to end the present hostilities, and put into practice the lessons he had learned.

Mr. Farmer who negotiated the treaty of Wadgaon has left a few pertinent remarks on this regrettable affair, which deserve to be quoted :—

"The Government of Bombay should have waited the arrival of Goddard's detachment and acted in conjunction with it against the Maratha Government on our own footing, disconnected with the pretensions of R'rao. Instead of this, the Government of Bombay misled by the assurances of poor Mostyn, resumed the romantic projects of blindly asserting the rights of R'rao and declaring to all the world that the English meant to re-establish him in the possession of those rights. Such an attempt and such à line of policy naturally united against us all the leading chiefs of the Maratha Empire and all the Powers who had cause to be alarmed at our ambition : as they (the Bombay Government) wanted also to engross the whole honour of this project and would not wait for the aid of Goddard, their attempt was attended with ill-success that might have been expected. Mr. Hastings surely is not answerable for their measures, nor for the horrid disgraces which were the consequences of them and which by effacing that sacred opinion of our arms, conduced to the Confederacy that subsequently came to be formed against us."[10]

Gleig thus remarks on the capitulation of Wadgaon : "Never had so disgraceful an affair occurred since first the English had established themselves as a substantive power in the east ; and its effects were instantly felt in all quarters of India. A spirit of dissatisfaction on the part of both Nizam and Haidar Ali began to show itself. The Raja of Berar hung back from the projected alliance. The Maratha party hostile to the English took fresh courage."[11]

"The essence of the whole matter," writes Lyall, "is that the Marathas were at this period far too strong and too well united to be shaken or overawed by such forces as the English could then afford or bring against them". This relative position remained practically unchanged right up to the battle of Khar-

10. Dodwell—*Warren Hastings*, Letters, p. 176.
11. *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, Vol. II p. 229.

da and the death of the young Peshwa Madhaorao II.

The set back suffered at Talegaon moved the whole British nation to depths of anger and passion for retribution as nothing else could have done. A long enquiry was held in Bombay : Cockburn and Egerton were dismissed from service as the authors of the disaster. Warren Hastings warmly repudiated the treaty of Wadgaon and strained every nerve to wipe out the disgrace by at once opening a new war against the Marathas, who on their part took up the challenge with equally unshakable determination. Nana Phadnis' genius for diplomacy began to shine with the result that the four power anti-British Confederacy came into being.

5. **Mahadji on the scene.**—The Maratha victory at Talegaon raised the spirits of the nation as never before. The boy Peshwa began to be extolled in every house on his good fortune. Mahadji Sindia's loyalty, valour and circumspection came to be widely appreciated. Tukoji Holkar also played a minor but satisfactory part. At his surrender R'rao was accompanied by three hundred indigenous cavalry, about 1200 Gardis, thirteen guns and a staff of some 200 menials along with his Secretary Chinto Vithal and his two adherents Sadashiv Ramchandra and Kharagsing. All these came to Mahadji's quarters at Wadgaon on 18th January 1779. At R'rao's special request the whole affair of his surrender was regulated by Mahadji himself, without Nana's interference. Nana and Bapu did not even pay a formal visit to R'rao, considering it sinful to see the face of the murderer. Amidst the usual wrangling the question of R'rao's future residence remained under discussion at Wadgaon for a month and a half. By the beginning of March the Maratha Government returned to Purandar. Thus his successful leadership during the three years' fighting gave Mahadji a predominant voice and position in the Maratha Government which he retained practically unimpaired to the end of his days. Diplomacy succeeds only when it is backed by armed might and Mahadji got the chance, which Nana Phadnis doubtless resented but could not help. From now on Mahadji came to be acknowledged as a powerful leader, as he was already dominating much of Central India.

R'rao finally signed and took oaths on an agreement (1)

acknowledging Madhavrao Narayan as the legitimate Peshwa, (2) renouncing his own claim to that position, (3) confessing his guilt in having waged a war against the Maratha State and (4) agreeing to retire from all public affairs and reside at Jhansi for the rest of his life with an assignment of a jagir worth twelve lakhs and (5) requesting that his son Bajirao be allowed to conduct the administration for the Peshwa when they both would come of age, following the precedent of Nanasaheb and Bhausaheb.[12]

Mahadji and Tukoji stood guarantee for the proper execution of these terms. Kharagsinh was at once executed for his complicity in the murder of Narayanrao. The other accomplices like Chinto Vithal were kept in strict confinement.

This assemblage of leaders at Wadgaon is noteworthy for various reasons. R'rao started thence on his journey to Jhansi on 24th February under the escort commanded by an efficient officer of Mahadji named Hari Babaji Ketkar.

But one tragic consequence of the victory at Wadgaon was the ruin of the veteran Sakharam Bapu, the senior member of the Poona Government who had so long led the Poona ministry with prudence and courage. When R'rao and his followers surrendered, the question came for consideration of punishing them, particularly Chinto Vithal and Sadashiv Ramchandra. R'rao in revenge against the old Minister, produced an autograph letter from Bapu inviting him from Bombay the year before when Moroba Phadnis had seized power. Both Nana and Mahadji were already estranged from Bapu on account of his dubious conduct and considering this action as treason, they had him arrested on 27th February and confined at Sinhgad and all his property confiscated. This was doubtless a cruel treatment in return for the conspicuous services the old diplomat had long rendered to the Peshwa's house. Next May Bapu was transferred to Pratapgad where his health failed owing to the heavy rain and damp air of two successive seasons. Thereafter he was removed to Raigad where he died on 2nd August 1781.

The removal of Sakharam Bapu put an end to the Coun-

12. *Itihas Sangraha,* Ai. Tip. 1-7, Parasnis' *Treaties and Engagements* pp. 130-134.

cil of the Barbhais after a career of some six years. Hereafter Nana Phadnis helped by Mahadji Sindia, became the sole manager of the Peshwa's Government and wielded full power right up to the death of the young Peshwa in 1795. As Mahadji was away most of the time in north India, Nana Phadnis made Haripant Phadke his confidential colleague, entrusting to him the military duties for which he himself was constitutionally unfit. Mahadaji Ballal Guruji and Krishnarao Kale, also continued as Nana's helpers in the administration.

Nana and Mahadji henceforth became perpetual colleagues in the Maratha Government, mutually indispensable and yet temperamentally antagonistic and suspicious of each other. Both greedy of power and intent on self-interest, the one strong in penmanship and intrigue, the other in warfare and diplomacy, they made their respective marks on the history of the next fifteen years, often disagreeing violently almost to the breaking point, and usually separated by long distances. An enormous amount of records has been preserved, revealing their mutual recrimination, and affording material for historical study.

Nana essentially a rigid, methodical worker, trusted more to the pen than to the tongue : Mahadji was quite the opposite, profuse in words and discussion, shifting and prevaricating as occasion required, but a man of action above all. Each had his own personal agents living in the other's camp and constantly reporting to their masters whatever the other said or did. These temperamental differences soon developed into such discord and mistrust between the two leaders, that a smooth working of the administration became impossible with their relations often reaching the breaking point and creating serious apprehensions in the outside world. Fortunately both had the wisdom to realize the evil consequences of such differences, and in order to avoid mutual harm they exchanged solemn oaths in writing promising brotherly conduct towards each other and making the other's interest as one's own. This exchange of vows took place at Purandar on 15th March 1779 when after the dispersal of the Wadgaon gathering, the party came to pay their homage to the young Peshwa their common liege Lord. Such promises and oaths had, however,

little effect in practical politics. Mahadji transferred his activities to Malwa and confined his attention to affairs in north India and Nana to those in the south. The great disparity in their ages also acted as a safety valve, Nana being fifteen years junior to Mahadji.

On 21st April the boy Peshwa had his thread ceremony performed at the Parvati shrine and in the afternoon he made his first formal entry into the ancestral palace in the city, where a full Darbar was held with Mahadji, Nana and the other Sardars making their obeisance and offering congratulations on the recent victory. But the joy of this occasion was suddenly marred by the unexpected news of the flight of R'rao back to Surat, which led to a renewal of hostilities that were supposed to have come to an end.

6. **Raghunathrao's wiles renewed.**—In his camp on the river Narmada, General Goddard commanding the Bengal force despatched by Warren Hastings, learned of the disaster that had befallen the British arms at Wadgaon. Burning for revenge at this evil news Goddard hastened to Surat, then the principal seat of the British power in the west with the resources of Gujarat at their disposal. The surrender of her husband at Wadgaon had equally grieved Anandibai then residing at Mandleshwar. She certainly kept a close contact with Goddard, as she travelled to Burhanpur to join her husband then on his way to Jhansi. R'rao was extremely restless, chafing at the restraint he was now compelled to accept. He instigated some of his ardent followers Manaji Phakde, Bajirao Barve, Keso Krishna Datar and others to gather their forces in north Khandesh, where some rebellious elements (such as the local Kolis, Gulzar Khan of Sultanpur, Khanderao Pawar of Dhar etc.), had been already creating trouble for the Poona Government. These activities gathered fresh impetus in the summer of 1779 as R'rao reached the vicinity of Burhanpur in April and the bank of the Narmada in May. His keeper Hari Babaji was vigilant enough on the journey, watching the plans and activities of his prisoner, who had his own paraphernalia of troops, artillery, followers and travelling equipment. These had their camp on the Narmada waiting for the provision of boats for getting across. It so happened that Hari Babaji had fever one day and was confined to his tent. R'rao while conveying his guns

drawn by bullocks, suddenly fired them upon the guard, killed Hari Babaji in his tent and in the confusion that ensued, ran away for life along the southern bank of the river. He was welcomed at Surat by Goddard who seemed to have been privy to the plan. Goddard won over Fatesinh Gaikwad the ruler of Baroda and together they started a fresh war in Gujarat with the object of retrieving the disaster of Wadgaon. Thus the Government of Poona found themselves once more involved in a deadly combat with all the labour and expense of the several years past wasted.

Nana and Mahadji at Poona received the news of R'rao's flight with consternation. Nana accused Mahadji of derelic-tion of duty and secret connivance. The latter was spending his well earned rest in fortifying his country residence at Jam-gaon and building his permanent villas with spacious accom-modation for himself and followers.[13] Here he performed the marriage of his daughter Balabai with Ladoji Shitole Desh-mukh in a grand style. In the midst of these pleasant occupa-tions news reached him of R'rao having escaped from his cap-tors. It was now the beginning of the monsoon and even the speediest pursuit would not have proved successful ; but Nana urged quick measures and quite unreasonably suspected that Mahadji was privy to the affair. This brought about an unprecedented disagreement and distrust between the two chiefs. Mahadji demanded the removal of Haripant Phadke from his association with Nana, which gave rise to acrimo-nious correspondence and messages between Poona and Jam-gaon. Mahadji would not move to face Goddard in Gujarat unless he was supplied with sufficient forces and funds. Once more a deep gloom shrouded the atmosphere of Poona, displac-ing the mirth of the departing summer. After a good deal of heated discussion and exchange of messages, the two men rose to the occasion and together took up the challenge of facing the British forces in Gujarat. Once again Nana indeed worked the miracle of his life by secretly organizing an all India Confederacy against the British power. This subject must be deferred to the next chapter.

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13. The name of this place is Madhav-Vilas and that of the ram-part Saheb-gad after his Muslim Guru Shah Mansur.

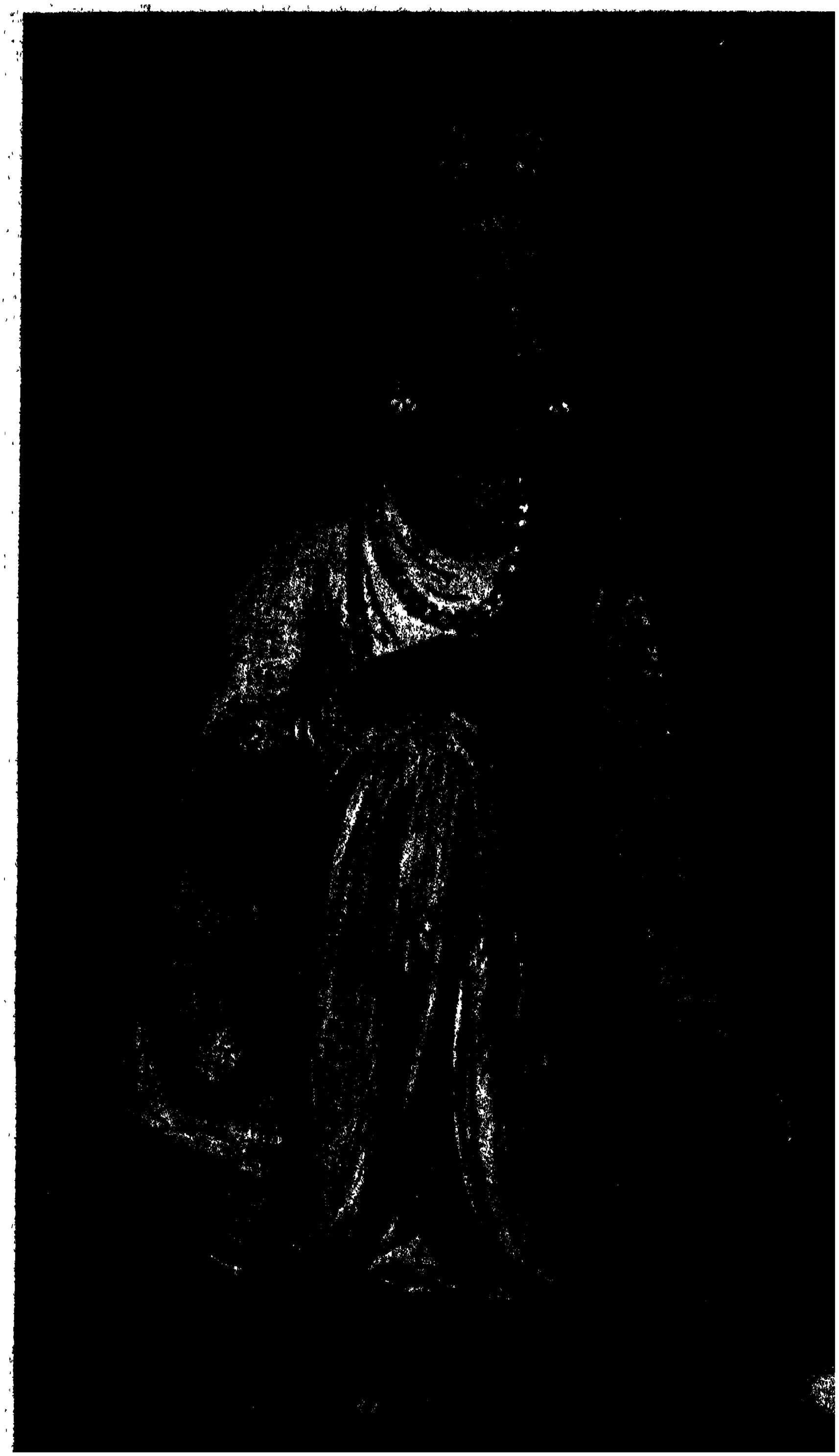
CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER IV

1774 February	R'rao forms treaty with Haidar Ali at Kalyandurg.
„ April	Haidar Ali reduces Shira ; Bapuji Sinde surrenders.
1776 March 15	Haidar Ali attacks Gutti, carries away Murarrao prisoner.
„ April 5	Bhagvantrao Pratinidhi dies.
„ Nov. 6 to Apl. 1778	Maratha operations against Haidar Ali in Karnatak.
1777 Jan. 8	Haidar routs Patwardhans at Sanshi : Konherrao killed and several men made prisoners.
„ August 30	Bhavanrao Pratinidhi dies ; son Parashuram born.
1778 Jan. to Apl.	Mahadji Sindia's war against Kolhapur.
„ April 23	Mahadji closes the Kolhapur war by a treaty.
1779 March 19	Col. Braithwaite captures Mahe.
„ June onward	R'rao in extreme misery at Surat.
1780 January 26	Fatesinh Gaikwad joins Goddard by a separate treaty.
„ February 7	Nana Phadnis wins over Haidar Ali for an anti-British alliance.
„ February 13	Goddard and Fatesingh capture Ahmedabad.
„ February 20	The four-power anti-British alliance comes into existence.
„ February 24	Khandoji Bhosle at Cuttack allows free passage to Col. Pearse.
„ March 8	British hostages Farmer and Stewart released by Mahadji.
„ April	Fighting starts between Goddard and Mahadji near Baroda.
„ April 15	The Siddi of Janjira joins the anti-British alliance.

1780	May 3	Holkar gains a victory over Goddard.
,,	May 11	The British capture Thana.
,,	May 24	The Marathas sustain a crushing defeat near Kalyan.
,,	May 24	Col. Hartley defeated near Panvel.
,,	June	Goddard and the Maratha forces in Gujarat retire to Dabhoi and Malwa respectively.
,,	June to March	1784 Haidar Ali and Tipu conquer eastern Karnatak.
,,	August	Haidar Ali threatens Madras.
,,	August 4	Popham captures fort Gwalior.
,,	December 12	Goddard captures Bassein, Ramchandra Ganesh killed.
1781	early	Suffren starts with a strong naval squadron from France.
,,	January	Marathas attack British in north Konkan.
,,	February 9	Goddard plants himself at Khandala upto 15th April : compelled to retire to Bombay.
,,	February 9	Col. Camac arrives at Sironj, threatens Mahadji.
,,	March 24	Camac inflicts defeat on Mahadji.
,,	April 4	Col. Muir joins Camac.
,,	June	Macartney arrives as Governor of Madras.
,,	July 1	Mahadji defeats Col. Muir near Sipri.
,,	July 16	Diwakar Pandit dies.
,,	August	Hastings initiates peace negotiations with the Marathas through several channels.
,,	August	Hastings persecutes Chetsinh.
,,	September 11	Macartney, Macpherson and Hughes conduct peace parleys with Poona.
,,	September 11	R'rao's agents Hanumantrao and Maniyar Parsi start for England, returning after a year.
,,	October 13	Provisional truce between Muir and Mahadji.
,,	December 14	Chetsinh seeks Mahadji's protection.
,,	December 21	Anderson arrives in Mahadji's camp.
1782		Hastings persecutes the Begams of Oudh for one year.
,,	early	Suffren and Bussy arrive on the east coast.
,,	Jan.-March	Anderson negotiates treaty with Mahadji.

1782	April 12	British and French have stiff naval fights near the Madras coast.
„	May 17	Treaty of Salbye concluded.
„	September 13	Suffren inflicts a severe defeat upon Admiral Hughes.
„	December 7	Haidar Ali dies.
1783	January 11	R'rao addresses a letter to George III of England.
„	February 10	Peshwa Madhavrao II married.
„	February 24	Nana Phadnis signs the treaty of Salbye.
„	April 8	Dhulap attacks the British ship Ranger.
„	June	Peace concluded between France and England ; war in Indian waters closed.
„	July	R'rao surrenders to Haripant near Dhodap, resides the Kopargaum.
„	August 4	R'rao performs penance and visits Gopikabai.
„	December 11	R'rao dies at Kopargaum.
1784	March 30	Chimnaji Appa born to Anandibai.
1785	January 7	Bussy dies in India.
1794	March 12	Anandibai dies.



Nana Phadnis

CHAPTER IV

END OF THE ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

[1779—1783]

1 Raghunathrao and Goddard.
2 Anti-British Confederacy.
3 Seduction of the Bhosles of Nagpur.
4 War in Gujarat and Madras.
5 Goddard's singular failure.
6 Mahadji's stand in Malwa.
7 Peace of Salbye.
8 Verdict of Salbye.
9 End of Raghunathrao.
10 Haidar Ali and others.
11 How grows the young Peshwa ?

1. **Raghunathrao and Goddard.**—The seriousness of the British defeat at Wadgaon was much reduced by the timely arrival of Goddard with fresh troops from Bengal. The Bombay authorities after consultation with him decided to repudiate the treaty and urged the Governor-General to support this policy.[1] Hastings at once informed the Maratha Court that the agreement of Wadgaon being unauthorized and disgraceful to the British name, could not be ratified, and that he had authorized Goddard to bring about a fresh treaty on the basis of the one concluded by Upton at Purandar. Soon after this, Raghunathrao arrived at Surat and the whole aspect of the affair suddenly changed. Nana categorically demanded the surrender of Raghunathrao and the fort of Thana before negotiations could be renewed. Goddard saw the force of this reply, but emphatically declined to hand over a guest who had of his own accord sought their shelter. This mistaken policy involved the Bombay Government in a costly war and their unwelcome guest now saddled them with a stipend of ten thousand rupees a month for his maintenance. He was a penniless fugitive, having lost every trace of vigour of body and mind. His immoral and whimsical ways of life excited contempt in the minds of Goddard and his companions. He often talked incoherently, exhibiting signs of extreme depression and disappointment. He had to be supported by three attendants

1. Vide Goddard's despatches of 19th February and 30th March, Forrest Vol. I.

when he came out to pray in the open sun. He ate nothing except a handful of rice at midnight. His wife Anandibai met him hardly once a week, being unable to conceal her anger at the large number of concubines he entertained. Husband and wife often exchanged bitter invectives, the husband attributed his ill luck to his wife and even prevented his young son Bajirao from associating with his mother. It was his sorest disappointment that having marched within twenty miles of it, he could not visit the city of his birth. At Surat he suffered from a venereal disease and had to take a long treatment for cure. His only activity now consisted in sending letters and agents to the different Powers of India and abroad inviting their support.

After another consultation in Bombay, Goddard returned to Surat having formed a plan of campaign, and immediately won over Fatesinh Gaikwad with a view to making a joint attack upon Ahmedabad and other possessions of the Peshwa in Gujarat. This time Goddard was accompanied not by Raghunathrao but by his adopted son Amritrao.

2. **Anti-British Confederacy.**—To oppose the English in distant Gujarat whose Maratha chief the Gaikwad had already joined them, was no easy task for the Poona Government, with Khandesh in open rebellion against them. The critical juncture called forth the diplomatic talents of Nana Phadnis, who rose to the occasion and countered English aggression by forming what has come to be known as the Grand Quadruple Alliance against the British power, the four members being the Peshwa's Government, the Nizam of Haidarabad, Haidar Ali of Mysore and the Bhosle of Nagpur. Although these four were the principal members actually joining in an anti-British alliance, there was at this moment such antipathy throughout India against the grasping policy of Warren Hastings, that most Indian Powers heartily welcomed the present move, having been wronged in one interest or another by British ambitions and realising the threat to their own independent existence. British policy had become familiar to all from the instances of the Raja Chet Sinh of Benares, the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, the Nawab of Bengal and even the Emperor of Delhi. The Anglo-French war was on and

the French port of Mahe on the west-coast was captured by a British squadron under Colonel Braithwaite on 19th March 1779. The loss of this important possession which enabled Haidar Ali to receive free French help in arms and men, at once turned that ruler into a bitter enemy of the British Power. When this fact came to the knowledge of the Poona Ministers, they decided to close their war with Haidar Ali and win him over to fight the British aggression. Nana and Mahadji immediately despatched a highly capable ambassador, Krishnarao Joshi to propose an offensive and defensive alliance to Haidar Ali, agreeing to confirm to him (Haidar Ali) all his recent conquests of Maratha territory south of the Tungabhadra, while the latter agreed to devastate the territory of Arcot and the lower Karnatak belonging to Nawab Muhammad Ali a protege of the British. Mahadji Sindia and Raste stood guarantees for the proper observance of the terms of the alliance, which came to be formally settled on 20th February 1780. How faithfully and enthusiastically Haidar Ali carried out his undertaking, how he swore revenge against the English, and how he inflicted severe defeats upon them in the vicinity of Madras, are matters of common knowledge in contemporary history and need not be described here.[2]

The idea of this comprehensive alliance against the British was first mooted by Nizam Ali. During the summer of 1779 he wrote repeatedly to Nana at Poona and to Diwakar Pandit of Nagpur proposing that it was high time to overcome the growing menace of British aggression, if the Indian Powers were to maintain their existence. Immediately upon receiving these letters from Nizam Ali, Nana invited Mahadji from Jamgaon and Tukoji from Wafgaon and in consultation formed a comprehensive plan with such secrecy that even Warren Hastings had no knowledge of it for several months after. During the sixties of the century when the British had become masters of Madras and Bengal, they found that their through communication between these two provinces was blocked by

2. Raj. Vol. 19 reproduces the complete despatches of Krishnarao Joshi on the subject of this alliance. Vide also *Treaties and Agreements* page 85; *Peshwa Diary* of Sawai Madhavrao No. 386; Raj. Vol. 10. 235 etc.

two intervening tracts, (1) Orissa belonging to the Bhosle of Nagpur and (2) the Guntur district south of the river Krishna belonging to Nizam Ali ; this latter then known as the Northern Sarkars, was already seized by them. Now when the British had on their hands two wars against the Marathas and the French, this east coast line became of vital importance to their strategy for the free movement of their armies. Nizam Ali had assigned this Guntur District to his brother Basalat Jang, whom Rumbold, the Governor of Madras, won over and obliged to cede it to the British. This surreptitious transaction carried out by the British served to create enmity between the two brothers Nizam Ali and Basalat Jang. The former felt extremely annoyed as the real owner of his State and vehemently opposed the cession of Guntur.

Hastings realized the danger of this strong anti-British combination, suspended Governor Rumbold and restored Guntur to Nizam Ali, thereby detaching at least one number from the Confederacy. Thereafter Nizam Ali remained entirely neutral. The moving spirit of the Confederacy was Nana Phadnis who alone was singularly well-posted with correct information from all Indian Courts. He enlisted for this purpose the sympathies of the Emperor of Delhi and his Minister Mirza Najaf Khan. Even the Siddi Nawab of Janjira, the traditional enemy of the Marathas, joined the combination by a separate agreement dated 15th April 1780. Similarly the Portuguese and the French settlements were induced to join the combination. Vandergraft, the head of the Dutch factories in India, planned the capture of Surat with Maratha co-operation. On 3rd June 1780 a solemn treaty was signed by Nana with the Government of Goa, furthering the project of the Confederacy. Warren Hastings' enormities against Chet Sinh and the Begams of Oudh, which later figured so glaringly in Anglo-Indian history, had their origin in the financial stress imposed on the British by the needs of the crop of wars which Hastings had to undertake to beat down this Confederacy.

On 7th February 1780 Nana wrote the following letter to Haidar Ali, " The British have grown intolerably provocative. During these five years their blind aggression has led them to violate solemn agreements and plighted words. They first make sweet promises in such an alluring tone, that one is led to be-

lieve that real honesty and faith in this world are to be found only amongst them. But it does not take long for one to be undeceived. One quickly realizes their evil genius. They win over any discontented member of a State and through him work its ruin. Divide and grab is their main principle. They are so blinded by selfish interest, that they never observe written agreements and solemn promises. God alone can fathom their base intrigues. They are bent upon subjugating the States of Poona, Nagpur, Mysore and Haidarabad one by one, by enlisting the sympathy of one to put down the others. They know best how to destroy Indian cohesion. They are adepts in the art of creating insidious differences and destroying the harmony of a State."[3]

3. Seduction of the Bhosles of Nagpur.—Nizam Ali first induced Diwakar Pandit, Minister of Nagpur, to broach the plan of a Confederacy to Nana and obtain his co-operation. Thereupon Nana and Mahadji prepared the ground and asked the Bhosle to play his part quickly and boldly by invading Bengal so as to cripple the main source of British finance. Indeed Bengal had been long ago overrun by the Bhosles and subjected to Chauth. But after Clive had obtained the Diwani of that province from the Emperor, the British had discontinued the payment of Chauth to the Bhosle. Janoji and his brothers had long pressed their claims upon the attention of the British Governors, but all their efforts had proved in vain.[4] If the Maratha Empire was to remain unbroken, all its member States were expected to exert themselves equally and work in co-operation with the central government. This lesson the Peshwa Madhavrao taught the Bhosles at the cost of a deadly war, and bound them in the treaty of Kankapur to serve the national State. But the lesson was effaced as soon as the two authors Janoji and Madhavrao died. Thereafter Mudhoji went so far as to propose to Warren Hastings to accept him as a vassal of the English king, giving up his allegiance to Poona. During the first phase of the Anglo-Maratha war Mudhoji

3. Raj. Vol. 19.56.

4. This sorry chapter of the Bhosle-British relations can be best studied in the Volumes of the Persian Calendar.

was won over by Warren Hastings by means of large subsidies and specious promises. Astute British diplomacy brought in an era of dissolution for the Indian Powers. The Bhosles had always a soft corner in their hearts for Warren Hastings.[5]

When Nana Phadnis organized the anti-British Confederacy, he assigned specific duties to each member ; the Bhosle was to attack the English in Bengal ; Haidar Ali to pounce upon Madras ; the Poona forces to oppose them in Gujarat and the Bombay Konkan ; while the Nizam was to menace them on the east coast. Accordingly a large and well equipped force was organized and marched from Nagpur to Orissa under Mudhoji's younger son Khandoji Bhosle, popularly called Chimnaji, a man of spirit and courage ; he was given positive instructions to invade Bengal and exact the payment of Chauth with all arrears. But before the plan could be executed, Raghuji Bhosle the elder brother of Chimnaji, who guided the Nagpur Government, and his wily minister Diwakar Pandit succumbed to the temptation of money offered by Warren Hastings and prevented Khandoji from executing the original object. The amounts offered were at least fifty lacs and differ only in nomenclature, presents gratuity, loans, army expenses or bribes, whatever one may choose to call them. Thus this important member of the Confederacy backed out at the critical moment.. The story of the Bhosle-Hastings negotiations is indeed a long one extending over several years. When Goddard arrived at the Narmada towards the end of 1778 he held frequent consultations with Mudhoji and succeeded in obtaining a passage across that river through the Bhosle territory into Gujarat. What perquisite Mudhoji received in return is nowhere mentioned. This conduct of Mudhoji excited Nana's serious irritation at the time. He sent for Raghuji and Diwakar Pandit to Poona and obtained their accession to the four-party-alliance.[6] This pledge was never fulfilled.

5. During the Chet Sinh rebellion at Benares Hastings' life was saved by the two Brahman ambassadors of the Nagpur State Veniram and Vishvambhar. They conveyed him in disguise in their palanquins and boats across the Ganges safely to Chunargad. See Forrest, Imperial Records, Vol. 3.

6. Ait. Patravyavahar, 168.

But even the backing out of the stipulated alliance by the two out of the four members, took time to be effected. During the interval, when the news of such an all-India rising first reached Hastings, he was for a time completely paralysed. Lala Sevak Ram the Maratha agent at Calcutta has left a graphic description of the alarm which seized Hastings and his Councillors. Sevak Ram writes, " Hastings in his dismay immediately called to his presence General Coote and wrenched out of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh a contribution of a crore and eighty lacs. The Wazir dashed his turban on the floor and fasted for three days. Hastings then called a meeting of his Council and explained the situation to them, adding, " that the Maratha war has already cost five crores : and now we must have more." He then invited several rich merchants of Calcutta to meet him and compelled them personally to yield a crore. With this he equipped an expedition and despatched it to Madras under the command of Coote. On 1st November 1779 he invited Veniram Pandit and his brother Vishvambhar and despatched them to Khandoji Bhosle at Cuttack requesting (1) a free passage for the British troops proceeding to Madras under Colonel Pearce, (2) a friendly alliance with the Nagpur Raja, and (3) the stoppage of an attack on Bengal. Liberal and handsome presents consisting of jewelry worth one lac, dresses worth two lacs, and cash of four lac mohars were brought for Khandoji. Similar presents had been given to the two agents to secure their sincere co-operation in winning over Khandoji. Veniram enjoys the entire confidence of Hastings and assiduously works against his own master's interests and also those of the Poona Government."[7]

If Khandoji had not been thus seduced and his projected expedition cut short, he could have easily overrun Bengal, as that province was then denuded of troops and was most vulnerable to an invasion. On 24 February 1780 Khandoji accepting a promise of payment of past dues allowed a free passage to Colonel Pearse's troops through Orissa. Hastings himself writes :—" We ordered Colonel Pearse to march and use every studied precaution for preventing rupture with the Government of Berar. At the same time Mr. Anderson was

7. Ait. Tip. 3.23 ; 4.20 ; **परराष्ट्रांच्या दरबारांतील मराठे वकील,** pp. 63-68.

deputed to Cuttack to notify these orders to Chimnaji Bhosla. Colonel Pearse crossed the Suvarnarekha in good order. Chimnaji very readily signified his assent to the passage, to minister to all its wants, which he did most abundantly. The march to Ganjam was quiet and easy. We agreed to relieve the distresses of Chimnaji's army by giving him a gratuity of 16 lacs. Chimnaji has agreed to furnish two thousand horse to be under the orders of Colonel Pearse, their pay to be disbursed by us at the rate of one lac per month. I have endeavoured to excite the ambition of Mudhoji to the acquisition of the (Maratha) raj ; but I am apprehensive he will not undertake any plan hostile to the young Peshwa."[8]

Sevak Ram writes, "Veniram Pandit of the Bhosles and Rajaram Pandit of Raghunathrao induced Hastings to open hostilities for the conquest of the Maratha territories. He at once despatched Goddard for the conquest of Gujarat and Colonel Palmer to the Rana of Gohad for the conquest of Bundelkhand with a regiment under Colonel Camac. The news came that Khandoji Bhosle was coming upon Bengal with an army of thirty thousand : to prevent injury from this army Veniram obtained Mudhoji's instructions preventing Khandoji from proceeding into Bengal. Haidar Ali has already created a havoc in Madras : if at such a juncture Khandoji had acted in co-operation, the British power would have been brought to the brink of ruin. Hastings would have immediately paid the arrears of Chauthai and himself sought terms. Till now more than 40 lacs have been paid to the Bhosles."[9] It was Mudhoji Bhosle, himself a sworn member of the Confederacy, who gave the first portentous news of that plot to Hastings.[10]

While several able and impartial writers have severely criticised Warren Hastings' policy, there are some who blindly admire his dash and enterprise in being the first to found a British Empire in India. The question is, whether the same result could not have been achieved by a more honourable and less rapacious method, by faithfully carrying out promises and

8. Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings* Vol. 2 page 358.
9. Ait. Tip. 3.23.
10. Hastings' Report to the Court of Directors dated 30th April 1781, Forrest's Imp. Selec. Vol. 2 ; Gleig. Vol. 2, p. 314.

solemn undertakings, not only towards the Marathas but towards the other Indian Powers such as Chet Sinh and the Wazir of Oudh as well. The Marathas were fighting in self-defence. Theirs was a just war, a righteous stand ; Cornwallis, by no means inferior to Hastings in serving his nation, has exposed this wickedness of Hastings' policy. Malcolm and other writers have also done the same. Writes P. E. Roberts : "Thornton hardly speaks too strongly when he says the moral atmosphere of Madras appears at this time to have been pestilential. Within seven years two Governors were dismissed from office and the third suspended by the Governor-General, the unhappy man dying in prison. These open scandals and constant changes in the government naturally resulted in an inconsistent and chaotic policy which soon entangled the Presidency in a war with Haidar Ali. The Nizam had long looked with growing disfavour on our alliance with Raghoba and built up a terrible Confederacy of practically all the native Powers of India. Mysore, Haidarabad, Poona, Nagpur all joined together for one desperate attack upon British rule in India." This was Hastings' creation. Says Lyall, "The fortunes of the English in India had fallen to their lowest water mark. Nor were the dangers from the Indian powers the only ones. France had already declared war upon England, having formed a coalition with Spain, Holland and the North American States. Haidar Ali had made common cause with the Marathas and had drawn the Nizam into an alliance against the English and obtained promises of French co-operation on the west coast."[11]

4. **War in Gujarat and Madras.**—The year 1780 opened for the Marathas with a clouded sky. In the previous summer Goddard, after consulting the Bombay authorities, had decided to open a campaign first in Gujarat and then in north Konkan. Goddard used the same methods with the Gaikwad brothers of Baroda that Hastings had done with Mudhoji Bhosle. Nana had correct news of these moves and formed his plans in consultation with Mahadji and Tukoji.[12]

11. *British Dom. in India*, p. 195.

12. At this time Nana and Mahadji had a serious breach in their relations owing to suspicions on various trifles having arisen.

These two generals moved towards Gujarat through Khandesh putting down the troublesome elements on the way, such as the Kolis, Chandrarao Pawar and others that have been already alluded to. Ganeshpant Behere and Visaji Appaji Athavle were the two Peshwa's commanders deputed by Nana to co-operate with Holkar and Sindia. These were already working in Khandesh, where they fought several actions, in one of which Chandrarao Pawar the youngest son of Udaji was killed in December 1780. Gulzar Khan of Sultanpur (Raghunath's ally) too was sufficiently humbled and made innocuous.

It was the quarrel between the two Gaikwad brothers Govindrao and Fatesinh, both claiming the ancestral patrimony of Baroda, that threw the latter into the arms of the English. Goddard offered to recognise the right of Fatesinh if he joined the English against the Poona Government. Fatesinh was guided by a clever minister named Govind Gopal Kamtekar who negotiated a treaty with Goddard, which was signed on 20 January 1780.[13]

Mahadji Sindia and Nana both wrote to Fatesinh warning him against the evil consequences of the course he had taken. Nana also wrote some strong remonstrances to him from Poona. But Fatesinh decided to throw in his lot with Goddard, who now marched from Surat and was joined by Fatesinh near Dabhoi; the two then proceeded towards Ahmedabad. Within three days of their arrival they captured that important place (13 February 1780).

Learning that Sindia and Holkar were speedily coming to oppose them, Goddard and Fatesinh sent their heavy baggage and artillery for safe custody to Cambay and repaired from Ahmedabad, with light equipment towards Baroda to face the Poona army. On 8 March 1780 Goddard was surprized to meet Farmer and Stewart suddenly appearing in his camp from Mahadji's quarters. They had been surrendered as hostages at Wadgaon more than a year ago and now were freely allowed to return by Mahadji as a discreet step for conciliating the English. This action of Mahadji created a

But it came soon to be happily closed, although a few precious months of campaigning were wasted in the meantime.

13. Forrest's *Maratha Series*, page 394.

sensation of many quarters and plunged even Nana into a distressful suspicion as to whether Mahadji himself was going over to the other side. It was a deliberate clever move on the part of Mahadji to gain time and try to bring about the end of the war by negotiation if possible, as he found himself unprepared to face the enemy immediately. By lengthening the campaign somehow till the advent of the monsoon, he hoped to overcome Goddard in the end. Nor was Mahadji supported wholeheartedly by Holkar, and he even gave out purposely as a hoax that he was going to put down Nana's power in Poona. He was sure that the hostages no longer served any useful purpose and only kept the sore open. When the two gentlemen met Goddard, they told him of the excellent treatment they had received at Mahadji's hands and the sentiments of amity and respect he entertained for the English nation. They also explained how kind and serviceable Mahadji was in the affair of Wadgaon, and how they would have suffered bitter humiliations if Mahadji had not exerted himself in their behalf. Mahadji conveyed his sentiments to Goddard that if he could have Raghunathrao back into his custody, he would close the war at once and the whole trouble would be over. Goddard could not comply with this request, as it would reflect discredit upon the British name if he were to give up his honoured guest. For a time this game of Mahadji upset Nana in Poona, but when they later on met and discussed the situation personally, all the temporary irritation was removed.

For the two months of February and March, negotiations for peace were continued, but they broke down, and fighting commenced in the vicinity of Baroda early in April, the Marathas as usual keeping out of the range of the British artillery and employing guerilla tactics with effect. On 3rd April the British force made a sudden raid on Mahadji's camp but no decisive action ensued. A month later on 3rd May Holkar fought a severe action and gained some advantage over the enemy, which convinced Goddard that he could not hope to win success over his opponents in a running struggle, in which he could not have a chance of using his cannon with effect. The approach of the rainy season compelled Goddard to retreat towards Surat, undergoing severe privations on the

way. Mahadji and Tukoji retired into Malwa in June and Goddard formed his camp at Dabhoi blocking the road to Songad against any sudden attack from Poona.

While the campaign in Gujarat was thus being handled, Haidar Ali's armies poured down the Karnatak passes to spread fire and sword through the coastal plain of Madras and continued it for over two years, lending to the Anglo-Maratha war an entirely different character. Mahadji on the spot knew this general tendency of the political situation better than Nana, who worked at Poona without any personal knowledge of men and affairs outside. Now the very existence of the British Power in India came to be threatened. Hastings immediately took bold steps and prepared to meet the danger. The need to support the war launched that proconsul into the famous enormities against Chet Sinh and the Begams of Oudh. While Nana confined his attention to the movements and intrigues of Raghunathrao, Mahadji realised the wider aspect of national existence and directed his thoughts to the best way of winning the war.

Hastings sent large reinforcements by sea to Madras under the veteran Sir Eyre Coote to counteract Haidar Ali's devastations, and at the same time fresh troops by land through Bundelkhand and Malwa first under Capt. Popham and later under Col. Camac and Col. Muir. Nana advised Mahadji to form his monsoon camp in Khandesh between Burhanpur and the famous pass known as Kondai, about 50 miles west of Dhulia, which commanded the route of Raghunathrao's advance from Surat and Songad into Maharashtra. Mahadji flouted Nana's suggestion and took up his quarters in Malwa. This enraged Nana beyond measure and gave rise to a long and acrimonious correspondence between the two. Mahadji declared that he could protect Poona only from Malwa by preventing fresh British troops from pouring through that province into the Deccan. If Malwa was lost, he urged, the Maratha State would come to an end. Nana never could follow the wider implications of Mahadji's strategy, who repeatedly urged upon Nana's attention that Raghunathrao was no longer the centre of British policy, but that what they were aiming at was the subjugation of the Bombay-Konkan right upto Surat, so as to

be masters of the West coast, as they had become of the Eastern one ; that they had already reduced the Gaikwad of Baroda and the Bhosle of Nagpur to the position of vassals ; that they were similarly planning the control of the Emperor and his capital Delhi. His presence in Malwa alone, he urged, would prevent the closing in of the cordon round the Indian continent, involving the end of Maratha independence. Mahadji was at great pains to explain the situation to Nana and to convince him that it would be playing into the enemy's hands to move from where he was. He advised Nana to take courage from the heroic stand made by Haidar Ali, try to win back Bhosle and hearten Nizam Ali to carry out his pledges for the success of the Confederacy.

One more stroke of good policy Mahadji initiated at this time. Govindrao Gaikwad was his friend, and had been ousted by Fatesinh. Mahadji supplied him with money and troops and despatched him to Gujarat to take possession of Baroda. This was a diversion which largely upset Goddard's plans. Mahadji also urged Mudhoji Bhosle to move into Bengal, and if that chief had responded, there was every chance of Mahadji's plans succeeding against the British. If Calcutta, the fountain head of British Power, could be threatened, suggested Mahadji, that would at once coerce the enemy into submission.[14]

In August Mahadji writes to Nana, " You must arrange to defend Gujarat and the Konkan with the Southern chiefs at your command. Holkar too is with you. He should hold Khandesh. Haidar Ali and Nizam Ali should be induced to perform their part in the south and the east. I will myself oppose the British advance on this side in co-operation with the Bundella chiefs, the Emperor and his ministers. Let us all exert ourselves to the utmost and spare no pains to do our duty : and with the good fortune of our boy Peshwa at our back, we are sure to win this war in the end." After a long hesitation Nana accepted Mahadji's plan of strategy. Nana found it difficult to exact any useful work from Tukoji Holkar,

14. Gwalior Papers of Mahadji Sindia, particularly correspondence from June to September 1780, Nos. 107-117.

who was himself not on good terms with Ahalyabai. It is this divided house of Holkar which all along crippled the Maratha efforts to resist the British.

Mahadji and Haidar Ali were the two principal persons who saved the Indian situation against the British onslaught at this critical moment. From the beginning of 1780 to the treaty of Mangalore on 11 March 1784, the whole of the Madras Karnatak was practically held first by Haidar Ali and, upon his death on 7 December 1782, by his son Tipu Sultan. Haidar Ali left his capital in June 1780 with a force of 70 thousand men and a hundred pieces of cannon and descended upon Madras playing havoc with several well-known British commanders such as Munro, Bailie and Fletcher, on the plains of Kanchi and putting to death nearly 70 British officers, three hundred European troops and large numbers of Indian sepoys. Sir Eyre Coote came hurriedly from Bengal by sea, having been provided with ample funds amounting to a crore and 36 lacs, and Col. Pearse by land. They did their best for a time to oppose Haidar Ali and to drive him away. Coote defeated Haidar in the field, but his own death shortly after weakened the English position. The Mysoreans overran and terrorized the eastern Karnatak for nearly four long years, so that the people thought that the British raj had come to an end. Haidar Ali felt so proud of his achievement that he painted graphic scenes of his victories and of the distress of his enemy, on the walls of his palace at Shrirangpattan which can be seen to this day. A new Governor of Madras Lord Macarthey arrived from England in June 1781 and gradually retrieved the lost position.

5. **Goddard's singular failure.** During the summer of 1780 while Goddard was occupied in Gujarat, large parties of Poona troops descended through the ghats and so completely devastated the environs of Bombay that the authorities of that place became very nervous. Since the capture of Thana in 1774, they had hoped to win easily all the important islands of Bombay along with Bassein and Kalyan. But they could make no headway against Visaji Pant Lele, the Maratha Governor of Konkan who bravely defended them. Under urgent pressure from Bombay Goddard despatched Col. Hartley

from Baroda on 8th May to reduce the Maratha pressure. Hartley was opposed near Panvel by Panse and Bajipant Joshi and was quickly routed with a loss of about 500 men and five guns. Thus while the British campaign in that year failed of effect for a time, their garrison of Thana made an unexpected dash against Kalyan only 13 miles north and captured that rich mart on 11 May, as it was at the moment denuded of its defence force. This was a triumph for the British and with vengeance in their heart they plundered the wealthy merchants of the place and carried the booty to Bombay in high glee. A Maratha force quickly arrived for the relief of Kalyan, but Hartley inflicted a crushing defeat upon it also on 24 May. Now the monsoon arrived and afforded leisure for fresh planning to both the combatants, none of whom was yet disposed to yield and stop the war.

The Bombay authorities resolved now to make a strong effort against Bassein, the most coveted Maratha possession on the mainland north of Bombay. Goddard was recalled from Gujarat and asked to make a dash upon that post. He left Surat on 16 October and besieged the place next month. No succours could come in time and the garrison was so hard-pressed that Visaji Pant surrendered Bassein to Goddard on 12 December. It was a severe blow to Maratha pride, as Bassein formed a living memorial of their former exploits. Ramchandra Ganesh, the veteran Maratha captain of north India fame, who was deputed to carry succours to Bassein, left Poona promptly, but was killed by a stray shot of the enemy in the morning fog of 12 December while camping on the hill of Vajreshvari and trying to capture Colonel Hartley alive. The same day Bassein was lost.

But this event did not damp the Maratha spirit, nor did it bring the end of the war nearer. There prevailed at this moment a strong anti-British sentiment in India owing to the unjust treatment meted out to most of the Indian powers. Nana Phadnis and Mahadji repeatedly urged the Bhosles of Nagpur to bestir themselves, but British money had made them inactive. A golden opportunity was thus lost, since Mahadji himself was impatient to advance from Bundelkhand upon Bengal in support of the Bhosles if they would make the effort.

But Diwakar Pandit the main support of Nagpur died on 16 July 1781 and all action in that quarter was paralyzed. The Bhosles never again rose to their former greatness.

Having secured Bassein the Bombay authorities resolved to march once more on the Maratha capital through the Borghat, as they had done two years ago. Their ablest commanders Goddard and Hartley, were selected for the purpose. Haripant Phadke and the Patwardhans advanced from Poona to oppose the British. Mahadji remained in Malwa stopping the further advance of the Bengal contingent, and Tukoji Holkar came through Khandesh to support the Poona forces in north Konkan. Late in January he proceeded to meet Goddard through the Khandala pass followed immediately by Parashuram Bhau. Goddard ascended the ghats on 9th February 1781 and planted himself at Khandala for two full months till 15th April.

Parashuram Bhau, Haripant and Tukoji reconnoitred the terrain and the location of the enemy forces and formed their plans for dislodging them by their familiar guerilla method. Once more the country between Poona and Panvel came to be so devastated that the enemy could get no supplies, and Goddard could not advance from Khandala. Constant skirmishing continued for three months, February to April, below the ghats, in which the Marathas inflicted several defeats and losses upon the enemy and secured much booty. Reinforcements were hurriedly sent from Bombay but they were dispersed in their advance from Panvel. Goddard found himself isolated at Khandala and becoming hopeless of any successful move towards Poona, went back to Bombay suffering severe losses and privations in his retreat. This campaign like the preceding one of 1779 cost the English nineteen officers killed, in addition to three thousand men dead and wounded, and five thousand muskets lost. A news-letter from Bombay records on 5 May ; "Such a setback was never experienced by the British before. All Bombay disparages this performance with open ridicule. Prices have gone terribly high and famine prevails throughout. Most of the bankers and merchants have become bankrupt and the country depopulated. What population remains has no food to eat ; the plight of Bombay is ex-

tremely grave and the authorities there are begging for such terms as the Marathas would impose on them".[15]

This failure of Goddard's venture discouraged the Britishers beyond measure. He was their ablest general, well-equipped with ammunition and supplies and an efficient artillery. His campaigns of three years cost a crore and a quarter of rupees to the Company's treasury.

6. **Mahadji's stand in Malwa.**—When Goddard first marched across Central India in 1778, he had reported to Hastings that unless the Maratha strength in Malwa was severely crippled, the war in Western India would not come to an end. Upon this suggestion Hastings despatched Popham with a force of about 2500 men equipped with artillery. The Rana of Gohad who had long been subjugated by the Marathas was now won over by Hastings to his side. He had formerly possessed the two strategic forts of Gwalior and Gohad which formed the basis of Mahadji's power in Malwa and Bundelkhand. When Mahadji formed his camp at Ujjain, Hastings sent Cap. Popham to the Rana's help and the two made a sudden dash upon Gwalior and on 4 August 1780 captured that historic fort before Mahadji could make any move to save it. The fort was deemed impregnable but there was one Sarupchand Gupta in Mahadji's service who treacherously disclosed to Goddard a secret passage which led into the fort and the English made an easy entry. Mahadji's trusted general Ambuji Ingle defended the place bravely; but the Killedar Raghunath Ramchandra was killed, many members of his family committed suicide to save their honour and Ambuji was compelled to surrender the fort, receiving in return, a safe conduct for himself and his family. Several chiefs who were discontented with Maratha rule, went over to the English. The enemy then marched southward to Antri and Sipri with the object of falling upon Mahadji himself. Hastings immediately despatched Col. Camac to the support of Popham. He

15. I. Sangraha. Ait. Tip. 3.18 and 28; Patre Yadi 327; Khare 2620, 2623; Nos. 2625-2634 give detailed lists of Maratha losses, proving that the Maratha Government attended to such details. Dowell, *Hastings' Letters*, p. 142.

crossed the Jamuna at Kalpi and arrived straight at Sironj in February 1781, threatening Bhilsa, then possessed by the Nawab of Bhopal, who, though a feudatory of the Marathas was on the point of deserting to the British. Mahadji despatched Ambuji Ingle and Khanderao Hari to oppose the advancing English and himself remained near Bhilsa to face Camac. In a short time he so harassed the small force of Camac that the latter fell back on Mahadpur and having replenished his supplies attacked Mahadji by surprise on 24th March and inflicted a severe defeat on him, making for a time Mahadji's position precarious, as further reinforcements reached Camac under Col. Muir on 4th April. Maratha rule in Central India appeared to be on the point of extinction.

Thus during the summer of 1781, while the Poona forces were beating Goddard back in the region between Panvel and Kalyan, Mahadji was fighting stubbornly in Malwa. For the present he eagerly bided his time till the advent of the monsoon when hostilities would be necessarily suspended. At his urgent request Ahalyabai sent him some succours from Indore, and a contingent also arrived from Poona under Balavantrao Dhondadev. Thus Mahadji improved his position and wrote to Nana on no account to approach Goddard for terms of peace. He now started a bold offensive, exerting himself night and day, without the usual comforts of food and rest. On 1st July he inflicted a severe defeat on Col. Muir near Sipri and established his camp on what is known as the Budha-pahad in the vicinity of Jhansi. Colonel Muir encamped at Sipri with less than forty miles distance between the two.

Warren Hastings had grown extremely nervous about the British situation and wished ardently to close the Maratha war and concentrate his energies upon Haidar Ali. Hastings had to bear severe opposition in his Council, and when the news of Colonel Camac's defeat near Sironj reached him, he moved in several directions, all at the same time, for effecting a settlement with the Marathas. He approached the Bhosle of Nagpur for that purpose, instructed Goddard to feel the inclinations of the Poona ministry, and asked Colonel Muir of Bundelkhand to fathom Mahadji's views. These simu taneous moves reacted on the whole situation with unhappy results for the British policy. The Government of Poona was bound in

a solemn engagement of the Confederacy with Haidar Ali, not to treat separately on any account, but to act jointly in every step that was to be taken. This was indeed the main obstacle to peace, otherwise the Marathas were quite as eager for it as Warren Hastings himself.

7. Peace of Salbye.—When in the summer of 1781 Hastings learnt of the severe disaster suffered by Goddard in his Konkan campaign and of the failure of Mudhoji to mediate and conclude a peace with Poona, he became extremely uneasy and hard-pressed for funds. He proceeded to Benares in August with the double object of squeezing some money out of Chet Sinh and opening direct negotiations with Mahadji, or possibly meeting him personally. He invited Divakar Pandit from Nagpur to Benares for that purpose, but he was disappointed to learn that Divakar had died just at this time.

Hastings' disappointment was further heightened by the rebellion of Chet Sinh, which exposed him to imminent personal danger. In his sore need he thought of Colonel Muir then camping in Bundelkhand in the vicinity of Mahadji Sindia, and asked him to try to find out if Mahadji could be induced to bring about an accommodation. On his part Mahadji was not less anxious to extricate himself without humiliation from the vexatious war and the wearisome campaigning which had continued for the last seven years. During August Col. Muir through clever mediators, possibly Farmer and Stewart, discovered Mahadji's readiness to treat, provided Salsette, Bassein and the other places near Bombay were restored to the Poona Government and the Rana of Gohad forced back to his allegiance. Muir at once agreed to this offer on promise that Mahadji should not ill-treat the Rana in revenge for his past conduct. The subject was referred to the Governor-General at Benares and a kind of temporary truce was effected on 13th October, 1781 between Muir and Mahadji, the terms of which were :—

1. That the two, Muir and Mahadji, should cease fighting ;
2. that within a week both the combatants should repair to their headquarters, Muir beyond the Jamuna and Mahadji to Ujjain ;

3. that Mahadji should mediate and arrange a peace first between the English and the Government to Poona, and then between the English and Haidar Ali ;
4. and that the territory conquered by the English in Bundelkhand should be restored to the Marathas along with the princes that had gone over to the English.

In addition Mahadji clearly conveyed to Muir and Hastings that he claimed an entirely free hand in managing the affairs of north India, particularly of the Emperor. Hastings immediately conceded all the points claimed by Mahadji and thus paved the way for a final treaty.

Hastings purposely made a long stay at Benares and Muir communicated to him and Goddard at Bombay the conslusion of a truce and its conditions, and the cessation of hostilities in that theatre of war. The news gladdened Hastings' heart. Muir wrote to Hastings on 20th October that he was going to cross the Jamuna the next day in compliance with the armistice. Hastings reported the news to Calcutta, Bombay and even to Europe ; and issued instructions to the various English commanders and the Presidencies to stop at once all operations against the Marathas. This put Nana Phadnis in an awkward position in relation to Haidar Ali, for thus violating the first clause of the Four-Power Confederacy. Nana never himself signed the treaty of Salbye until after the death of Haidar Ali which took place a year later on 7th December 1782. Nana, however, advised Mahadji not to disband his force and equipment, as war might be resumed at any moment. A large French naval squadron commanded by their renowned Admiral Suffren had started from Europe early in 1781 with a view to supporting Haidar Ali and destroying through him the English power on the Coromandel Coast. The delay in the arrival of Suffren and the sudden death of Haidar Ali frustrated the intended offensive of the French. How dangerous the situation in Madras then was can be understood from the letter of the Select Committee of Madras addressed to Hastings on 22nd March 1782, in which they said,—

"Peace with the Marathas is become absolutely necessary to us and unless it is very soon concluded, there is reason to

apprehend the most fatal consequences to the British interests on this coast."[16]

Another complication affecting the fortunes of this war arose from an unexpected quarter. When the British General Sir Eyre Coote and their Admiral Hughes, the head of the British navy in India, were doing their utmost to defend the British power in the southern Presidency, there arrived at Madras in June 1781 Lord Macartney the newly appointed Governor, accompanied by Sir John Macpherson, who was just then appointed member of the Governor-General's Council, both important officials who had first-hand information of the political situation in Europe and of the Anglo-French War. Immediately on arrival at Madras, they held a consultation with Coote and Hughes and came to the conclusion that Warren Hastings' wrong policy had subjected the British Power in India to untold losses in money, men and prestige. They boldly set aside the usual constitutional procedure, took the matter in their own hands and directly wrote a letter to the Peshwa at Poona offering to close the war. The letter is dated Madras 11th September 1781 and runs to this effect :—

"Orders have just arrived not only from the Company but from the King of Great Britain, which were issued when the news arrived in England of conquests by General Goddard, and when Vakils had brought letters to the king and the Company from Raghunathrao with great offers. These orders are that their servants in India should not aim at new conquests, but live in peace and amity with all the Powers in India. There has been such great indignation at the infraction of this wise policy, that we four are charged expressly with the said orders and write to you this joint letter with a view to carry them into execution. The orders are to settle immediately a peace and a treaty of friendship with your Government, which will be ratified by the King and the Parliament, and which cannot be altered by any servants of the Company in India. We have sent to General Goddard and to the Presidency of Bombay the Company's commands to cease all hostilities against you and have no doubt that you will direct hostilities to cease against us. Please write without delay to the

16. *Warren Hastings' Letters*, Dodwell, page 117.

Governor-General and Council the particular stipulations you desire of an everlasting friendship. We hereby pledge to you in the most solemn manner our respective honours not only on our own parts but upon the part of the Governor-General in Council, the Company and the King also, that every just satisfaction shall be given to you in a sincere and irrevocable treaty. After these assurances you have before you the alternative of peace or war. If you join with us in permanent peace, you will enjoy all the advantages which our friendship will be willing and able to afford you. May God grant you to make a just and proper choice."[17]

Thus there were now some three or four agencies in the field working to arrange peace, (1) Hastings through Captain Muir and Mahadji, (2) Mudhoji Bhosle acting on the stale instructions of Hastings, (3) Captain Watherstone, the trusted agent of General Goddard sent by him to Poona and directly approaching Nana Phadnis, and (4) the above one from Madras in which the Nawab Muhammad Ali of Arcot was to act as a mediator. Nana well understood the meaning of all these moves, and tried to reap the highest advantage out of the confused situation of the British, now so impatient to avoid further ruin. He asked Mahadji to hold out and protract the negotiations on the ground that no separate peace could be made without reference to Haidar Ali. But this ruler of Mysore was in no mood to yield, as he was momentarily expecting the arrival of the French naval squadron so as to eradicate finally all the British Power from the peninsula. He was already in possession of an enormous territory which he was loath to relinquish. All this was clear to Hastings at Benares, and he lost not a moment in concluding a final treaty through Mahadji. For this purpose he prolonged his visit to Benares and sent his personal agent David Anderson with full powers to settle the terms without delay on the basis of Muir's truce. Hastings himself was anxious to meet Mahadji Sindia personally and, with his consummate diplomacy and inducements, detach that powerful chief from the Confederacy, so as to isolate Haidar Ali. Hastings asked Ander-

17. Forrest's Maratha Series, p. 461. Ait. Tip. 3.43 and 4.16. Itihas-Sangraha चिनापट्टनचीं राजकारणें.

son to arrange a meeting for him with Mahadji somewhere near Farrukhabad in the Doab, as it would have been derogatory for him personally to proceed to Mahadji's camp in Bundelkhand. Mahadji on his part gauging the force of these approaches, carefully avoided a personal meeting, acting on the advice of Nana which had arrived. On December 14, 1781 the fugitive Chet Sinh came to Mahadji and a week later Sindia received an intimation of Anderson's deputation as the personal agent of the Governor-General. Before Anderson could call on Mahadji, the British agent demanded Chet Sinh's dismissal, as he was an enemy of the British Government. Mahadji coolly replied that Chet Sinh could not be sent away and if on this account alone Anderson would not call on Mahadji, he was welcome to go back and drop the visit. This gentle reprimand had the desired effect; Anderson had no choice and paid his first visit to Mahadji on 23rd December, 1781.

Hastings was not sure that Anderson would succeed in his mission. He was afraid of Nana and Haidar Ali frustrating the project of peace; and as a second string to his bow he had already called up to Benares the two brothers Veniram and Vishvambhar, the Nagpur agents ever ready to execute Hastings' behests. He paid them a cash present of one lac and a jagir in perpetuity of an annual yield of 25 thousand rupees.[18] He then dispatched them to Nagpur with a request to Mudhoji to arrange a treaty with the Poona Government. To watch the workings of the two envoys Hastings sent his own personal agent named Chapman to Nagpur. This step only served to create further complication, vexation and delay on account of the several agencies thus working simultaneously in different channels between Benares, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Poona. Anderson was a capable diplomat and managed his mission with admirable skill and caution during the early months of 1782. Nana tried to have the whole subject of negotiation transferred to Poona, where Watherstone had already proposed certain terms. He asked Mahadji to visit Poona with Anderson to attend the celebration of the young

18. This Jagir is supposed to be still enjoyed by the family. The best and worst sides of Hastings' character are thus fully in evidence in this one long episode of the treaty of Salbye.

Peshwa's nuptials, which Nana now proposed to hold with a view to bringing together not only all the prominent Maratha chiefs but even Nizam Ali and Haidar Ali on special invitation, and then conclude the treaty in a full assemblage. Haidar Ali was constantly warning Nana against a separate treaty. Nana's plan, therefore, was to impress upon the Indian potentates the power and prestige of the Maratha State, now gathering strength under the aegis of the rising Peshwa.

While this plan of Nana had much force in it, there was another equally powerful consideration put forth by Mahadji. So long as peace was not finally concluded, the large forces collected for the war could not be disbanded. The British were strongly entrenched near Allahabad and there were not a few chiefs in the north ready to take advantage of any weakening of the Maratha position. The negotiations required frequent references to Warren Hastings who had planted himself near Benares and who after all had the final word on war or peace. In these circumstances Mahadji refused to move to Poona, urging that he was likely to secure better terms in the final settlement brought about in the military atmosphere of the north, than amidst the peaceful rejoicings of a marriage ceremony at Poona, which Haidar Ali could not attend as his absence from the Karnatak would endanger his position. This is how ultimately the subject of the negotiation remained in Mahadji's hand.

Although the preliminaries of a truce could be quickly adjusted, the settlement of the actual terms proved a long and vexatious process, not only because the settlement directly or indirectly affected most of the Indian Powers owing to the widespread nature of the war, but also because constant reference between Mahadji and Nana became necessary. The peace feelers started by Macartney and Goddard were quickly withdrawn, and the business came to be handled solely by David Anderson and Mahadji in a direct contact with Hastings.

Nana Phadnis' main contention which he communicated to Mahadji was to get back all the conquests made by the British during the seven years of war, particularly, Thana, Salsette, Bassein and parts of Gujarat, that is, Broach and Ahmedabad, as the war was not provoked by the Marathas.

The terms that Hastings first offered through Anderson were :—

1. That Mahadji should undertake to bring about an offensive and defensive alliance between the English and the Marathas on the one hand and Haidar Ali on the other.
2. That the English should retain their conquests in Bombay and Gujarat.
3. That Raghunathrao should be given adequate provision.
4. That this treaty should not affect the engagements which the English had made with Nagpur, Baroda and Haidarabad ; that Mahadji was free to deal with the Rana of Gohad as he liked.
5. That the Marathas should entertain no other European nationals in their service.

These and other points with proposals and counter-proposals came to be under a severe fire of discussion for full four months. The restoration of the conquered territories proved a very tough subject for adjustment. Mahadji insisted upon all the places being returned. A genuine goodwill, respect and friendship soon came to be developed between Anderson and Mahadji and much vexation was removed. While heated discussions and conferences were the order of the day throughout the period, there was at the same time no lack of the civil exchange of dinners and entertainments between these two chiefs. Hastings after giving full liberty to Anderson to win over Mahadji by all possible means, returned to Fort William in February, 1782.

When Mahadji urged that no separate treaty could be settled without the consent of Haidar Ali, Anderson said, "Tell me then what terms Haidar wants." "No," said Mahadji, "I have not yet consulted him. I will write and ask." "This will take months and possibly years. How can we wait so long ?" They then discussed the terms sent by Hastings. On 14 February 1782 Mahadji writes to Nana, "Anderson has come here with Hastings' terms. Please tell me if I should send him to Poona and whether it is possible to arrange a treaty without reference to Haidar Ali. If I don't come to a settle-

choose his residence and Rs. 25,000 a month should be paid by the Peshwa for his maintenance.

6. Fatesinh Gaikwad should remain in possession of the territory he had before and should serve the Maratha State as heretofore.
7. The Peshwa engages that Haidar Ali Khan shall be made to relinquish the territory he had recently seized.
8. This article defines the allies of the Marathas and the English. Both the parties engage not to molest each other's allies.
9. The English to enjoy the privileges of trade as before.
10. The Peshwa engages not to allow support to any other European nations.
11. That the East India Company and the Peshwa Madhavrao Pandit Pradhan request Maharaja Madhavrao Sindia to be the mutual guarantee for the proper observance of the conditions of this treaty. If either of them violate the conditions, he will endeavour to crush the aggressor.
12. Such territories as were granted to the English by Raghunathrao shall be restored, agreeable to the terms of Colonel Upton's treaty.

The treaty was ratified by Hastings at Fort William on 6 June following, but signed by Nana Phadnis much later on 24th February 1783 when Haidar Ali was dead.

This treaty forms an important landmark in the political history of India and it was being shaped for over a year. The British tried their hand against the Marathas and suffered a setback from which they found it difficult to recover their position. Nana long continued to point out to Mahadji the flaws and shortcomings of that clumsy agreement and urged that Upton's treaty and the contract of Wadgaon should be fully carried out. But Mahadji had no other alternative and did, it must be admitted, honestly try to secure the best bargain possible. The fort of Thana and the fertile island of Salsette were finally lost to the perpetual regret of the Maratha nation. Mahadji certainly raised his own importance by accepting the guarantee for the proper observance of the terms.

Hastings honoured him by offering his own friendship and allowing him a free hand in the management of the imperial affairs, for which Hastings came to be censured by British diplomacy, and which Mahadji did not fail to make the basis of his future rise. On 17 December 1783 Hastings writes, "Nizam Ali Khan has from the beginning indignantly protested against any peace not made by himself. Mudhoji complainingly makes the same objection. I have written long letters to Mudhoji appealing to his own advice to make Sindia our friend. He writes very respectfully of Mahadji Sindia but complains bitterly that he himself is not included." In fact there was a scramble for the authorship of the peace among the Indian potentates, and Hastings chose the ablest instrument for his object.

Nana had urged upon Mahadji's attention a specific provision in the treaty granting to the Marathas the payment of the Chauth of Bengal. But the Bhosles of Nagpur, the real sufferers had slept over the claim for more than a quarter of a century and displayed an unedifying want of nerve, so that Mahadji could not now revive a lost cause and a claim long dead. He shrewdly adopted a practical conciliatory tone towards Hastings, reserving his demand for Chauth for another occasion. The centre of Indian politics which had shifted from Delhi to Poona during the days of the early Peshwas, was now going back once more to the north, where the pressure of events was soon to decide, which was to be the supreme Power in India.

Salbye clearly indicated this great political change : and one cannot help regretting that Nana Phadnis and Mahadji Sindia, the diplomat and the soldier representing the Maratha Government, could not be on the spot in negotiating this important instrument. It is a thousand pities that Nana did not even once move to the north after his first short experience of the Panipat days. But although they did not meet personally, they conducted full and frank discussions through personal correspondence. Facts disprove the judgment passed by Keene, when he remarks "this treaty made an epoch in history. It was by means of that treaty that without annexing a square mile of territory, the British power became virtually paramount in the greater part of the Indian penin-

sula, every province of which with the one exception of Mysore acknowledged that power as the greatest universal peace-maker." The role of a peace-maker now passed for a time to Mahadji Sindia.

8. Verdict on Salbye.—How Mahadji Sindia saved the Maratha situation is well illustrated by David Anderson himself. He writes, " The Sindia gave me explanations which were fully satisfactory and I had no doubts whatever remaining in my mind. I assured him that I could with confidence declare that the favourable sentiments which he entertained towards our Government, could not exceed those which our Government entertained towards him. I assured Sindia of the thorough conviction which I had of his friendship and of the reliance which the English placed on it. In the situation in which I was placed, it was particularly incumbent on me to guard against the effects of misrepresentations, and Sindia must be sensible that there were not wanting many who were ready to lay hold of everything on which they could place an unfavourable construction."[20] This diary or report of Anderson clears many a doubtful point in connection with this treaty.

Hastings himself placed the greatest confidence in the integrity of Mahadji Sindia and valued friendship with him as of the highest importance to British interests. He laid it down as an axiom that on no account should the British contract enmity with Mahadji Sindia, and this principle was scrupulously observed by Hastings' successors Cornwallis and Shore. Mahadji's friendship and intimacy with the English doubtless gave rise to foolish suspicions of his being disloyal to the Maratha national interests. But no sensible critic can accuse Mahadji of such meanness. He was the main prop of the Maratha State.[21]

Universal praise is justly bestowed upon the wonderful genius and capacity of Nana Phadnis in saving the Maratha State from the great danger of the British Power now joined by such a pre-eminent figure of the Peshwa's family as Raghu-

20. Forrest, *Imp. Records* III, page 978.

21. See Hastings' letter to Wheeler, 22 April 1784, *Forrest Imp. Rec.* Volume III, p. 1087.

nathrao. Nana also helped Mahadji indirectly by exacting co-operation from Tukoji Holkar, a brave but rude Maratha soldier, without any political judgment. Nana sagaciously controlled the evil ambitions of Moroba and Sakharam Bapu. He utilised Raghuji Angre's services to the best purpose and won over Raghuji Bhosle and the Gaikwads to a right sense of duty. He won the admiration of such righteous characters as Ahalyabai and Ram Shastri and gained many devoted and able supporters for the State such as Haripant Phadke, Parashuram Bhau, Krishnarao Kale, Mahadaji Ballal Guruji, Visaji Krishna, and Ramchandra Ganesh. Nana's organization of the formidable all-India Confederacy to humble the English was a stroke of policy, which will ever remain an unforgettable achievement to his credit.

One of the offshoots of this protracted war was the singular exploit achieved by the Maratha navy under Anandrao Dhulap, which very nearly upset the peace so laboriously built up at Salbye. Forrest thus describes this incident on the west coast : "A short time after the conclusion of the treaty of Salbye an event took place which for a time threatened to disturb peace. The *Ranger* a small brig of 12 guns under the command of Lt. Pruen was on the way to Calicut, when the Maratha fleet suddenly attacked it on April 8, 1783 on the coast near Ratnagiri. The fight was long and fierce. The shot fell thick. The assailants boarded by hundreds. The deck was strewn with the English dead and dying."[22] Five officers and 28 men were lost on the British side. The Marathas lost 8 distinguished men and about 75 wounded. Dhulap captured five English vessels and took them to his port of Vijaydurg. He was indeed honestly carrying out his duty in prosecuting the war vigorously, being ignorant of any peace having been already concluded. Naturally the incident angered the British severely. They at once protested to Mahadji who in his turn impeached Nana and asked him to make the losses good. Nana took prompt action, restored the ships and the goods that had been seized and thus closed the incident. The incident doubtless imparted a wholesome lesson to the Bombay Presidency, since they realised

22. Introduction, Forrest's Maratha Series.

the greatest British proconsuls, Warren Hastings, assisted by such able men as Hornby, Coote, Goddard, Hughes, and Mostyn.[23]

One very far-reaching result of this war was the change of the traditional warfare known as Guerilla tactics. They had served one age well, but were now found to be out of date. The great Maratha leader Mahadji pinned his faith to the adoption of the western methods, although his colleagues Nana, Haripant and others did not immediately put this lesson into practice for preserving the independence of the Maratha State.

9. **End of Raghunathrao.**—The remainder of Raghunathrao's life-story must be completed here. His flight from Mahadji's custody, in May 1779, clever and ingenious in itself, availed him nothing. He was sufficiently punished for his sins by the distress, agony and humiliation which he had to endure during several years of exile and want. Even after the treaty of Salbye, he continued to live at Surat and be maintained by the English for over a year, showering curses on his benefactors for not carrying out his vain and impracticable wishes. He forgot to thank them for having waged a costly war on his account, at the risk of losing all their power and prestige. The English ultimately got tired of him and stopped his allowance. Nana and Mahadji for a time continued to demand his surrender, but soon ceased even to care on that account, as he now possessed no power for mischief. When General Goddard failed in his advance against Poona in the summer of 1781 and soon after Hastings opened negotiations with Mahadji through Colonel Muir in Bundelkhand, Raghunathrao undertook the mad project of sending a deputation to England direct, in order to approach the King over the heads of the Indian authorities, requesting strong military help to retrieve his fallen fortunes. He selected for this purpose his own trusted Brahman agent named

23. The Marathas were generous enough to commemorate the Englishman Capt. Stewart's valour by conferring the title of *Phakda* on him in perpetuity, which can be likened to the Victoria Cross of the present day. Ramchandra Ganesh met a similar sad fate at Vajreshvari, which deserves to be equally commemorated. Notice also Warren Hastings' boast, Imp. Selections, Vol. I, Intr. xci.

Hanumantrao (of Rajapur on the west coast) and appointed one Parsi assistant named Maniar under him. They left Bombay by a ship on 11 September 1781 and returned a year later without achieving anything, as was to be expected. This happens to be the first journey of Hindus overseas during modern times, and if an inquisitive reader would love to learn how they fared in England, the following letter of Edmund Burke would amply satisfy his curiosity.

RIGHT. HON. EDMUND BURKE, TO RAGONAUT ROW.
(Dated the end of 1782).

"I am extremely thankful for the honour you have done me by your letter, and I hope you will have the condescension to excuse me, if I am not well enough acquainted with your customs, to employ the address that is usual in writing to persons of your rank and character. But I beg you will be assured that I wish to employ the style best fitted to express the highest possible respect to the illustrious and sacred *caste* to which you belong, to the high office you lately held, to your personal merit, and to your great sufferings.

"You set too much value on the few and slight services, that I have been able to perform for your agent Hummond Row, and his assistant Manear Parsi. It was nothing more than the duty which one man owed to another. Hummond Row has done me the honour of being my guest for a very short time; and I endeavoured to make my place as convenient as any of us are able to do, for a person so strictly observant as he was of all the rules and ceremonies of the religion to which he was born, and to which he strictly conformed, often at the manifest hazard of his life. To this I have been witness. We have, however, sir, derived one benefit from the instructions he has given us, relative to your ways of living; that whenever it shall be thought necessary to send Gentoos of a high *caste* to transact any business in this kingdom, on giving proper notice and on obtaining proper licence from authority, for their coming, we shall be enabled to provide for them in such a manner, as greatly to lessen the difficulties in our intercourse, and to render as tolerable as possible to them a country where there are scarcely six good months in the

nathrao with all his family surrendered to Haripant Phadke at Dhodap near Chandwad about the middle of July 1783. In the letters he now wrote he ceased to style himself Pant Pradhan or the Peshwa, and acknowledged young Madhavrao in that position. He hereafter adopted an extremely soft and humble tone in his conversation and correspondence and soon evinced amity and respect towards Nana Phadnis also, to whom we find the following letter addressed by him on 19 July.

"I have now removed from my mind all the hatred and ill will which I had so long entertained towards you. You should also give up all inimical sentiments towards us. We shall rejoice to see you prosper and highly appreciate the way in which you have tried to preserve the Maratha State." A specific solemn contract between them had already been concluded under mutual oaths, in which Raghunathrao abjured all intention of harming the Maratha State. As soon as he arrived at Kopargaum, he became anxious to pay his respects to his sister-in-law Gopikabai, a lady revered by the nation and now leading a pious life in solitude near Nasik. But she refused to receive the visit of a sinner, who, she believed, had murdered her son, unless he performed the prescribed rite of penance in the river Godavari in the presence of a priestly assemblage of her choice. After some hesitation Raghunathrao consented to undergo the necessary ceremony, which he performed on 4th August declaring loudly to all the audience that he did instigate the confinement of his nephew, although he never meant to slay him. Immediately after the ceremony he visited the lady at Gangapur and craved her blessings for his salvation. Raghunathrao returned to Kacheshvar in the vicinity of Kopargaum and there expired on 11 December 1783 at the age of 48. He had already lost all his strength and vitality. He erected large buildings at Kopargaum some of which are still to be seen. Here his wife Anandibai and her son Bajirao took up their residence. She then gave birth to a posthumous son on 30th March 1784. The two brothers were brought up at Kopargaum in the company of their mother, but under a strict guard and close supervision by Nana Phadnis. The elder Bajirao was destined to be the last Peshwa. Anandibai died in 1794 (12 March) having suffer-

ed practical imprisonment throughout her remaining life which proved full of misery and indignity.[25]

How Raghunathrao's followers were dealt with has been already mentioned. Chinto Vithal, the able and devoted Secretary of Raghunathrao was transferred from place to place in rigorous imprisonment. He died in June 1783 and his wife and daughter put an end to their lives by poison. Sadashiv Ramchandra son of the famous Ramchandra Baba died a similar death in imprisonment along with his wife and other members of his family. Bajirao Govind Barve was for a time sheltered by Ahalyabai and died in misery. Manaji Phakde alone managed by means of personal valour and intrepidity to live a long and comfortable life till his death in April 1800.

10. **Haidar Ali and others.**—In attending to the main thread of the war, several other affairs handled by the Poona Government had to be kept over. As there happened to be two factions in the central administration, the contagion naturally spread to all the Maratha leaders in a greater or less degree. The house of the Pratinidhis for instance had been already divided against itself, with Bhavanrao and Bhagawantrao in open fight, the former siding with the ministers of Purandar, the latter with Raghunathrao. When Raghunathrao was expelled from Poona, Bhavanrao joined Haripant Phadke in pursuit, but he returned to his headquarters about the end of 1774 and began to oppose his cousin Bhagavantrao, a valiant soldier, and the two by their raids and skirmishes devastated the district of Satara during the year 1775. This contest came to an end with the death of Bhagavantrao on 5 April 1776. Bhavanrao also died the next year on 30 August 1777, when a son was born to him named Parashuram, who afterwards became the representative of the family and who had a chequered career during the time of the last Peshwa.

The Chhatrapati of Kolhapur proved a constant thorn in the sides of the Poona Government. In theory this raja had an equal status with his cousin of Satara, but while the latter was a closely guarded prisoner of the Peshwas, the former remained completely independent and lost no opportunity

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25. Details of her subsequent life can be studied in S. P. D. Vol. 4.

of profiting by the troubles of the Peshwas. Raja Shivaji was adopted in 1762 and the dowager Rani Jijabai conducted the administration during his minority. The Rani died on 17 February 1773 and her brother Yesaji Shinde a clever and intrepid administrator, conducted the affairs of the Kolhapur State with the main object of weakening the Poona Government by taking full advantage of the civil war that had begun in the Peshwa's house. The small state of Ichalkaranji represented by the Rani Anubai Ghorpade, sister of the first Bajirao, became an easy prey to Yesaji's depredations. The Poona Government could not send any succours to Ichalkaranji and the two neighbours' bitter antagonism has continued to our own times. Yesaji Shinde made common cause with Haidar Ali and so threatened the Peshwa's possessions in the south that the Poona Government had to take stern measures. This became possible only when Upton's treaty suspended the Anglo-Maratha war and the Poona armies returned to their base in 1776. Mahadji Sindia after putting down the pretended Bhau, marched against Kolhapur in 1771 with a powerful artillery. Early in 1778 he commenced an offensive siege of Kolhapur, inflicted severe defeats upon the armies of that State and brought Yesaji Shinde to submission. Mahadji concluded a treaty with Kolhapur on 23rd April 1778, and returned to Poona in time to put down the mischief Moroba Phadnis had begun to create there in the meantime.

But what proved most ruinous to the interests of the Maratha State was the offensive assumed by Haidar Ali of Mysore by seizing the Maratha possessions of the Karnatak, in defiant scorn of the English and other Powers in that region. When Raghunathrao moved towards the Karnatak at the end of 1773, he gave out as his ostensible object the curbing of the aggression of Haidar Ali, but as Raghunathrao's position became precarious on account of the Barbhai's preparations to overcome him, he at once made a secret pact with Haidar Ali known as the treaty of Kalyandurg in February 1774, by which Haidar Ali acknowledged Raghunathrao as the rightful Peshwa and continued to support him during the next six years by rendering him such services as he could afford without injuring his own interests or incurring any special cost. He sheltered the absconders of Narayanrao's murder, for whom

Raghunathrao requested his protection, viz., Tulaji Pawar, Bajirao Barve, Manaji Phakde and others. Haidar Ali however, did not take long to discover that Raghunathrao's was a lost cause, and that he had not the capacity to maintain his position at Poona. But without caring to identify himself with either party, Haidar Ali wrought tremendous havoc upon the Maratha State, not only recapturing most of the territory that the Peshwa Madhavrao had subjugated, but by destroying the power of the Patwardhans and annihilating Murarrao Ghorpade, who was maintaining his power at Gutti through long and severe trials. The Nawab of Savanur and Murar Rao were the two vassals of the Peshwas, who suffered most at Haidar's hands as they could get no support from Poona.

During April 1774 Haidar Ali reduced Shira compelling its brave Maratha defender Bapuji Shinde to submit. He then reduced Balapur and Mudgiri. During 1775 when the Poona armies were engaged in Gujarat against Raghunathrao, Haidar Ali made common cause with the Desai of Kittur and the raja of Kolhapur. Konherrao Patwardhan for a time exercised a strong check on this move. Early in 1776 Haidar Ali turned his attention to Murarrao who had alone so long preserved whatever Maratha power had remained in that region. Haidar Ali fell upon Gutti with an enormous force and called upon the veteran chief to surrender. He boldly refused the call and held out valiantly for six long months defending his capital in momentary expectation of succours from Poona. The water supply of Gutti was exhausted, and Murarrao was compelled to surrender himself to the victor with his whole family on 15th March 1776. Murarrao's defence of Gutti forms a thrilling chapter in Maratha history with many a romantic incident doing credit to Maratha valour. Haidar Ali pressed Murarrao to disclose his stores of valuables and as he declined to do so, inflicted upon him unspeakable torture. He was cruelly consigned to the close prison of Kabaldurg where, after being exposed to most inhuman treatment, unbecoming, as public opinion declared, even for an implacable, enemy like Haidar Ali, Murarrao ended his days in prison, how and when has not been recorded. Later on the Peshwas' Government made provision for the wife and other surviving members of

his family by way of atonement. His brother's descendants rule at present at Sandur near Bellary.

The tragic end of Murarrao roused the whole nation to a pitch of anger and retribution. Nana Phadnis immediately set himself to retrieving the Maratha position in the Karnatak in collaboration with Nizam Ali, who had equally suffered from Haidar Ali's aggression. But by the time any effective action could be taken, Haidar Ali advanced far to the north, and captured Hubli and Dharwad, thus enormously strengthening his position. Haripant Phadke along with Pandurangrao and Konherrao Patwardhan moved against Haidar Ali towards the end of 1776. On 8 January 1777 a stiff and sanguinary action took place at Sanshi (near Dharwad) in which the Patwardhans were defeated with heavy loss. Konherrao was killed and three of his cousins were captured and wounded, along with some of the Ghorpades. Haripant was not present at this battle having been engaged in another field at the time. R'rao's agent Bajirao Barve then present in Haidar's camp did his best to relieve the miseries of these Maratha prisoners. Pandurangrao died of his wounds while in the enemy's confinement, and the others came to be released later.

During the years 1777 and 1778 Haripant and Parashuram Bhau exerted themselves in regaining the lost position in these regions, but were compelled to leave the task incomplete, having been urgently recalled by Nana first to save the Government from Moroba Phadnis' rebellion and then to meet the English advance upon Poona after the rains of that year. Manaji Phakde had during the rains of 1777 accompanied Haripant as an employee of the Poona Government, but being at heart a partizan of R'rao, played a nasty trick. He made secret plans with Haidar Ali treacherously to bring about the destruction of both Haripant and Parashuram Bhau. Fortunately his machinations were discovered in time, Manaji was attacked and defeated and would have been put to death, had he not managed to save his life by a precipitate flight. By the middle of 1778 the Maratha forces in the Karnatak returned to Poona. Mahadji Sindia had already reduced the Raja of Kolhapur, and Haidar Ali soon after joined the anti-British Confederacy organised by Nana Phadnis. The treaty of Salbye

and the death of Haidar Ali in 1782 gave quite a different turn to the future relations between Mysore and the Marathas.

11. **How grows the young Peshwa ?**—This Peshwa's coming into the world was heralded by the Anglo-Maratha war. Possibly no child was ever born under the shadow of such freaks of fortune. His advent on 18th April 1774 was most joyfully received in Poona and outside ; people supposed that the late Peshwa Madhavrao had taken a rebirth in him, and hence the child received the same name. Not the slightest precaution was omitted by Nana Phadnis and other guardians to foster his health and prevent harm to him. His mother died of a short fever at Purandar when the boy was three years old. His first five years were spent in that fort in the midst of its heavy rainfall and cold weather. Purshottam Daji Patwardhan sat in constant guard at the entrance of the room in which the Peshwa lived. On all public occasions such as Darbars and visits Purushottam Daji occupied the principal seat with the child in his arms, proudly exhibiting him as the future master of the Maratha State. Indeed when the British forces at Wadgaon came to be severely routed in January 1779, every soul cried out with justifiable glee that the success was due to the good fortune of the boy Peshwa.

Nana Phadnis had the Peshwa's marriage ceremony performed in Poona on 10 February 1783 with a girl from the Thatte family named Ramabai. The Peshwa at the time was a little under 9 years of age. The occasion was marked by a profuse display of pomp. The Chhatrapati of Satara and most of the prominent chiefs attended the ceremony at Poona, except only Mahadji Sindia, whose presence was sorely needed in Malwa. Nizam Ali's eldest son came from Haidarabad for that occasion. Nana Phadnis' powers of organization and punctilious attention to minute details to make the occasion in every way successful, were amply in evidence and profusely acknowledged by all the guests and members of the State. The whole nation felt immensely heartened by such a consummation and were able to undertake greater tasks in the future with confidence.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER V

1751, March 8	De Boigne born.
1778	De Boigne arrives at Madras, enters English service.
„ April 16	Prithwisinh of Jaipur dies : Pratapsinh succeeds.
1782	De Boigne goes to Calcutta.
„ April 6	Mirza Najaf Khan dies.
1783, March	James Brown arrives at Delhi as British Resident.
„ Summer	Maratha envoy Hingne visits Mahadji at Gwalior.
„ June 30	Mahadji visits Jawan Bakht near Agra.
„ July 27	Mahadji captures Gwalior.
„ Sept. 23	Mirza Shafi murdered.
„ December	David Anderson retires from Sindia's residency : his brother James succeeds.
1784, Feb. 26	Gohad surrenders to Sindia.
„ early	De Boigne enters Sindia's service.
„ Mar. 27 to Aug. 27	Warren Hastings' visit to Lucknow.
„ April	Mirza Jawan Bakht flees from Delhi and joins Hastings at Lucknow.
„ August	Jawan Bakht resides finally at Benares on a British pension.
„ Oct. 5	Mahadji leaves Gwalior for Agra.
„ Nov. 3	Hamdani murders Afrasiab Khan.
„ Nov. 14	Emperor receives Sindia in audience ; confers Vakil-i-Mutlak office on him.
1785, Feb. 5	Warren Hastings leaves India.
„ Feb. 21	Zabeta Khan dies.
„ „	Brown recalled from Delhi.

,, March 26	Sindia takes possession of Agra fort.
,, June	Sindia establishes permanent camp at Mathura.
,, June	Ladoji Deshmukh appointed Sindia's manager for the Emperor.
,, June	Sindia forms friendship with Pratapsinh of Machedi.
,, August	Sindia besieges Raghogad.
,, Nov. 20	Sindia captures Ramgad alias Aligad.
1786	Rana of Raghogad captures and conciliated by Sindia.
,,	Gosavi brothers intrigue against Sindia.
,, early	Sindia and Emperor march into Jaipur for exacting tribute : the Raja refuses payment. Rayaji Patil stationed to exact payment.
1787, March 10	Emperor's accession duly celebrated at Dig : he and Sindia start against Jaipur.
,, Summer	Taimur Shah arrives at Peshawar preparing to invade India.
,, June	Hamdani deserts to Jaipur : Raja Pratapsinh opens offensive against Sindia.
,, July 28-29	Two actions fought near Lalsot, Hamdani killed.
,, July 30	Mughalia troops desert Sindia and join the Rajput coalition.
,, August	Mahadji retreats to Alwar.
,, Aug. 24	Ladoji Deshmukh abandons Delhi to save himself.
,, Aug. 27	Sindia loses Ajmere.
,, Sept. 5	Ghulam Qadir wrests powers from the Emperor.
,, Sept. 5	Cornwallis arrives at Lucknow.
,, Sept. 16	Ismail Beg captures Agra city. Holkar and Ali Bahadur start for north.
,, Nov. 14	Ambuji Ingle fails to relieve the Emperor and retires.
,, Dec. 8	Jawan Bakht arrives at Delhi.

1788, Feb.	Jawan Bakht retires to Benares.
,, ,,	Sindia retires to the Chambal.
,, Feb. 17	Ghulam Qadir captures Aligad.
,, April 27	Ismail Beg and Ghulam Qadir defeated at Chaksan.
,, June 1	Jawan Bakht dies at Benares.
,, June 18	Ismail Beg crushed near Agra ; Sindia's power re-asserted.
,, July 4	Sindia occupies Mathura, Ranjitsinh Jat joins him.
,, July 4	Ismail Beg joins Ghulam Qadir at Shahdara and forms a pact with him.
,, July 8	Ravloji Patil and Bhagirath Sindia go to the Emperor's help ; their offer rejected.
,, July 24	Emperor grants Ghulam Qadir's demands.
,, July 30	Ghulam Qadir takes possession of Delhi and confines the Emperor for 68 days.
,, July 31	Emperor deposed, Bedar Bakht installed.
,, Aug. 10	Shah Alam blinded.
,, Aug. 23	Shah Nizam Uddin attacks G. Q., is routed.
,, Aug. 26	G. Q. meets the Emperor and demands Mir Bakhshi's post.
,, Sept. 5	G. Q. made Mir Bakhshi, begins reign of terror : starves inmates, digs up palaces and city houses.
,, Sept. 23	Mansur Ali Nazir severely beaten.
,, Sept. 28	Rana Khan and Jivba Bakhshi occupy Delhi
,, Oct. 2	Ismail Beg joins Rana Khan.
,, Oct. 10	Powder magazine in Delhi fort explodes. G. Q. leaves Delhi fort.
,, Oct. 11	Marathas enter the fort of Delhi.
,, Oct. 12	G. Q. pursued.
,, Oct. 16	Shah Alam restored to his throne.
,, Nov. 3	Rana Khan starts in pursuit of G. Q.
,, Nov. 4	Ali Bahadur arrives in Sindia's camp.
,, Nov. 6	Rana Khan arrives at Mirat.

1788, Nov. 17	Ali Bahadur joins Rana Khan at Mirat.
,, Dec. 17	G. Q. escapes from Mirat.
,, Dec. 18	G. Q. captured.
1789, Feb. 14	G. Q. brought to Mathura.
,, Dec. 31	Ali Bahadur makes a full report of G. Q.'s affair to Nana Phadnis.
,, March 4	G. Q. put to death. Bedar Bakht put to death. Farman prohibiting cowslaughter issued.
1789, April	Tukoji Holkar reaches Mathura.
,, Dec.	De Boigne retires.
1830	De Boigne dies at Chambery.

Mahadji Shinde

CHAPTER V

THE MARATHAS BACK IN DELHI

[1783—1788]

1 Two contemporary figures, Najaf Khan and Mahadji.
2 Benoit De Boigne.
3 English ambitions at Delhi.
4 Vakil-i-Mutlaki for Mahadji.
5 Mahadji's war upon the Rajputs, Lalsot.
6 Cautious recovery of Mahadji.
7 Ghulam Qadir in the Mughal Palace.
8 Ali Bahadur to the front.

1. Two contemporary figures, Najaf Khan and Mahadji.—The Anglo-Maratha war was a strong eye-opener to the Indian Powers. The conquest of India by Europe now became a practical certainty, unless the country's Powers bestirred themselves in time. Ever since the days of Clive a revolution was slowly coming on in the art of war in India. Most Indian Powers began to organize their armies on the western model and employ English, French and other European adventurers, who now flocked to India in a continuous stream. The Emperor's affairs were at this time being managed by an able soldier-diplomat named Mirza Najaf Khan, the last great Muslim genius anxious to support the tottering house of Babar. He had been brought up in contact with the British and he put to the best use of the Emperor the valuable experience he had gained. Says Sir Jadunath,[1] "Najaf Khan had faced British troops in the field and later fought side by side with them. He knew and appreciated the new warfare and quickly adapted himself to the change. He successfully incorporated into his army alien elements and diverse instruments. He concentrated on fire arms and assembled ten thousand sepoy-musketeers trained in the European system and a heavy park of improved artillery. To these two arms he added the best cavalry then available in India, the Mughal horses." He employed in the Emperor's service some able Frenchmen, Count de Modave and Rene Madec, the German Walter Ren-

1. Fall III, p. 42.

hardt, surnamed Samru and his Begam, who became famous in later history. In addition he had also able Muslims of his choice in his employ, viz., Afrasiab Khan, an adopted son, Mirza Shafy, his sister's son and another brave captain named Muhammad Beg Hamdani, to whom Najaf Khan entrusted the guardianship of the imperial fort of Agra. The two Gosavi brothers Umraogir and Anupgir, who owned Gosavi battalions, were also employed in the imperial service.

It was mainly through Mahadji Sindia that Shah Alam was restored to his capital of Delhi in 1772 after having long failed to obtain British support for that purpose. Since then it was Mahadji's ambition to secure control of the Emperor's affairs, but the murder of the Peshwa Narayanrao called Mahadji away to conduct the Anglo-Maratha war for some ten years from 1773 onward. His absence proved advantageous to Mirza Najaf Khan. But this chief's death on 6th April 1782, and the treaty of Salbye which was concluded a month later, freed Mahadji to attend once more to the affairs of the Emperor. He had now only to step into the office vacated by Najaf Khan.

When Mirza Najaf Khan died, and Mahadji Sindia got round the awkward corner of the Maratha situation, the Emperor at once approached that chief as the only rising star on the political horizon. The Emperor became so impatient to entrust his affairs to Mahadji, that he deputed the Maratha ambassador at Delhi to proceed to Mahadji's camp with full instructions on the future plans. Hingne wrote to Mahadji, " this is an occasion for you to secure not only monetary gains, but many other solid advantages. Such an opportunity may not come again." And as it took long for Mahadji to extricate himself from the many troublesome offshoots arising out of the late treaty, Hingne journeyed to Gwalior from Delhi in the summer of 1783 and personally explained the imperial situation to him, in order to induce him to take up the Emperor's cause without delay.

Mahadji had good reason to hesitate for a long time. He knew he would get absolutely no support from Poona, either in money or in troops : the Poona Darbar was then hardly able to hold its own. Mahadji was well aware also that the Mughal Court could not be relied on in times of emergency. In order

to accept the adventure of Delhi he needed a very strong base in Bundelkhand and well equipped army at his command. For such a base to be secure he had to overcome his constant enemy to Rana of Gohad. Mahadji's own army was by no means at all organized for a large scale campaign, as now the western method of warfare and trained artillery had become absolutely necessary ; and these could not be improvised at a moment's notice. The only relieving feature in the otherwise dismal situation was his deep friendship with David Anderson, in whom Warren Hastings had implicit confidence : and so long as Hastings and Anderson remained faithful, Mahadji's security was greatly assured, although the other English elements, Brown, Macpherson and Kirkpatrick, were all eager to prevent Mahadji establishing his influence at the Court of Delhi. It was this delicate friendship with Anderson, which Mahadji was anxious to confirm by bestowing upon him some lucrative jagir, as Mahadji could have an easy walk over in the imperial game only if the English remained friendly. Thus we can account for the earnest efforts which Mahadji made about the said jagir for Anderson which Nana Phadnis vehemently opposed.

The Emperor became impatient to come to an arrangement with Mahadji and deputed his eldest son Mirza Jawan Bakht accompained by Afrasiab Khan and Mirza Shafy to Agra, where they invited the Maratha chief to an interview. " The Shahzada arrived at Agra and wrote to Mahadji, " We are coming to meet you at Gwalior." Mahadji replied, "You should not come to me : I will go to you." Accordingly Umraogir Gosavi came on behalf of the Mughals to fetch Mahadji and arrange the details of the meeting. In June 1783 Sindia proceeded to Agra with five thousand light troops and ten pieces of artillery. He first met Afrasiab Khan and then they together advanced to meet Jawan Bakht accompained by Anderson and Chetsinh. They were received standing : Mahadji paid the nazar : the Prince offered the customary dresses to him and the rest of the party. The second day the Shahzada requested Mahadji to come and take charge of the administration at Delhi. Mahadji replied, " I can't undertake this just now. I will do it after the rains when I have put

down the Rana of Gohad." Mahadji was asked to receive a visit from Najib Khan Rohilla's son Zabeta Khan : but he declined. He took leave of the Prince and returned to Gwalior."[2]

2. **Benoit de Boigne.**—Ever since the treaty of Salbye, Mahadji was engaged in humbling the Rana of Gohad. Occupying the north-western region of Bundelkhand bordering on Agra and the Doab, he had become quite a thorn in the side of Sindia and his destruction became necessary for the safety of the Maratha dominion on that side. He possessed the strong fort of Gwalior and although he was now given up by the English, he created all kinds of trouble for Mahadji. For putting him down Mahadji formed his camp at Salbye. After a heroic effort he succeeded in capturing the fort of Gwalior on 27th July 1783 and so crippled the Rana that he surrendered Gohad also on 26th February 1784. One remarkable incident of this war was that it brought to Sindia's notice the military genius of De Boigne. Pre-eminent among the warlike adventurers of India, De Boigne was born in Savoy on 8th March 1751 and obtained an Ensign's Commission in the famous Irish Brigade of France. He resigned in 1774 and joined the Russian commander in the Greek Islands. In a campaign that ensued between Russia and Turkey he was made prisoner by the Turks and sold at Constantinople. He then made his way to St. Petersburgh where he came to the notice of Catherine, Empress of Russia, through the good offices of Lord Macartney then the British Ambassador to the Russian Court. The Empress anxious to obtain first hand information of Indian trade, employed him for that purpose, and with Macartney's recommendation De Boigne sailed from Egypt to India arriving at Madras in 1778. He was present in the autumn of 1780 with the Regiment of Col. Baillie that was destroyed by Haidar Ali near Conjeveram. His friend Macartney then arrived as Go-

2. This meeting between Jawan Bakht and Mahadji took place for 5 days from 27th June 1783. William Palmer, the British Resident at Lucknow was present at this conference. Hamdani the keeper of the fort of Agra was in league with the Rana of Gohad and so a declared enemy of Mahadji, and at the latter's stipulation was not allowed to be present at the meeting. (Satara Soc., Vol. I. 69).

vernor of that settlement and with his recommendation De Boigne went to Calcutta in 1782 and saw Warren Hastings with an intention of travelling through Central Asia back to Russia, gathering information on trade for the Empress Catherine. With Warren Hastings' recommendation he went to Lucknow and was treated with great respect by the Nawab Wazir Asaf-ud-daula. Here he learnt during his five months stay to speak Hindustani and accompanied Major Brown who was proceeding to Delhi as British Resident to the Emperor. On the way Brown introduced him to David Anderson then posted with Mahadji Sindia as the British Resident. Sindia was then conducting his campaign against the Rana of Gohad, to whom De Boigne secretly suggested a plan of operations to overcome Mahadji. Sindia discovered the intrigue and being furious that a guest of the British ambassador should interfere in his war against Gohad, had him sent back to Calcutta. But the incident enabled Mahadji to discover the Frenchman's genius and he soon afterwards obtained his services through Warren Hastings. Thus De Boigne entered Sindia's service early in 1784 and retired after eleven years at the end of 1795 on account of illness. He left for England in Sept. 1796. He married a Muslim lady in India from whom he had a son named Charles Alexander who became his heir at his death in 1830. His grand memorial exists in Chambery in Savoy.[3]

On employing him in his service Mahadji first commissioned De Boigne to raise two battalions of infantry for his wars. He did his work so efficiently that he gradually rose in Sindia's estimation and organized for him a new model of a fine army and eventually brought it to the pitch of the highest perfection. It was with this fine new weapon that Mahadji won most of his life's victories.

3. English ambitions at Delhi.—Although Warren Hastings outwardly avowed friendship for Mahadji, he as a matter of policy strongly opposed Maratha penetration at

3. With the wealth he had amassed in his Indian service he built a large palace at Chambery and there lived a long retired life without concerning himself with the wars which Napoleon then waged. Two French lives of him are available. Vide H. R. C. IX, 1926, Paper Benoit de Boigne.

Delhi and appointed Major Brown as English Resident to the Mughal Court, where the latter's arrival in March 1783 caused a painful sensation not only to Mahadji and Nana Phadnis, but to those Indian potentates who dreaded British aggression. Hingne thus reports on this subject on 5th February 1784,— "Brown had an interview with the Emperor, who had been starving for want of funds. Brown offered to supply his immediate monetary needs in return for his acceptance of British support, so that British overlordship may become an accomplished fact." For a time the Emperor was in a dilemma between the Marathas and the British as to whose support he should choose.

Muhammad Beg Hamdani, the keeper and guardian of the fort of Agra was a powerful chief, who strongly opposed Maratha penetration at Delhi ; he had long supported the Rana of Gohad and on that account become a mortal enemy of Mahadji. He severely resented the Emperor's overtures to Mahadji and Shahzada Jawan Bakht's negotiations with him, and in the usual Mughal manner contrived to murder Mirza Shafi, on 23rd September 1783 for being the supporter of Mahadji and the successor of Najaf Khan. The incident led to an open war between the two parties. Afrasiab Khan and the Gosavis sent urgent summons to Mahadji for help to put down the rebel Hamdani. Mahadji immediately despatched Ambuji Ingle with whatever forces he could spare from his operations before Gohad.

These developments were being keenly watched by Hastings and his councillors at Calcutta. David Anderson, a firm friend of Mahadji, retired at the end of 1783 and was succeeded by his brother James, who had been previously acting as Assistant and who did not share the same warm feeling towards Mahadji. Responsible British elements disapproved Hastings' policy of befriending Sindia and allowing him a free hand in the imperial affairs. But Hastings knew his term of office was coming to a close and was not inclined to take any decisive action. He, however, left Calcutta and took up his residence at Lucknow on 27th March 1784. He there called James Ander-

son for consultation on the complicated affairs of Delhi so as to seek some permanent advantage for the Company's Government. The Wazir of Oudh was already a British creature, and now Hastings tried to win over the Emperor without risking an armed conflict at Delhi. Pulling the wires through various channels Hastings remained at Lucknow for full five months upto 27th August. During the interval he managed to entice away the Emperor's heir apparent, Mirza Jawan Bakht to his presence. The Emperor was not averse to allying himself with the British, but his main condition was that British troops should be permanently stationed at Delhi for his protection. This risk, particularly, its heavy expense and the possibility of an unnecessary war with Sindia, prevented Hastings from embarking on the venture. Nor did he satisfy the Shahzada's demands, beyond allowing him an annual stipend of four lacs for maintenance. The prince accompanied Hastings upto Benares on the latter's return to Calcutta in August 1784, and thereafter took up his residence at that place. Here he died on 1st June 1788.

The flight of the Shahzada from Delhi to Lucknow on a dark night in April 1784, staggered Mahadji beyond measure as an act of hostile intent induced by the English in the midst of an apparently cordial friendship. Nana Phadnis was not slow in taunting Mahadji for the high value which he used to place on the uprightness of the English character, and Mahadji was at pains to refute Nana, confessing openly that "the British were false and perfidious, blind to all engagements and promises when self-interest came in the way." This conviction led him to employ De Boigne and improve his own fighting arm, as the ultimate arbiter of all disputes in politics. He immediately sent his ambassador Sadashiv Malhar to Lucknow to meet Hastings and find out from him why he had interfered with the Emperor's affairs and called away the heir apparent without previous intimation to Sindia. In this connection Hastings himself writes on 3rd May 1784, "Sindia at any rate will be jealous of my attempt to engage our Government in an interference with the affairs of Delhi, which he considers as his prescriptive property. It appears to me that the design of the Prince's visit is to persuade me to espouse his father's cause

against Afrasiab Khan. I am resolved to have no concern in it."[4]

Mahadji thus became the most ardent supporter of the Emperor in his sore need. By the month of August 1784, when Hastings and the Shahzada were forming plans at Lucknow, Mahadji became free to attend to the Emperor's affairs, having defeated the Rana of Gohad, secured a firm base at Gwalior and employed De Boigne to raise an infantry corps. Hastings departed for Calcutta after assuring Sindia that the English would in no way go against his designs at Delhi.

Hastings admittedly was a sound judge of men. "Mahadji's character inspired him with respect at the same time that his own generous heart had impelled him strongly to take active measures for the relief of the unfortunate Emperor." William Palmer supported Hastings' measure in taking Jawan Bakht under his protection in preference to the Emperor himself. Between the father and the son the British considered the latter more capable than the aged and perfidious father. It should be noted that Hastings' successor in office equally refrained from interfering with Sindia's management of the imperial affairs. Major Brown, however, advocated immediate British protection being given to the Emperor. "Brown continued to work desperately to revive Warren Hastings' abandoned plan of turning the Emperor into an English puppet and governing the Empire through some Muslim regent who would be under the dictation of the British Resident at the capital as the Nawab of Oudh already was."[5] Writes Mahadji, "The Emperor has sent me repeated invitations to repair immediately to his presence and thwart the designs of his son Jawan Bakht who had fled to British protection at Lucknow. Afrasiab Khan also has repeated the same request.

4. Dodwell---*Hastings Letters*, p. 193. This view of Warren Hastings indeed appears sincere as later on he thus wrote in answering the accusation that he had connived at the designs of Sindia, "I declare that I entered into no negotiations with Mahadji Sindia for delivering the Mughal Emperor into the hands of the Marathas, but I must have been a mad man indeed if I had involved the Company in a war with the Marathas because the Mughal as his last resource had thrown himself under the protection of Sindia." Keene's *Mahadji S., Rulers of India*, p. 103.

5. Fall III, p. 292.

I am, therefore, starting for Agra where the Emperor is coming." Mahadji left Gwalior about 5th October 1784 and proceeded towards Agra where the Emperor was now in residence. Afrasiab Khan advanced and welcomed Mahadji on 24th October in the vicinity of Fatehpur Sikri. This action of Afrasiab Khan was highly resented by Muhammad Beg Hamdani and in order to prevent further developments Hamdani contrived to have Afrasiab Khan murdered in his tent on 3rd November. Hamdani thus effected two wanton murders of prominent Mughal ministers out of hatred for the Marathas. But they availed him in no way. The Emperor and the whole court condemned the act and called upon Mahadji to punish the perpetrator adequately. Strong parties of pursuers were immediately despatched to capture Hamdani. He surrendered to Ambuji Ingle and was kept closely confined. Later on, however, he managed to escape and create further trouble for Mahadji. At last he was killed in the famous battle of Lalsot on 28th July 1787, giving Mahadji the chance to become the most ardent supporter of the Emperor.

4. **Vakil-i-Mutlak.**—When Mahadji proceeded from Gwalior, the Emperor set out from Agra to meet him in his camp near Fatehpur Sikri, nearly at the same spot where Afrasiab Khan had been murdered. Mahadji came forth and pitched a reception tent where he paid his first formal obeisance on 14th November 1784 by placing his head on the Emperor's feet and paying a nazar of 101 gold mohars. The Emperor seated him by his side and commanded him to take charge of all his affairs and administration. Hastings left India finally in February 1785 and Major Brown was also withdrawn from Delhi shortly after.

The Emperor now bestowed full powers upon Mahadji to administer the Mughal State with the grand new title of Vakil-i-Mutlak or plenipotentiary Regent, the highest executive office, combining both the Wazirship and the Mir Bakhshi's functions, which only once in the past had been conferred by the Emperor Muhammad Shah upon Nizam-ul-mulk. The traditional robes and insignia pertaining to that office, i.e., the Nalki, the Mahi-Maratab, the pair of kettledrums, horses, elephants &c.

were presented to Mahadji according to form. Mahadji asked for these marks of power to be given in the name of the Peshwa, offering himself as his deputy ; but in the written reply on Mahadji's petition, the Emperor entered the name of Mahadji and not that of the Peshwa, on the ground that the Peshwa was far away and that he would recognize only Mahadji as the responsible officer on the spot. This explanation of the Emperor and Mahadji's concurrence in it, highly offended Nana Phadnis, who charged Mahadji with a desire to establish his power independently of the Peshwa. The irritation thus caused continued long and bitter and to a certain extent doubtless affected Maratha interests in north India.

Mahadji's new office was no bed of roses. His first duty was to bring to obedience all those Mughal chiefs who enjoyed large jagirs but rendered no service in return. This proved the most difficult task for Mahadji and created for him a number of enemies in his new administration. Shah Alam, a small-minded, timid but crafty man, never gave Mahadji his unstinted support in anything that he advocated and executed. To get control of the crownlands and ensure the regular collection of revenue was the first duty Mahadji took in hand. There was besides, the problem of reducing to obedience the tributaries of the Empire, such as the Rajput rajas, local chiefs in charge of the forts and positions, who were more or less disposed to defy Mahadji's authority. The keeper of Agra, Shuja-ud-din Pathan, a relation of Afrasiab Khan, would not give up the fort. He was brought round after strong resistance and the fort was secured on 26th March 1785 when Sindia's flag floated on it and continued to do so during the next 18 years, until it fell into Lord Lake's hands in 1803. Another fort was Ramgad, a principal Rohilla possession held by Jehangir Khan, brother of Afrasiab Khan. After a long siege it was captured by Rayaji Patil on 20th November 1785, which together with the possession of Agra gave strength to Mahadji's position. Earlier in the year Zabeta Khan, son of Najib Khan died (21st January 1785) and was succeeded by his son Ghulam Qadir, who soon proved a severe thorn in Mahadji's side.

For the first time during the monsoon of 1785 Mahadji

established his camp at Brindawan near Mathura, a central place from which his eye could watch all quarters in a circular line. The Emperor then proceeded to Delhi as the two did not find it either necessary or congenial to be always together. It was from this seat of Mathura that Sindia hereafter directed all his affairs. For the Emperor's expenses Mahadji fixed a sum of one lac monthly ; and appointed his own son-in-law Ladoji Deshmukh Sitole to be in immediate attendance on his own behalf, along with Shah Nizam-ud-din, a personal favourite of the Emperor. Thus Mahadji's administration started with a fair prospect of success during the first year of his office.

But the heavy responsibilities of Mahadji's position, his innumerable difficulties, his immediate straits, were hardly realized either by his own friends and colleagues or by the Peshwa's Government in Poona. People saw only the empty bubble of the high post of Vakil-i-Mutlak and believed that Sindia had struck a stream of gold flowing into his coffers. "He was now the Regent of the Empire and Capt. General of the forces, but what in reality he had obtained was only two sheets of paper signed by a titular sovereign. He did not hold a single inch of the imperial domains beyond the ground his camp stood on. If he was to be the Emperor's deputy in reality and not merely in name, he must obtain possession of the royal forts, official treasures and the lands still subject to the Crown. By the close of 1784 he had run into a debt of 80 lacs. His own force of 30 thousand with his artillery cost him 7 lacs a month and the imperial contingents he had now taken over added about three lacs to his monthly cost."[6] Indeed his solid possessions in Central India were more valuable to him than the empty dignity conferred upon him by an insolvent Emperor. In order to meet his immediate demands he established a mint of his own at Mathura where he struck the Nana-Shahi rupee.

Mahadji had undertaken an enormous responsibility without funds, having already become heavily indebted. He was personally not very keen on this hazardous enterprise. It was Nana's persistent urging that induced him to tackle this com-

6. Fall III, p. 295.

plicated situation of the Emperor in the midst of treacherous friends and implacable enemies. And when in his difficulties he needed all the support and co-operation he could get from the Peshwa's Government, Nana Phadnis suspected him of insubordination and wrote to him vexatious letters requiring explanations. This gave rise to a perennial friction between the two principal figures of the Maratha State, which only ended with Mahadji's death. It was fortunate that they did not allow their passions to run beyond legitimate bounds, both being devoted servants of the Peshwa's house. Mahadji in his dire need implored Nana, Ahalyabai and others for a supply of funds or a loan : but he never got any.[7]

Mahadji was lucky enough at the beginning to collect round himself a band of devoted followers like Rana Khan Bhai, Ambuji Ingle, Khanderao Hari, Rayaji Patil, Jivba Dada Bakhshi, Devji, Gauli, Ladoji Deshmukh &c. His new employee De Boigne was also fully attached to him. The co-operation of these loyal supporters alone saved him from utter ruin. He could not keep his engagement with the Emperor of making regular monthly payments of his allowance, and his failure in this respect enraged the Emperor all the more. Even loans were not available. He writes, "I wish to retire completely from this intolerable business as soon as I succeed in bringing about a workable order. All Hindustanis whether Hindus or Muslims, Brahmans or low castes, are vile and treacherous, entirely unreliable. They while professing friendly sentiments, will not scruple to cut your throat. The Mughals, the Kashmiris, the Pathans are all wicked and perfidious. I don't know how I can get on."

Mahadji was always cool, moderate and calculating and never lost his head even under severe trials. His supreme self-confidence enabled him ultimately to win victory out of a

7. One typical instance exemplifies Nana Phadnis' dealings with Mahadji. At the end of 1784 Nana wrote to Mahadji asking for a detailed report of his financial position, with the gains and losses involved in his new venture. In reply Sadashiv Dinkar under Mahadji's instructions forwarded a detailed statement to Nana dated 5th June 1785. The document deserves study and discloses the embarrassments into which Mahadji had been driven. Ai. Tip. 5. 10.

desperate situation. He was just and liberal even towards his opponents. He supported the family and relations of the murdered Afrasiab Khan and did his best to utilize the valour and enthusiasm even of Hamdani.[8] The Gosavi brothers Umraogir and Anupgir, well known to Mahadji since the days of Dattaji Sindia's stand at Shukratal and now chiefs in the Emperor's service, were befriended and provided with useful work. But when they revolted and broke away, Mahadji was compelled to deal with them sternly. More than once he discovered Anupgir's secret intrigues and treachery in inciting the Emperor against his measures. Mahadji deputed his agent Kesopant to take possession of the Gosavi's jagirs in Bundelkhand and the Doab : Umraogir managed to have Kesopant murdered. The two Gosavi brothers then commenced open hostilities against Mahadji, who in April 1786 sent Devji Gauli to chastise them. They were defeated, all their possessions reduced and they sought shelter with the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. Cornwallis was then the Governor-General, and he issued a strong warning to the Nawab Wazir against any hostility of Mahadji. This is one of the many instances of the Emperor's erstwhile servants who enjoyed jagirs and rendered no service.

Mahadji's great effort to secure for the Emperor a regular fixed income and a well marked territory for his undisputed sway, insensibly led him to a number of campaigns and transactions which could not be planned or foreseen in advance and which resulted in endless trouble. It was by dint of exceptional patience and fortitude, that he made his way successfully to his goal. His choice of Mathura for his camp proved judicious. He kept his bases strong in Malwa and Bundelkhand, the source of all his power. Agra was an imperial possession which he had to hold firmly along with Delhi, so as to keep his eyes on the activities of the Sikhs in the north-west, those of the Pathans in the Doab, and the Rajputs in the south-west. From the beginning he had secured a firm ally in Pratapsinh the chief of Machedi, now the principality of Alwar. Early in 1785 Mahadji sent Ambuji Ingle, and Pratapsinh to confirm the Emperor's hold on the northern territories which suffered

8. Fall, p. 286.

depredations from the Sikhs. They accomplished the task quickly and successfully. The Sikh leaders were brought for a personal interview with Mahadji at Mathura in May : and an agreement was concluded with them which worked with tolerable success in the future. During this same year 1785 Mahadji was occupied in several other campaigns, Aligad, Jaipur and Raghogad or the Khichi country of Malwa.

The last mentioned affair of Raghogad, however, needs a short explanation. The Khichi Rana of that place had long been a Maratha vassal paying tribute to Holkar. The present ruler Balwantsinh asserted his independence and refused to pay the tribute. He commanded the centre of Maratha communications in northern and central India, and from his strong base could impede the march of Maratha armies at his will. Mahadji sent a large force under Ambuji Ingle against Raghogad and besieged the fort in the autumn of 1785. The affair dragged on for a year. The Rana was brought to submission and his State confiscated. Balwantsinh was kept a prisoner in chains at Gwalior. After a time he was turned into a friend and treated kindly. Some other chiefs such as those of Banda, Kalinjar and Charkhari in Bundelkhand, who had created trouble were also quickly put down. The Ingle brothers, Khanderao Hari and De Boigne rendered conspicuous service in putting down these rebellions.

5. Mahadji's war upon the Rajputs, Lalsot.—Prithvisinh, the Rajah of Jaipur died on 16th April 1778 and was succeeded by his brother Pratapsinh, a boy of thirteen, although the dead monarch had left a son behind named Mansinh then six months old. One of Jaipur's clansmen and vassals, named Rao Raja Pratapsinh, Naruka, had recently risen into prominence by dint of his own valour and capacity, and made himself independent at the expense of Jaipur at Machedi, in the vicinity of Alwar. This Pratapsinh ingratiated himself with the Emperor and now became a great friend and associate of Mahadji in his work of settlement. As he rose to prominence at the cost of Jaipur, he bore bitter enmity to his namesake Pratapsinh of Jaipur, a notoriously profligate ruler, unfit to manage his State in the midst of enemies internal and external.

He wasted his time in drinking and dancing. Sometimes he roamed about at night with vile companions of his wine cup and entering the houses of bankers and merchants, carried away whatever money and valuables they could lay their hands on.

The ruler of Jaipur had all along been a vassal of the Emperor to whom he used to pay a yearly tribute. In addition the Peshwas had since the days of Sawai Jaisinh imposed their Chauth on the State, so that when Mahadji became the supreme administrator of the imperial concerns, he claimed a double payment of long accumulated arrears both on account of the Maratha Chauth and the tribute to the Emperor. This naturally exasperated the Jaipur Raja, who began a game of subterfuge and hostility under the cover of long drawn negotiations. In this project he enlisted the support of Raja Bijaysinh of Marwar and Mahadji's mortal enemy Hamdani.

The Jaipur Raja stoutly refused to make any payment urging his inability to pay, or to effect any improvement in his vicious administration. Mahadji was then compelled to take stern measures. He stationed Rayaji Patil with an adequate force at the capital for exacting payment and enforcing the Emperor's right of overlordship. He threatened the Raja with deposition by raising to the throne the latter's young nephew Mansinh, who was brought for that purpose from Kishangad to Brindawan and given a small jagir for his maintenance. The raja was so exasperated at these measures that he prepared in desperation for a war of life and death. Mahadji was compelled to take up the challenge and early in 1786 marched with the Emperor into the territories of Jaipur. He formed his camp at Sanganer seven miles south of Jaipur and demanded three crores from the Raja on pain of complete annihilation. A higgling strife commenced through intermediaries about the settlement of the amount, which was agreed to be sixty-three lacs. But even this was not forthcoming. The Raja had no cash or jewellery, and the only thing that Mahadji could do was to take forcible possession of his territory. But this hardly improved Mahadji's position, for both he and the Emperor were in dire want of cash. No imme-

diate revenue could be realized from the dry lands, until peaceful conditions of normal life were restored. Thus a serious situation developed both for the Raja and his Maratha aggressors with no honourable escape for either. "Sindia sent armed parties to different places for squeezing out money. A large number of places was besieged, bankers and traders of Jaipur were seized, thus aggravating the trouble."

Mahadji Sindia and the Emperor then left Rayaji Patil in charge of the duty of executing the terms accepted by the Raja, and themselves returned to Dig in June (1786) ; here they separated, Mahadji going to Mathura and the Emperor to Delhi. In his extreme agony and bewilderment the Jaipur raja despatched personal agents to Bijaysinh of Jodhpur, imploring armed support for his relief and to the British authorities at Lucknow, who were anxious to curb the growing power of Sindia. But at this time the sober statesman Cornwallis was at the head of the British Government and refused to interfere in the disputes of Indian Powers. The Raja of Jodhpur, however, formed a defensive alliance with Jaipur to withstand by force of arms any demands from Sindia and the Emperor. Thus matters began to assume an awkward look and Mahadji was compelled to accept the challenge. He immediately recalled Khanderao Hari from Bundelkhand and Ambuji Ingle from the cis-Satlaj campaign which he was conducting against the Sikhs, and himself started in high spirits against Jaipur after celebrating the Emperor's accession day at Dig on 10th March 1787.

Pratapsinh of Jaipur had an army of about 20 thousand men and received in addition ten thousand horsemen from Jodhpur under the command of Bhimsinh. Jaipur and Jodhpur thus made themselves ready for a final decision of arms, rather than submit to Sindia's demands. Till the last moment the Jaipur raja kept up the show of negotiating for terms, thus gaining time for intrigue and preparation throughout the summer months from April to July. Mahadji was cool and calculating, trying with the utmost caution to overcome his opponents without any lavish expenditure of life and money, employing for this work a net work of efficient spies. He, however, received sufficient warnings and portents of the coming storm

and coolly prepared to meet any emergency. His main object was to bring about, by a mere demonstration of force, a settlement of the outstanding disputes with the Rajput Princes of Udaipur, Jaipur and Jodhpur and retire in June to his camp at Brindawan. But as days passed, the Rajput attitude stiffened. Alarming reports poured in for Mahadji, and even the Emperor called upon Mahadji to avoid a recourse to arms and retire immediately to his base.

During May and June the Rajputs played their game of seduction with consummate skill. They knew Mahadji had in his train large bodies of Hindustani and Mughalia troops, formerly in the service of the Emperor, whose commandants now owed little loyalty to Sindia personally, and who ardently desired his ruin at heart. Muhammad Beg Hamdani, formerly an opponent of Mahadji but now readmitted to his command, along with other Mughalia captains deserted the Maratha camp on 27th May and openly joined the Rajputs. This defection opened Mahadji's eyes to the danger he was running into. Hamdani's arrival heartened the Rajputs beyond measure. "They proclaimed to the world that it was a disgrace for a brother Hindu like Sindia to confiscate a Hindu State and strengthen the Muslim cause." Mahadji faced the situation boldly and by way of precaution removed his large number of ladies and non-combatants to a safe distance. He received a communication from Bijaysinh urging, "We have been enjoying our lands since a long time : the Marathas have protected us in the past ; Pratapsinh of Jaipur is a senseless idiot, not deserving your wrath. You must have pity on him and overlook his blemishes and save him." Some of his own well-wishers advised Sindia quickly to retire from the Jaipur territory to a place of safety ; but he rejected such a course as he thought it would destroy his power and prestige at once. Pratapsinh rightly noticing the weakness of Sindia's position, boldly came out of his capital in June and opened a direct offensive, seizing an opportune moment for attack, when Sindia was greatly handicapped by want of supplies, with famine prices prevailing in his camp and accelerating the desertions which had been long going on. By the middle of June Sindia was joined by Khanderao Hari from Bundelkhand and Ambuji Ingle

from Patiala. The Rajputs were terribly afraid of the new infantry battalions of De Boigne. The two parties tried for a month to seek an advantageous point for winning success. At last Mahadji made an advance on 28th July, fought a sanguinary action without a decisive result on the plain at Tunga, about 14 miles north-west of Lalsot, by which latter name the battle has been since known in history. Hamdani was killed by a cannon-ball while watching the battle from behind.

The Rajputs boast of this battle of Tunga as a victory, but they did not capture a single gun of Mahadji nor took a single prisoner from his army. They did not molest his retreat though it was conducted under untold hardships. In fact, the Rajputs were paralysed by the accidental death of Hamdani, who was their moving spirit, and when Mahadji retreated, they thanked God that they had been able to get rid of him so easily. On the other hand, Mahadji had gone out to break the Jaipur army and in this he failed. Though he saved his army by his masterly retreat, the terror experienced by his captains, who called it a second Panipat, proves the defeat of his strategy. It was indeed a drawn battle if merely judged by the result of the actual fighting. Mahadji wrote the following account of it to Nana Phadnis :—

"The Rajputs, when joined by the deserter Hamdani, brought their ranks to the number of some 50 thousand with a park of artillery consisting of 60 pieces. We delivered an attack on Saturday 28th July with cannon firing on both sides. In the midst of the action Hamdani was killed by a gunshot from our artillery and their left was completely routed. The Rajputs had three heavy guns which worked havoc upon Rana Khan, but he stood firmly having lost about a 100 men dead and wounded. The artillery action continued uninterrupted from 9 in the morning to an hour after nightfall. Twenty officers of distinction and a thousand men on the Rathod side fell in the field, in addition to about two thousand wounded. Our horses and men suffered from want of drinking water, otherwise we could have so completely routed the enemy that they

9. Lalsot is 30 m. s.-e. of Jaipur.

never again could come to face us. We tried to attack them the next day, they did not come out in the open, remaining concealed from our view."

Although the actual battle thus proved successful for the Marathas, further developments began to make their position precarious. The enemy had treacherously planned to assassinate Mahadji along with Rana Khan and other prominent chiefs. But these attempts were successfully foiled. In this battle De Boigne's infantry force was not more than about 1300 men with only 4 or 5 light guns. The rest of Sindia's army was composed of the old-fashioned cavalry and cumbrous heavy guns. There was no desertion among De Boigne's men. But starvation and long arrears of pay made Sindia's cavalry leave him in disgust, succumbing to the secret inducements which the enemy offered them, so that on the following day (30th July) the Hindustani troops numbering about eight thousand commenced a sit-down strike, demanding immediate payment of their dues. Mahadji contrived to have them dismissed and they were disbanded. Then they walked away with their guns and joined the enemy. It was for a time a critical moment for Mahadji, Rana Khan and all his chiefs keeping awake the whole night in their saddles, in order to prevent mischief. This desertion doubtless heartened the enemy, exposing Mahadji to an instantaneous attack and complete destruction, during the course of the nine days from 1st August. But he extricated himself with wonderful presence of mind and exemplary fortitude and managed to retire to Machedi safely by Rana Khan's advice. Some mischief-makers set fire to a stock of his gunpowder. Retiring from Lalsot Mahadji marched towards Dig with as much care and precaution as was possible on the occasion, after first destroying all his baggage and his camp equipment which could not be removed, to prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. Ladies and non-combatants were safely removed to Gwalior. A similar trouble occurred simultaneously at Delhi also, but it was quickly got over by Ladoji Deshmukh and Shah Nizam-ud-din. For a time the Rajputs boasted of having humbled Sindia finally, but the hollowness of their claim became clear as they failed to bar his safe retreat.

This disaster of Lalsot naturally brought about a considerable setback in Mahadji's prosperous career : the power and prestige which he and the Emperor hitherto enjoyed was lost for a time. But he never for a moment lost courage or dreamt of abandoning his imperial charge. The eclipse, however, lasted for nearly a year up to June 1788, and materially affected the fortunes of the royal house of Delhi. Mahadji received a welcome shelter at Alwar from his friend the Raoraja of Machedi and here he lived with the remnants of his camp for three months from August to 2nd November 1787. During this interval Ismail Beg, a nephew of the former Hamdani, managed to take possession of Agra city from Maratha hands on 16th September, but Lakba Dada stoutly resisted Ismail Beg's attempt to capture that fort. Ajmere was similarly lost by Mahadji's agent to the Raja of Jodhpur on 27th August.

6. **Cautious recovery by Mahadji.**—It was only his rare presence of mind and uncommon fortitude which enabled Sindia ultimately to gain a decided victory after what for a time appeared as a crushing failure and hopeless ruin. The Peshwa's envoy Hingne at Delhi immediately reported to Poona correct accounts of Mahadji's setback. The enemies of the Marathas suddenly rose in all quarters. Ghulam Qadir, in particular, drove away the Maratha garrisons from the Doab, seized the whole territory of which he had been recently dispossessed and came right upon Delhi to challenge Mahadji's hold. Ladoji Deshmukh and Shah Nizam-ud-din felt their position so weak, that on the night of 24th August 1787 they both deserted their posts and ran away from Delhi suffering privations and plunder on the way at the hands of robbers. Ghulam Qadir appeared before the helpless Emperor and wrenched from him all the offices and powers held by Sindia under threat of reprisals (September 5). Ismail Beg and Ghulam Qadir acting in co-operation established their sway at Delhi and the surrounding country. The Emperor sent frantic appeals to the Rajput princes and to other chiefs for help. Mahadji anticipating such a result had despatched Ambuji Ingle to meet the Emperor and bring him to the Maratha camp. But the latter had been so cowed by Ghulam's threats that he cancelled his invitation to Mahadji for help, and Ambuji

was compelled to return unsuccessful from Delhi on 14th November. Hence Mahadji hereafter grew naturally indifferent to the concerns of the Emperor and directed his main attention to plans for his own safety. On 8th December Prince Jawan Bakht in response to his father's call appeared at Delhi, from Benares, where he was living on a British pension, but beyond plotting to suppress his father and seize the sovereignty, he could not relieve the situation. The Emperor dismissed the Prince on a mission to capture the city of Agra from the hands of Ismail Beg. The Shahzada lost all grace with both Ismail Beg and Ghulam Qadir, and was obliged to go back to British protection in utter disgust (February 1788).

What part the British played during this political crisis is thus explained in a Maratha report, which says, "the news of Mahadji's reverse at Lalsot so ruffled Cornwallis that in order to prevent disturbance of peace, he at once left Calcutta, talked to Jawan Bakht at Benares and proceeded with him to Lucknow. Here the envoys of the raja of Jaipur and Mahadji both met him and asked for British support in arms. Cornwallis rightly judged complete neutrality on his part as the best course likely to conduce to the British interests. He made an unequivocal declaration to all Indian Powers that he was under strict orders of his superiors in England not to interfere on any account in the internal disputes of Indian chiefs, and therefore he would not help either side but remain friendly to all. Thereupon Cornwallis along with the Wazir Asaf-ud-daula and Jawan Bakht marched to Farrukhabad with three armed brigades. From that place the Governor-General returned to Cawnpur after despatching Jawan Bakht to Delhi with Major Palmer as his adviser." Finally Cornwallis went back to Benares and Calcutta in due course.

Mahadji never depended upon British support for his schemes. His trouble, which began with the defection of Hamdani on 27th May 1787, ended with his capture of Agra from Ismail Beg on 17th June 1788, with the result that since that day all elements realized that Sindia was in his saddle again as before. This thirteen months' eclipse was to him a bitter experience. On 17th August 1787 he wrote to Nana

Phadnis reporting his situation and pathetically appealing for help. "Having retired from Jaipur and sent away my heavy baggage and non-combatants to Gwalior, I am now employing my light cavalry in harassing the enemy. My sore need is money. The Emperor's allowance is now nine months in arrears. He does not care to join me and without his presence in my camp I possess neither power nor prestige. If you can manage to despatch some efficient troops and a considerable amount of money, I shall soon be able to recover the lost ground, particularly as such a support from Poona will bring our enemies here to their senses. Just now the whole atmosphere has become anti-Maratha : not only the Rajputs but the Rohillas, the Nawab Wazir and even the British are trying their hand against us, almost a repetition of the days of Panipat. It is essential that we should impress upon all that the Maratha Power is still sound and solid."

These appeals of Mahadji reached Poona at the end of August 1787, when the Maratha armies of the south had shortly before returned from a successful campaign against Tipu Sultan. Nana lost not a moment in arranging succours and relieving Mahadji's distress. He remitted 5 lacs and ordered a large body of troops to proceed immediately to the north headed by Tukoji Holkar and Ali Bahadur, along with Manaji Gaikwad, Shahji Bhosle (of Akalkot) and Odhekar. These men were to start on 8th September, but they took more than a year to reach their destination, Ali Bhadur meeting Mahadji at Mathura on 6th November 1788 and Tukoji Holkar six months later (April 1789). Nana Phadnis had not realised that, Tukoji, all along hostile to Mahadji, would create fresh trouble for him. But there was no other chief in the south conversant with the affairs of the north, which had all along been the joint responsibility of the two chiefs. The Poona Ministers doubtless believed that Sindia's authority at Delhi had brought to him vast treasures of which they expected to have a share ; but when Mahadji demanded monetary help from Poona, their dreams of profit received a staggering blow. Nana Phadnis could not turn a deaf ear to the earnest and pathetic appeals of Mahadji, but made the mistake of sending to the theatre of war an utterly incompetent man, Tukoji

Holkar, who had no heart in his work and who withal bore an innate hatred towards Mahadji. Some friends urged Nana to depute Haripant Phadke to the north instead of Tukoji. But Haripant declined to serve under Mahadji. The result was that Tukoji proved a positive hindrance to the Maratha interests, having thereafter intrigued against Mahadji not only on his way to the north, but throughout his stay in that region during the next seven years.

The selection on the other hand of Ali Bahadur to reinforce Mahadji was quite appropriate for the time being and was highly welcomed by Mahadji Sindia himself. Ali Bahadur was young and energetic and being a Muslim was expected to carry favour with the Mughal Court. Unfortunately, he too came soon to be at loggerheads with Mahadji on account of the treacherous Gosavi Anupgir whom he harboured. On his way to the north Tukoji Holkar without consulting Mahadji commenced independent negotiations for settling the Rajput-Maratha dispute, feeling a kind of pique towards Sindia, who had now pushed himself to the first place in north India. Tukoji easily swallowed the complaints which the Rajputs conveyed to him about Sindia's high-handedness, and tried to upset Sindia's arrangements, thereby giving serious offence to him. Nana's prompt replies offering to send armed help to Sindia, which had heartened Mahadji in his extreme depression, remained merely hollow words on account of the mischievous action of Holkar. Mahadji replied in cordial terms thanking Nana for having saved a drowning man. The Rajput chiefs had sent their agents to Poona craving the Peshwa's intervention for redressing their grievances. In reply, Nana asked his own agent Lakshman Sambhaji directly to treat with Pratapsinh of Jaipur, evidently a wrong move which exasperated Mahadji all the more and weakened his position. Well-ordered governments usually support the man on the spot. This was indeed a moment when the interests of the Maratha State would have been well served if Nana had himself gone to the north with the young Peshwa and effected a settlement of the several irritating questions then in agitation in that quarter.

The Pathan elements headed by Ghulam Qadir and now joined by the Rajputs, renewed their old game of pre-Panipat

days, inviting the Shah of Kabul for driving away the Marathas from north India, a move in which the old Malika Zamani also joined. Ahmad Shah's son Taimur Shah was now the Afghan ruler, who took up his residence at Peshawar in the summer of 1787, ready to cross at Attock into the Punjab. Bijaysinh of Marwar sent his envoy to the Afghan Shah to bring him to oppose the Marathas. Taimur Shah, however, replied that as he had his own troubles on hand, he would not like to add to them by undertaking an Indian expedition. Mahadji had taken the precaution of securing a friendly alliance with the Sikhs of the Punjab, the noted enemies of the Afghan Shah, who barred his passage across the Indus. Mahadji's old experience of Panipat now served him eminently. He never for a moment gave up his task of defending the Emperor and specially sent Ambuji Ingle to bring him into his camp at Rewari where he himself arrived from Alwar at the end of October 1787. If Shah Alam had shown the wisdom of entrusting himself sincerely to Mahadji, he would have escaped the indignities which he had to suffer during the next year. But he now believed Mahadji to be a broken reed, and, overawed by Ghulam Qadir, declined to move from Delhi. Having thus failed in his attempt to persuade the ill-fated monarch to join him and strengthen their joint position, Mahadji was compelled to leave him to his fate, abandoning the whole territory of Delhi, and himself retiring to the south of the Chambal about December 1787 in order to secure his rear. The only Maratha garrisons that still remained to the north of that river, were those that defended Agra and Aligad.

During the first three months of 1788 Sindia knew not a moment's rest. Having withdrawn his forces to the Chambal, he began feverish preparations for a fresh offensive to retrieve his lost position. He had already ordered a fresh band of Maratha recruits from his own native place of Jamgaon in addition to those that had been despatched by Nana Phadnis. The former arrived about 16 March 1788 and he at once began the offensive early in April. Rana Khan crossed the Chambal and in co-operation with Ranjitsinh Jat and the Rao Raja of Machedi began to regain his lost position. Rana Khan surprised Ismail Beg near Bharatpore and managed to send in provisions to the beleaguered garrison with which

Lakba Dada held the fort of Agra. Mahadji himself remained on the Chambal, supporting the advanced movement and cautiously directing the operations from behind. Deoji Gauli, De Boigne and Rayaji Patil advanced in succession, recovered the Mathura district and crossed the Jamuna into the Doab in pursuit of Ghulam Qadir. They captured Umraogir Gosavi and sent him as prisoner to Mahadji. The Pathans offered a stiff opposition in the vicinity of Agra : but it was successfully overcome, when Jivba Bakhshi and Khanderao Hari joined with their parties.

A severe but indecisive action was fought on 22nd April near Chaksan. Ghulam Qadir retired to save his own estates threatened by the Marathas, and Ismail Beg being now isolated, suffered a heavy defeat on 18th June on the banks of the Jamuna at Bagh Dehra, a suburb of Agra. In this action the six battalions of Mahadji that had deserted to the enemy were all cut to pieces along with some two thousand of Ismail Beg's army, who perished in the river while trying to swim across through the rising flood. It was De Boigne's strategy that led to this victory and it obtained ample recognition from Sindia. This phenomenal success had a magic effect on Mahadji's fortunes. The Sikhs who held the territory north of Delhi were already the supporters of Mahadji's power, and he now became the undisputed master of the region between the Chambal and the Satlaj. The Gosavi brothers once more joined Sindia's standard. It was a general surprise that Mahadji could recover his lost ground so quickly. His speedy recovery was due to the bravery of the recruits whom he had specially ordered from his native place of Jamgaon, mounted on Deccani ponies and led by Devji Gauli.

By the end of June 1788 Mahadji was again firmly in the saddle and could have easily run to the rescue of the Emperor. But Sindia bitterly resented the latter's treachery and vacillation, and avoided going out of his way, until he was specially invited to Delhi to undertake the former management. The three months period, July to September 1788, was the interval which filled the cup of the Emperor's misery, when he was a close prisoner in his own palace. In order to understand how this came about we must go back and review

the activities of the Emperor and his court during 1787 after Sindia had been crippled by the failure of his Lalsot campaign. The Emperor did not follow a consistent plan. Lacking resolution he agreed to every momentary change advised by his arch-enemies. The spirited Begam Samru with her small but well-led force and an efficient park of artillery of 85 pieces, stood by him, bravely offering to oppose any odds. The Emperor, however, did not follow her plan. Shah Nizam-ud-din and Ladoji Deshmukh were too weak to save him. The all-powerful Superintendent of the Harem, Mansur Ali Khan Nazir, was a traitor at heart and he secretly used Ghulam Qadir and others to extinguish Maratha power in the north.

7. **Ghulam Qadir in the Mughal Palace.**—After his decisive victory at Bagh Dehra on 18th June, Mahadji immediately proceeded to Mathura and occupied his old camp on 4th July. Here, Ranjitsinh Jat came and paid him a visit cementing his former friendship and offering co-operation in pursuing the future plans. During his first two months at Mathura, Mahadji was occupied in satisfying the demands of his troops, a section of whom had rebelled asking for immediate payment of their arrears of pay. He was not then free to attend to the Emperor's affairs.

Ever since the debacle of Lalsot in July 1787, Ghulam Qadir was occupied in completing the ruin of the Marathas and strengthening his own position, first in his ancestral lands of the Doab and then in the region of Delhi. On 21st August 1787 Ghulam marched his army to Baghpat and sent word to the Emperor demanding an interview. On 23rd August Shah Nizam-ud-din rashly attacked Ghulam Qadir's force at Shahdara and was completely routed, whereupon the terror-stricken Emperor opened friendly talks with the rebel who came to the palace on the 26th and was presented by the Nazir. He demanded the office of Mir Bakhshi from the Emperor and promising to drive away the Marathas from Delhi, returned to his camp on the opposite bank. On 5th September he again appeared with a band of two thousand followers, took possession of the city and compelled the Emperor to confer on him not only the post of Mir Bakhshi, but the titles of Amir-ul-umra, Ruknud-daula Bahadur with the customary robes.

He captured Aligad on 17th February, 1788, and thereafter busied himself in reducing the places held by the Marathas.

Sindia's victory of 18th June exasperated Ghulam Qadir, but he was now joined by Ismail Beg, then in an utterly distressed and broken condition. Their safety lay only in mutual alliance and co-operation, although their personal aims were utterly divergent. Ismail Beg did not heartily support the stern measures Ghulam Qadir employed against the Emperor or the indignities he heaped upon the helpless monarch and his household. It is, however, undeniable that if Ismail had not joined Ghulam Qadir, the latter would not have dared to commit the inhuman atrocities which have for ever branded the Pathan name with infamy. Mansur Ali Nazir, an immediate and trusted servant of the Emperor, manager of his harem but a bitter enemy of Sindia, was the main instrument of the Rohilla's plan of action. The period of the atrocities committed by Ghulam Qadir extended from 29th July to 10th October 1788, the day on which the powder magazine in the fort exploded, a portent which compelled the Rohilla to exclaim "Now the fort itself refuses to keep me," and he quitted the Red Fort. His pursuit was immediately undertaken and he was captured on 19th December. The culprits were tried and put to death on 4th March 1789. Within these three main periods of his atrocities, pursuit and trial, the whole affair can now be studied in detail.

Ghulam Qadir was a member of the Pathan tribe and he possessed its marked characteristics. He was devoid of pity, shame or truthfulness. He inherited his grand-father's capacity for intrigue, but not his wisdom or foresight. Upon his accession to his father's estates, he put to death numerous other members of his large family. Habituated to drink, he became reckless in his actions. His great ambition was to imitate his grandfather by becoming the Regent of the Empire. "He believed himself to be the divinely appointed instrument for purging the Mughal imperial house of all Hindu influence with the manly Afghan clansmen at his back. The Afghan spirit of revenge would not be satisfied unless he recovered by force every article taken away by the imperialists from his house and capital. This explains the brutality and the unspeakable torments and indignities heaped by him upon the royal ladies,

to which there is no parallel even in the blood-stained annals of Islam."

On 1st July 1788 Ismail Beg with the whole body of his Mughalia troops joined Ghulam Qadir at Shahdara on the opposite bank of Delhi and there formed a pact with him for seizing the treasure and lands of the Emperor and dividing them in the proportion of two parts for the latter and one for the former. They then began to concert measures to effect their objective. Mahadji Sindia, knowing that some mischief was afoot, sent Ravloji Patil and Bhagirathrao Sindia with two thousand troops to maintain order. They contacted the Emperor on 8th July, but unable to cope with the Afghan forces and failing to secure the Emperor's support, they quickly withdrew from Delhi along with Himmat Bahadur to Faridabad, leaving the situation entirely free to the Rohilla fanatic, who with his troops crossed the river on 14th July and took possession of the city on the 18th. The Pathan was supported in his evil designs by the two old queens of Muhammad Shah, Malika Zamani and Sahiba Mahal, who had their mansions outside the fort and who now paid Ghulam 12 lacs in cash for deposing Shah Alam and placing their grandson Bidar Bakht on the throne. Thus supplied with funds, Ghulam Qadir commenced applying pressure to the monarch by bringing forth all sorts of fantastic demands.

On 24th July Shah Alam was compelled to yield to all the demands of the Rohilla and delivered to him his son Suleman Shukoh as a hostage that he would keep his word. On 30th July, Ghulam Qadir and Ismail Beg took possession of the fort and the palace inside, confined Shah Alam in the small mosque and started plundering all the treasure and valuables they could lay their hands on during a period of 68 days thereafter, till they were expelled from the palace. On 31st July Ghulam Qadir deposed Shah Alam and placed Bidar Bakht on the throne, thus implementing the pact he had made with Malika Zamani. Henceforward Ghulam subjected the royal family to all manner of dishonour and suffering, and finally Shah Alam was blinded on 10th August. Tender children and helpless women were starved to death by denying them food and drink for days together. Princes were flogged, prin-

cesses dishonoured, servants beaten till they died. The entire palace area and the mansions of the rich in the city were dug up for discovering concealed treasure. For nine weeks hell was let loose on the fair capital. Youthful beauties were sacrificed to gratify the Rohilla's passions. Maid servants were tortured and eunuchs done to death for not disclosing hidden wealth. Those that died were left unburied. Twenty-one were reported to have thus met with their death. Even the mansions of Malika Zamani and Sahiba Mahal were dug up and their persons were exposed to the public gaze.

Ghulam Qadir's evil genius, Mansur Ali Nazir did not escape the same harsh fate. Ghulam upbraided him and laid a fine of seven lacs on him. He refused to pay and was severely beaten on 23rd September. In this way the Rohilla secured a large booty, the amount of which has not not been definitely computed. Secret chambers containing coins, gems, gold and silver plate, costly clothing and valuables, all now came to be divulged under the severe pressure exerted by Ghulam. From the beginning bitter feelings were raging between Ismail and the Rohilla over the division of the spoils. The former strongly remonstrated against the ill-treatment of the Emperor and separated himself from his colleague, forming his camp in a distant quarter of the city, where the two came to an open clash, when Ghulam Qadir alone appropriated all the wealth he had collected and acted further tragic scenes in the fort without Ismail's knowledge or co-operation. Towards the end of September when Mahadji began to reassert his power, Ismail Beg under the pressure of circumstances joined Sindia and exerted himself in expelling Ghulam Qadir from Delhi.

Hardly any news reached the outer world for some time about the horrid scenes that were being enacted in the palace of the Red Fort. In September, Mahadji received vague reports and at once organized an expedition for relief. Rana Khan was despatched with all haste, followed soon after by Jivba Dada. On 28th September the Marathas occupied old Delhi, and the city proper on 2nd October ; Rana Khan was joined by Ismail Beg and Begam Samru and opened fire on the fort. Ghulam Qadir, dreading the consequence, began to convey his

booty across the river to be deposited in his home at Ghausgad. On 10th October the powder magazine in the fort exploded, owing to the negligence of the Rohilla soldiers, at which Ghulam Qadir vacated the fort with the remnants of his men and spoils. The next day, 11th October, Rana Khan, Himmat Bahadur Gosavi, and Ranoji Sindia entered the fort, offered food to the starving inmates and brought them whatever peace and comfort they could command. On 16th October Rana Khan waited on the blind Emperor, restored him to his throne, and had the *khutba* read in his name once more.

Pursuit was immediately started for capturing the miscreant and securing the spoils he had carried away. On 11th October, Rayaji Patil and Deoji Gauli entered the Doab followed by Jivba Dada on the 12th. On 20th October Fort Aligad was captured by the Marathas from the Rohilla garrison. Rana Khan first busied himself in restoring order and bringing relief to the sufferers of the capital. This occupied him for over two weeks and on 3rd November he himself left Delhi to organize an effective pursuit of the Rohilla fugitive. In the meantime, Ali Bahadur, who had arrived in Mahadji's camp from Poona, joined Rana Khan on 17th November with special instructions from Mahadji that Ali Bahadur should be enabled to secure the credit of capturing the despoiler of Delhi.[10]

Ghulam Qadir after making his way through the Doab reached Mirat on 4th November and taking refuge in that fort defended himself desperately. Mirat was strictly blockaded and defied Maratha attacks for about six weeks. At last unable to hold his own, Ghulam Qadir slipped out of the fort on 17th December and hid himself with a few followers, in a Brahman's house at Bamnauli, three miles south-west of Shamli. His companions Mansur Ali Khan Nazir and Maniyar Sinh, Commandant of Ghulam Qadir's personal troops were arrested at Mirat. The Brahman communicated the intelligence of Ghulam's concealment to Ali Bahadur who captured him on 19th December and brought him along

10. Full details of Ghulam Qadir's atrocities are available in the Hingne papers of Delhi published by Parasnis in the *Itihas Sangraha, Life of Jivba Bakshi* &c.

with the other prisoners to Mahadji's camp at Mathura on the 31st. For two months Mahadji tried to extract from the prisoners as much treasure and information as possible and considered the question of their punishment. Under the express orders of the Emperor and against Mahadji's own lenient wishes, they were blinded and put to death on 4th March 1789, and their bodies exposed to the public gaze. The Emperor put to death Bidar Bakht who had been enthroned by Ghulam. Shah Alam heartily thanked Mahadji and rewarded him by issuing a *firman* prohibiting cowslaughter throughout the Timurian Empire and granting Mahadji the government of the two holy places at Mathura and Brindawan. The Emperor regretted his inability to grant similarly the possession of the three other places of Prayag, Benares and Gaya, as they were not under his control.

Maratha agents in the north and particularly the Resident ambassador Hingne and Mahadji Sindia himself communicated full reports of these events to Poona with ample regret that they could not be prevented. "The Mughal Empire has vanished. Such indignities had never been known during the Muslim rule of 500 years," is the theme of these reports. The infatuation of the monarch and the treachery of his agent Mansur Ali Khan remain the main causes of the tragedy. Sindia declared in unambiguous terms his readiness to retire from his administration in the north, if it failed to secure the approval of the Poona Government.[11]

8. **Ali Bahadur to the front.**—Ghulam Qadir's mother and brothers had run with his spoils towards Kunjpura seeking shelter with the Sikhs. They were quickly pursued by Rayaji Patil and Ali Bahadur and made to disgorge the spoils. Similarly, the Rohilla possessions of Ghausgad, Aligad and Saharanpur were reduced and garrisoned by Maratha forces. The various accomplices of the Rohilla Chief were traced and punished. Mahadji wisely employed Ali Bahadur to superintend these measures and the establishment of regular administration, with a view as much to giving the young enthusiast the necessary training, as to entrusting to his management the

11. *Gwalior Papers*, Nos. 536-537.

whole sphere of Maratha activities in the north. Sindia, however, soon discovered that Ali Bahadur was not altogether loyal to his policy, being under the sinister influence of Tukoji Holkar, and had begun a course of conduct and intrigue which Mahadji soon found intolerable. Sindia's secretary Appaji Ram writes to Nana, "Ali Bahadur does not seem to possess the capacity to keep order and enforce peace in the disturbed atmosphere of north India and to meet at the same time the cost of running the experiment, without material help in men and money from the south." Nana Phadnis wrote in reply, "You must impress upon the Patil Bawa never to think of retiring from his charge of northern affairs and putting Ali Bahadur in his place. If Mahadji retires from those quarters, all the results achieved in the past would be lost." Mahadji was not agreeable to this course. He found his task thankless and irksome, as it brought him neither peace nor advantage, mainly because he had to experience perpetual opposition instead of cordial support from Poona. He again and again asserts to Nana, "To write replies to and refute all the points and controversies raised in your correspondence, is at once impossible and useless. I can give satisfactory explanations only in a personal talk, if at all I am ever allowed to return to the homeland. No amount of writing will accomplish this object."

Soon afterwards Mahadji and Ali Bahadur found themselves at loggerheads. The latter was called to Mathura for a personal consultation, the gist of which he thus reported to Nana : "On 14th February 1789 I had a consultation with Mahadji. He wishes me to undertake the management of the affairs of the north, himself retiring to the south. I cannot accept this responsibility for want of funds. My refusal has offended Mahadji beyond measure. He says he does not know what crime he had committed that he should not be allowed to go home and pay his respects personally to his master. He avers that he is ready to serve the State as long as he lives. It seems he has no heart in his work here. You have asked me not to accept the responsibility proposed by the Patil Bawa. Please direct how I should act." Nana as the representative of the Central Government should have given a bold decision. He, however, tried to instigate Ali Bahadur against Mahadji

all the more. He wrote in reply, "Remember you have always my support. Mahadji's ways are queer. He will create suspicion where none exists; will disturb smooth working by exciting factions. You long believed wrongly that Mahadji was going to be your great patron. I am sure he never meant to be such. He will put before you a certain plan, ask you to act upon it : then you will unsuspectingly commit yourself to a certain course, so that in the end he will prove you to be treacherous. If he entrusts any matter to your discretion, you must preserve vital proof that he will not afterwards shift his ground." In this way the entire relationship between Sindia and the Central Government became vitiated to the great detriment of the State. Nana directly instigated Ali Bahadur against Mahadji and also the other officers working in the north. If Nana considered Sindia's policy wrong, the only course for him was to replace him by some more trusty agent. But Nana knew that there was none else equally competent to be in charge of the northern affairs and he tried to checkmate Mahadji by insidious methods.

But there were more serious reasons why Ali Bahadur fell in Mahadji's estimation. When faced with financial difficulties he began to issue false cheques which led to the loss of all his credit and no one would trust him. He demanded from Mahadji funds to pay off his troops, as, he said, under instructions from the Poona ministry Mahadji was to bear his expenses. Mahadji, on the other hand, urged that in the serious difficulties he had to encounter in the north, he had appealed to the Minister Nana for help in troops and money, meaning that the expenses of the men sent to his help were to be borne by the Poona Government. If Mahadji was to bear these expenses himself, why could he not utilize the same amount in raising fresh troops on the spot ? Thus the relations between Sindia and Ali Bahadur went on deteriorating. Sindia himself was undergoing the same financial strain. His troops mutinied when they failed to receive regular wages. On the occasion even his own Chitnis Krishnoba was seriously wounded while haranguing the mutineers. Rana Khan happened to be near and saved Krishnoba's life. These were not rare occurrences, but frequent ones which Mahadji had to deal with.

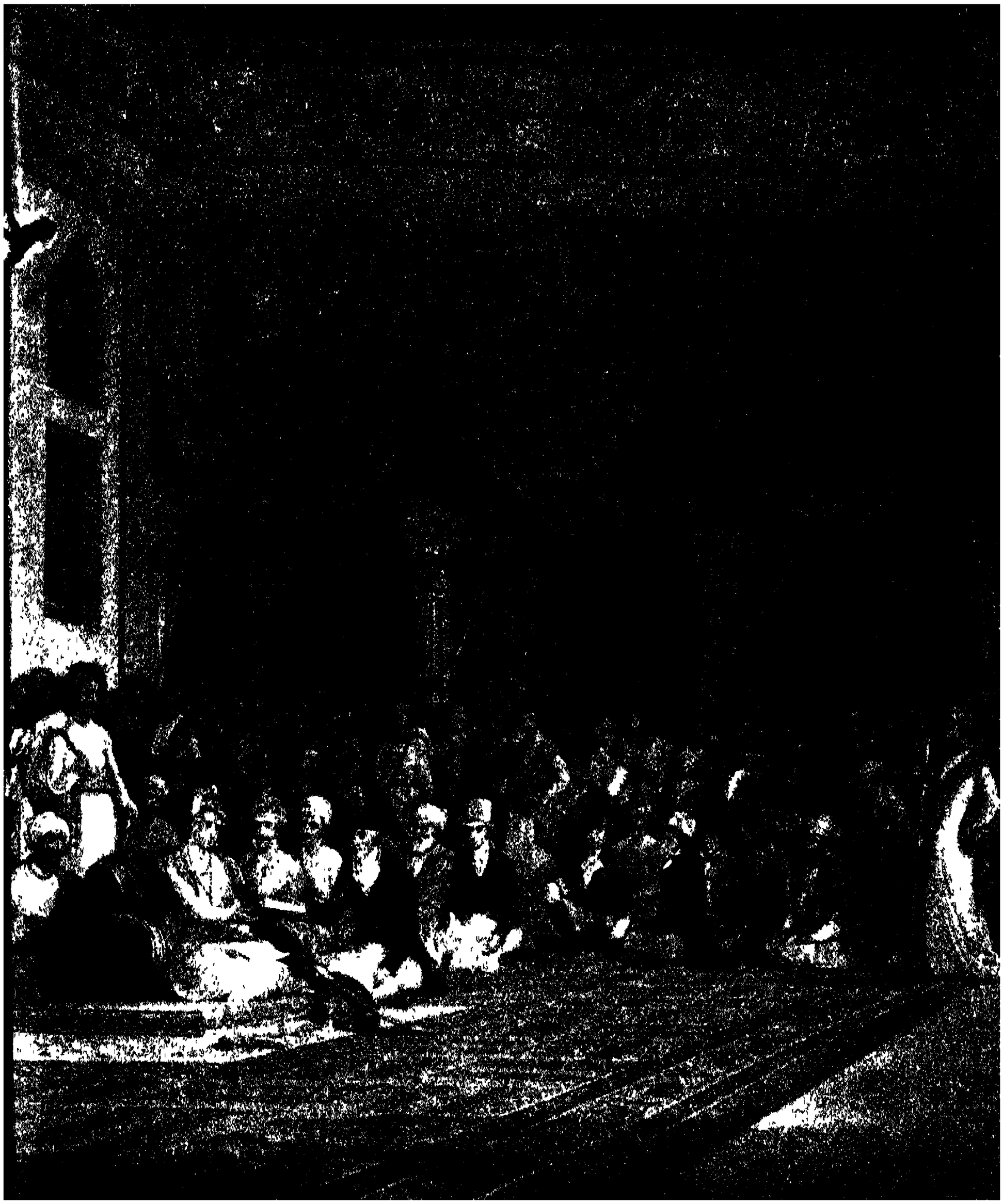
The Gosavi brothers were also a perennial source of trouble for Mahadji as they were adepts in all kinds of mischief and intrigue. They were not a little responsible for the estrangement which came about between Mahadji on the one hand and Holkar and Ali Bahadur on the other. Tukoji was deputed by Nana specially to help Mahadji in his great distress following Lalsot. He left Poona in September 1787 and reached Mathura in April 1789, wasting precious time on the way. On arrival he demanded from Mahadji a half share in the territories he had recently subjugated. Mahadji agreed to the demand provided he shared the expenses in equal proportion. Tukoji took offence at this counter claim, urging, "We are two equal brothers of a joint concern. One member of a family manages the home, the other goes out and earns : but they both become equal sharers in the property." Thus the quarrel ultimately grew like a putrid ulcer, and burst on the battle-field of Lakheri, to which we shall have occasion to refer in detail in a subsequent chapter.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER VI

1752	Malet born.
1753	Tipu born.
1770	Malet enters Co.'s service at Bombay.
1775	Malet posted to Cambay.
1782, May 17	Treaty of Salbye signed
1783	British embarrassment in India.
„	Bussy and Suffren on the east coast.
„ April 30	Tipu recaptures Bednur, takes 4000 British prisoners
„ May 4	Tipu besieges Mangalore.
1784, Jan. 30	Tipu captures Mangalore.
„ March 11	British conclude treaty of Mangalore.
„ May 6	Nana Phadnis and Nizam Ali meet at Yadgiri.
1785, Jan. 27	Malet leaves Bombay for north India.
„ May 20	Malet meets Mahadji at Mathura.
„ June	Malet leaves for Calcutta.
„ July 29	Tipu reduces Nargund.
„ Sept.	Tipu reduces Kittur.
„ Nov. 7	Malet at Calcutta receives letter of appointment as Resident.
1786, Feb. 15	Nana Phadnis and Nizam Ali meet and concert measures of war at Yadgir against Tipu.
„ March 3	Malet arrives at Poona.
„ May 19	Malet visits Nana Phadnis at Badami.
„ May 21	Marathas capture Badami.
„ June 8	Marathas capture Gajendragad.
„ June 30	Tipu captures Adoni from Nizam.
„ Sept. 22	Cornwallis assumes reins of Govt.
„ Oct. 2	Tipu makes a surprise attack on Haripant.
„ Oct. 10	Tipu captures Savanur.
1787, March	Treaty of Gajendragad concluded between Marathas and Tipu.

1788	Cornwallis organizes Co.'s affairs in India
„	Kennaway appointed Resident of Haidarabad.
„ Oct. 12	Malet visits Bombay.
1789, March 29 to Ap. 11	Malet again in Bombay.
1790, June 1	Tripartite treaty concluded at Poona.
„ July 4	Nizam Ali signs the treaty.
„ Dec. 12	Cornwallis arrives at Madras and assumes conduct of the war against Tipu.
1791, Jan.	Haripant leaves Poona on war against Tipu.
„ Feb.	Cornwallis and Medows leave Madras against Tipu.
„ Mar. 21	Cornwallis captures Bangalore.
„ Apr. 6	Parashuram Bhau captures Dharwar.
„ April 13	Nizam's forces under Poladjang, join Cornwallis near Bangalore.
„ April 14	Tippu sustains defeat at Arikere.
„ April 24	Haripant and Parashuram Bhau join Cornwallis.
„ April 28	Cornwallis and the Marathas meet near Moti-Talav, suspend operations during the monsoon.
„ Oct.	Parashuram Bhau marches against Bednur, and despoils the Hindu shrine of Shringeri.
„	Artist Wales in Poona.
1792, Feb. 5	Allies move against Shrirangapattan.
„ Feb. 11	Tipu offers submission.
„ Feb. 25	Tipu's sons arrive as hostages in the allied camp. Treaty concluded.
„ Feb. 29	Medows shoots himself.
1792, Mar.	Haripant and Cornwallis fraternize.
„ April 10	The allied armies part.
„ May	Haripant reaches Poona.
1793	Artist Daniel in Poona.
„ Oct. 20	Cornwallis retires from office.
1797, Feb. 22	Malet retires from office at Poona.
1815, Jan. 24	Malet dies in England.



Occasion at Poona on the 6th August 1790

d Treaty of 1790 to Shrimant Sawai Madhavrao Peshwa in full Durbar held on
. 1790, in the Ganesh Mahal of the Shaniwarwada at Poona.

CHAPTER VI

YEARS OF INTERNAL PEACE AND GROWTH

[1784—1792]

1 Problems of the Maratha State after the war.
2 The Tri-partite Treaty of alliance.
3 Operations of the Mysore war.
4 Tipu's submission.
5 Sir Charles Malet Resident at Poona.

1. Problems of the Maratha State after the war.— The young Peshwa was growing to manhood and giving promise of becoming a competent master for handling the complicated affairs of the Maratha State. It was unfortunate that he was placed for his future training under self-centred, suspicious, cold, nervous and rigid disciplinarian like Nana Phadnis with his narrow outlook and limited range of experience. There was no lack of leaders, soldiers, diplomats, now as before, but all these, in the absence of a master to control and guide them in their activities, found themselves drifting towards dangerous waters. The only solution would possibly have been for Nana and the young Peshwa to live with Mahadji for some time and bring about unity of counsel in the existing government. But Nana's obstinate self-assertion and unwillingness to share power with others, would not brook a rival. Mahadji Sindia as a jovial soldier of varied experience and unusual adaptability in dealing with others, would have proved a much better tutor for the future ruler of the Marathas. But destiny willed otherwise, with the result that a kind of double government came into being between the north and the south.

This is best illustrated in the war with Tipu Sultan, which had its origin in the treaty of Salbye and which for a time assumed a threatening aspect. Nana's great diplomatic achievement has already been mentioned, viz., his organization of the strong anti-British Confederacy. The express condition on which Haidar Ali joined the war against the British, was that none of his confederates should conclude a treaty of peace independently of others. If Haidar Ali had not created his

diversion in the English Karnatak, the Marathas would not have won the success they did and obtained the favourable terms of Salbye. That treaty was concluded not only without reference to Haidar Ali, but with a specific provision that "the Peshwa would engage to compel Haidar Ali within six months to relinquish the territories he had seized in the Karnatak." This Maratha treachery naturally gave offence to Haidar Ali. As soon as the treaty was concluded, the British began to press the Marathas to join them in expelling Haidar Ali from the Karnatak. Nana Phadnis felt extreme chagrin at Mahadji's hasty conclusion of the treaty and himself delayed the ratification as long as he could. Sir Eyre Coote, the British Commander-in-Chief in the Karnatak was the first to communicate to Haidar Ali the terms of this treaty and called upon him in a letter dated 12th July 1782 to relinquish the British territories and retire immediately with his forces. Haidar Ali coolly pointed out to Coote the absurdity of his demand, based on a one-sided contract and asked for a copy of the terms. Coote thereupon sent Haidar Ali a full copy ; the latter wrote back the following cutting reply. "I have not occupied these territories for the last two years in order to vacate them to please you or any one else. If you dare, do come and oppose me along with your friends the Marathas and the Nizam, and you will then see what I can do. I seek no orders from you as to what I should do. You are not getting a single pie from these territories all these days and I shall see to it that you don't do so in the future either."[1]

As soon as the terms of Salbye were signed, 17th May, 1782, Mahadji was pressed by the British for Maratha aid in expelling Haidar. He asked Nana to send the Poona armies against Haidar and himself communicated a threat to him (Haidar), placing Nana and the Poona Government in a very awkward position. At this critical stage, Haidar Ali died on 7th December 1782 and his work was taken up by his fanatical son Tipu Sultan. What followed is reflected in a vast web of war, controversy, and mismanagement on the part of the British,

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1. The student is advised to read in this connection the long interesting report of the British envoy Shrinivasa Row, Forrest's *Imperial Selections*, Vol. III, pp. 885-894.

and in the havoc played by Tipu upon the British forces and territories during 1783. The Governments of Madras and Bengal exhibited a deplorable lack of co-operation and levelled charges and counter charges against each other, which have soiled the pages of history.

While Warren Hastings tried his best to prosecute the war tenaciously against Tipu, Lord Macartney of Madras on his own initiative opened negotiations for peace with him, thereby encouraging Tipu to carry on the war with all the greater vigour after his father's death. The year 1783 found the British prestige in India at its lowest. The old French general Bussy and the renowned French Admiral Suffren arrived in India early in that year ; the veteran general Coote died ; his successor Stuart proved utterly incompetent. The ignominious policy of the Madras Council in seeking terms from Tipu was bitterly resented in Bombay and Bengal. To relieve the pressure on the Madras Government, the Bombay authorities sent a strong force by sea to the Malabar coast under General Mathews. These men landed at the port of Honawar, captured that port and Mangalore from Tipu's possession and quickly ascending the ghats seized his strong post of Bednur. where Mathews obtained a vast amount of booty in treasure and stores. The intelligence of this sudden stab in his back made Tipu so furious, that he left his eastern theatre and so rapidly fell upon Mathews in the west, that that General had no time to escape. On 30th April Tipu recaptured Bednur along with Mathews and his whole force of about four thousand men with several officers, who were marched off in irons to the dungeons of Shrirangapattan. After gaining this signal victory over the British, Tipu immediately descended to the west coast and invested Mangalore, which proved one of the decisive incidents of the war. The siege of Mangalore continued from 4th May 1783 to 30th January 1784. The British garrison was at last starved into surrender. Governor Macartney found himself so helpless and unnerved, that, notwithstanding the Governor-General's opposition, he despatched a body of commissioners humbly suing Tipu for peace. The negotiations were deliberately protracted, in which Tipu exhibited a singular spirit of vengeance and a grim plea-

sure in humiliating the British. "Tipu was thereby able to represent at every Darbar in India that the English Government had sent Commissioners all the way from Madras to Mangalore begging terms of peace. On 18th December the Madras Council met and reviewed their position ; their finances were ruined, their credit was broken, and the confidence of the Supreme Government was gone. Hastings now was powerless ; his own council deserted him. Macartney set him at defiance and played to Tipu's tune. The English peace-commissioners were marched leisurely through the country and subjected to all kinds of indignity at every stage. And, at Mangalore, after having been again insulted by the erection of three gibbets in front of their tents, the Commissioners at length signed the treaty (11th March 1784) on the basis of a mutual restitution of conquests. Of the prisoners who had fallen into the hands of Haidar and Tipu, the most distinguished had been taken off by poison or hacked to pieces in the woods ; but 190 officers and 900 other Europeans who still survived the barbarous treatment meted out to them during several years of war, were now liberated. The treaty itself carried with it the certain germs of a future war. On the occasion of the signature of the treaty, the English Commissioners stood with their heads uncovered for two hours. The Vakils of Poona and Haidarabad united in the most abject entreaties, before His Majesty (Tipu) the Shadow of God, was at length softened into assent."[2] It was obviously a truce reluctantly accepted by the two Powers each unable to destroy the other, but both fully convinced that without the destruction of the one, there was no safety for the other.

Tipu excelled his father in audacity and personal valour, but lacked the latter's calculating foresight, which raised the one and ruined the other. While the British were thus being hard pressed at Mangalore, Mahadji and Nana were carrying on a severe controversy over the question of sending succours to the British in consonance with the stipulation of Salbye. Nana took offence at the English having concluded the treaty of Mangalore with Tipu without reference to Poona, whose forces had already proceeded some way under Haripant Phadke to oppose Tipu. Hastings retired early in 1785. It

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2. Marshman's *History of India*, Vol. I, p. 410.

was the arrival of Cornwallis next year that slowly brought a kind of orderly Government into the Company's territories.

Nor was Nizam Ali Khan slow in profiting by the long war between the Marathas and the English. Nana now turned his attention to measures for retaking the territories which Nizam Ali had seized. When Maratha troops were sent against Tipu early in 1784, Nana called upon Nizam Ali to send his quota for that purpose. Tipu being freed from the British pressure and elated by his success, now undertook the task of punishing the Marathas for having deserted his cause. His religious fanaticism now burst out afresh. Reports reached Nana that Tipu in one day converted fifty thousand Hindus to the Muslim faith, a feat, he boasted, no Muslim potentate had ever before achieved. Then he came on furiously devastating Maratha possessions in the Raichur Doab. Nana had already despatched Haripant to oppose him and now called upon Tukoji Holkar to support Haripant. In this effort Nana found it necessary to win over Nizam Ali and decided to hold a personal conference with him at Yadgir in the Raichur district. For this Nana journeyed in state from Poona. The meeting commenced on 16th May and lasted for a week with due ceremonials and free discussions. On 21st May Nizam Ali paid a return visit to Nana. They determined to have a joint war against Tipu, but as the season had then far advanced, the actual operations were postponed to the fair weather after the rains. Nizam Ali agreed to pay the arrears of Chauth for two years ; not a few vexatious questions being left undecided. After all the much advertised affair of these boasted visits, brought no solid gain to the Marathas and, in contrast with Mahadji's achievements in the north, appeared very delusive and barren, particularly when it is remembered that politics become successful only when backed by the sword. Mahadji worked seriously for the improvement of his armed force ; Nana neglected this vital point.

Tipu's reply to these Maratha-Nizam demonstrations was prompt and decisive. Burning with revenge against his co-religionist Nizam Ali, Tipu called upon him to hand over Bijapur and acknowledge himself a vassal by paying him an annual tribute. He at once followed up the threat with an attack

on the Nizam's districts, south of the Krishna and advanced upon the Maratha post of Dharwar. Kittur and Nargund were two vassal Hindu States belonging to the Marathas south of the Malaprabha, which formed the particular objects of Tipu's ambition. They openly defied him, relying upon the support they drew from Poona, Nargund was for a time ably defended by its Diwan Kalopant Pethe. Allaying the suspicions of the Poona government by a false tone of humility, Tipu suddenly overwhelmed the defending forces of this tiny principality. He devastated Nargund mercilessly, took its Brahman ruler Vyankatrao Bhave and his Diwan Kalopant prisoners along with a large number of their troops and fair young ladies, whom he most harshly outraged (29th July 1785). Kalopant's mother died of a broken heart, as he and the other prisoners were marched in chains to Shrirangpattan. Brahmans were singled out for special indignities. One of the Nargund Chief's young ladies was forcibly taken into the Muslim harem. Tipu's forces next advanced to the north, reduced Kittur and meted out the same harsh treatment to the chief of that place and his family (September 1785). All merchants and householders in the city were stripped of their belongings. The Lingayats of the province were equally maltreated. Tipu had formed a large corps of young Muslim lads whom he called his sons and now provided them with handsome young wives from the Hindu fold. These atrocities were perpetrated during the wet months of 1785. When these occurrences were reported to Nana, he felt entirely embarrassed. He sent for Tukoji Holkar and the Bhosle of Nagpur and wrote frantic appeals to Nizam Ali. On 15th February 1786 Nana and Nizam Ali once again met at Yadgir. Nana was compelled to stay on in the camp and conduct the war.

The allies left Yadgir about the middle of March and moved on to Badami by the eastern route ; while the Maratha captain Behere moved by the western, via Kittur and Belgaum accompanied by Tukoji Holkar, who knew to rule and observed no discipline in his march. He plundered and devastated Maratha territories recklessly on the way simply to fill his purse. The invaders laid seige to Badami on 1st May. The post was captured on the 21st after three weeks of stubborn

resistance in which the Marathas had to sacrifice nearly a thousand lives. Nana Phadnis himself was present at the redoubt for directing the batteries, for unless he took the lead, the armies would not put in sufficient effort.[3]

From Badami Nana returned to Poona and the Maratha forces moving on to Gajendragad captured that fort on 8th June. To offset these losses Tipu came sweeping along impetuously upon Adoni, a strong post of Nizam Ali, and captured it after severe fighting at the end of June. In this theatre Haripant and the Patwardhans were severely handled by Tipu and often so hard pressed that they had to recross the Tungabhadra to save themselves. Tipu captured Adoni, demolished its fortifications and then turned savagely against Savanur an ally of the Marathas, for whose protection Haripant had to run precipitately amidst innumerable obstacles. Holkar and Behere also arrived for the defence of Savanur. Tipu accepted the challenge boldly and in August arranged his forces for a stiff action. This was an occasion on which most of the Maratha chiefs and commanders except Mahadji Sindia, were present in the camp which totalled some 75 thousand. They saw how powerful Tipu was on account of his disciplined infantry and efficient artillery. The Marathas depended solely on their old-fashioned guerilla tactics. The present occasion supplied a realistic demonstration of the comparative merits of the two methods of war on which depended the defence of national freedom, and which now came to be employed extensively on the large plain of Savanur. Tipu's triumph was complete. He captured Savanur on 10th October. The Patwardhans openly confessed, "Our tactics don't work before the enemy's heavy artillery." In spite of their overwhelming numbers and plentiful resources, the best Maratha leaders felt anxious about their own safety. On 2nd October Tipu made a surprise attack on Haripant, who fortunately saved himself from a dreadful fate. But the lesson was never taken to heart. Tipu succeeded on account of his su-

3. The British Resident Malet who had just arrived at Poona and was invited to the camp at Badami, had his first audience with Nana here on 20th May 1786 and has recorded some graphic details of that warfare.

perior tactics, sudden movements, quick perception of the enemy's weak points and readiness to take advantage of them. He deluded the Marathas by constantly keeping up a show of negotiations for peace.[4] Holkar and some others were secretly seduced, the reports of which were freely discussed in the camp. Months were wasted by the Marathas in a desultory warfare. Haripant found it difficult to carry on the war.

The presence of Malet at Badami and the increasing friendship between the Marathas and the English were portents which Tipu could not ignore. He well knew how the humiliation of Mangalore was ranking in every English breast. The Company's Government was now presided over not by an opportunist like Warren Hastings, but by a sober statesman of high principles, who slowly prepared to reduce Tipu's power and organize all available resources to regain the lost ground by humbling Tipu. The latter, therefore, showed an increasing anxiety to come to an understanding with the Marathas. Nana had become tired of war and disgusted with the conflicting claims and interests of the Maratha chiefs, which made any concerted action on their part impossible. Haripant reported the situation to Nana in dismal terms and invited him to the front for exacting work from insubordinate and intensely selfish co-workers. But Nana had no taste for camp-life and refused to move from Poona. Haripant realized his situation and readily closed in with Tipu's offer of peace communicated through Holkar. After discussions and parleys, peace at last came to be signed early in March 1787 at Gajendragad with the following main provisions :—

1. The arrears of tribute amounting to 65 lacs left unpaid for five years and now reduced to 48 lacs, should be paid by Tipu to the Marathas, 32 lacs immediately and the remaining 16 in six months.

2. Badami, Nargund and Kittur should be ceded to the Marathas and Adoni to Nizam Ali.

3. Savanur should be restored to the Nawab under Maratha control.

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4. For evidence vide Raj. 10. 286 and 289.

4. All prisoners captured during the war should be released.

Kalopant Pethe had died in confinement at Shrirangpattan. There was a strong report widely circulated that Tukoji had received a heavy bribe for adjusting the terms to Tipu's advantage.

The net gain of the war to the Marathas was practically nil. They now extended their boundary to the Tungabhadra, which had been reached before so long ago as 1756.

While Mahadji was struggling in the north to maintain Maratha prestige at Delhi, Nana found himself unable to regain the lost position in the south without outside help. Malet slowly wormed himself into Nana's bosom in order to induce him to accept a British alliance in maintaining the position of the State. Indeed during their stay at Badami Nana requested Malet to arrange for a supply to British regiments to put down the aggression of Tipu. Malet shrewdly replied that as Tipu was also their friend like the Marathas, the British would not take sides ; they would remain neutral. Mahadji discouraged a British alliance as being detrimental to the Maratha interests.

It is convenient to conclude here the subject of the Maratha-Mysore relations and then take up the story of northern affairs.

2. The Tri-partite Treaty of Alliance.— The close of the Seven Years' War (1763), which assured British maritime supremacy over France, the grant of the Divani of Bengal (1765), and then the Regulating Act of 1773, are events which ushered a change in Indian politics in favour of Britain and determined India's fate for the future. Warren Hastings the first Pro-consul of the British power in India shaped events for a period of thirteen years (1772-1785). In 1785 Warren Hastings retired and then there came upon the scene another powerful personality of quite a different type, Lord Cornwallis, who commenced his work in India on 12th September 1786 and continued it for seven years retiring on 20th October 1793.

During this period Cornwallis introduced a radical change in British-Indian politics and administration. The Indian potentates hardly realized what this meant, being totally ignorant of European history and the politics that were quietly shaping India's destiny. Cornwallis well understood the agitation which Warren Hastings' measures had roused in England leading to his famous impeachment and he carefully avoided offensive action. On arrival he spent his first two years in patient study and observation before initiating a decisive course of policy. He noticed one great defect in Hastings' administration viz., the crop of animosities he had kindled all round, which launched him into serious financial demands on the Company's Government. The Council of the Southern Presidency was altogether rotten. The Treaty of Mangalore had discredited the British name and lowered its prestige. In the north Sindia had grown powerful at the Mughal capital ; in the south Tipu Sultan had assumed an overbearing tone towards the British Power. The Nizam, the Nawab of Arcot, the Wazir of Oudh and the Emperor himself had all become restless and distrustful, so that there appeared a danger to the British position, particularly as the French became once more aggressive and tried to work their way in India through Tipu Sultan. Indeed the moment was ripe for an Indian genius like Shivaji or Bajirao to appear on the scene and preserve India's independence. The Marathas, the English, and the ruler of Mysore were then obviously the three main Powers competing for supremacy in India, all practically evenly balanced, so that any two of them combined could easily be stronger than the third. The Nizam by himself was of little account and threw his influence always on the winning side. Tipu had great hopes from his French connection. The great Revolution in France was then nowhere anticipated and the traditional antagonism between England and France was considered favourable to strengthening Tipu's position. Under these circumstances Tipu strenuously tried to keep friendly relations with the Marathas and prevent their function with the British against him. Cornwallis was by no means less keen than Warren Hastings to establish British supremacy in India, but he was a statesman of the high order that Britain then needed, avoiding the pitfalls which engulfed Warren Hastings. For one thing the financial condition of

the East India Company was then most embarrassed. Cornwallis was aware of the menacing position Sindia had attained in the north Indian politics. Bearing all these factors in mind, Cornwallis wisely refrained from interfering with any Indian Power, and during the first two years of his regime he carefully improved the finances by effecting stringent economy in the various branches of the Company's administration, putting down corruption and stopping the prevalent practice of making presents on ceremonial visits and other occasions. By the end of 1788 when he found himself well situated, he turned his attention to the external affairs, among which he found it necessary first to crush the power of Tipu Sultan. To that end he worked strenuously for another year and a half, building up an alliance with the Nizam and the Marathas. In this he pushed his way cautiously and slowly through an intricate maze of secret diplomacy worked by his trusted agents, Malet at Poona and Kennaway at Haidarabad. Malet's subtle working upon Nana's sentiments presents a striking contrast to Mostyn's methods and is easily noticeable in his correspondence. Malet gained Nana's good will and fostered an estrangement between him and Mahadji.

After two years strenuous work Cornwallis decided to put down the power of Tipu, effecting for that purpose an alliance both with Poona and Haidarabad, in order rather to keep these Powers from joining Tipu than to obtain any substantial military help from them. In 1788 he instructed Malet to negotiate an alliance with the Peshwa and entrusted a similar mission to his own trusted agent Kennaway, whom he despatched as the first British Resident to the Court of Nizam Ali with instructions to organize a tripartite alliance. Malet formed personal friendships with most of the Maratha gentry of Poona and thereby prepared a favourable atmosphere for engaging the Peshwa's power in a war against Mysore. Mahadji Sindia was not at all enthusiastic about the British move encouraged by Nana.

On 12th October 1788, the Maratha envoy in Bombay wrote to Nana, "Malet has been here these ten days, holding long discussions with the Governor. The subject of their talk is the projected war with Tipu and the possibility of French

help coming to him." He again stayed in Bombay from 29th March 11th to April next to mature the same plan. On his return he succeeded in drawing up a treaty of alliance with the Peshwa's Government, of which a draft was sent to Haidarabad. The subject was under consideration for more than a year.

Nana consulted Parashuram Bhau and Haripant as to the choice of a leader to conduct the operations in conjunction with the English. They both refused to shoulder the responsibility. Writes a reporter from Poona, "Parashuram Bhau says, I have now grown weak, I cannot undertake this heavy task and court a failure. Haripant is suffering from an intestinal complaint and refuses to lead the Maratha forces in war. Nana, the head of the government, is so prone all his life to fear and timidly, that he is at a loss how to act. Troops here have not received their pay and are quite inefficient. As regards the Peshwa, nothing but his pack of deer attracts his notice. You can imagine the result."[5]

Although the Marathas and Nizam Ali Khan were anxious to put down Tipu Sultan's aggressions, the aspect of Indian politics had recently taken quite a different turn on account of the rapid growth of the British power, which now menaced the security and independence of India, so that the other Indian Powers were not naturally enthusiastic about the destruction of Tipu, whose existence with the prospect of the French power proving a check upon the English, was considered essential in India's interest. But Malet and Kennaway under the able direction of Cornwallis managed successfully to bring about after nearly two years of persistent labour a solid compact between the three Powers. In order to disarm Maratha suspicion, Cornwallis went to the length of placing the Company's Bombay contingent under Maratha command during the period of the war.

Malet informed Nana that Cornwallis intended to take the command of the actual operations himself and suggested that the young Peshwa too should personally accompany the field armies, thus getting experience and training of an essential character. He was than 16 years of age and quite fit for

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5. Khare 3188.

such a course in consonance with the martial traditions of the Peshwa's house. Nana Phadnis did not accept Malet's suggestion, being quite half-hearted about the subject of the war to which he had reluctantly agreed under Malet's urge. A treaty containing 14 articles was concluded on 1st June 1790. The Maratha army of ten thousand horse, was to be fully reimbursed from Poona for their expenses and to be accompanied by British troops. The territories and forts conquered during the war were to be divided equally among the allies.[6] The Nizam proposed a definite stipulation in the treaty that the British should guarantee to save him from any future Maratha aggression. But this provision, repeatedly pressed, was never accepted. Similarly Nana Phadnis asked Cornwallis to put into Maratha possession the holy city of Benares, where he was anxious to restore the original Hindu shrine of Vishveshwar, which had been demolished by Aurangzeb. This request was not granted.

Of the three Powers in the Deccan the Nizam was the most feeble. He knew but too well that as soon as the strength of Tipu was broken and that check upon the Marathas was removed, he would be the first to be exposed to their aggression on account of the huge arrears of Chauth which he had not paid for many years. He, therefore, delayed the ratification of the treaty trying to obtain a guarantee from Cornwallis of British protection against Maratha claims after the termination of the present war. Cornwallis could not consent to such a proposal without giving offence to his Maratha allies. But Cornwallis was not going at this moment to dictate a new political order to the Indian Powers. He declined to give the specific guarantee to the Nizam and only offered to use his friendly offices in adjusting the dispute if it should arise, consistently with the existing engagements. Nizam Ali after a good deal of hesitation signed the Poona treaty on 4th July 1790, and continued throughout the period of war to press Cornwallis for an assurance of British support against the Marathas.

6. See P. R. C. Vol. 3. For full treaty refer to Parasnis' *Life of Malet* p. 40, and I. S. Ait. Tip. 5. 36.

3. **Operations of the war.**—Before proceeding to the story of the war, it is necessary to offer a short sketch of Tipu's past life. He was now (in 1790) thirty seven years old, having been born in 1753 at Devanhalli of a high-born mother named Fakhr-un-nisa. He was given good education by his father in reading, writing, accountancy and the military art. But he did not inherit the sagacity and caution of his father. He was distinguished for desperate courage and an overweening sense of self-importance and omniscience. He was also a religious fanatic, a cruel despot determined to use his sword for the glory of Islam by increasing the numbers of his faith. In Malabar he at a stroke converted a hundred thousand Hindus to his faith. In 1786 he declared himself an Emperor and had the Khutba read in his name in all the mosques throughout his kingdom. He bore intense hatred towards the British Power ; and the ruling passion of his life was to drive them out of India. To achieve this object he made armed preparations of every kind and desolated his own territory of Bangalore, that the attacking British might be halted for want of food and water. On 4th August 1788 he despatched two private European agents with letters addressed to the King of France, inviting him to invade India with armed forces. These preparations and movements could not remain secret and Cornwallis made himself ready to meet them.

We are here concerned only with that portion of the war which relates to the Marathas ; the other details are available elsewhere. Cornwallis was from the beginning well aware of the fearful mismanagement of British affairs in the Madras Presidency. Governor Campbell had fallen ill and retired in 1788. He was succeeded by Hollond, who was in no way inclined to undertake a war against Tipu and who conveyed his strong protest to Cornwallis against such a move. Thereupon Cornwallis compelled Hollond to resign and appointed in his place Sir William Meadows, an intrepid soldier of Bombay, who having suffered indignities at the hands of Haidar in his first attack upon Madras in 1780, was burning with a thirst for revenge. Medows, however, was utterly unfit to manage the other affairs of government. The Bombay troops arrived by sea on the Malabar coast in May 1790 and a simultaneous rush was made by Medows from the east towards the

west. In these early movements Tipu succeeded in beating Medows and compelling him to fall back upon Madras. This initial reverse so worked upon Cornwallis' mind that he decided to take charge of the war himself and lead the forces personally against Tipu. On 12th December 1790 he arrived in Madras and having formed a complete plan of the compaign assumed the command in January 1791. What were the Marathas doing in the meanwhile ?

After the treaty was signed at Poona on 1st June 1790 Parashuram Bhau, joined by the British contingent under Capt. Little, proceeded against Dharwar where he arrived on 22nd September. This post was stoutly defended by Tipu's officer Badri-uz-Zaman Khan during a hard pressed siege lasting for six months from October to April. Many interesting details of the fighting are narrated in Capt. Moore's graphic account. Dharwar was captured on 6th April and the Maratha banner began to float on it. If Parashuram Bhau had immediately advanced and joined Cornwallis, who was then proceeding against Shrirangapattan after having occupied Bangalore, the war would perhaps have been over in a single campaign. But each of the allies had separate objectives and did not join heartily in Cornwallis' plan. Tipu continued strenuous exertions at Poona to secure Maratha neutrality, and this had no small part in delaying their movements.

Cornwallis with Medows as second in command, left Madras in February and came dashing rapidly against Bangalore which he occupied on 21st March, a wonderful feat which dumfounded even his allies in no small measure. Having secured Bangalore, Cornwallis at once started against Shrirangapattan, the fall of which would have finished the war in one stroke. A little later Nizam Ali's forces joined Cornwallis on 13th April under his son Polad Jang assisted by the two ministers Mushir-ul-mulk and Mir Alam. They all paid formal ceremonial visits to Cornwallis. Haripant Phadke, not inclined to execute the stipulations of the treaty promptly, left Poona early in 1791, accompanied by Nana and Malet part of the way, who, however, returned as their presence on the front was not considered necessary. Haripant proceeded towards the east with a view to meeting Nizam Ali

and concerting an independent plan. They met at Pangal, about 50 miles east of Raichur, and Haripant moved with Nizam Ali's contingent slowly towards Bangalore. It was quite possible for Parashuram Bhau and Haripant to join Cornwallis in April if they had marched rapidly. But the two Maratha chiefs wasted precious time in reducing the northern districts of Mysore. Cornwallis became impatient and without further waiting pressed against Shrirangapattan and fought a stiff action against Tipu at Arikera on 14th May. As Lord Cornwallis prepared to march for a final assault on Tipu's capital, his commissariat officers reported that it was impossible to move even a step further, as the supplies of food had all been exhausted. The transport animals were reduced to skeletons and the whole camp fell a prey to hunger and disease. The Governor General then realized that his salvation depended on an immediate retreat which he began on 26th May.

In the meantime, the two Maratha divisions of Parashuram Bhau from Dharwar and of Haripant from the east, feeling mortified at the rapid progress of the British arms and the likelihood of Cornwallis concluding the war in one short campaign without a chance for the allies to strike and claim a share in the spoils, marched in haste towards Shrirangapattan after having united on 24th May. They were unexpectedly sighted near Melkota by the retreating Britishers about 20 miles north of Tipu's capital. Tipu's efficient spies had successfully prevented any intelligence reaching the three allies regarding their separate movements. Had the approach of the Maratha armies been known by Cornwallis a week earlier, he would not have retreated, as the British version of the affair makes it out. Haripant was severely handicapped by want of funds which delayed his movements. But what had occurred proved a wholesome relief to all. The Marathas had with them huge supplies of grain with which they relieved the starvation of the British armies. "The Bazar of the Maratha camp presented the greatest variety of articles, English broad cloths, Birmingham pen-knives, the richest Kashmere shawls, rare and costly jewellery together with oxen, sheep, poultry and all that the most flourishing towns could furnish."[7]

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7. Marshman II, p. 20.

While Haripant sold the provisions to the needy English, he was long in arrears with his troops and asked a loan of twelve lacs from Cornwallis which the latter readily gave him by utilizing the specie that was on its way to China for the Company's trade and diverting it to the expenses of the war. Cornwallis, Parashuram Bhau and Haripant had a very cordial meeting on 28th May at Moti-Talav, followed by conferences and deliberations on the best plan to be followed hereafter against Tipu Sultan. The campaigning season had then drawn to a close, the rains had already begun to fall and the Kaveri was in flood. It was, therefore, decided to defer an attack upon Shrirangapattan till after the rains and utilise the interval in preparing for an effective assault. One important result of this arrangement was that Cornwallis and Haripant obtained facilities for mutual fraternizing during some three months in the vicinity of Bangalore. On July 7th Cornwallis held a grand review of his disciplined troops whose extraordinary efficiency impressed the two Maratha commanders and their followers in no small measure. For three months the best and wisest of the two strange nations lived together and derived valuable lessons and benefits from close contact. The Nizam's army also was present throughout in the vicinity and by contrast its inefficiency and disorder became all the more apparent. "The gay cavaliers were so utterly unsuited for field work that they were unable to protect their own foragers and soon ceased to move beyond the English pickets."[8]

Parashuram Bhau was highly mortified at losing an opportunity of inflicting an independent revenge upon Tipu for the wrongs his family had suffered at the latter's hand for over thirty years. In October Bhau marched to the district of Bednur, for the conquest of which heroic exertions had been put forth since the time of Nana Saheb. Raghunathrao Patwardhan burning with the desire of revenge against Tipu, wantonly destroyed at this time the holy shrine of the Shankaracharya of Shringeri, an affront to Hindu religion by a brother Hindu, the sad memory of which long remained fresh in Maratha memory.

8. Marshman II, p. 17.

Tipu had not expected the rapid blows which Cornwallis dealt him, and surrounded by danger on all sides and pressed back to the capital, he curbed his cruel fanaticism and deputed his Minister Purnaiya to meet Cornwallis and obtain terms, urging "that the English should not sully their reputation for moderation and gentility. I am ready to face the worst, as I am not a ruler of standing and prestige. I might as easily lose what my father and I acquired through sheer strength of arms." Tipu had in his custody hundreds of English officers whom he promised to liberate on condition that they should obtain for him the stoppage of further hostilities. He at this time visited the Hindu shrines of Kanchi, where the main gate of the principal temple commenced by Haidar was lying half-finished. Tipu ordered the work to be quickly completed offering to bear the cost. He also personally led the grand Hindu procession of the holy chariot, letting off profuse fireworks with his own hands to show how earnest he was in the cause of the Hindu religion! He employed large numbers of Brahmans to perform Hindu religious ceremonies invoking success to his arms. Some Brahmans were appointed to perform special penance by immersing themselves in water for days together. He invited the Shankaracharya of Shringeri to be present at Kanchi to supervise the rites of worship in order to ensure success in his war. He expended large amounts of money to set up new gold idols in Hindu shrines. Forty thousand Brahmans received alms and rations. Thus he announced to the world how, though a Muslim he served the interest of the Hindus in contrast to the spoliation practised upon the Shankaracharya by the Hindu Patwardhans. In short, during these months of enforced inactivity, Tipu moved heaven and earth to obtain peace from the allies. He sent urgent emissaries to Poona begging Nana Phadnis to intercede in his behalf. In the camps of Haripant and Nizam Ali, Tipu's envoys were increasingly employed for the same purpose. He also despatched urgent requests for French help.[9]

9. Parasins has printed in the I. S. 17 letters addressed by Haripant Phadke to Nana Phadnis under the title "Miscellaneous affairs" dated from 6th Feb. to 7th March 1792. These reveal Tipu's activities and the politics of the allies as no other records do.

4. Tipu's submission.— Cornwallis was well aware not only of this feverish activity of Tipu but of the intricate internal secret intrigues of his two allies. He so managed the subject of peace that he gave no chance for any outside interference ; and he showed himself a master of diplomacy in handling the various problems. He and his army were now in the highest spirits and earnestly began a forward movement at the beginning of February 1792. Just as the armies commenced the attack on Shrirangapattan, Haripant used his personal influence with Cornwallis on behalf of Tipu and persuaded him to accept Tipu's offer of submission and stop the war. Writes Haripant, "On 5th February the English forces followed first by the Maratha and then by the Nawab's forces, arrived within 5 miles of Pattan. The same night heavy guns opened fire on Tipu's lines. Tipu had prepared carefully to resist the enemy, but the valour of the English carried everything before them. They lost heavily about 700 whites and nearly a thousand Indians. The second day the fighting continued and both parties felt exhausted and took rest the whole of the third day. On the 4th the English started their attack so furiously and determinedly that we never had witnessed such a sight before. Tipu answered with equal fortitude and from the terrible losses he had so far suffered, Cornwallis felt convinced that Shrirangapattan could not be captured easily. On 11th February letters were received from Tipu both by the Lord and me, offering to send a plenipotentiary for negotiating peace and requesting a reply. The noble Lord facing the difficult prospect before him, expressed his willingness to admit the envoy to the camp. If we find matters unsatisfactory, we can resume the fighting. Then Tipu's envoy arrived and a settlement was reached under my mediation, viz., Tipu to cede half his dominions and pay a fine of three crores in cash, and till the payments are made, Tipu was to surrender his two sons as hostages. The terms were accepted and signed by Tipu ; his two sons aged ten and eight years, arrived in the English camp on 25th February, with a personal request from Tipu that the noble Lord would look upon them as his own sons. Kennaway and Daula (Mushir-ul-mulk) and I held consultations to which Govindrao Kale, Bachaji Mehendale and Appa Balavant were also

invited. We jointly proposed the terms which Tipu accepted and the hostilities ended. The two sons of Tipu were entertained in the three camps separately. When they came to my tent, they said they were hungry. So I gave them refreshments in a separate tent. Tipu sent his Diwan Purnaiya to execute the terms. Medows and Cornwallis held conversations on 29th February, upon which the former retired to his tent and shot himself dead, apparently not approving the terms. Cornwallis graciously returned the fort of Bangalore to Tipu. On the whole, we experienced some very heavy fighting and achieved great results through the benign stars of our Shrimant. I am anxious to return immediately, but the Lord presses me to accompany him on the journey upto the point of our parting."

The inner motive of Cornwallis agreeing to close the war with Tipu was afterwards known to be somewhat different. This was a hot time in England created by Warren Hastings' impeachment. Cornwallis had already spent heavily and appropriated for the war the cash meant for the China investments. So the Directors had sent him prompt orders to end hostilities and prevent further expense. In this situation Cornwallis made the best of a bad bargain and stopped the war on such liberal terms, instead of finishing the enemy finally.

It is interesting to note how the failure of Cornwallis' campaign against Tipu in the summer of 1791 reacted upon Mahadji Sindia. He was then conducting his war against the Rajput combination and offered to join the English forces himself with his troops, provided the Governor General would allow two British battalions from Allahabad to assist his operations in Rajputana. The proposal was contemptuously declined.[10]

Before starting on the return journey from Shrirangapattan Haripant received a short secret visit from Tipu Sultan personally, an incident hardly noticed in history. At this meeting Tipu conveyed to Haripant a dark sinister warning saying, "You must realize I am not at all your enemy. Your real enemy is the Englishman of whom you must beware".[11]

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10. See Keene's *Mahadji Sindia*, p. 191.
11. *Itihas Sangraha, Ait. Kirkol Prakarne*, part II.

A true prophet indeed ! Tipu was defeated but not crushed. He had no knowledge then how his friends, the French nation were faring in Europe at this time. He certainly expected great things from them in the future politics of India and hoped one day with their help to retrieve his position. Even Cornwallis himself believed that a day would soon come when Tipu would have to be finally finished. How far Haripant gauged the implications of the situation we have no means of knowing. He had long friendly talks with Cornwallis during the six weeks of February and March in the vicinity of Bangalore. The honest and upright demeanour of Haripant befitting a real soldier impressed Cornwallis most favourably. Civilities of all kinds were freely exchanged between them including dinners and entertainments in which Mushir-ul-mulk also participated. Cornwallis formed a very low estimate of the Nizam's fighting forces and his general administration and by contrast found the Marathas far superior. "These armies," he writes, "are lazy and useless, fit only to consume valuable supplies, a positive obstacle in the way of any useful undertaking".[12]

This impression became then plain and clear to all observers. The Bombay regiments under Capt. Little were allowed to return with Parashuram Bhau as they had come. They were requisitioned by Nana Phadnis to go to Poona to meet the possible danger of Mahadji Sindia's apprehended aggression ; but Cornwallis flatly refused to comply with that request. Haripant communicated to Nana in high terms Lord Cornwallis' noble and manly demeanour and his frank, polite and honest ways during their contact of ten months. Writes Haripant, " The noble Lord appears past sixty, his hair all white. He is going to retire after a few months' stay in Bengal." The allied chiefs parted on 10th April. The intimate open friendship that developed between Haripant and Cornwallis became an eyesore to Mushir-ul-mulk who became very uneasy about the future of his master's State. Mushir-ul-mulk tried his utmost to secure Cornwallis' guarantee of protection against future Maratha demands upon the Nizam. But Kennaway and Cronwallis had between them decided to make no

12. See Keene's *Mahadji Sindia*, p. 110.

commitment that would draw the Company's Government into prospective hostilities between the two neighbours. Haripant and Mushir-ul-mulk journeyed together from Bangalore up to Raidurg where they parted, the first for Poona and the latter for Haidarabad. Several Maratha diplomats of Nana's confidence, such as Govindrao Kale, Chintopant Deshmukh, Trimbakrao Parchure, Bajaba Shirolkar and others so prominent in subsequent history, were present with the Maratha armies in this campaign and gained valuable experience of Indian politics which they later used in the service of their State.

How did this short war affect the political balance of India is a question which naturally strikes an enquiring student. In June 1790 when the treaty of alliance was concluded, the Maratha and the British Powers stood on terms of equality. Two years later when the war was over, the superiority had unquestionably passed to the British, as Cornwallis so contrived to deal with his two allies that they had to submit to his dictation. The cleavage in the Maratha State, between Nana and Mahadji appeared plain. How to ward off the British menace became hereafter the paramount concern of the Marathas.

Thus we come to the summer of 1792, when Haripant was hurriedly summoned to Poona, as Mahadji's momentarily expected advent had unnerved Nana Phadnis beyond measure. Why he should have been so inordinately frightened is inexplicable except on the supposition that Nana looked upon Sindia as a rival bent upon destroying Nana's influence in the Government and himself taking charge of the young Peshwa, a consummation, which, even if realized, spelt no evil to Maratha interests. Haripant reached Poona on 25th May and Mahadji on 12th June.

5. Sir Charles Malet, Resident at Poona.—The appointment of Sir Charles Malet as the first British Resident at the Court of Poona is itself an evidence of the growing interest of the Company's Government in Maratha politics. The process began with the signing of the treaty of Salbye. A British agent had been visiting Poona off

and on ever since the days of the Peshwa Madhavrao I. The Maratha Government were not much enamoured of such appointments. The agent did no service to the Marathas and only supplied his own Government with vital secret news of Maratha plans and activities affecting British interests. Nana Phadnis could never forget the serious mischief which the British Resident Mostyn had created at Poona after the murder of the Peshwa Narayanrao. The treaty of Salbye had raised the prestige of Mahadji and made him the prominent spokesman of the Maratha State. David Anderson continued since then to reside with Mahadji Sindia as the British Ambassador, with the result that the Central Government of Poona lost the initiative of directly dealing with the British Government even in affairs concerning western India.

But British diplomats all over India began to be jealous of Mahadji's growing power when he was appointed the sole agent of the Emperor. Malcom writes : " James Anderson, the clever British Resident with Mahadji Sindia wrote a warning to the Acting Governor General Macpherson against Sindia's growing power, adding that if it were not checked in time, he would prove positively dangerous to the British interests."[13]

Nana Phadnis proposed to the Government of Bombay to have a separate Resident posted at Poona for direct dealings, without Sindia's medium. This proposal was readily accepted both by the Bombay Government and the acting Governor General Macpherson, as it tended to minimise the

13. Malcom's *Pol. Hist. of India*, Vol. I, pp. 87-90. It would be helpful to remember the names of British Residents Mahadji had to deal with.

1. David Anderson with his brother James as assistant. 5th Nov. 1781—end of 1783.

2. Maj. Brown British Agent with the Emperor ; March 1783—April 1785.

3. James Anderson. April 1784—March 1787.

4. Kirkpatrick, 20th December 1786—October 1787. He was removed by Cornwallis on account of his imperialistic convictions. See introduction P. R. C. Vol. I, where Kirkpatrick's work is well explained.

5. Maj. William Palmer, 20th October 1787—upto Mahadji's death, 1794.

growing importance of Sindia. The result was the appointment of Charles Malet as the first British Resident Ambassador at Poona. He had a long and varied experience of Maratha-British affairs in the western Presidency. Born in 1752 he had entered the Company's service as a writer at Bombay in 1770. He was posted to the factory of Cambay in 1775, where he helped Raghunathrao then flying before Haripant's armies, to proceed in British ships to Surat, and conclude the famous treaty which gave rise to the first Maratha war. Malet studied Persian and Hindustani and his subtle and consummate social and diplomatic intercourse with the Maratha Government through the ten long years of his residency, succeeded in weakening the strength of the Maratha cohesion and in proportion enhanced the British prestige and power. Malet was the first British statesman to give the Marathas a foretaste of an all-sided western penetration.

As the Poona Residency was to be a direct charge of the Governor General, Malet was asked to proceed from Bombay to Calcutta to obtain personal instructions about his duties at Poona. For this purpose he was to take the overland route through Gujarat and Central India, thus utilising the occasion for acquiring useful information of a political and commercial nature, having been provided for that purpose with the services of a Doctor and a Surveyor, as well as a suitable staff. As it was apprehended that Mahadji would take offence at a separate British agency being opened at Poona, Malet was asked to meet Sindia on the way and remove his objections by a personal explanation. Two British Residents for one unitary Maratha State was an ominous step which Mahadji certainly did not relish.

Malet left Bombay on 27th January 1785 and travelling via Ujjain, Gwalior and Agra, reached Mahadji's camp at Mathura in the middle of May.[14] James Anderson took him to Mahadji's audience on 20th May. It proved an entirely cold affair confined to a pure ceremonial. Mahadji did not exchange a single word with Malet on the subject of his appointment. Nor would he give him his leave to depart, although Malet remained there for nearly a whole month. He

14. See Malet's diary, Forrest, Mar. Series.

paid a visit to the Emperor and ultimately left Mahadji's camp without obtaining his formal congee. Writes Keene, "When the despatch of Malet as an envoy to the Court of Poona was under contemplation, Mahadji was strongly opposed to what he considered as a dangerous interference. He represented that the mission was unnecessary as he alone was the true representative of the Maratha Confederacy to deal with British interests."[15] Mahadji never forgave Nana for this wanton division in Maratha counsels. On 23rd May Malet wrote from Mathura a strong report to Macpherson against the increasing power and ambitions of Mahadji, saying, "I am sorry I cannot defer any longer acquainting you with my situation and the awkward predicament into which I am thrown by the Patel's opposition to my appointment at Poona. Why should he confine the Company's negotiations with Poona to the channel of his own person? You have an indisputable right to have a direct representation to the Peshwa's Court. Do you not apprehend danger to our interests from his elevation to the sole power in the Maratha State? Such an extraordinary concentration of power and title will not only expose the Company's possessions to vexatious demands and endanger the safety of our allies, the Wazir of Oudh and the Nawab of Arcot. His selfish ambition is bound to affect the Company's honour, dignity and right. When he has thoroughly subdued the Mughal chieftains and settled the royal succession at Delhi, his power will decidedly grow formidable. At present he is in a predicament which exposes him to momentary peril and inclines him to a disagreement with the Company. Now that he has procured the office of the Vakilat, he will gratify his ambition by using King's title to extend his own dominion. Such an extension not only strikes immediately at the root of our own interests and possessions, but unfavourably interferes with our allies and dependents."

What Malet wrote represented the general view of the British diplomats then present in north India, and coming as it did within three months of Hastings' departure, shows how severely the latter's policy of befriending Sindia was generally disliked. Mahadji ever deplored that nana should swallow the

15. *Mahadji Sindia*, p. 99.

bait and weaken his moves. After all, armed force is the ultimate support of an independent State, and at this time Sindia alone possessed that strong arm. Nana's sole hope centred in the boy Peshwa, whose future character was then an unknown factor. In December 1784 Mahadji warned Nana in these words. "My attempt in organizing the Emperor's power and resources and my elevation to the highest post in his gift, have given extreme offence to the British. Brown at Delhi is freely bribing the imperial grandees to remove me from my situation. You must remember how treacherous these Britishers are."

It is interesting to note the contrast between the position of the British Resident with Sindia and that of Malet at Poona. The former worked in a humble suppliant spirit, while Malet's tone gradually attained a hectoring pitch, which was overbearing if not insolent. Mahadji caused James Anderson to retire on account of some friction and similarly removed Kirkpatrick for overstepping the bounds of his position. Malet on the other hand so worked upon Nana's timid temperament, that the latter found it impossible to keep the Resident at arm's length. Sindia's Residents had absolutely no knowledge of the plans and intentions of their chief, whereas Malet knew every whisper of Nana's Council.[16]

In June 1785 Malet left Mahadji's camp and proceeded to Calcutta via Agra, Cawnpur and Banaras arriving there on 18th October. He obtained from Macpherson a formal official letter of his appointment on 7th November and leaving Calcutta on 13th by sea reached Bombay in January and entered office at Poona on 3rd March 1786, an office which he held up to 22nd February 1797, for full 11 years, leaving Poona finally after Bajirao II had been installed as Peshwa in the previous December.

A French agent Montigny had been for three years in Poona when Malet arrived there to occupy his new office. Thereupon Malet contrived to have this Frenchman dismissed.[17] Saiyad

16. *Gwalior Papers of Mahadji Sindia*, 343. P. R. C. Introduction, Vols. I and II.

17. See *Ait, Patr. Vyavahar* no. 223.

Nuruddin Hussain Khan,[18] a learned Persian Munshi who had long served Malet, was appointed his assistant at the Poona Residency with Bahiro Raghunath Mehendale as the Peshwa's agent for conducting diplomatic transactions. Malet was punctilious in all points of ceremonial in preserving the dignity of the Power he represented at Poona. He claimed better treatment than the French agent Mons. Montigny was then receiving. Malet possessed a large establishment of about one thousand persons of whom 200 were for military duty, 100 personal servants and 425 were guards of the Mahar caste. Malet and his two assistants rode out in palanquins. He kept a Muslim girl. He was first lodged in the city under Indian conditions which he found unsuitable. He then proposed to build a house of his own. Nana Phadnis gave him the site at the Sangam, the confluence of the Mula and the Mutha rivers, where the Residency buildings were soon constructed. These buildings were burnt down by the last Peshwa's troops on the 5th November 1817.

Malet was a versatile man and omitted no means of endearing himself to the growing Peshwa. During his long tenure he largely contributed towards the formation of the Peshwa's tastes and amusements. He freely entered into the lad's ideas and pastimes. The two often went out together hunting and exchanged dinners and parties. On ceremonial occasions presents used to be distributed. When the Peshwa paid his first visit to the Residency, Malet scattered a present of a thousand rupees waved over his head and there was a race among the Peshwa's servants to pick them up. Malet accompanied the Peshwa in the campaign of Kharda and has left a valuable account of that war.

18. This Saiyad family became famous in later Maratha history. Nur-ud-din's life of Najib-ud-daula is a valuable historical work as the writer was in personal contact with both Najib-ud-daula and his opponent Ghazi-ud-din the younger.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER VII

1784	Nizam Ali's envoy Babarao Govind goes to Mahadji in the north with the latter's sister Anandibai Nimbalkar.
1785	Anandibai Nimbalkar dies at Gwalior.
"	Mahadji's demand for tribute of Bengal rejected by the G. G.
1788	Jealousy of the Holkar house against Sindia's growing power.
1789-1795	Shahzada Mirza Muzaffar Bakht at Poona seeking Maratha help ; dies in the south.
1789, July 4	The Gosavi brothers' black magic against Mahadji discovered.
1790-1791	Mahadji conducts operations against the Rajput coalition.
1790, Feb.	Pratapsinh of Jaipur makes a separate treaty with Mahadji.
" June 20	Pratapsinh and Ismail Beg routed at Patan. Ismail Beg flees for life.
1790, Aug. 7	Mahadji receives Emperor's Farman delivering Mathura and Brindaban into Maratha hands.
" Aug. 19	Mahadji and Tukoji Holkar hold a cordial discussion.
" Aug. 21	Ajmere city captured by Mahadji.
" Sept. 10	Battle of Merta, Bijaysinh crushed.
" Oct.	Rupture between Mahadji and Ali Bahadur.
1790-1791	Disturbances created by Malharrao Holkar, Tukoji's son.
1791, Jan. 6	Bijaysinh accepts Mahadji's terms and closes hostilities.
"	Babarao Govind returns to the south.

1791, Jan. 6	Mahadji negotiates a tripartite settlement about the Punjab with Taimurshah and the Sikhs, fixing the Satlaj as the boundary for Maratha influence.
1791, May	After quarrelling with Mahadji, Ali Bahadur proceeds to Bundelkhand and establishes Banda.
„ July	Nana's agent Tambe makes a full report of Mahadji's situation.
„ Sept. 3	Mahadji before Chitod.
„ Nov. 17	Chitod restored to the Rana.
„ Dec. 4	Ismail Beg routed ; Mahadji concludes his northern work.
„ Dec.	Ahalyabai's son-in-law dies, her daughter becomes Sati.
1791-1792	Malharrao Holkar's disturbances in the Deccan and Malwa.
1792, Jan. 5	The Rana of Udaipur visits Mahadji, who then proceeds to south.
1792, Jan.	Fracas at Satwas between Mahadji's men and Ahalyabai's officers.
„ April.	Ismail Beg captured and confined finally at Agra.
„ Oct. 8	Holkar's camp at Suravli beaten.
1793, June 1	Holkar's power smashed at Lakheri by Sindia's troops.
„ July 8	Bijaysinh of Jodhpur dies.

CHAPTER VII

SINDIA'S NORTHERN TASK CONCLUDED

[1789—1791]

1 Mahadji gets a rebuff from the British.
2 Ali Bahadur's rupture with Mahadji.
3 Holker's house in hopeless decline.
4 Babarao Govind, Mahadji's adviser.
5 The Rajput collapse.

1. Mahadji gets a rebuff from the British.—We must now resume the thread of the narrative in the north subsequent to the capture and punishment of Ghulam Qadir in March 1789 and the restoration of the blinded Emperor to his throne. This success of Mahadji invited from the English increasing antagonism to his measures. Warren Hastings' policy of befriending Mahadji was not heartily shared or supported by the general opinion of the Company's officials. Brown, Malet, Kirkpatrick, James Anderson and other diplomatic representatives were all more or less jealous of Mahadji's growing power. There was absolutely no reason why he should be feared. Mahadji made a demand on the Governor General MacPherson for the arrears of tribute due to the Emperor from Bengal for the Diwani and from Surat and other places. At the same time the Bhosles of Nagpur also had been pressing their claim for the Chauth of Bengal upon the English, as the successors of the previous Nawabs. Janoji, Mudhoji and Raghuji had, ever since the day of Mir Jafar and Mir Qasim, been making repeated requests now for a quarter of a century for the payment of their claims. Warren Hastings anxious to secure the goodwill of the Bhosles never gave a decisive reply on that subject, biding his time in temporary vacillation. When in 1784 and 1785 Mahadji established his power at Delhi as the supreme administrator of the imperial affairs, he was pressed both by the Emperor and the Bhosles to realise their lapsing claims. Even the Nizam of Haidarabad sent him his special ambassador with a request to secure out of the British treasury more than a crore of rupees for arrears of tribute due

to him for the territory of the Northern Sarkars which the British had seized. Mahadji, well knowing that the English would never submit to the demand, contented himself with forwarding it to the authorities in Calcutta. Hastings had gone, and MacPherson was acting.

"Demands for the tributes from Bengal both about the Bhosle's Chauth and the Emperor's tribute were transmitted to Acting Governor General through Maj. Brown, under the respective seals both of the Emperor and Mahadji Sindia. In reply James Anderson residing with Mahadji was instructed to inform Sindia that his interference in such demands would be considered in the light of direct hostility and a breach of our treaty with the Marathas ; and Shah Alam was to be informed that the justice of the English to his illustrious house could never admit the interference or recommendation of other powers and could alone flow from their voluntary liberality. A repudiation of these claims advanced unjustly and disrespectfully, was insisted upon by the several British agents and on their advice MacPherson announced the same in May 1785. Even before this James Anderson on his own responsibility had conveyed his own remonstrances against the demands to Mahadji and the Emperor." The affair was purposely advertised in the Calcutta Gazette on 12th May 1785. At the same time Mudhoji Bhosle was threatened by the Governor General with an attack on Orissa.

Mahadji understood the situation, offered some vague explanations and closed the affair, not being then prepared to break with his English friends. Then came the tripartite war with Tipu Sultan, as a result of which the British power under Cornwallis reached a dictatorial position in respect of the Poona Government. But Mahadji also had then grown equally strong in the north, having finally overcome all Rajput and Muslim opposition. "In July 1792 Mahadji under his sanction transmitted the intelligence that the Emperor of Delhi had written to the Peshwa and to Sindia (then in Poona) informing them that 'he hoped through their exertions to obtain some tribute from Bengal.' This plain intimation could not be overlooked by Lord Cornwallis. He in August 1792 furnished his Resident at the Court of Sindia with instructions

to represent that in the present condition of the Mughal (the prisoner of Sindia), he should consider all letters written in his name to be by Sindia's power and authority only, and that the attempt to establish principles of the above description by any power whatsoever will be warmly resented by this Government." His Lordship goes on to instruct his Political Resident,—" you will take care to recall in the most forcible manner to Sindia's recollection, the spirit of moderation and forbearance that has been manifested by this Government during the long period in which he has been employed in extending his conquests in Hindustan."[1]

This indicated the relationship in which Mahadji stood towards the British power. He seriously prepared for a trial of strength and for that purpose attempted to form a combination of the Indian powers, the Sikhs, the Afghans, Tipu Sultan and others. When Tipu was killed in 1799 Mahadji's secret correspondence was discovered in the latter's palace at Shrirangapattan. Unfortunately Mahadji was dead by that time and circumstances put off the trial of strength till 1803.

2. **Ali Bahadur's rupture with Mahadji.**—The arrival of Tukoji Holkar and Ali Bahadur in the north began to disturb the unity of counsel and command which Mahadji till then possessed. Since Tukoji and Mahadji separated in 1780, the latter had advanced by long strides in the political arena, while the former had sunk to a second rate position, possessing no judgment of his own but playing into the hands of his subordinates and secretaries. Tukoji was the chief executive servant of Ahalyabai but was hardly trusted by her. When Mahadji asked for reinforcements from Poona after his disaster of Lalsot, Nana sent Tukoji to his help as the only man, then available conversant with northern affairs. As a counterpoise Ali Bahadur was asked to accompany Tukoji. Nana had intimated to Mahadji to pay the charges of Ali Bahadur's troops, but Mahadji being himself in great distress could not bear Ali Bahadur's expenses, with the result that severe friction arose between them. If Mahadji was to pay for Ali Bahadur's Contingent, why should he not engage fresh men

1. Wilkes' *History of Mysore*, Vol. II, p. 317. Poona Res. Cor. Vol. II, p. 246-247.

for himself with the same money? If Nana sent help from Poona, evidently he was bound to bear the cost. At least that was Mahadji's view. Nana had instructed Ali Bahadur to proceed to Bundelkhand, after he had finished Mahadji's job, and recover in that quarter the former Maratha territories which had been seized by some rebels. Nor were Tukoji and Ali Bahadur asked to hold themselves subordinate to Mahadji, as this would have been derogatory to their status. They claimed an independent position, leading to disunity of counsel and adding to the original friction. Mahadji never took kindly to these chiefs from Poona, who had come to his relief and who followed Nana's guidance. He had recently made vast new conquests of which Tukoji demanded a share. Mahadji claimed payment of expenses which had been incurred on those conquests before he could share them with Tukoji. Such questions came to be hotly argued for nearly a year and a half, producing an acrimonious wordy warfare. The trouble came to a head when Mahadji fell suddenly ill in the months of June and July 1789, when for a few weeks his life was despaired of, and all political activities came to a standstill.

In those superstitious days sudden ailments like this were attributed to magic on the part of hostile agents. As soon as Mahadji was taken ill, an inquiry was undertaken which disclosed that the two Gosavi brothers had employed black magic to encompass Mahadji's ruin.[2] These Gosavis were known to be time-servers with no fixed allegiance and possessing the ill repute of faithlessness and treachery towards those whom they served. Once they were the servants of the Nawab Wazir, then they came into the Emperor's employ and later became Mahadji's subordinates, as he was the absolute controller of the Emperor's affairs. Mahadji had often noticed their double-dealing when they disclosed his plans to his Rajput opponents, possibly receiving gratification in return. It was later discovered that they had a secret understanding with Ali Bahadur in a plan to remove Mahadji from his position with the Emperor and instal Ali Bahadur in his place. The open rupture between Holkar and Mahadji offered opportunities to the

2. For full account see Sir Jadunath's article, *Mod. Rev.* March, 1944.

Gosavis which they were not slow to turn to their advantage with a view to ruining Mahadji. In the monsoon months of 1789, Mahadji who was ailing, attributed his trouble to the agency of some secret enemy. An investigation was ordered. On 14th July spies brought in reports about a woman in Vrindaban having practised magic upon Mahadji's life. The next day the woman was brought to Mahadji's presence. She confessed that the Gosavis had employed two agents to give her materials for sorcery and wine to bring about the ruin of Mahadji. Upon this evidence Mahadji besieged the Gosavi brothers' camp and had Himmat Bahadur arrested. As he was being conveyed to Mahadji's camp, he suddenly made his escape and entering Ali Bahadur's tent, took shelter under the Peshwa's flag. Thereupon Mahadji called upon Ali Bahadur to deliver him. The latter refused and referred the question to Poona. Mahadji's exasperation knew no bounds and for a time such a complete rupture occurred between him and Ali Bahadur, that a civil war was apprehended every moment. Mahadji arrested the Gosavi's wife and children. Most of the chiefs on both sides tried to mediate and bring about a workable understanding, but these proved of no avail. The dispute on being referred to Poona fanned the anti-Sindia sentiments there into a white flame. Tukoji Holkar strongly supported Ali Bahadur in not giving up the Gosavi into Mahadji's hands, urging that it was a question of the Peshwa's prestige to whose flag the Gosavi had resorted. For a time the relations between Mathura and Poona were poisoned by ugly rumours; and exaggerated reports poured into Poona against Mahadji. The latter wrote strong protests against the allegations and begged to be relieved of his duty in north India altogether. Ali Bahadur himself wrote such bitter invectives against Mahadji to Nana, that his mother, then in Poona, sent him a severe warning not to indulge in such strong language through letters against a powerful chief like Mahadji, lest the letters should be intercepted and opened on the way and thereby bring on serious consequences.

Nana, at Poona, at first supported Ali Bahadur, but soon realized the force of Mahadji's contention and wrote to Ali Bahadur, "You must deliver the Gosavi to Mahadji and close

the affair. You must not support him either with money or with your armed forces. You must not conduct independent negotiations with the Rajputs or other chiefs, so long as Mahadji alone is responsible for the whole management of northern affairs. You must do nothing behind his back." Nana wrote to Tukoji also advising him to accept Mahadji's leadership. At the same time Nana never gave up his own rooted suspicions about Mahadji. Throughout the vague and varying instructions he wrote at this time, one hardly discovers any consistency in his views on the situation in the north. In one letter he clearly intimated to Ali Bahadur that Mahadji would never allow him an independent field of action and that he would always contrive to bring him into trouble. At another time he wrote that Ali must obey Mahadji fully. After a good deal of correspondence it was decided that the Gosavi should be asked to do duty in Bundelkhand. Pressure from friends and mediators made Mahadji accept the sacred oaths taken by Ali Bahadur ; he restored the Gosavi's family to him on Ali Bahadur remaining guarantee for his good conduct. Thus the affair came to be temporarily closed.

A little later, however, Mahadji discovered a secret intrigue by Ali Bahadur with Ismail Beg and with the rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur, which led to a fresh estrangement between the two. When Mahadji renewed his campaign against the Rajputs in 1790, Ali Bahadur hesitated to join him and deputed only a very weak detachment to act on his behalf, as he was entirely under the spell and advice of the Gosavi. He also induced Tukoji Holkar to oppose the lead of Mahadji and to keep in confinement his chief secretary Naro Ganesh on the plea that he was a partizan of Mahadji. Undaunted by these treacherous activities of his two principal helpmates, Mahadji conducted his campaign against the Rajput princes and brought it to a speedy and successful issue. The source of the whole mischief Mahadji attributed to Nana Phadnis, for he publicly declared that Ali Bahadur could not go to such a length on his own initiative and that he acted advisedly counting on the support he had from Nana. For two years the Gosavi was shielded by Ali Bahadur even against the explicit orders communicated to him by Nana and often against the sound advice imparted to him by Tukoji Holkar. In disgust, Mahadji ulti-

mately asked Nana to recall both Tukoji and Ali Bahadur to Poona. But Nana did not accept this proposal either, thereby keeping open the growing ulcer between Sindia and Holkar.

This long drawn and vexatious affair did incalculable harm to the general interests of the Maratha Power in the north. Nana Phadnis himself felt so embarrassed by these developments that he sent his own special confidential agent Vithal Gopal Tambe to the theatre of Mahadji's activities and asked him to make a full and secret report of Mahadji's situation with reference to Ali Bahadur and the Gosavi brothers. Tambe's report from Jaipur dated 25th July 1791 and Hingne's remonstrance in the same connection are valuable documents shedding full light on the mismanagement and confusion raging in the Maratha administration in those quarters.[3]

How this regrettable affair undermined the prestige and efficiency of the Maratha administration can be easily conceived. The fall of Ghulam Qadir was a moment which marked Sindia's complete ascendency in imperial affairs. If he had been then willingly supported by Holkar and Ali Bahadur, the elements hostile to the Marathas, such as the Rajput chiefs, Ismail Beg and the Gosavis would have collapsed in no time, so that Mahadji could have moved to the south in 1790 to concert with Nana a strong policy with reference to the Tripartite treaty against Tipu Sultan. A bold front was needed at that critical moment. Men in responsible positions even then made this clear. Vithal Shivdeo's son Shivajipant Bapu, then present in the north, all along exerted himself to the utmost to bring about a reconciliation between Mahadji and Ali Bahadur ; but his efforts proved of no avail.[4]

Every day that passed simply increased the tension between the Maratha chiefs. Ultimately Ali Bahadur decided to proceed to Bundelkhand and was advised by his friends to call on Mahadji and take a formal leave of him. A visit was arranged ; but as Ali Bahadur insisted on taking with him a large number of armed followers to the meeting place, Mahadji on his part assembled a strong guard of his own by way of precaution. When Ali Bahadur came to learn of such

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3. I. Sangraha, Ait. Ti. 6. 33 ; Delhi Y. Supplement Nos. 47-52.
4. Mahadji Sindia's Papers, Gwalior nos. 582-590.

a development, he decided to drop the visit and marched away in severe resentment. The Dasara day of 1790 thus proved one of dismal consequences.[5]

Ali Bahadur could not proceed to Bundelkhand immediately and roamed about for a long time from October 1790 to May 1791 in the region of Jaipur, trying to obtain funds for effecting his future designs. He was now a penniless beggar, utterly distrusted by all, and living only on the hollow promises which his new false friends—the Gosavi brothers fed him with. After wasting nearly a year in useless marches, he piteously begged Tukoji Holkar for a loan ; the latter although in no better position himself, pledged his personal credit and advanced three and half lacs to Ali Bahadur, thus enabling him along with the Gosavis to proceed into Bundelkhand, where he arrived towards the end of 1791. Here he tried to obtain tributes from the former Bundella vassals with the help of the Gosavi contingent. But the old Maratha chiefs, such as the two sons of Govindpant of the Panipat days, openly opposed these fresh ambitions of Ali Bahadur. Mahadji too had his own stakes in Bundelkhand along with Gwalior and Gohad, which he had long ago reduced to obedience at great sacrifice. In order to safeguard his interests, Mahadji was compelled to send his detachments into that region and here again a clash became imminent, so that Ali Bahadur found himself in the extremity of embarrassment, a consequence of his uncalled for opposition to Mahadji's measures. Maratha rule in Bundelkhand practically vanished on account of the anarchy thus set in, and Nana Phadnis in Poona had to bear the loss in helpless inaction.

Ali Bahadur invited all this trouble upon himself by refusing to co-operate with Mahadji. His further operations in Bundelkhand can be shortly summed up. After years of vain struggle he managed to carve out for himself a small principality at Banda. He besieged Kalinjar and was killed there during the operations on August 28, 1802. His allies, the Gosavi brothers obtained a separate provision for themselves by accepting British vassalage in 1804. Ali Bahadur's successors

5. Bhave's Rumal 3. 159.

ruled at Banda till the days of the great mutiny of 1857, in which the jagir of Banda came to be confiscated.

3. **Holkar's house in hopeless decline.**— Tukoji Holkar's deputation by Nana Phadnis for Mahadji's support in 1787 likewise proved barren of good. Sindia and Holkar were the two principal props of the Maratha State since the days of Bajirao I ; but it was not always possible in the nature of things for these two props to put forth equal ability and capacity during succeeding generations. The Sindia brothers, sons of Ranoji were all able men ; not so the Holkar successors of Malharrao I. After that chief's death, his house became a double government, the lady Ahalyabai as the nominal chief at the headquarters holding the purse tightly, and Tukoji Holkar as her executive officer conducting campaigns and missions outside, in obedience to her wishes and instructions. Thus for practical purposes Mahadji and Tukoji now came on the scene as arbiters of Maratha distinies.

The history of the Holkar family after Malharrao's death is a sorroy tale of intrigue, dissension, mismanagement and vice. The pious Ahalyabai could hardly control the disorder in her own household or the external politics in which Sindia now attained prominence. She did not realize the strength of the British pressure on the Maratha State in the midst of her devotional occupations conducted in her retreat of Maheshwar. While she was lavish in charities, she did not see the necessity of improving her armies on the model required by the circumstances or of co-operating with Mahadji in his wars and measures. The result was that this second prop of the Maratha State gradually deteriorated. Tukoji claimed equal rights with Mahadji, but neglected to share his responsibility to the same extent. Instead of easing the troubles created for Mahadji by the Rajput combination, Tukoji sided with his enemies and considerably weakened his endeavours. Tukoji was a mere soldier addicted to drink, so that in matters of administration he played into the hands of his selfish and intriguing secretary Naro Ganesh. Ahalyabai and Tukoji, both nearly of the same age, never agreed in their views or methods. The lady tried to remove Tukoji from his position, but had no one else in the family to take his place as a leader of the armies.

Nana Phadnis vainly tried to put an end to this double government of the Holkar house. He proposed to entrust its sole management to Tukoji, making Ahalyabai a non-entity with provision for her personal expenses and religious duties. But this arrangement the spirited lady refused to accept; nor could Nana enforce it against the lady's strong will and the universal reverence which she commanded in society. Mahadji also tried his hand in adjusting the matters for the Holkar house, but with no better success. The result was that while the strings of the purse were held tight by the lady, Tukoji had to starve his armies when out campaigning.

This is only one typical case illustrating the general rotten condition of the whole Maratha State, which only a drastic surgical operation could have saved. Under such circumstances Mahadji worked his way alone, as cautiously and prudently as he could. He trained and reared his own band of able helpmates and asked co-operation as much from the Holkars as from the Central Government of Poona. But his growing power only created jealousy in both. Tukoji's household was steeped in vice. His four sons were either imbeciles or vain braggarts, raving like mad men in their drinking fits, and rushing at each other's throats. They were riotous and clamouring for money to feed their vices without rendering any useful service to the State. Tukoji's wife Rukmabai and his able but corrupt manager-in-chief Naro Ganesh had for years to face the perennial problem how to keep the sons from mischief, a problem which equally worried the saintly Ahalyabai. With jealous eyes they noticed the growing power of Mahadji but refused to share his toils and expenses. As Mahadji followed a certain definite programme towards the Rajputs, Tukoji too claimed to have an independent plan of his own, and Ahalyabai simply added to the confusion by constantly egging Tukoji on in his claim of equality with Sindia. Mahadji found himself helpless in satisfying the demands of Holkar. After Mahadji's reverse at Lalsot, Tukoji had been specially deputed to co-operate with the former; but instead of receiving co-operation, Sindia met with such opposition from him at every step that in despair he asked the Poona Ministers to relieve him of his task in the north.

At last Mahadji finished his northern undertaking successfully in 1791 and returned to the south at the height of success and glory, without leaving any substantial power or sphere of activity for the Holkar to enjoy. Tukoji, Ahalyabai and the youngsters visibly felt the mortification that thereafter they would have to play the second fiddle to Sindia : whereas at one time the two chiefs had been on a footing of perfect equality. They failed to realize that ancestral glory or family tradition avails very little in this matter of fact world. The concerns of the State depend for their success, on character and capacity. When in 1788 Tukoji arrived in north India, Ahalyabai particularly admonished him to assert his individuality on equal terms with Sindia, as Malharrao had done during the days of Bajirao I. The affair of the Rana of Udaipur, which pertained to Holkar's sphere, was settled by Mahadji in November 1791 by capturing the famous fort of Chitod and restoring it to the Rana. Ahalyabai considered this an infringement of the territorial rights of her house and an insult to her government. On the other hand Mahadji lost all respect for any member of the large Holkar family, now sunk in vice and vanity, utterly oblivious of the dangers that had begun to threaten the Maratha State from outside. In this sullen atmosphere when, in January 1792, Mahadji left Ujjain for Poona, he did not care even to pay a formal visit to Ahalyabai. She had lost her son-in-law in the preceding December and at least a condolence visit from him would have been appropriate. This estrangement reached its height during his journey to the south when an unexpected trouble occurred for Mahadji at the crossing of the Narmada, which further embittered the relations of the two families. Ahalyabai had posted a party of guards at the village of Satwas to collect tolls from the men and animals that had to be ferried over the river. Mahadji had a large following and refused to pay the toll claimed by Holkar's customs-collectors. The incident, trivial in itself, so enraged the old lady that she uttered a curse that the Patel would never live to return, as the tradition says. It came true.

The growing jealousy and enmity between the two powerful chieftains set ablaze a conflagration, the flames of which ruined not only the two houses of Sindia and Holkar, but des-

troyed the entire edifice of the Maratha Confederacy. Lakheri was to be the beginning of the end, the sequel being supplied by Yashwantrao Holkar's attack upon Poona and the Peshwa's flight to Bassein in 1802. These fatal portents of Sindia-Holkar rivalry were fully apparent to wise men then living in the Maratha State. The Holkar pillar was visibly cracking, and even the sober wisdom of Ahalyabai could not save it. Tukoji's son Malharrao II (born about 1770) became the greatest nuisance not only to the Holkar family but to the whole Maratha State. He bragged of annihilating the trained artillery and battalions organized by De Boigne. No one could control him. He collected roving bands, the precursors of the Pindaris and began to plunder and devastate indiscriminately throughout the Maratha lands. An appeal was sent to Poona for capturing and restraining Malharrao. But who could dare lay hands on a Holkar ? Nana Phadnis invited him to Poona, but took no proper measures to control him. At Poona, Malharrao made specious promises of good behaviour and was allowed to return to Indore honourably. There, again he immediately resumed his evil ways raiding and plundering the peasants and devastating the fair lands of Malwa. Tukoji would take no action against him and Ahalyabai could not muster courage to restrain him. Years passed aggravating the mischief. Ahalyabai's old loyal servant Parashar Dadaji asked her pointblank, "This Saturnine devil should be at once kept under arrest and confinement." At last she called the Frenchman Dudrenec to her help and ordered him to bring Malharrao a captive. Dudrenec accomplished the task boldly. The turbulent youth was brought in chains before Ahalyabai and kept secure in the fort of Khushalgad. This result so put out the imbecile father that he threatened to commit suicide if his jewel of a son was not restored to his bosom. And so the disturber of peace had to be released. The civil war culminating in the battle of Lakheri (1st June 1793) so roused even the complacent Nana Phadnis at Poona, that it became impossible for him to ignore any longer the affairs of the Holkar house. He took the only way he was used to in such situations that is, to send a diplomatic mission to Indore. Devrao Hingne, the youngest of the Hingne brothers,

was chosen along with Balavantrao Kashi Katre to proceed to Indore and bring about a settlement of the troubles by persuasive methods. A vain hope! The mission reached Indore in August 1793 and after spending 18 long months returned to Poona with Tukoji Holkar in December 1794 without effecting any cure, beyond the long paper reports made by Hingne, now printed by Parasnis in his *Itihas Sangraha*.[6]

Holkar's is only one of the many prominent instances of degeneration varying only in personalities and details, but exemplifying the same moral decline on all sides. The Peshwa Bajirao II, Daulatrao Sindia, Sarzarao Ghatge who are soon to come on the stage of Maratha history, have the same tragic tale to unfold.

4. **Babarao Govind, Mahadji's adviser.**—Mahadji Sindia's accession to the Regentship of the Mughal Empire, prompted many of the Indian Powers to approach him for gaining their objectives. For example, Nizam Ali of Haidarabad despatched his own trusted agent, Babarao Govind Karmalekar, towards the end of 1784, who arrived and lived in Sindia's camp for several years thereafter advising Mahadji on important affairs and rendering him conspicuous service in many directions, possessed as he was of singular capacity in settling many a vexatious dispute in sweet reasonableness and shrewd argument. Babarao Govind was accompanied in his mission by Mahadji's sister Anandibai who had been married into the family of Rao Rambha Nimbalkar, a vassal jagirdar of Nizam Ali. She suffered from monetary distress and wished to secure some relief from Mahadji. Nizam Ali asked her to support his own suit to Mahadji Sindia. This consisted of the following items :—

1. The grant of a formal title of Wazir of the Empire which Asaf Jah I, his son and grandson had successively held ;

6. The curious reader can study the extensive literature contained in the Maheshwar Darbar letters, Hingne Embassy, the Holkar Kaifiat and the recently published sources of Holkar History Vols. I and II.

Hingne suggested a severe surgical operation as the only remedy, the entire suppression of the Holkar State for incompetency and mismanagement. But such a drastic step was beyond Nana Phadnis' powers and he had to content himself along with the great and small of his class in the administration, with the adage "after me the deluge."

2. Indisputable confirmation of Nizam Ali in his rulership of the Haidarabad State which Ghazi-ud-din the younger, now a homeless wanderer was seeing for himself ;

3. There was a large property in Delhi and its environs with lands and estates once possessed by Asaf Jah, to which now Nizam Ali preferred his claim ;

4. The old Jamuna Canal at Delhi was delapidating and required repairs. Nizam Ali now offered to pay two lacs for its repair and upkeep if the canal could be thrown open for public use ;

5. Nizam Ali claimed an amount of more than a crore by way of arrears of tribute from the British for the territory of the Northern Sarkars, which had been ceded to them. Mahadji was asked to realize this along with the sums he was claiming from the British for the Emperor and the Bhosle of Nagpur.

This mission proved altogether unavailing. Madhadji's sister, an old lady whom Nizam Ali selected as a deliberate family bond, died at Gwalior in 1785, but Babarao continued to stay with Mahadji for more than five years, having earned a name for probity and disinterested service. Through him, Mahadji obtained a loan of ten or twenty lacs from Nizam Ali, who was watching with anxious interest the widening gulf at Poona between Nana and Mahadji and who preferred the latter's friendship against the former's greed. When Mahadji in 1791 decided to march to the South, Babarao also returned to his master, the Nizam. He once again met Mahadji in Poona on his master's mission in 1793, when Ghazi-ud-din was trying his luck by raising a fresh Shahzada to the throne of Delhi. But Ghazi's efforts never proved successful as Mahadji did not support him. Nana Phadnis, however, had a soft corner in his heart, for Ghazi-ud-din ever since the days of Panipat and now assigned a small jagir for his maintenance near Kalpi.[7]

In the meantime, one Mirza Muzaffar Bakht, son of Jawan Bakht, claimed to be the heir-apparent (Vali-Ahad) of the Emperor and came to Poona in 1789 asking the Peshwa's support for being installed at Delhi. He lived at Poona and other places for several years ; but as he failed to obtain Mahadji's

7. *Hingne Daftar* II. 84.

support, Nana Phadnis alone could not countenance his efforts, and he died in want some time in 1795. How Mahadji was distracted by such incidents in the midst of the war he was conducting against the Rajputs can be easily understood.

5. **The Rajput collapse.**— During 1790 and 1791 Mahadji's captains were variously occupied in different localities in settling the country and putting down the prevailing disturbances. Khanderao Hari invested Kanod where Najaf Quli's wife assisted by Ismail Khan and the rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur, had defied Mahadji's power, being fully apprized of the internal dissensions that then raged between Sindia and Holkar. Bijaysinh sent his agents to Poona seeking redress against Mahadji's encroachments. He employed agents to get Mahadji murdered. "Bijaysinh needs a sharp and unforgettable lesson," wrote the Maratha envoy at Jodhpur. In February 1790 Mahadji managed to form a separate treaty with Pratapsinh of Jaipur, who agreed to pay regularly an annual tribute of fifteen lacs. He loyally carried out his engagement till his death in 1803.

Mahadji thus gradually succeeded in restoring full Maratha power in the north up to the Satlaj. He also secured an understanding with the Durrani Shah Taimur of Afghanistan, then hard pressed by the Sikhs, who, like his father Ahmad Shah, was covetous of the Punjab. A tripartite arrangement was negotiated on the question of the Punjab between the Marathas, the Sikhs and the Afghans. The territory between Lahore and Attock was ceded to the Shah ; the Sikhs were allowed to exercise their sway between Lahore and the Satlaj, and the Marathas to the south of that river. Thus the main point of discord so long affecting the Maratha-Afghan amity was finally removed. There remained only two opponents for Mahadji to deal with, the Raja Bijaysinh of Jodhpur and Ismail Khan. Gopalrao Raghunath was dealing heavy blows to the former from his possession of Ajmere. At such a juncture Bijaysinh and Ismail Khan joined hands and renewed their struggle against Mahadji during the summer of 1790 in the Shekhawati district of Jaipur, having entrenched themselves at Poona about 80 miles north of that capital. Mahadji took up the challenge and employed his best generals in a

concentrated attack. Gopalrao Raghunath, Jivba Bakhshi, Ambuji Ingle, Pratapsinh of Machedi with De Boigne's powerful brigades came upon Patan and manoeuvred for a position to attack the enemy. At this time Mahadji happily secured full co-operation from Tukoji Holkar, having freely and magnanimously granted him a full half share in all his recent conquests. The operations before Patan extended over nearly a month from 24 May to 20 June 1790, on which last day the bloody and decisive action was fought with strong artillery duels on both sides, lasting from morning till late at night. De Boigne's brigades executed a fearful havoc ; a large booty of elephants and a hundred pieces of cannon were secured. Mahadji sent glowing accounts about this victory to Poona. Ismail Beg saved his life by a precipitate fight to Jaipur.*

But this victory of Patan did not bring the Rajput war to an end. Sindia's enemies resumed the offensive again and showed no signs of submission. Mahadji employed his captains to devastate the Rathod territory. Bijaysinh began separate negotiations with Tukoji Holkar, once more trying to effect a breach between the two Maratha chiefs. In the midst of his anxieties Mahadji was heartened to receive from the Emperor the formal farman of his appointment as Naib-i-Vakil-i-Mutlak and the cession of two of the Hindu sacred places, Mathura and Brindaban into Maratha possession. Mahadji held a special Darbar on 7th August 1790 and received the farman in a befitting ceremonial. The event served to announce to the outside world the strong position Mahadji held in the Mughal Government and the high trust the Emperor placed in his capacity and management. Sindia's prestige was now fully restored in north India.

It was due to the strength of De Boigne's disciplined brigades that the victory of Patan was won, confirming the wisdom of the experiment which Mahadji had begun in hesitation five years ago. De Boigne was particular about regular payment to his men. As Mahadji's financial embarrassments often created trouble, De Boigne frankly demanded some arrangement by which regularity of payment of his men could be assured, and loyal service at all times could be exacted. He

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8. See Sir Jadunath Sarkar's paper in *Mod. Rev.* May 1943.

was, when first employed, allowed Rs. 4000 a month, which was afterwards increased to six thousand. In order to avoid delay in payment Mahadji allotted to the General's charge his rich districts in the vicinity of Aligarh, estimated to yield twelve lacs a year to cover the payment of his own salary and that of his men. De Boigne administered the fief very ably and so improved its annual yield as to secure the highest efficiency for his new army. The experiment served as a worthy example even for British administrators to copy at a later date.

After the battle of Patan Bijaysinh tried various means to seduce the French General from his loyalty to Mahadji. De Boigne replied to him, "What more can you give me? I already fully possess the two kingdoms of Jaipur and Jodhpur," so sure was the General of his victory over the Rajput combination. He at once captured the town of Ajmere and its strong fort Taragad (21st August 1790). The joint endeavour of Mahadji and Tukoji in winning the victory of Patan, brought a temporary reconciliation of the two chiefs. On 19th August they had a cordial meeting at which they held a frank discussion about past occurrences and future plans. A half and half division of all conquests and spoils was agreed upon between them. It seems Mahadji did not abandon his exclusive hold both on the territories and their administration. Once more friction was renewed.

On 27th August Mahadji went into tents for a fresh campaign to finish the Rajput opposition and celebrated the usual birthday ceremony of Shrikrishna (2nd September) having already despatched Ladoji Deshmukh against Bijaysinh. Gopalrao Chitnis, Jivba Dada, Kashirao Holkar (son of Tukoji) advanced into Jodhpur territory, determined to smash all opposition and reduced Sambhar, Rupnagar and other posts. Bijaysinh on his part took his stand on the plain of Merta and pressed into service all the male members of his whole population between the year of 14 and 60, for a final deadly effort against Maratha hegemony. While the Rajputs were yet waiting for the arrival of Ismail Beg's contingents to join them, De Boigne on the morning of 10th September opened his artillery on the Rajput horse. Four thousand Rathods answered De Boigne's charge in a frenzy and were completely mowed down. The whole enemy camp fell into Maratha hands

with all their belongings. Bhimrao Singhvi, the Commander-in-chief of Bijaysinh ran to Nagor and swallowed poison. The battle-field of Merta was covered with the dead and wounded of the Rathod chivalry. Those who were alive were carefully picked up and properly treated by the Marathas. Writes Sir Jadunath, "This was the hardest fight in De Boigne's career and showed his military genius at its best. It will also be remembered for all time as a classic example of the utter futility of mere courage against discipline, and of the sword against bullets. Merta proved the superiority of the European system of warfare over the old Indian beyond the possibility of doubt."[9]

Mahadji at once sent off parties to capture Jodhpur the Rathod capital, when Bijaysinh finding his position hopeless sent envoys to obtain terms of submission. These met Mahadji at Ajmere. The negotiations became unusually protracted on account of higgling and subterfuges. The following terms were at last agreed upon on 6th January 1791, a repetition of the scene acted 45 years ago with Dattaji Sindia :

1. Forty lacs to be paid by Bijaysinh by instalments in one year and thereafter an annual tribute of 5 lacs ;

2. The city and the fort of Ajmere with the villages under them to be ceded to Sindia in perpetuity.

3. Sambhar and some other districts to be similarly handed over to the Marathas.

Ajmere had belonged to the Sindias since Jayappa's days. It was wrested from them after Lalsot ; and now it came back. The holy place of Pushkar also now passed to the Marathas. Here Mahadji erected a splendid new temple. Lakhba Dada was appointed to settle the conquered country. Bijaysinh died soon after the war was over, on 8th July 1793. Just as the field of Patan proved the graveyard of Jaipur chivalry, the battle of Merta broke the power of the Rothods of Jodhpur. Appaji Ram casually remarks, "The Patil Bawa is very fortunate. He possesses marvellous capacity for managing men and affairs, others who tried to imitate his ways have failed."

Of all Mahadji's adversaries in north India Ismail Beg alone now remained to be dealt with. His story need not de-

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9. *Mod. Rev.* January 1944.

tain the reader long. Having now no supporter left and rejecting all overtures of Mahadji to win him over, he took to a wandering life. Najaf Quli Khan, another imperial chief, was also in a similar situation, a friend of Mahadji at one moment and an antagonist at another. For a time Mahadji pitted the one against the other. Najaf Quli while engaged in occupying Kanod died on 4th September 1790. Thereafter Ismail Beg occupied Kanod and joined Bijaysinh. When the latter gave up the struggle, Ismail Beg was isolated and was hunted by Mahadji's men from place to place. Early in 1791 he turned to the southern Rajputana, raiding Sirohi and Palanpur in search of support. In July he approached Ahmadabad and plundered the surrounding country. Being hunted out from Gujarat, he returned to Jaipur, but nowhere did he receive shelter. Khanderao Hari came on his track and routed him on 4th December 1791. He then was admitted into the fort of Kanod by Najaf Quli's wife who held that place. Khanderao besieged Kanod and having ordered heavy artillery from Mathura captured the place by bombardment. Ismail Beg's person was secured in April 1792 after Mahadji Sindia had already left for Poona. De Boigne offered personal protection to Ismail Beg at the intercession of Moti Begam a relation of Najaf Quli who had married De Boigne. The Beg was confined as a prisoner in Agra with Rs. 500 as an allowance for his monthly expenses. He spent eight years in confinement and died in 1799, the last surviving member of the Mughal service.

Thus by the end of 1791 all north India from the Narmada to the Satlaj came into Sindia's nominal possession and was reduced to a kind of settled political order. In southern Rajputana, Rana Bhimsinh the ruler of Udaipur had been faced by an internal revolt fostered by the namesake Bhimsinh of Salumbra, who had forcibly occupied Chitodgad and could not be dislodged. Chitod was a precious possession of Udaipur which the ruler could not afford to lose. In March 1791, when Mahadji came to Pushkar to perform there his spring festival, he was approached for help by the Rana for the recovery of Chitod. He was then in a hurry to proceed to Poona and did not immediately accept the Rana's call. But the Rajput affairs kept him occupied much

longer than he had expected, and he arrived near Chitod where the Rana came for his visit which took place on 5th September. Chitod was at once besieged and forced to surrender to Mahadji's men on 17th November. It was given back to the Rana's possession; the tribute from Udaipur was finally fixed and Mahadji proceeded to the south. On 4th December 1791, he thus wrote to the Peshwa :--

"Extremely anxious to pay my respect to you at Poona after such a long separation, I moved from Mathura through the Marwar territory, and receiving an appeal on the way from the Rana of Udaipur for reducing his ancient possession of Chitodgad, held by the rebellious chief Bhimsinh, I arrived before the fort and reduced it in a short time. It was due to your blessing that the renowned fort which took the great Akbar twelve years to reduce, was captured in a few days. I have settled the affairs of Udaipur, and having appointed Ambuji Ingle for the defence of the Rajput territory, I am going to reach Poona quickly and offer my humble obeisance." The Rana and the rebel Bhimsinh both paid parting visits to Mahadji on 5th January 1792. The vakils of Jodhpur and other states also paid similar visits, confirming their cordial obedience and effecting a settlement of the outstanding disputes in mutual negotiation. Mahadji left Mewar on 6th January escorted by Ambuji Ingle and Samru's battalions for a short distance. During the ensuing absence of Mahadji in the south, Ambuji discharged his duties in the north with exceptional ability, which the historian Tod has highly extolled.

CHAPTER VIII

CHRONOLOGY

1777, Feb. 8	Ghasiram appointed Kotwal of Poona.
1789, Aug.	Nana Phadnis building a house at Benares.
1791, Aug 29	Ghasiram confines Brahman criminals.
1791, Aug. 31	Ghasiram stoned to death.
1792, Feb.	Mahadji reaches the Godavari.
,, Mar.-May	Mahadji visits Tulzapur.
,, May 11	Peshwa initiated in office-work.
,, June 12	Mahadji arrives at Poona.
,, June 22	Mahadji's Darbar at Wanavdi.
,, Aug. 9	Mahadji entertains the Peshwa at dinner.
,, ,,	Sindia's claims being examined at Poona.
,, Oct. 8	Holkar's camp beaten at Suravli.
1793, Mar. 13	The grand colour festivals at Poona.
,, Mar. 23	Ill-treatment of the Sachiv.
1793, April	Reconciliation between Sindia and Nana attempted.
,, April-May	Sachiv's affair investigated.
,, June 1	Holkar routed at Lakheri.
,, July 23	Reconciliation between Sindia and Nana reported.
1794, Feb. 12	Mahadji Sindia dies at Poona.

CHAPTER VIII

SINDIA AT POONA

[1792—1794]

1 Sindia's aims in coming to the Deccan.
2 The Darbar of 22nd June, 1792.
3 Sindia's antagonism to the Poona Ministers.
4 Holkar's rout at Lakheri.
5 Sindia's triumph at Poona.
6 The ill-treatment of the Sachiv.
7 The tragic end of Ghasiram Kotwal.

1. **Sindia's aims in coming to the Deccan.**—Mahadji Sindia's arrival in the Deccan synchronised with the end of the Allies' War with Tipu Sultan, the indirect consequence of which in the opinion of close observers was the preponderance gained by the British power in the politics of India and the proportionate decrease in the Maratha prestige. To counteract this result before it was too late, was the first object which Sindia now set before his eyes. This was a moment when he had become the most powerful among Indian chiefs, the foremost champion of the cause of India's self-rule. He was a creation of the Peshwas, that is to say, he was one of those chiefs who from the small beginnings laid out by the great Shivaji, had raised the Maratha power to a position in which the founder's dream of a Hindu-pad-Padshahi was all but accomplished, when early in 1772 this Sindia under the direction of the able Peshwa Madhavrao I, had carried the Emperor from the British control to Delhi and restored him to his ancestral seat. Twenty years had now passed since that restoration, a period which had witnessed momentous changes in Indian politics, particularly the advent of a new rival to the Maratha power, this time not from the trans-Indus Afghan regions, but from the trans-ocean lands of Europe. Is this new power to be allowed an easy passage to the supreme position and for ever mar the prospect of self-rule or Swarajya for this vast ancient continent of glorious memories? Or should not the sons of the soil do their utmost to keep off the prospective enslavement? Jayapal, Jayachand, Prithviraj, Ramdev of

Devgiri, Ram Rai of Vijaynagar these and others died in an attempt to resist the Muslim subjugation of India. We cannot say that they entirely failed. For in the course of time the conquerors settled in this land, assimilated its life and culture, and became one with the people. The process now threatened to repeat itself in a more dangerous form. Sindia perceived the shadows creeping forward and set his face towards resisting British supremacy. Few then living realized the gravity of the danger. But Nana Phadnis at Poona and Sindia at Delhi were perfectly alive to it, on account of their daily contact with British diplomats, whose dealings have been plentifully reflected in the extant records now available for study. This was the main purpose which brought Sindia to Poona and which then puzzled not a few politicians of the day. The century of foreign rule we have experienced, has so perverted the post-Maratha trend of India's history, that it is high time those early conditions are put in their proper perspective.

Sindia's visit to his homeland created quite a stir not only in Maharashtra but throughout India. A few friends welcomed him ; but a vast majority sensed either personal or national danger from that event. The curiosity of all was roused as never before. Long in advance of his actual arrival at Poona, people began to form their own views about the possible reason and likely consequences of Sindia's visit. In the midst of the glow of his power few cared to remember that he was coming indeed to his home after an absence of twelve long years. There was a time when all Maratha chiefs were required to pay yearly visits to their master at the head-quarters. But his twelve years' absence with the momentous events that had happened in the interval, had obliterated all past memories, had made Sindia himself a stranger to Poona, to the Peshwa's Court with its youthful growing master, and with the rising generation of his compatriots in the Deccan. Most men believed that Sindia had carved out an independent kingdom for himself in the north and would have no longer any reason to maintain relations with the south. He was supposed to have amassed vast treasure and to have become invincible on account of his French-trained battalions, who had enabled him to master the Emperor. Why may he not then similarly

overthrow the Peshwa too? Such wild and fanciful notions filled the atmosphere of Poona, when on the sultry 12th of June Sindia reached the outskirts of the capital. *There he was a lion among hyenas and every one had to face him.*

Mahadji himself was not a little surprised to notice the unprecedented stir about an event, which he looked upon as an ordinary matter of course. He marched slowly and warily trying his utmost to calm the popular alarm. In order to disarm wicked suspicions he sent back from Burhanpur part of the battalions that had at first accompanied him. His confidential secretary Balarao Govind, who had long been posted in the Deccan to give him full reports from that quarter, advanced and met Mahadji at Toka on the Godavari early in February and communicated to him the alarm and unfriendly sentiments agitating the political circles of the capital. Mahadji thereupon wisely changed his course. From Toka he proceeded to Bid to see his Muslim *guru* and receive his blessings. From Bid he went to Tulzapur to offer worship to his family deity. Here he married another wife hoping to get a son and heir and then took up his residence at Jamgaon, his ancestral home. He thus spent four long months away from the atmosphere of Poona, utilizing the interval for visits and talks with people of all shades of opinion and sentiment, and quieting their groundless suspicions. The initial storm was thus allowed to blow over.

A contemporary bard named Ramchandra has composed a ballad on the battle of Kharda in which the following refrain occurs at the end of each stanza[1] :—

"The Sindia has left Hindustan and Gujarat ;
Has now sojourned to the Deccan,
At the behest of the Emperor."

This is perhaps according to one view the real motive of Sindia's visit. He had certainly formed a plan of his own for future action and come to the south at the command of the

१. हिंदुस्थान गुजरात सोडुन सिंदा दक्खनेंत आला ॥
हुकूम केला बादशहानें त्याला ॥

Shah Alam was an opportunist. While he gave his support to Sindia, he intrigued with British agents at Delhi. See P. R. C. I, p. 276 and II pp. 128-132.

Emperor, the sole master of India, to put that plan into action, viz., to keep the British from further encroachment. The snubbing he had received from Cornwallis rankled sorely in his heart. The Emperor had received every insult and every rebuff from the British ever since Clive's days. He lost territory, he lost tribute, he lost even the stipulated allowances for his maintenance in exchange of the Diwani. Shah Alam had witnessed the vain struggles of Siraj-ud-daula, of Mir Qasim and Mir Jafar, of Shuja-ud-daula, of Najib Khan, of Chetsinh and the Rohillas and of the poor Begams of Oudh, against British aggression. Clive, Anderson, Brown, Malet, Kirkpatrick, to these in succession and in rising degree, the Emperor became a dupe, finding to his cost his power slipping fast out of his hands. Mahadji alone had saved him and rescued him from intolerable indignities. He alone understood how Indian potentates now suffered at the hands of the British, like the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, the Bhosles of Nagpur, Nizam Ali of Haidarabad and even their creature Nawab Muhammad Ali of Arcot, now undergoing the agonies of misrule and interminable debts.

As this dismal aspect of Indian politics now became patent all over India, every eye began to look to Sindia as the saviour, as he had assumed the role of the Emperor's protector, having vindicated his capacity by successfully overcoming the Rajput and Muslim opposition. He had won the friendship of the Sikhs and the trans-Indus Afghans. Nizam Ali and Tipu Sultan courted his goodwill. Babarao Govind a diplomat of high order was striving to organize a unanimous combination of Indian Powers to save Indian independence. The most vital requirement for the success of the experiment, viz., the armed forces trained on European model, had now been secured by Sindia with the help of a French expert. The Maratha jagirdars of the Deccan were now to be impressed with the same crying need of improving their armaments. Thus by common consent Mahadji came to a position best fitted to champion the cause of Indian independence against foreign aggression. Such a move required the support of the Central Maratha Government for which a young promising master was being reared. So Sindia came to Poona, apart from other declared objectives, to remodel the Maratha power and put fresh blood into its organization so that the united power of Delhi and

Poona should prove effective. The ballad-singer has rightly disclosed the inner motive.

At the same time Mahadji was fully alive to the drawbacks of this plan. He had accurately gauged the strength of British arms and the ramifications of their diplomacy with Malet and Kennaway planted at Poona and Hyderabad, working under the guidance of Lord Cornwallis. He, therefore, moved cautiously, giving out his grievances against Nana Phadnis and his desire to exact satisfaction for them. The various British Residents tried to fathom Sindia's motives and reported each in his own way what they learned and gathered on the subject of Sindia's plans, suggesting action for restraining his growing power. He gave out as his ostensible objects (1) the settlement of his claim of several crores against the Poona Government for the expenses he had incurred during his operations in north India since 1777 under the Peshwa's orders ; (2) he was ready to prove that he had not bagged heaps of money by his capture of Delhi and swallowed them instead of paying it to his master ; (3) he also demanded an authoritative decision of his vexatious disputes with Ali Bahadur and Tukoji Holkar. These and other points were certainly given out as the ostensible objects of his visit, but the real object which he had set before himself, as disclosed in the extensive literature of the period, was the resuscitation of the Maratha Government with a view to meeting the threatening dangers which surrounded it.

Mahadji, however, was shrewd enough not to rouse any hostile sentiment either among his brother chiefs or the representatives of the outside Powers. He carefully avoided any clash of arms. As soon as he arrived at the Narmada he sent special agents to Raghuji Bhosle and Nizam Ali in order to fathom their views on the existing situation. Mahadji himself proposed to go to Nagpur direct, but dropped the visit for various reasons. The British Residents at Poona and Haiderabad sensed that an important political move was afoot and tried each in his own way to counteract it. Nana received cordial support from Malet against any mischief from Sindia.[2]

2. How Nana Phadnis was worming himself into British hearts is well illustrated in the following correspondence :—

Malet, however, was cautious and shrewd and advised his superiors to observe a strictly waiting attitude towards the Marathas and afford no cause for offence during the life-time of those two powerful chiefs. This advice both Cornwallis and his successor Shore fully endorsed and acted upon against the contrary suggestions of Kennaway at Haidarabad.

Writes Malet a month before Mahadji's death :-- "Permit me to draw your attention to the probable predicament of the Poona Government falling under the administration of a

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On 29th June 1789 Lord Cornwallis writes to Malet, "You may inform the Minister that I have with the utmost readiness and pleasure given directions to our Resident at Benares to receive Nana Phadnis' Diwan with the greatest personal civility and to give him every degree of assistance he can desire, to enable him to build a house at that city. You may assure Nana, should he execute his intention of visiting Benares, that I shall take effectual measures to secure for him all those marks of attention and respect to which he has a claim for his rank and dignity in the Maratha State, as well as from the consideration and high esteem which I have for his personal character." (P. R. C. Vol. II, p. 148).

Writes Cornwallis to the Court of Directors on 2nd August 1789.

"I have lately received with peculiar satisfaction a convincing proof of the good effects of Mr. Duncan's judicious management upon the minds of the neighbouring Powers, by an application from Nana Phadnis, the first Minister of the Maratha State, for leave to build a house for himself in the city of Benares for the avowed purpose of resorting to it occasionally to perform religious duties : and this application has given me the more pleasure as the resolution was deliberately adopted upon the report of Mahadji Ballal Pandit, his own household Diwan, whom he sent privately last year with a caravan of pilgrims to make his observations and who it seems had given a most favourable account of the mildness and regularity of the British Government.

On 23rd October 1789 Malet thus wrote to Cornwallis, "Bahiropant talked of the Minister's intention of visiting Benares at some future period when the Peshwa arrived at maturity and should have no further occasion for his guardian care. Bahiropant also asked me if your Lordship could be prevailed upon to grant this Court (Poona) a promise of occasional aid of a detachment of our troops. The present domestic arrangements of this state are unstable and I think it probable your Lordship might take such advantage of them as may be thought compatible with the interests and dignity of your Government. I am not sorry for the prospect of the continuance of dissensions among these chiefs of Hindustan."

vigorous head in the person of the present Peshwa or of an ambitious minister in the person of Mahadji Sindia."[3]

Thus came Sindia to Poona quietly feeling his way and earnestly trying to find out what kind of a master the young Peshwa was growing into, and whether he could not himself put into him a little more manly spirit and knowledge of the outside world, confined as he had all along been to the small narrow palace in Poona, amusing himself with childish games and pet animals rather than with warlike pursuits and surrounded by timid politicians who would not let him roam about in the open. For years Mahadji had stayed away from his home campaigning in Hindustan, and repeatedly begged the Poona Minister to be relieved of his thankless job there. Nana never granted Mahadji's request and urged that there was none capable of taking his place. Thus was Mahadji prevented from visiting his native land and more than once plainly asked what crime he had committed that he should be prevented from meeting his master in person for so many years. If he stayed away from the Deccan, he was accused of a desire of carving out an independent State ; and now when he came to Poona, he was charged, with an attempt to usurp the Maratha Government. How was he to get out of this dilemma ? He had exhausted his patience in his dealings with Holkar and Ali Bahadur. Could he not explain and discuss matters personally, organize the Central Government to enable it to exact implicit obedience from one and all, remodel the whole army system, and in particular take steps to meet the dangers that were fast developing for the State. This was a legitimate task which Mahadji alone could tackle. From 12th June 1792 to 12th February 1794, the day of his death, Mahadji spent twenty months in Poona without achieving any material results and with his aspirations practically shattered.

At the moment of his arrival he was indeed shocked to learn that Nana Phadnis, his colleague and sworn brother, should have been so frightened at his visit as to request Cornwallis for a loan of the Bombay Regiments then returning from Mysore to their station, as if he meant to start a civil war in the capital to put down the only man (Sindia) who

3. P. R. C. Vol. II, no. 204, p. 311.

could have saved the State in its extreme peril. It is this tragic attitude of the Poona Government of calling in foreign help to sustain its power, which Mahadji most bitterly resented and did his best to counteract. Says P. E. Roberts, "Sindia persuaded the Peshwa that a serious mistake had been made in the late war in supporting the British Power against Tipu and urged a closer connection with him."[4]

Writes Duff, "When Sindia moved towards Poona, various were the conjectures which ensued. Some considered that jealous of the increasing power of the British and their power at Poona and Haidarabad, his views were directed to the establishment of his own authority at Poona for the purpose of preventing the British ascendancy. Others supposed he had views on the territory of Nizam Ali ; and some believed his sole object was to prevent the interference of Holkar in his late acquisitions in Hindustan."

The notion of the author of the ballad quoted above that Mahadji moved to Poona under the Emperor's orders, is singularly borne out by Keene, when he writes, "In July 1792 Sindia professed to have received orders from the Court of Delhi to collect tribute from the British administrators of Bengal. It is difficult to understand why a fresh experiment should have been attempted on Cornwallis' patience. In a state paper of 2nd August, Cornwallis treated the subject with all due gravity."[5]

Says Malleson, "the troops organized and disciplined by De Boigne had disposed of the Mussalman and the Hindu opponents of Sindia. He still looked for more at their hands. The great dream of Mahadji's life was to unite all the native Powers of India in one great confederacy against the English. In this respect, he was the most farsighted statesman that India has ever produced. It was a grand idea capable of realization by Mahadji and by him alone and which but for his death would have been accomplished. Mahadji's successor Daulatrao also for a time entertained such a dream." Because the Maratha dreams were never accomplished, history cannot

4. Roberts' *History of British India*, p. 240.
5. Already quoted ; see P. R. C. II, No. 141 Cornwallis' letter.

be oblivious to the singular effort put forth by Mahadji Sindia to sustain the Maratha State in its independence.

Politicians at Poona were obstinately blind to the situation. They had no clear conception of the British aims such as Mahadji had formed by his dealings with them. Sindia's scheme was to set the young Peshwa on his legs, so as to enable him to assume charge of the Maratha Government and through him to build up a strong central authority that would exact implicit obedience from one and all. Nana Phadnis, however, clung to his personal autocracy, jealously hated Sindia and sought only how to avoid being overshadowed by him. The result was that Sindia failed to obtain willing and sympathetic support in organizing the Maratha State. The last chance for its resuscitation was thus foolishly lost. The Courts of Nagpur and Haidarabad were equally agitated at this moment by Mahadji's activities in Poona. Mahadji thought himself equal to handling the situation and confronting the British Power boldly when a suitable opportunity would offer. The mere presence of Mahadji was sufficient to keep the British in the awe of the Maratha Power. Malet repeatedly conveyed to his superiors his candid opinion and warning against risking a war with the Marathas.[6]

Mahadji Sindia was anxious to secure possession of the district of Bid where his spiritual guide the Muslim saint Mansur Shah lived and which belonged to Nizam Ali. He had a blind faith in the blessing he received from his saint whom he had invited to reside at Gwalior. But the saint declined the offer and refused to move from Bid. Mahadji, therefore, tried to make a permanent endowment of Bid to the saint. But Nizam Ali was unwilling to part with the place as it commanded the Maratha posts of Poona and Ahmadnagar. To obviate the difficulty Sindia obtained specific orders from the Emperor to Nizam Ali to transfer or exchange the required possession. It was to effect this transaction that Sindia proceeded to Bid from the Godavari, but he did not succeed in his object of securing the exclusive possession of that place.

2. **The Darbar of 22nd June, 1792** :—Having spent four

6. P. R. C. Vol. II, Introduction. pp. 22-24.

months in preliminary exploration, Sindia at last arrived near Poona early in June. He had already ordered quarters to be prepared for him in a camp at Wanavdi, in the vicinity of which the British Resident had his military cantonment. On the afternoon of 13th June the Peshwa went out personally to welcome Sindia and they met near the Ganesh Khind amidst display of cordiality. The young Peshwa had practically never before met Mahadji. True he had first set his eyes on this general in 1779 on the occasion of the British surrender at Talegaon, when he was a child of five years, hardly able to comprehend anything. He had seen Tukoji Holkar, Ali Bahadur and other chiefs, but not known Mahadji beyond the oral accounts that had reached him. But now at this meeting the Peshwa was fully eighteen years old and had already commenced to assert his power and personality as is apparent from the enquiry he had instituted into the high handed police administration of Ghasiram in September 1791. Mahadji used to send the Peshwa presents and curios from the north, such as a pair of powerful rhinoceros, wild animals and rare birds, for whom the young lad was known to have a fondness; and as he was quite active and impressionable, Mahadji after his arrival at the capital did not take long to win his intimacy and trust. There is a record that tells us of the Peshwa having formed a separate office room in the palace and started the regular work of looking into business and writing orders and signing accounts on 11th May 1792, that is, a month before Sindia's arrival. Mahadjipant Guruji initiated the Peshwa in his official duties. Whether this procedure was adopted in anticipation of Sindia's visit or at the Peshwa's own initiative, cannot be determined.

Sindia paid his first formal visit to the Peshwa at the latter's palace on 13th June, when the Patil laid his head on the Peshwa's feet in complete humility and respect due to a master. The Peshwa on this occasion took off the pearl necklace which he was wearing and put it round Sindia's neck. On the 14th Sindia again arrived at the Peshwa's palace and formally requested him to accept the titles and dresses he had brought for him from the Emperor. In the meantime Mahadji paid a visit to Nana Phadnis and the latter returned the com-

pliment in due course. They both freely talked and discussed the programme of a grand Darbar to be held for the acceptance of the imperial insignia. Nana had from the beginning his own views on the subject and never concealed his objection to that course. The presents sent by the Emperor had been lying at Ujjain for seven years. The written farman that accompanied the gifts contained the title, "Maharajadhiraj" meant for the Peshwa and Maharaj for Sindia. To these Nana objected on the ground that they could be applied only to the Chhatrapati. But Mahadji carried his point by referring the subject to the Chhatrapati at Satara who was hardly his master in deciding the complexities of the question, which after all were mere verbal quibbles, as neither the Emperor nor the Chhatrapati, nor even the Peshwa wielded now the real power which their ancestors had once held. Sindia's power was now unquestionable; and the objection was overruled after Sindia had referred the point to the Chhatrapati at Satara and obtained the necessary permission from him. A grand tent was erected with lavish display of decorations at the Gar Pir (near the present Poona Collector's office) where the ceremony was held. It is thus reported :—

"On the 21st June 1792 Sindia proceeded to wait upon the Peshwa in Darbar, bringing as his offering all sorts of costly rarities and products of Hindustan. The virtual sovereign ruler of this country, victorious in diplomacy and war over all opponents, lord of vast provinces and of unconquered legions, he approached the state enclosure on foot, leaving his elephant and his body-guard of grandees under European officers at the confines of his own camp. On entering the tent he took his station below all the officials present; when the Peshwa appeared, Sindia made his obeisance with the rest and declining the invitation to be seated, produced a bundle out of which he unwrapped a pair of new slippers. "This," he murmured, "was my father's occupation and it must also be mine." Then reverently removing the slippers which the young Peshwa had been wearing, he wrapped them in the cloth from which he had taken the new pair; and having laid them before the Peshwa permitted himself to accept the reite-

rated invitation to be seated, still carrying the Peshwa's old shoes under his arms.

"Next day the 22nd June there was a second and more solemn levee at the same place, the programme and arrangements of which Mahadji had himself drawn up in advance. Most of the Poona gentry attended on invitation by repeated calls from the chobdars." The British Resident Malet thus reported the affair :—

"About 12 noon Sindia proceeded to the Farman-Bady and after drawing up his infantry to advantage in its neighbourhood and placing the farmans, the dresses and articles intended for the Peshwa on the empty musnud supposed to be the king's throne, the Peshwa's approach on an elephant was announced. Sindia advanced to meet him and received him at the commencement of the carpets of the tents. On the Peshwa reaching the Salamgah, he made three low bows to the musnud and advancing placed 101 gold Mohrs on it as a nuzzar, repeated his obeisances and took his seat on the left of the musnud.

"The Darbar being arranged Sindia's Munshi delivered into the Peshwa's hands the royal letter ; after lifting it respectfully to his head the Peshwa delivered it to his own Munshi who explained its contents and one or two other papers, one of which contained a prohibition to slay bullocks throughout the Timurian Empire.[7] The following articles were then presented : Dresses, jewellery, swords, horse, Nalkie,[8] a palki, two morchels and three cases of the farmans. The Peshwa then retired to an adjoining tent to put the royal dress ; and on his return, after repeating his obeisances to the vacant musnud, seated himself to the right of it, when Mahadji and his chieftains presented their nuzzars.

"Soon after the Peshwa arose and followed by Mahadji and Haripant with the new presented morchels in their hands, proceeded to the Nalkie in which having seated himself, he returned in the state he came, to his palace accompanied by Sindia, at an hour after sunset.

7. Published at p. 431, of the Author's *Musalman Riyasat* Vol. 2.

8. A hauda with an awning carried by men on two poles, a respectable conveyance of those days.

"On the Peshwa entering his palace Nana Phadnis and the other civil and military officers of government, presented nuzzars except the Maratha mankaries who declined it.

"The investiture of Mahadji with the *naubat* of the Vakil-al-Mutalak now took place by the Peshwa's presenting him a complete habit that had been worn by himself, a sword and target, a horse, an elephant, seal and kalamdan, the naubat, the nalkie and a pair of morchels." The event was announced by a salvo of gunfire. After the Darbar was over Sindia returned to his quarters. Nana Phadnis and his partizans seem to have freely taken part in all these functions.[9]

These ceremonials proved only the beginning of Sindia's intercourse with the Peshwa which went on steadily increasing. The nalkie was a novel conveyance brought into Poona, which the Peshwa once again used at Sindia's request for a visit to the Parvati temple in his company. Thereafter he never used that vehicle. It used to be displayed once a year on the Dassara day. The Peshwa and Sindia continued to meet and talk freely and frequently, exchanged visits and dinners and went out together hunting and shooting. On 9th August 1792 Mahadji entertained the Peshwa at dinner in his own tent : and during the Krishna-birth celebration of the two years (12th August 1792 and 30th August 1793) the Peshwa attended by invitation at the camp of Sindia, taking part in the music and prayers of the occasion.

3. Sindia's antagonism to the Poona Ministers.— Thus we may presume Mahadji on his arrival at Poona had plenty of opportunities to explain to the Peshwa the affairs and concerns of the Maratha State and the part he was called upon to play as its responsible master. This influence of Mahadji on the pliant open mind of the Peshwa soon came to be noticed by Nana Phadnis and his party and became to them such an object of concern and jealousy, that to avoid an open conflict in the future policy, Nana proposed to retire from public life and proceed to Benares to end his days there in worship and

9. P. R. C. II, 140. Further details can be obtained from Parasnis' I. S. in Marathi, Ait. Tip. 1. 9 ; his *Life of Baijabai* p. 11 ; Khare No. 3482 &c.

prayer.[10] This development requires a little more explanation. The first two months of Mahadji's stay in Poona were mostly spent in formalities and ceremonials, the indirect result of which was to give the Peshwa and the public of Poona an idea of the sort of personality Sindia possessed and of the object and mission he hereafter was going to pursue. This initial stage was naturally crowded with visits, dinners and parties between Sindia on the one part and the high and low gentry of Poona on the other. Serious business, however, soon followed and the discussions that ensued disclosed a wide difference of views and policy between Nana and Sindia, and often produced acrimonious controversies. There is no connected account on record of day to day developments, of what questions were asked and what answers given. The vague notices that occur in the reports of the Patwardhans and other writers must form our guide in determining the nature of the controversy.

A report, for instance, of October 1792 says, " Parashuram Bhau, Haripant and Nana have held daily sessions for examining the monetary accounts presented by Sindia. He demands seven crores from the Peshwa for his expenses and has taken an obstinate stand. He does not talk of going away from Poona. He demands the release of Nana's cousin Moroba who was rotting in jail since 1778. Nana is highly exasperated by Sindia's demand of explanations and opposition and has offered to retire to Benares, having obtained the Peshwa's leave for that purpose. Parashuram Bhau says that if Nana leaves Poona, he on his part would rather precede him. Sindia and Haripant have become friends and the latter has agreed to conduct the administration after Nana's retirement. Sindia often takes such an overbearing attitude that the Poona partizans feel nervous about their safety. They are collecting their armed following to meet an emergency."

A letter from Sindia's camp dated 10th February 1793 describes the tense atmosphere and gloomy aspect of Poona in these eloquent terms : " There was a time when the example of Maratha rule used to be quoted as a sample for imitation. Now thick darkness prevails all around. There is no justice,

10. Vide his request to the Governor General for a residence at Benares.

no enquiry. Everybody is distressed at heart. Instead of getting justice one is persecuted for not falling in with the wicked cabal. There is none ready to hear a complaint. Our Maharaja (Sindia) receives numerous demands for redress of wrongs; but he has to turn a deaf ear to these as he has on hand important matters to attend to. We are waiting to see how his efforts turn out. Extreme ill-feeling exists between him and the Poona Ministers. Nobody cares to distinguish between right and wrong. People in the Deccan are solidly behind the Maharaja and wish him well in the contest. They hope, as he has come to these parts, he would accomplish some measure of reform and amelioration. One cannot say that God wills. The times ahead, seem unlucky and hard. Officials here don't relish the Patil's ascendancy. The Peshwa's own kindly sentiments towards him, the blessings of the common man and the Patil's own uprightness are sustaining him. There is every chance that he will succeed in reorganizing the Government. If he is enabled to carry out his plans, then alone will the State be saved, otherwise the prospect is gloomy. God's will be done. It is dangerous to write freely on present day occurrences. After all we are only instruments in the hands of Providence."

For a time there appeared chances of rupture in the Maratha Government at the very moment when serious hostilities were raging between Sindia and Holkar in Rajputana. But the sensible Peshwa was doing his best to bring about a reconciliation between the hostile parties through constant discussions with Sindia on the one hand and with Nana, Tatya and Parashuram Bhau on the other. A reporter says, "At the beginning of January (1793) Sindia disclosed a wicked plan. He has received 32 lacs from Nizam Ali. The latter has agreed to give away the town of Bid to Mahadji in exchange of the Chauth of Bidar." A deep laid plan of Sindia and Nizam Ali was in the making. Nizam Ali arrived at Bidar with strong bodies of fighting men, apparently threatening Poona. A pretext for his visit to Poona was not difficult to find. The Peshwa had lost his wife on 31st January and his marriage with a second one was fixed for 3rd March. For the celebration of this wedding invitations had been issued as

usual to all brother princes including Nizam Ali. The latter wrote in reply, saying that as he had not been able to attend on the occasion of the Peshwa's first marriage in 1783, he would now like to be present ; but the notice was too short and before arrangements could be completed for Nizam Ali's visit, the ceremony was over. Nizam Ali thereupon urged that another wife might now be taken by the Peshwa for his personal visit to him. But no one took this suggestion seriously and Nizam Ali continued to press his visit upon the Poona Court, with what secret object no one could gauge.[11] Sindia, however, calmed the fears of the Peshwa and the rest by declaring that he was alone able to meet Nizam Ali singly if the latter meant a war upon the Marathas. This bold stand quickly eased the threatening situation. People admired the loyalty and devotion of Sindia towards the Peshwa. The earlier suspicions about his disloyal attitude came thus to be gradually removed.

The 13th March was the Rang Panchami or the day of the usual spring festival. Sindia celebrated the occasion with such a lavish display of sport and merriment that its faint echoes have not yet died out. It was intended to be a happy conclusion of the Peshwa's recent nuptials. On that occasion Sindia arranged a special display of fireworks then exhibited in north India and unknown in the south. At Mathura and other places the Ram and the Krishna festivals used to be celebrated with lavish pomp and great rejoicing, of which Mahadji was fond and he now tried to attract the young Peshwa's attention to these novel forms of enjoyment by means of fireworks and the play of dye-syringes, common in the north. The whole route between the Peshwa's palace and Sindia's camp at Wanavdi was decorated and dye-stations for a lavish spray were arranged at the mansions of the various chiefs and other residents of the city. On that 13th March Sindia came in procession to the Shaniwar palace and took the Peshwa in an elephant procession accompanied by music, dance and the spray of liquid dyes and red dust (gulal). From midday to late in the night the whole city turned out to witness and partake of the celebration, even the recorded descrip-

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11. See P. R. C. II. 177.

tion of which strikes us as novel and interesting today. The whole way from the city to Wanavdi is said to have been covered knee-deep with the dust of the red powder.

It is interesting to note the various stages through which the Sindia-Nana controversy passed during nearly a year's time. At first Nana resorted to various subterfuges : Sindia threatened and countered the moves : Nana also threatened to retire to Benares. When the controversy came to the breaking point, Haripant Phadke and the Peshwa intervened and ultimately succeeded in bringing about a friendly understanding. Let the recorded evidence speak.

On 29th September 1792 W. Palmer thus reported to Cornwallis : " All report from Poona concurs in the determination of Sindia to take leave of the Peshwa after the Dassara (25th September). I have private intelligence from good authority that he has been both disappointed and deceived by the Minister, when he has reproached with duplicity in secret by encouraging his rivals in Hindustan to oppose him, whilst he gave him assurances to the contrary. Sindia has intercepted a letter from Nana Phadnis to Ali Bahadur promising him the Peshwa's authority and support in resisting him and upon this has declared to the Minister that he could place no further confidence in him and would immediately return to Hindustan and maintain his authority there by his own power."

On 9th February 1793 Kennaway reported, " I have received intelligence from Poona that Balaji Phadnis in consequence of a reconciliation with Haripant (a misunderstanding with whom was the chief cause of his thinking of retiring), has entirely relinquished his intention of retiring to Benares ; that he has been informed by Sindia that though he saw little prospect of succeeding in the design for which he visited the Deccan, yet having undertaken the journey at such a sacrifice of time and expense, he was determined to remain some time longer to see what could yet be effected."

This shows that no progress had been made in settling the controversy till February 1793. The surprising fact revealed in this connection is a misunderstanding which had arisen between Nana and Haripant Phadke. The latter, it seems, approved Sindia's contention and opposed Nana's move.

Another report on 24th April 1793 says, " Yesterday and on previous days Haripant called on Mahadji and held talks with him with the result that Mahadji was satisfied. This news will now reach Nizam Ali and will surely induce him to abandon his plan of marching on Poona." Another writer says on 1st May, " the next day Haripant accompanied by five troopers called on Mahadji and had a two hours talk. In this way he came consecutively for several days holding prolonged discussions. Mahadji found that it was a mere eyewash, and answered in the end, " What you say now must be proved by your action in the future. I am now here for a year and have made no progress ; we are just where we were at the start. I have been facing an abnormal strain on my purse. I already owe crores of debt. I now realize what you mean. You are a servant of the Peshwa, and so am I in an equal degree. So is also Holkar, once brother to me. And this brother was sent to the north to help me. How he acquitted himself in that task you must decide and then tell me if I am to blame. Our master is yet young and incapable of giving and enforcing commands. There is none to bring Holkar to book. At this very moment he is ravaging my provinces in the north. You know it and yet don't prevent it. You make light of it. While I alone stand to lose." Haripant answered, " Sindia well knew how often definite orders were sent to Holkar from Poona : even special agents were despatched to restrain him. But he did not listen." Sindia thereupon demanded to know, if Holkar flouted the Government orders, how he could any longer be the Peshwa's servant ; surely his estate deserved to be confiscated. Sindia added that he was ready to teach Holkar a lesson such as he would never forget. Said Sindia,—

" Take the other affair, that of Ali Bahadur. He yet harbours under his protection my declared enemy the Gosavi. Do you approve of this conduct ? If you as the Peshwa's servant cannot restrain him, order me. I am equally a servant of the Peshwa and I will execute his commands. If Ali Bahadur is a servant, he must obey. If not, he must be dismissed. If I am a loyal servant of the master, I am sure I have the nerve to do the right thing under his blessing."

In this way Haripant and Sindia had long and frequent

conferences together. At that moment the armies of Sindia and Holkar were arrayed against each other on the field of Lakheri. After this talk Mahadji at once wrote instructions to his commanders "to fall on Holkar, and not to hesitate any longer. I have waited so long and have no more patience. Finish with him once for all." Thus came off the grievous rout of Holkar on that fatal 1st of June 1793.

A report of 15th May from Poona says, "A severe storm had arisen between the Patil Bawa and the Poona administration and it was on the point of breaking out when Haripant came to the Patil several times and personally cleared away the differences. Then came again to Sindia both Nana and Haripant together and their explanations have in a great measure quieted the ruffled situation. Yet owing to mutual suspicion both the parties are on their guard. The Sindia-Holkar dispute is the main topic of the discord. If this is not prevented, the same trouble might break out here. If Holkar wins in the north, Sindia will immediately proceed there himself. If Sindia wins, he will at once call here the whole of his armed force from Hindustan and exact terms from the Poona party. If Holkar wins, the Poona party intend to raise an all out storm against Sindia by instigating Ali Bahadur, the Rajputs and other elements of the north and the Bhosle, Nizam Ali and the English of the south, against Sindia's power, which can thus be divided and broken in both theatres. So the decision of the present impasse hangs on the result of the Sindia-Holkar struggle in Rajputana. If Mahadji wins, he is sure to exact full retribution from the Poona chiefs." What a false cry was herein raised can be understood from the actual result. Sindia won complete success at Lakheri and made no inordinate demands and exacted no retribution.

4. **Holkar's rout at Lakheri (1st June 1793).**—The origin of the Sindia-Holkar rivalry goes back to the middle of the eighteenth century when those two chiefs took opposite sides in the war of the Jaipur succession. Ranoji Sindia and Malharrao Holkar started their careers together under Bajirao I. Malharrao left no worthy son after him at his death in 1766, while Ranoji Sindia at his death in 1745 had five

brilliant sons, who all poured their blood in the service of the State. Four of these sons and a grandson met their death on battlefields, while the fifth Mahadji was wounded and lamed for life on the fatal day of Panipat. Mahadji combined in himself Malharrao's leadership in war and his wisdom in diplomacy. Few Maratha chiefs possessed the long vision of Mahadji. At the outset of his career his resources in money and men were very much poorer than Holkar's. Malharrao was succeeded in authority by his son's wife, the pious and saintly Ahalyabai, who being a woman allowed a male relation Tukoji to act as her deputy in leading the armed forces in campaigns. This double government proved the bane of the Holkar's house, whose position in the Maratha confederacy steadily dwindled after the treaty of Salbye, when Mahadji pushed himself forward as the Regent of the Mughal Empire. Mahadji's rise excited the jealousy of Nana Phadnis who found in the disgruntled Holkar a ready instrument to oppose Sindia's ambitious schemes and supported Holkar as a counterpoise of Sindia.

But what spoiled the prospects of the house of Holkar was the curse of drink, to which Tukoji and his sons were inordinately addicted. Ahalyabai's husband Khanderao suffered from the same weakness. Tukoji's sons Malharrao and Yashvantrao were victims of this vice. Ahalyabai in vain tried to reform their lives. The contrast became all the more glaring when the Holkar house came to be matched against a born leader of the type of Mahadji Sindia. Holkar's ministers knew this essential weakness of their side and studiously avoided an open rupture. Sindia was plunged into difficulties by the disaster of Lalsot, but he soon recovered from the shock and became more formidable than ever before. When Tukoji arrived on the scene apparently to support Sindia, the situation soon grew tense as has been already described. Nana Phadnis had long employed Tukoji in the south both to avoid a conflict between the rival chiefs in the north and by way of a counterpoise to Sindia's growing power : and now when Holkar interfered with Sindia's administration of the north, he roused the latter's resentment and fanned into white heat the old embers of antagonism. Sindia denounced Nana's action

with all the vehemence he could command, "Nana has made Holkar sit down on my chest," said Mahadji.

An open clash seemed imminent to observers when Tukoji and Ali Bahadur arrived in the north to share Mahadji's spoils, but not his troubles. The traitor Gosavi mischievously utilized the situation to his own selfish ends, thus increasing Mahadji's anger. In August 1790 Mahadji held the customary celebration at Mathura to receive the imperial farman appointing him the sole Regent of the Empire. A grand Darbar was arranged where most of the grandees attended except Tukoji, who refused to take part in it, thus offering a public insult and a personal affront to Mahadji. The gulf between the two chiefs continued to widen as time advanced, when Tukoji began to support every opponent of Sindia and counteract the measures he proposed. When Ali Bahadur went to Bundelkhand, he started the same opposition to Sindia in that region. In 1790 while Mahadji was engaged in a life and death struggle with the Rajputs joined by his enemy Ismail Beg, Tukoji entertained in his camp the envoys of Sindia's opponents under the pretext of negotiation, but in reality to embarrass Sindia. Thus an intolerable situation developed between the two chiefs, both of whom submitted their dispute to Nana Phadnis at Poona. But the latter being committed to the support of Holkar and having really instigated him secretly to thwart Sindia's plans, could not now play the part of an honest judge. Mahadji quickly worked his way at Poona, and overcome all opposition, nursing in the meanwhile a just sense of wrong against Holkar for which he on his arrival in Poona demanded redress. Holkar, however, was still in the north apparently occupied in collecting tribute, but all the while concerting plans and measures to break down Sindia's power by every means. Sindia never wanted to wage an open war upon Holkar. Tukoji's responsible minister Naro Ganesh and his experienced cousin Bapu Holkar both strongly advised Tukoji to bring about a peaceful solution and avoid a recourse to arms.

When Mahadji returned to the south, he stationed the major portion of his forces in Hindustan by way of check upon the hostile elements at different places. The supreme command of this northern army was entrusted to the sober Jivba Bakhshi

with De Boigne in charge of brigades known as the campoos. The general administration was left in the hands of Abaji Raghunath Chitnis and his brother Gopalrao. Ambuji Ingle was posted in Bundelkhand and Khanderao Hari looked after the Emperor's affairs at Delhi and those of the Sikhs beyond. Lakba had long been in charge of the fort of Agra, where the prisoner Ismail Beg was confined. Tukoji Holkar watched all these arrangements of Mahadji with the utmost jealousy, and sought to wreak vengeance upon his adversary during his absence from the scene. As Mahadji's forces were scattered over a large area, Tukoji planned to destroy them piecemeal. For some time past he had imitated Sindia in his experiment of training his men in Western methods and had employed for that purpose the French general Dudrenec. Tukoji's son Malharrao in the excitement of drink bragged of hurling into the dust Sindia's campoos, of possessing the courage to face Sindia in an open conflict and of regaining the leadership for his house. For years these vaunting talks went on at the Holkar Court when the hot-headed Malharrao openly denounced the sober advice of elderly counsellors in service, like Naro Ganesh and Parashar Dadaji calling them cowards. Tukoji and Ahalyabai in their weak moments could not restrain the two spirited youths, Malharrao and Yashvantrao (the latter now about fourteen years old), and gave them a free rein to work out their plan.[13]

On the other hand Gopalrao Bhau in charge of Mahadji's affairs in the north, anxiously watched these hostile activities of the Holkars and kept himself ready to meet any emergency. It so happened that Tukoji began to seize Sindian territory in the vicinity of Alwar and provoked Gopalrao Bhau to come to an action in September 1792. This was a moment when Sindia at Poona had just commenced discussing his grievances with the Ministers, after the initial flush of ceremonials was over. Gopalrao Bhau was not the man to take things lying down. He came to close grips with Holkar in the region of Sawai Madhupur, south of the river Banas, where Suravli, Lakheri, Bhagavantgad and Indragad have attained a histori-

13. Note particularly Nos. 384 and 387 of *Holkar State Records* Vol. I.

cal celebrity in the present struggle. Tukoji had taken his post at Bhagavantgad, having formed a secret understanding with the Jaipur Diwan Daulatram Haldia for executing a surprise attack upon Gopalrao Bhau with the help of a Jaipur contingent. Sindia's generals having timely information of the plot, determined to forestall the enemy by suddenly falling upon Holkar's camp before the Jaipur contingent could effect its junction with it. On the morning of 8th October, 1792, as Tukoji was moving his camp to a different spot, Gopalrao Bhau suddenly made a surprise attack upon him at Suravli, in which a few of Holkar's men were killed. Tukoji himself was carried by his guards to a safe distance and thus escaped being captured. Bapu Holkar and Parashar Dadaji then approached Gopalrao Bhau and wisely closed the affair by a mutual agreement on points of friction. With this light skirmish the affair was temporarily closed.

When news of this affair of Suravli and the consequent compromise effected by Bapu Holkar and Parasharpant, reached Ahalyabai and Malharrao at Indore, they considered it a cowardly disgrace for the Holkar chiefs to have avoided extreme measures and demanded a repudiation of the terms agreed upon. This attitude became the subject of constant agitation at Indore and in Tukoji's camp for full eight months after the brush at Suravli. The two armies remained watching each other ceaselessly, seeking to gain a secret advantage over each other. The Sindian generals reported the position to Mahadji at Poona, who, then involved in his discussions with the Ministers, found added strength for his arguments in the obstructive tactics of Holkar in the north. In vain did Mahadji appeal to all in power at Poona to stop these indecent scenes of domestic recrimination. The Poona Ministers either did not realize the gravity of the situation or wantonly neglected to put a curb on Holkar, perhaps secretly welcoming the humiliation of Sindia. That the tension should last unremedied so long, appeared to observers as a sure sign of the impending crash of the Maratha State.

Malharrao found in this situation a convenient opportunity for proceeding with his wild design. He insisted upon being sent to the front with powers to override his father's

cautious advisers, boasting he would surprise and crush the new model of the Sindian army in one dashing charge by his light cavalry. Malharrao had no patience to learn modern tactics. Ahalyabai, engrossed in pious meditation within the four walls of her residence but equally keen to have the family disgrace wiped out once for all, was blind to the march of events in the outside world, and misled by Malharrao's high sounding boast, she gave him a free hand to proceed against Sindia in Rajputana by supplying him with whatever troops and money he asked for. On arrival at his father's camp, he hastily brushed aside the wise advice of Bapu Holkar and Parajipant and commenced attacking stray parties of Sindia's horse. All that Parajipant could do was to put off the evil day by a show of skirmishing around the Sindian formations. Gopalrao referred the situation to Mahadji at Poona. The latter replied in April, "Now that Holkar disregards friendly advice and is spoiling for a fight, let him have it. He has burnt his boats and left no room for compromise. Begin the attack at once and finish the business." Upon getting this reply Gopalrao decided to fall upon Holkar and secure a decision by force.

Malharrao could not be restrained and hostilities began afresh. Tukoji gave a free rein to his young giddy son, who thus had complete command of the family forces. Gopalrao Bhau and De Boigne carefully prepared for the coming contest. They formed a light mobile force and advanced upon Holkar's camp in the vicinity of Lakheri.[14]

This was the stiffest action ever fought in north India. Holkar's cavalry numbering some twenty-five thousand and about two thousand trained infantry of Dudrenec with 38 guns, were engaged by Gopalrao's twenty thousand cavalry, six thousand trained infantry with 80 light guns of improved French design. De Boigne's clever tactics won the day with Jivba Bakhshi's experienced handling. The whole force of Holkar was practically annihilated. Dudrenec fought to the

14. The first clash took place at Panchilas on 27th May, but the decisive action was fought on 1st June 1793. See *Modern Review*, February 1944, Sir Jadunath Sarkar's description. Indragad and Lakheri are now railway stations on the main line of the Western Railway, south of Sawai-Madhupur.

last, refusing to surrender though called upon to do so. He was picked up wounded. Malharrao's dash availed him nothing. He was picked up drunk and unconscious on the bank of a tank by the roadside. Holkar's defeat was complete and the action decided the Sindia-Holkar rivalry in Hindustan.

Holkar's men took to fight so precipitately that more of them died of thirst and fatigue on the way than those that fell on the field. Gopalrao secured valuable spoils in the deserted camp of Holkar, who lost the day through the rash behaviour of the different wings, having no concerted plan or united action. De Boigne did not allow them to go away safe, once they had wantonly attacked him. He utilized his opportunity fully and inflicted a heavy punishment on his opponents. He himself wrote later that of all the actions that he ever fought, this encounter with Dudrenec at Lakheri was the most obstinate and occasioned the severest anxiety to him, while the issue was in suspense. From Lakheri he marched on to Jaipur and exacted from its ruler Pratapsinh a tribute amounting to 70 lacs which he had not paid before as promised. The crest-fallen Tukoji Holkar came to Indore from the fateful action and on the way satisfied his feeling of revenge by mercilessly plundering Sindia's capital Ujjain. Thus the Sindia Holkar estrangement which had commenced in pre-Panipat days, came to a head at Lakheri and culminated in the ruin of the Maratha State.[15]

5. Sindia's triumph at Poona.— The news of Lakheri flashed like lightning through the Maratha world and produced diverse repercussions. While Mahadji personally was glad that his men had acquitted themselves creditably in his absence, he grieved that matters had been pushed to such an extreme between the two leading chiefs of the State. It is said that when his subordinates suggested firing of a salvo of guns

15. The disagreement of the two families continued even through subsequent generations with great bitterness. The two distinguished rulers of the Mutiny fame, Tukoji Holkar and Jayaji Sindia never met in their lives except once near the end.

in honour of the victory, he prohibited such a course, calling it rather a day of mourning.[16]

The ministers of Poona, however, felt afraid that they would be the next on Sindia's list for vengeance, now that the only brake on his power was gone and that they would come in for dire punishment for their past sins of omission and commission. They at once yielded to him the points which he had been long demanding. They gave up all their former defiance and readily effected a reconciliation with him. Haripant now played the significant part of a mediator as has been already described. Mahadji on his part was wise enough to accept the proffered hand of friendship of the ministers in order to secure unity of counsel in the Central Government. It also became evident that he had never dreamt of seizing the power of the Government at Poona for himself. The young Peshwa was fast growing up to manhood and he might be expected to act as a competent master, so that it now became the concern of all to give him full support. Mahadji hated to use his armed strength against his compatriots. Only once before in his life he had had recourse to such a method, namely in his war on the raja of Kolhapur (1778), but he had reluctantly accepted even that undertaking and executed it as moderately as he could. All the other wars and conflicts that he waged were against the enemies of the Maratha State. He equally deplored the restraint he had to impose upon the Rajputs by waging war against brother Hindus. The Rana of Gohad and the chief of Raghogad were rebels who deserved punishment. He now wisely made friends with the ministers of Poona to uphold the Peshwa in his dignity.

Sindia had already won the heart of his master by his frank and open manners, his love of outdoor sports and his constant concern for the welfare of the Maratha State. He had taken the lead in exposing the iniquity of the prevailing

16. A report became current that he punished his vice-gerent Gopalrao Bhau with dismissal and confinement. Sindia might have made such a gesture, but he never carried it out as he knew that Gopalrao had only acted under his orders. Gopalrao continued long in his office after Mahadji's death.

Poona administration and drawing the Peshwa's attention to several cases requiring redress. The corrupt police administration of Ghasiram, the ill-treatment of the Sachiv of Bhor, the miserable plight of the raja of Satara and other affairs were prominently brought by Mahadji to the Peshwa's notice. The offences were properly investigated and their authors adequately punished. After a year's tutelage and guidance from Mahadji, the Peshwa's whole outlook changed. He felt emancipated from the narrow secretive atmosphere in which he had been brought up, and began to realize both his powers and responsibilities. As soon as the news came of the regrettable affair of Lakheri, the Peshwa took the lead and succeeded in personally bringing about a reconciliation between Sindia and Nana.

In vain did Mahadji work for months to persuade the ministers to realize the gravity of the situation, but beyond discussions and explanations no headway was made. The Peshwa was just married and much appreciated the sports and amusements organized by Sindia. Haripant Phadke won Sindia's confidence and sincerely tried to effect a permanent friendship between him and Nana. By temperament a persuasive, yielding soul and possessing a profound sense of duty. Haripant was best fitted to act the healer with no selfish motive of his own. He made it his business to visit Sindia fearlessly in his camp and explain matters in their true light, unlike Nana who was afraid of going alone to meet Sindia. Phadke understood Sindia's plans and difficulties and freely offered him his sympathy and co-operation. Sindia was made to realize that with all his weaknesses Nana alone was the man capable of running the administration with no one else to take his place. Similarly Nana was persuaded to understand Sindia's worth and comprehend his difficulties. Nana admitted the shortcomings of the Poona administration and professed his readiness to rectify them.

The news of Lakheri expedited matters. The Peshwa immediately called to his presence both Nana and Sindia along with others and asked them both to serve the State disinterestedly. He explained to them in unequivocal terms that

Nana and Mahadji were his two hands right and left, and it would be criminal for the two hands not to work harmoniously. This speech had a magic effect. On 21st July 1793, Col. Palmer thus wrote to Cornwallis from Fathgad, "I learn by particular intelligence from Poona, that at an interview lately held between Mahadji, Nana and Haripant by the express appointment and in the presence of the Peshwa, the three chiefs entered into mutual engagements to reconcile their differences, to support the Peshwa's Government, to confirm the authority of Sindia in Hindustan, to accommodate the dispute between him and Tukoji Holkar, and to enforce the claims of the Maratha State upon Nizam Ali Khan, and that these engagements in order to render them sacred and inviolable, were taken in a temple and sworn to under the most solemn forms of their religion."

Nizam Ali's envoys Kalyanrao and Raghuttamrao residing at Poona conveyed the following news on 27th September 1793 :—"Sindia has settled all his business at Poona agreeably to his wishes ; his accounts have been signed by the Peshwa acknowledging a balance in his favour of five crores ; that he is to have the sole management of affairs in Hindustan; that he is to be furnished with such troops from Poona as he may require in his operations ; and that he is to do as he likes in regard to Himmat Bahadur Gosavi.[17]

On 1st October 1793 Nizam Ali informed Kennaway, "I have received a communication from Poona purporting that the ministers have agreed to all the demands made upon them by Mahadji including reimbursement of his expenses to the extent of five crores. As this large amount could not be at once procured, Sindia was allowed to administer the newly acquired territory in the north till the whole amount was defrayed and thereafter restore it to the Peshwa. The ministers also undertook to maintain at their own expense the Peshwa's contingent of troops under Mahadji's supervision for the protection of this new territory." Financial stringency was the main point in Sindia's contention, which after all came to be

17. P. R. C. I. 283 ; P. R. C. II. 194.

decided in his favour, although he did not live to reap the benefit of it.

6. **Ill-treatment of the Sachiv.**—It is necessary here to allude to a few other topics of controversy, which came to be linked with Mahadji's advocacy. The ill-treatment of the Sachiv was one such irritating topic of investigation. Mahadji was known to be a man of action, fearlessly and impartially exerting himself in the cause of justice and fair play, and the purity of the Maratha administration. People in general felt a great relief when on his arrival at Poona he began to exercise a healthy check on the administration into which so many evils had crept. When Mahadji began to assert his power, complaints of harassment and torture began to pour in from various quarters. The poor and oppressed found courage to come forward and denounce the corrupt and tyrannous administration of Poona. As a responsible member of the State Sindia felt himself called upon to inquire and redress them and indirectly to impart training to the Peshwa. One typical case of this nature was the affair of the Sachiv, one of the surviving eight ministers of Shivaji's constitution. Times had changed and those ministers had lost their former power and influence, and were carrying on a precarious existence on the patrimony that they were allowed by the Peshwas to inherit.

Raghunath Shankaraji Sachiv died on 11th July 1791 and was succeeded by his grown up son Shankaraji. This Shankaraji had three wives, the eldest a daughter of Sakharam Bapu and the second a daughter of Ram Shastri. Shankaraji did not possess the necessary character and ability for managing his estate ; and his two wives being highly connected in Poona wielded considerable influence. A third element for creating mischief in the family was Shankaraji's step-mother, a young spirited widow who appealed to Nana Phadnis for an efficient manager to look after the affairs of the family and obtained from him the services of one Baji Moreshvar. This gave rise to two factions in the Sachiv's house, Shankaraji himself and his wives as against his step-mother guided by the nominee appointed by Nana Phadnis, each trying to possess the power of management. A deadlock followed and matters assumed

a grave aspect ; the Sachiv and his wives came to be starved and prevented from performing the daily worship in the house. Complaints reached Poona when Haripant Phadke made an enquiry and advised Nana to recall Baji Moreshwar. Nana did not accept the advice and declined to remove his agent from the management.

The Sachiv bitterly resented the authority of the Karbhari (manager) and his step-mother set over him by Nana. The two in collusion managed to take possession of the forts and defied the rightful claimant, reporting that he was mentally unfit. As usual the Sachiv went to Jejuri for the Ramnavami celebration of the family deity (25th March 1793), twelve days after the grand colour-festival celebrated by Sindia for the Peshwa. Here a scuffle ensued over the possession of the gold idol which the Karbari Baji refused to part with. He sent a party of troops to restrain the Sachiv from the worship of this gold idol. These men attacked him while engaged in his prayers with the result that he and his wife (daughter of Sakharam Bapu) were wounded and some seven servants killed. The news of these occurrences at Jejuri reached Mahadji Sindia at Poona. He at once repaired to the Peshwa's palace and requested him to stop these high-handed proceedings against the Sachiv by a servant in power. Mahadji also sent a company of his own men to Jejuri, brought the Sachiv into his camp at Wanavdi, and arrested Baji Moreshwar and his henchmen. These proceedings created quite a commotion throughout the city and the ministers' party felt nervous about the consequences. An enquiry was ordered by the Peshwa when it was discovered that a plot was on foot to poison the Sachiv. Nana's conduct in the affair appeared gravely suspicious owing to an allegation that he had deliberately started this persecution of the present Sachiv out of a feeling of revenge he had entertained towards his late father. It was also suggested that Nana contemplated the confiscation of all the estates of Shivaji's ministers. Baji Moreshwar was Nana's agent directly acting under his orders, who prevented true facts from reaching Nana's ears. This was one of the instances which brought to light the nepotism and corruption of Nana's administration. The Sachiv's ladies conveyed this complaints to

Mahadji and begged for his intervention. Mahadji took up their cause and called upon Nana Phadnis for an explanation. The latter considered this a wanton interference and an affront to the station he held. Thereupon Mahadji sent his secretary to Nana and called upon him to have the wrongs righted and stop the Sachiv's harassment after holding an open judicial enquiry.

For a time the relations between Nana and Mahadji were severely strained. On account of Mahadji's firm stand the Peshwa, who also took a keen interest in the case, discovered that he was not free to act independently of his Regent. Mahadji put heart into him, enabled him to override his minister and assert his power by taking steps to remove the shortcomings in the administration, irrespective of the personalities. Many other glaring cases of mal-administration came to light in which Mahadji demanded inquiry. When Nana replied that he would soon start an enquiry into the Sachiv's case, Mahadji told him that he had no faith in that farce, adding "Yes, I know you will inquire. I have also investigated the affair and do not speak without enquiry. If we go and complain to our common master, he is already a puppet in your hands and has no independent voice. I have now wasted a year in Poona making no headway. I asked you last year to set right the affair of Sawantwadi, and that of the Gaikwad of Baroda. But you have taken no action in either case. In north India when I tried to assert my rule, you appointed Holkar and Ali Bahadur to thwart my efforts and block me in every direction. In such circumstances, all our hope centres in this small tender plant, the young Peshwa, upon whose strength the fate of the Maratha State delicately hangs. But you don't rear this plant up to full vigour by allowing him to exercise his will and freedom. I only see sure and rapid ruin in all this. Am I not as good as a servant of the Peshwa as you are, to institute enquiries and do justice where it is denied? Why should I not act here with a latitude equal to yours? Why can I not make the enquiry myself?"

This is one sample out of many on record illustrating how the Poona administration was run on one man's voice and authority, where all open door justice and fairplay

had come to be stifled. Mahadji delivered frequent remonstrances to Nana on this subject. In the case of the Sachiv when no action was taken on his first representation, Mahadji again proceeded to the Peshwa's presence and in an open council repeated the same charges so violently, that the Peshwa confessed he never knew that the affair of the Sachiv had assumed such a grave aspect. Haripant replied that an enquiry was going to be made. Mahadji urged, "Yes, you are going to do it : the master too will do it and you and I will see the result. I am awfully distressed at the future fate of our State by such wrong high-handed methods, the State which our joint ancestors reared at the sacrifice of their life and blood. I have exhausted all my patience and can wait not a moment longer for your so-called enquiries. I well know how these are conducted and what results they produce. I demand open justice here and now out of you, my master."

This plain open speech in a full assemblage so agitated Haripant, that he suggested such discussions should not be held in an open Darbar but in a private conclave. The hint was taken and at once the Peshwa with Nana, Haripant, Mahadji and his Chitnis Krishnoba retired to an anteroom where the same high words came to be repeated. Nana did not reply by a single word. The party dispersed. Mahadji returned to his tent and immediately despatched the following personal letter to the Peshwa.

'You are cowed by your worthy servants. I cannot tolerate such humiliation any longer. It seems my real object in all this controversy is not being appreciated. I, therefore, think it advisable to withdraw myself from your service and earn my livelihood elsewhere in this wide world." This note was delivered to the Peshwa by Ramji Patil, Mahadji's personal secretary, in the presence of Nana and Haripant. The Peshwa gave the following reply : "We recognise your sincerity and earnestness. We have every desire to support your views and effect the necessary improvements in the administration immediately. We give full reparation to the Sachiv." Upon this Mahadji for a few days kept himself entirely away and did not visit the Peshwa. The latter sent messages imploring Mahadji to come for a visit. He then

responded and gradually infused a new tone into the Court, enabling the Peshwa to assert himself. The Sachiv's grievances were quickly redressed. Baji Moreshwar and his son were punished with imprisonment in chains, and their property confiscated along with a large number of his abettors who had shared Nana's confidence. The Sachiv was restored to his power and position and was allowed to manage his estate as before.

There were other cases in which similar injustice and high-handedness were brought to light. For a time Mahadji had his way and ractified several palpable wrongs that came to his notice. This happened during the months of April and May 1793. Thereafter Mahadji began slowly to lose his health and died early in the next year followed shortly after by Haripant Phadke. The administration began to relapse into its old rut with the result that history has permanently recorded. It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that a diplomat of the prestige of Nana who once unified the whole Maratha State for a determined stand against a foreign aggressor, should now in his advanced life have restored to short-sighted selfish measures, which eventually hastened the ruin of that State."[18]

7. **The tragic end of Ghasiram Kotwal.**—This was another glaring example of the prevailing mal-administration by the Poona Ministers. It took place shortly before Sindia's arrival at the capital. The Police administration of the Marathas was very unlike what we in recent times have been used to. As a rule all rural administration was in the hands of village councils. It was only a few cities like Poona (and there were no large cities then beyond a few market places where crowds gathered only once a week for their purchases), which required special police arrangements for regulating traffic, protecting life and property and investigating crimes like thefts, prostitution, drink, gambling, murders, etc. Poona as the capital town had a special long-term governor like Naro Appaji who earned a unique reputation for efficiency, justice and tranquillity in the city's affairs for half a century. There used to be a police

18. See. V. R. Natu's *Life of Mahadji Sindia*, pp. 253-256.

mob. Thereupon the Peshwa personally gave orders for the kotwal being properly punished. During the early night of 30th, Ghasiram was paraded through the streets mounted on an elephant and kept confined at the enclosure below the Parvati hill. The next morning, 31st August, the Brahmans of the city again assembled before Nana's house and demanded the person of the kotwal being delivered into their hands. In the meantime both Nana and the Peshwa came to the conclusion that Ghasiram was responsible for the wanton deaths of so many innocent Brahmans, brought him out from his cell, now mounted on a camel, and gave him to the crowd who stoned him to death near the Garpir that same afternoon. Ghasiram's house and property were confiscated to the Government. Nana Phadnis reported the affair to the Chhatrapati saying that the kotwal's crimes had reached an enormity, and he deserved the punishment that was meted out to him. Thus Nana does not seem to have tried to shield the kotwal, after he had come to learn the full details of his crime. He readily executed the orders which the Peshwa passed after the sort of summary enquiry that was held.

This affair is about the first public act on record of which the Peshwa took personal notice and, on his own initiative, asserted his power. It was also the first occasion in which the hitherto all powerful Nana Phadnis began to lose ground. In a few more months Mahadji arrived on the scene and Nana found himself almost at his wits' end in answering for many a similar case of injustice and corruption. This is the direct result of Sindia's powerful voice exercised for the last time in improving the state of the Maratha Government. All this good work was unfortunately cut short by Mahadji Sindia's unexpected death.

CHAPTER IX

CHRONOLOGY

1763, Oct. 5	Renhardt's massacre of Englishmen at Patna.
1778, May 4	Renhardt dies, Begam Samru takes charge.
1780	Daulatrao Sindia born.
1785	Raymond accepts service under Tipu Sultan.
1791	Dudrenec employed by Holkar.
„ Dec. 22	Rana Khan dies.
1793, June 5	First mention of Mahadji's illness.
„ July	Mahadji gains all his points against the Poona Government.
1794, Feb. 12	Mahadji Sindia dies.
„ May 10	Daulatrao Sindia installed.
1795, Mar. 11	Battle of Kharda.
„ Sept.	Alijah, son of Nizam Ali, poisons himself.
1798, Mar. 25	Raymond dies.
1836, Jan. 27	Begam Samru dies

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST GREAT MARATHA CHIEFTAIN

[1794]

1. The death of Mahadji Sindia.
2. Character and achievement.
3. European adventurers in India.
4. Mahadji's leading followers.
5. Pen-pictures of Mahadji's personality.

1. **The death of Mahadji Sindia.**—On 1st June 1793 Sindia scored a decisive victory over Holkar at Lakheri, which compelled his adversaries in Poona to yield him all the points which he had been urging for a year. He hardly suspected that these labours would sap his life so quickly. The first notice that we obtain of his illness is contained in a newsletter from Poona dated 5th June 1793,[1] which says, "Mahadji has been getting fever for the last eight days. The Peshwa and Nana Phadnis called on him to enquire about his health. Haripant too goes there almost every alternate day". This was merely the beginning of an ailment of which no notice was taken, as no one suspected that it was in any way serious. But it is significant that after this first symptom no important affair in which Mahadji took a personal interest, is recorded during the few months preceding his death, although it was in July 1793 that he practically gained all his points of contention from the Ministers. In the face of the ample reliable accounts of his last days, one must absolutely reject all the fanciful hearsay reports about his being poisoned. Mahadji's own personal clerk at Poona reported a full account to his officers in the north, purporting that "Mahadji was attacked by a cold and a fever. For five or seven days the malady appeared light and of a passing nature, since during the last two months he used now and then to be subject to such attacks of cold and temperature, lasting for four or five days, and thereafter come to normal as before. The cold season of 1793-94 was rather severe, but the Maharaj did not miss his daily hunt. The slight temperature

1. Khare, 3514.

he used to get was not considered serious for some time, and the physicians (vaids) administered their usual remedies. On the morning of Tuesday 11 February his health took a sudden turn for the worse. Five or seven experts were called for consultation : they prescribed some drugs which produced no effect. The illness all of a sudden moved on to a crisis : the patient was not able to talk. Early next morning, Wednesday 12 February Nana Phadnis called, but no conversation took place. Nana immediately returned and reported the condition to the Peshwa. The two arrived again quickly but found the Maharaj collapsing. The Peshwa said to Aba Chitnis, "I send you gold, you must at once weigh him against it." Aba replied, "We have gold here too". The Peshwa then returned to his palace towards evening and learnt immediately after that all was over. The Peshwa and his officers quickly arrived in the camp, a grand procession was organized and the funeral took place during the early part of the same night. A most painful gloom has come over the whole camp, the city and the country. Bhagirathi Bai and Daulatrao Baba have gone to Tulzapur. Further rites would be performed when they arrive."

Thus Mahadji died in his camp at Wanavdi near Poona on 12th February 1794 at the age of 67. Not expecting that his end was so near he had made no dispositions. He longed to have a son, but as he was disappointed in the hope, he had a few months before his death decided to adopt his cousin Anandrao's son named Daulatrao, then about 14 years old, having been born in 1780, the year in which his contemporary Ranajitsinh was born.[2]

2. Mahadji's brother Tukoji (both born of Chimabai, Ranoji's second wife), had three sons Kadarji, Ravloji and Anandrao. This last was married to Mainabai daughter of Yesaji Angre of Kolaba and sister of Baburao Angre (of whom Broughton speaks so frequently as Mamasahib). Daulatrao was the son of Anandrao and Mainabai. Mahadji is said to have been born out of wedlock, his mother Chimabai, a Rajput lady, having been married not according to the usual rites but through the medium of a sword as was the Kshatriya practice then. But this was enough to keep Mahadji low in the social hierarchy of the time. He always bitterly felt this stigma and tried his best to establish connections with families of noble blood such as the Nimbalkars of Phaltan, the Savants of Wadi, etc. To some extent the sentiment descended to Daulatrao also, as we have documents recording Mahadji's and Daulataro's efforts to raise their status. It is said

The ceremony of Daulatrao's formal adoption took place in April, and the lad was officially installed as successor to Mahadji on 10th May 1794, Mahadji had married nine wives, five of whom had died before him, and three survived him, viz. Bhagirathibai, Yamunabai and Lakshmibai, who later figured in a war against Daulatrao. Whether one wife burnt herself as a sati is doubtful. Mahadji's daughter Balabai was married to Ladoji Shitole Deshmukh, who had long served as the Emperor Shah Alam's guardian at Delhi.

2. **Character and achievement.**—The life of Mahadji Sindia was one long period of strenuous activity and has been minutely scrutinized by modern historians as well as by his contemporaries, Maratha, Persian and English, whose voluminous records are now available for our study. Biographies of this singular man have also been published, but few of them are either comprehensive or authentic.[3]

Mahadji Sindia and Nana Phadnis are the two eminent figures who between them, often in cooperation, sometimes in antagonism, dominated the post-Panipat period of Maratha history. Embittered conroversy has raged about the correct estimate of their character and achievements. The narrative presented above will enable the reader to form his own judgment on the point.

Mahadji's private life was pure and free from blemish. The long list of his wives may be taken as evidence that he confined his amour to legal bounds. At Tulzapur he noticed a lovely girl of the worshipping officer and made her his own by an immediate marriage. Having reached the height of worldly prosperity in point of wealth, power and fame, he led a life entirely unsullied and scrupulously chaste. He was a man of devout temperament who never forgot to snatch a few moments

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that such a stigma completely disappears in the third generation of the family.

3. A full and critical survey of Mahadji's life was published in Marathi by a versatile scholar V. R. Natu, which though composed more than half a century ago (1894) can still hold the ground as an accurate estimate. Keene's volume on that subject in the Rulers of India series is another sketchy attempt now forty years old and entirely innocent of research among sources.

daily for prayers which made him forget the world outside. He composed devotional songs some of which have been recovered and recently printed. While he was a sincere follower of his religion, he had no prejudice against Muslims and Christians. Bawa Mansur Shah of Bid was his Muslim guru, whom he highly respected and consulted in all times of weal and woe. His tomb at that place is still enjoying endowments from the Gwalior State. Dattanath was a Hindu saint whom Mahadji often invited to reside in his camp. It is recorded that he entertained poets, musicians, astrologers and gifted scholars. There is mention of his visit to an ascetic of extraordinary powers near Mathura and of his being closeted with him for a long time. During the month of Shravan he heard daily recitations of the sacred *Bhagawat Puran*. It seems he understood Sanskrit fairly well.

All the sons of Ranoji Sindia were men of strong will and active energy ; but all except Mahadji died young in the nation's service. Mahadji developed a unique personality.

The glow of the names of Shivaji and Bajirao must not make one blind to the services rendered by Mahadji Sindia to the Maratha State. Recall to your mind the prominent contemporaries of Mahadji and you will recognize that he shines far above them in every respect. Nana Phadnis was not known for scrupulous purity in private life ; Haripant Phadke possessed a good obedient accommodating soul, but developed no stern personality of his own. The moral degradation of the Holkar family is only relieved by the saintly character of Ahalyabai. Sindia's diplomatic service was always well remunerated and offers a severe contrast to the pathetic tales of beggary and want which one and all of the agents employed by Nana Phadnis at foreign courts convey in their despatches. Chetsinh of Benares, the Khechi chief of Raghogad, Pratapsinh of Machedi and Alwar, Wazir Ghaziuddin and the Shahzadas, Ismail Beg and other antagonists of his type, the Gosavi brothers and the Emperor himself all received liberal and indulgent attention at the hands of Mahadji. Mahadji certainly earned a lot but spent it also in a right royal manner, unlike Tukoji Holkar, who inflicted dreadful persecution on his own faithful Secretary Naro Ganesh to compel him to disgorge his funds. Such highhandedness and corruption as were disclosed in the

affairs of Ghasiram, Baji Moreshwar or Balwantrao Nagnath, and such wanton hardship as were imposed upon the Prabhu community of Poona, were never heard of under Mahadji's administration. He wisely avoided a clash with the Muslims and the English. He freed Mathura and Brindaban from Muslim control and managed to secure an imperial order prohibiting cow-slaughter throughout India. What Balaji Vishwanath and Shahu projected in 1718 was practically achieved by Mahadji by persistent endeavour for nearly half a century. If any hostile feeling of Muslim rulers existed towards Shivaji and his mission, it had entirely died down during the century after Aurangzeb's death, giving place to mutual trust and cordiality, as is evidenced by Mahadji's management of the Emperor's affairs.[4]

One noteworthy feature of Mahadji's character was his freedom from caste or religious bias. He was equally respected by Muslims and Hindus. He had in his employ and enjoying his full confidence Brahmans, Prabhus, Marathas, Mahars, bankers, traders, all having an equal opportunity to rise by merit. The Saraswat Brahmans attained special distinction in Mahadji's service both as soldiers and diplomats. Jivba Dada Bakhshi, Lakhba Lad, Balaji Anant Pinge, Jagannath Ram alias Jagoba Bapu, Lalaji Ballal of Kotah are some of the Saraswat names figuring in the history of the period.

As the affairs of the Maratha State during the careers of Mahadji Sindia and Nana Phadnis had to be conducted through correspondence over long distances between the south and the north, the art of letter-writing and the drafting of state documents attained special perfection and a great many names of competent writers such as Naro Shankar, Sadashiv Dinkar, Balaji Janardan and others are found figuring prominently in the records of the day, as both Nana and Mahadji were exacting

4. Let us quote one little known but glaring instance. During Asafud-daula's regime at Lucknow the Muslim shopkeepers of leather goods killed a Brahman money-lender, which incited the Brahman community of the city to fury, leading to rioting and bloodshed between the two sects. The infuriated Muslims attacked the residences of the Minister Hairer Beg Khan and his Hindu accountant Tiket Sing. Asafud-daula at once punished the aggressive Muslim mobs and imposed on them a heavy punitive tax. I. S. Delhi Ye. ii. 63.

avoidable waste of resources. If Nana Phadnis had backed Mahadji at the outset, then the unchallengeable position which the great Sindia gained for the Maratha race in January 1789, would have been achieved fully four years earlier; and if such an early consummation had as its natural effect, prolonged Mahadji's life by sparing the needless agonies of the intervening four years' time of struggle and reverses, then the whole course of Maratha history might have become different."

The English despatches published in the first volume of the Poona Residency Correspondence "supply the inner meaning of the course of this history. We see here month by month the difficulties that Mahadji had to struggle with, his diverse remedies, his inflexible determination which the English observers on the spot mistook for fatuous obstinacy, and his resounding success in the end. We also realize his suppleness, his moderation, his unwavering steadfastness to the English alliance, his royal gift of judging character and choosing his fittest instruments and his power of adhering to a clear cut policy in the midst of obscurity and distractions. The British policy during this decade becomes transparently clear in the careers of the successive British Residents with Mahadji Sindia."[6]

Abaji Naik Wanavle, a respectable Hindu banker who long lived in Mahadji's camp during the Lalsot days, afterwards paid a visit to Ahalyabai in 1790. Upon being questioned by that lady, Abaji gave a very glowing tribute to the good work done by Mahadji in restoring peace and order in North India and breaking down the hostile Rajput combination. At the same time the banker severely denounced Tukoji Holkar and Ali Bahadur.[7]

"Mahadji", writes Keene, "was easily provoked and not easily appeased. If he seldom forgave an injury, he never forgot the benefit. If he was severe in punishment, when punishment seemed requisite, he was not implacable or given to cause needless pain; while in conferring rewards for service rendered,

6. Intr. P. R. C. I. p. VI.
7 Maheshwar Darbar letters ii.205; Keene's *Mahadji Sindia*, p. 192.

his gratitude admitted neither stint nor oblivion. Consequently he was served with fidelity and affection. It is impossible to read the memoirs of De Boigne without seeing how great a part of Sindia's success was due to the admiration inspired by his moral character, and the confidence with which his subordinates trusted to his consistency of conduct, good faith and tenacity of purpose. He was good-humoured, if not exactly good-tempered : and his countenance, in spite of an ususually dark complexion, was full of amiability and intelligence. His correct expression was happily caught by a young Italian artist (Wales) who painted his portrait at Poona shortly before his death. His personal habits were simple and abstemious. Better educated than was usual among men of his class, he was not only able to read and write but was a good accountant and had a colloquial knowledge of Persian and Urdu. He was versed in business and without caring for the details either of war or civil administration, invariably chose good agents, whom he trusted thoroughly, and who repaid him for his confidence. The officers whom he employed at Ujjain and Gwalior were not less successful in fighting his battles and managing his affairs. He was an Indian ruler of successful capacity in times of exceptional difficulty. He was coldly regarded if not positively disliked for his abandonment of old Maratha warfare and favouring Muslims, such as his chief adviser Ranakhan and his religious guide Mansur Shah."

Mahadji's life falls into four clear divisions, the first consisting of the pre-Panipat days when he was an entirely obscure figure overshadowed by his brilliant brothers. The second period from the day of Panipat to the restoration of the Emperor to Delhi, was one of apprenticeship, in which he acquired the supreme fitness which next enabled him to co-operate with Nana Phadnis and the Poona Ministers in fighting the British power. In this third period he gained invaluable experience of war and diplomacy on his own initiative, which he put to actual test in the fourth period commencing with the treaty of Salbye and ending with the crowning successes he gained in north India. If there is one man who could be credited with the authorship of fulfilling the Maratha dream of Hindu-Pad-Padshahi, that man admittedly was Mahadji Sindia. Malleson thus comments

on Mahadji's death. "By the death of Mahadji Sindia the Marathas lost their ablest warrior and their most foreseeing statesman. In his life he had two main objects, the one to found a kingdom, the other to prepare for the contest for Empire with the English. In both, it may be said, he succeeded. The kingdom he found still lives; and if the army which he formed was annihilated by Lake and Wellesley eight years after, it was because of the loss of his guiding hand. Had he lived, Mahadji would have brought under one standard the horsemen and the French contingent of Tipu, the powerful artillery of the Nizam, the whole force of the Rajputs and every spear which Maratha influence could have collected from Poona, from Indore, from Baroda and from Nagpur. Even if the final result might not have been attained, the great problem of contest between a united India and the English would have been fairly fought out. As it was, his death settled it. Thenceforth the sinister result was only a question of time."[8]

In the Deccan Mahadji had his ancestral patrimony at Jambgaon in the Ahmednagar district, where he built edifices and fortifications and where he often loved to reside. He named his palace Saheb-gad after his Muslim preceptor. Besides the several distinguished Indian officers trained by him, he had some two hundred Europeans as well in his service in a new model army. He carefully acquired useful details of Western science and military equipment from the British camp at Cawnpur and used it to improve his army in all essentials.

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8. Malleson, *The Native States of India*, p. 145.

A Marathi paper thus enumerates the actual value of Mahadji's acquisition.–

	Rupees in cash, jewellery etc.
From the Rana of Gohad	32 lacs
Mirza Shafikhan	33 lacs
Afrasiah Khan	40 lacs
Jahangirkhan &c.	4 lacs
Narayandas	3 lacs
Muhammad Beg Hamdani	6 lacs
Sikh Administration through Ranjitsing Jat	12 lacs
Raja of Jayanagar twice	85 lacs
Administration of Patiala	6 lacs
Datia and Bhadawar	8 lacs
Imperial lands	3 lacs
Pratapsinh of Machedi	4 lacs
Ghulam Qadir Khan	60 lacs
	Total Rs. 296 lacs

two crores and ninety six lacs.

In addition 815 guns are mentioned as captured. Besides the above cash acquisition, territory yielding annually 2 crores and 85 lacs is mentioned as acquired by Mahadji :—

Emperor's estates including Najafkhan's and Ghulam Qadir's	2 crores	25 lacs
Rana of Gohad territory ..		42 lacs
Bhadawar, Kachvadhar, Bhander ..		18 lacs
	Total 2 crores	85 lacs[9]

Several writers, particularly English, have ascribed to Mahadji a desire to becoming independent of the Peshwa's Government. This is an entirely wrong view and hardly needs refutation. It was the studious effort of British policy to dismember the Maratha State. Mahadji well understood the

9. Parasnis' Life of Baizabai, p. 13.

value of a united front. His aim was to consolidate the Maratha State with a view to checking the growth of the British power in India. It was, therefore, natural for them to show a friendly patronizing tone to the Poona ministry in order to curb the capable Sindia of whom they were jealous.

3. European military adventures in India.—The post-Panipat period of Mahadji's career is significant in Indian history for several revolutionary changes, in the shaping of which many individuals of note, Indian and European, had their share. The ultimate deciding factor in the fortunes of a nation has been its armed force. When Babar established his supremacy at Delhi, the Indian world was staggered by the advent of artillery. This power came to be nullified later by the genius of Malik Ambar and his help-mate Shahji, who introduced yet another method of warfare suited to a difficult mountainous country like Maharashtra. This method known as guerilla warfare, was developed by Shivaji along with his system of forts, and it held ground in India for nearly a century (1650-1750). In the middle of the 18th century Dupleix and Bussy introduced trained infantry of the European model to support the action of artillery.[10] It took some time for the change to be fully assimilated; and although Sadashivrao Bhau failed to win success at Panipat through his guns, it became obvious that a new era had dawned which was to govern the future politics of India. Thus, since the day of Panipat there came into being a rapid race for armaments among nearly all the Indian powers, each employing, according to his means and opportunity, one or more European captains who came in numbers to seek rapid fortunes in this land of gold. Portuguese, French, Italian, British, German and other nationals of Europe rushed to India during the latter half of the eighteenth century and they helped to shape the future politics of India. Students are usually familiar with only a few prominent names such as De Boigne, Perron, Raymond and Dudrenec. But there are many more like Rene

10. The student is advised to notice an excellent analysis on the success and failure of the Guerilla method entitled गनिमी कावा आणि कवाइती कंपू by the late Professor H. G. Limaye.

Madec, Walter Reinhardt and his consort Begam Samru, George Thomas, Skinner, Vickers, Bourquien, Hessing, and the several Frenchmen (Allard, Avitable, Comt & Ventura : 4 generals) later employed by Ranajitsinh. Mahadji Sindia and De Boigne formed a fortunate combination of power for a period of about eight years. De Boigne became ill and resigned his command in December 1795, leaving India in September 1796.

It was difficult for the Indian princes to judge the capacities of these foreign captains or to distinguish one from another. Any European coming to India posed as a trained leader of armies. He got together a few Indians, from a hundred to a thousand, usually of the lower grades of society, such as possessed no source of maintenance. These were dressed in uniforms and trained within a few months for military duty. These European adventurers with no fixed loyalties, were mere slaves of fortune and changed their masters as often as their interest dictated, one day serving Haidar Ali, another day Nizam Ali and the next day the Nawab of Arcot, or the Jat Raja, or the Emperor. Thus they appear to be the precursors of foreign domination, as the Indian princes became more and more dependent upon them for their own safety and protection. The armies they trained were mercenary and could not be called national. A dashing intrepid temperament and a vigilant foreseeing eye were assets on which the adventurers mainly traded. In the face of these new rivals the indigenous armies of the Indian rulers soon became effete and discontented, as they were not only low paid, but even that low amount remained for years in arrears.

Maratha history is much concerned with the careers of some of these foreign captains. Walter Reinhardt, for instance, was a German soldier in the employ of the French settlement of Chandernagar. When Clive captured that post in 1757, Reinhardt was discharged and secured employment under Mir Qasim. From his serious gloomy appearance he received the nickname *of Sombre*, which was corrupted in Hindi as Samru. He dressed like a Muslim and spoke Urdu fluently. While serving Mir Qasim he contracted the bitter enmity of the British power for being instrumental in the massacre of 51 English-

men at Patna on 5th October 1763. After the fall of Mir Qasim this Samru entered the service of Jawahirsinh Jat, and after that prince's death got himself employed under Mirza Najafkhan, Shah Alam's Minister. Samru owned a trained body of 2,000 infantry with 5 pieces of heavy cannon, for the expenses of which the Emperor assigned him the district of Sardhana near Meerut, yielding eight lacs annually. Samru died on 4th May 1778 and his Begam took charge of the Brigade along with the European officers in employ and managed it with consummate skill during a period of thirty years, serving the Emperor with perfect loyalty and efficiency. The latter was so highly pleased with her devotion, valour and honesty that he gave her the title of Zebunnisa Begam. She supported Mahadji Sindia in his management of the imperial concerns. Three years after her husband's death she embraced the Christian faith and married a Frenchman named Levassoult : the marriage did not prove successful and Levassoult committed suicide. The Begam enlarged the town of Sardhana and embellished it with new houses and gardens. In 1803 when the British captured Delhi, the Begam submitted to their power and had the jagir confirmed to her during her life-time. Thereafter she settled down to a life of peace, piety and charity. She died on 27th January 1836. She amassed large wealth, part of which she bequeathed to her step-son and sent an amount of 16 lacs to the Pope of Rome for charitable purposes.

4. Mahadji's leading followers.—Rana Khan to whom Mahadji owed his life on the fatal field of Panipat, because his constant companion and adviser. Possessing an upright character, the Khan long remained a power and a general referee throughout the Maratha State. He was also an able commander and took part in many arduous campaigns of Mahadji. His sobering voice was a corrective of Mahadji's obstinacy and passion for vengeance. High and low including Nana Phadnis sought his mediation in their dealings with Mahadji. Rana Khan was given the honour of a *palki* and he died on 22nd December 1791. His son Hasan Khan flourished as a commander and the family still enjoys fiefs in the Sindian State. Rana

Khan's son-in-law Saheb Khan Toka was also a prominent military captain.

Mahadji's trusted secretary was Abaji Raghunath Kulkarni, a Deshastha Brahman of Nigdi near Satara. His brothers Krishnoba and Gopalrao also figured prominently in Mahadji's service. Gopalrao was an intrepid soldier, who supervised De Boigne's brigade and exacted right duty from that Savoyard and his brother officers. Mahadji's foreign minister Sadashiv Malhar, known as Bhau Bakhshi, also a Deshastha Brahman surnamed Bavle, is seen managing Mahadji's relations with the English. His two brothers Bapuji Malhar and Ragho Malhar were army commanders. Khanderao Hari alias Appa Khanderao, Ambuji Ingle, Rayaji Patil, Ramji Patil Jadhav, Deoji Gauli are a few more prominent persons who worked under Mahadji. Balarao Govind and Lalaji Ballal Pandit Gulgule, both Saraswat Brahmans, long enjoyed Mahadji's confidence and rendered him meritorious service, the former as Sindia's agent at the Court of Poona and the latter a tribute-collector, whose records in Kotah have proved of immense hisorical value.

CHAPTER X

CHRONOLOGY

1774, April 18	Savai Madhavrao born.
1775	Ruknud-daula murdered ; Mashir-ul-mulk becames minister of Nizam Ali.
1786, Mar.-1797 Feb	Malet at Poona.
1786, Sep. 13	Krishnarao Kale dies ; son Govindrao takes his place.
1788, May 19	Mudhoji Bhosle dies.
1789, Oct. 20	Ram Shastri dies.
1790, Feb. 12	Restrictions imposed upon the Prabhus.
1791	Artist Wales at Poona.
1793, Mar. 27	Raghuji Angre dies.
„ April 23	Nizam Ali encamps at Bidar.
„ Oct. 23	Cornwallis retires, Shore Governor-General.
1794, Feb. 12	Mahadji Sindia dies.
„ April	Sikandar Jah married at Haidarabad.
„ July	Mir Alam arrives at Poona.
„ Nov. 20	Mir Alam returns from Poona.
1795, Jan.	Maratha armies start from Poona.
„ March 2	Shore's minute on Maratha-Nizam dispute.
„ March 6	Parashuram Bhau appointed to chief command against Nizam.
„ March 11	Battle of Kharda.
„ March 13	Nizam Ali sues for peace.
„ May 1	Mushir-ul-mulk reaches Poona.
Sept. 17	Peshwa's first symptom of fever.
„ Oct. 22	Peshwa's Dassara procession.
„ Oct. 25	Peshwa falls from the balcony.
„ Oct. 27	Peshwa dies.
„ Nov. 13	Artist Wales dies.
1796, June 5	Mushir-ul-mulk set free from confinement.

Peshwa Savai Madhavrao

CHAPTER X

THE VANISHING FLICKER

[1795]

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1. **The Young Peshwa's bringing up.**—We now turn our attention to the affairs of Poona, where a young master for the Maratha State was being reared after the sad end both of the great Peshwa Madhavrao I and his brother Narayanrao. The twenty years that had elapsed since those tragic occurrences, had witnessed many vicissitudes in the nation's fortunes, which now centred round the personality of Madhavrao Narayan popularly called Sawai Madhavrao. Born on 18th April 1774, never did a child make its appearance into the world under better auspices of the nation's hopes than this posthumous son of Narayanrao. He was universally hailed as an incarnation of his justly celebrated uncle, whose name was given to him. During his early years he was always a petted child and there was no comfort however trivial that was not supplied to him. A particular breed of goats was after much inquiry procured for the milk needed to nourish the baby. Modern scientific methods of training and education were not known in those days : and according to our present ideas horrid mistakes were committed due as much to superstition as to ignorance. At the age of three the child lost its mother and was thrown into the hands of servants and officials in no way inferior to blood relations. Nana Phadnis was the sole ultimate authority in charge of the Peshwa and nothing was done without his knowledge or sanction. The two prominent traits of Nana's character, suspicion and timidity influenced his acts as guardian in no small measure. Immediately on his arrival on March 8, 1786, Malet writes, " the Peshwa Madhavrao Sawai

is a boy of about 11 years old, of a slender habit and small for his age ; his countenance though neither handsome nor strongly marked, is sensible and acute, which corresponded with his character.[1]

The young boy freely partook of the usual games, and pastimes. Teachers and caretakers were appointed to look after him. He learnt to write a fairly good modi hand in addition to reading, writing, recitation and account-keeping. He also practised riding and athletics within a limited area. But surrounded as he was all the time by sycophants and menials, he had not much opportunity of getting acquainted with the wide world outside, and acquiring life's experience by his own effort as most of his predecessors had done. His travels did not extend beyond a radius of about a 100 miles round Poona and Nasik, Wai and Satara as the farthest limits. He was present on the battle-field of Kharda only a few months before his death. He was not taken to any of the numerous military campaigns of his time, either in the south or in the north. The British Resident ceaselessly pressed Nana to allow the young Peshwa to accompany the Maratha armies proceeding against Tipu, in 1791, but this proposal was not agreed to, nor was he taken to a place like Bombay where the influence of western life and methods was visible. A groundless suspicion of danger to his life was the only consideration which weighed with Nana Phadnis against the obvious benefits of freedom and adventure. Mahadji Sindia, Haripant Phadke, Parashuram Bhau had all direct contact with Englishmen and their ways ; but this was denied to the rising Peshwa beyond what he could see at the Poona Residency.

Raghunath Hari Nevalkar of Jhansi developed an amateur interest in modern European learning by contact with the English camp at Allahabad and built up a library of English books and a laboratory for scientific experiments at his capital. Raja Sharfoji of Tanjore, only three years younger than our Peshwa, studied under a German missionary named Swartz and wrote excellent English letters. The Peshwa could easily have visited the scene of Mahadji Sindia's activities in north India, particularly after the affair of Lalsot, when Nana

1. P. R. C. 2 p. 3.

found life comparatively free and easy at Poona. It was then a common apprehension that the British would soon attain the mastery of India : and Nana taking note of such a contingency could have made it his concern to study the Western methods and the secret of their power. When Mahadji arrived at Poona like a gust of fresh wind in 1792, the Peshwa, then 18 years of age, saw a new vision and gained a new outlook in Mahadji's company. They met and discussed matters, had dinners and hunting together, so that the bright youh developed a high regard for Sindia and appreciated his open frank ways, in contrast with the sombre and secretive manner of Nana, after whom the court of Poona had been more or less fashioned during a quarter century. The advent of Mahadji changed this stagnant atmosphere quickly. The Peshwa seems to have realized his position and responsibility, when Mahadji tried to make a new master out of a boy who had so long been practically caged in a narrow round of ease and play in the capital.

Nor was the Peshwa allowed to meet any contemporary figures, such as Nizam Ali who expressed a keen anxiety to meet him, or Tipu Sultan or any of the Rajput princes or the Emperor. The earlier Peshwas certainly made it a point to see the eminent worthies of India with whom they had to deal. In fact this Peshwa had no occasion to have his mind and outlook broadened. The list of persons who could meet and talk to him was approved and fixed by Nana. Beyond these he could not see any one. He sometimes went to Nasik and saw his grand-mother. In 1788 when he was on one of such visits she at once noticed the defect in his training and drew the pointed attention of both Nana Phadnis and Haripant Phadke to it. She says, "He is ever surrounded by small men, clerks and servants, not allowed to see outsiders freely and gain his own experience. How do you expect him then to acquire wisdom ?"

Religion or superstition, as one may now term it, was the only subject which occupied most of the young Peshwa's time, it being his duty to take part in the Ganapati and the other festivals, the Shravan charities, the daily prayers and ritual. He thus moved in the environment of a begging priesthood

intent solely on sumptuous meals. The city of Poona during the autumn months was full of roving crowds of Brahmans hailing from distant places begging and getting alms. The rush at the main charity enclosure (Ramna) can be imagined from the graphic descriptions left by the various European visitors.

In the absence of wide and congenial intercourse with his own kind, the Peshwa developed as the main occupation of his mind a fondness for pet animals. He kept a regular menagerie and maintained a deer park below the Parvati hill. There was a large number of deer preserved in an open ground where the Peshwa was fond of hunting.[2]

In the year 1790 the Brahmans of Poona once more renewed their old agitation against the Prabhu community and presented a written complaint that the latter violated the restrictions that had been imposed upon them by the murdered Peshwa. Once more the former injunction was issued on 12 February 1790, prohibiting the Prabhus from acting against it. Ram Shastri had died and was succeeded by Aiya Shastri, who probably issued this fresh injunction under Nana Phadnis' Government. Once more a widespread commotion took place in Poona. The young Peshwa was approached. What could that ignorant boy do beyond upholding the order of his dead father? Thereafter took place the affair of the police atrocities of Ghasiram. At such a time Mahadji Sindia arrived on the scene and began to influence the Peshwa in his judgments. After the death of Mahadji Sindia, affairs immediately took a different turn. Spoiled by an atmosphere of seclusion and superstition the Peshwa was growing to be a capricious lad, not amenable to discipline or control, as can be gathered from his favourite pranks and mischiefs which are found recorded.

2. **British influence on Poona society.**—The two great proconsuls of British power Clive and Warren Hastings had impressed a deep mark on the destiny of India. Their hasty and disjointed policy was slowly but surely consolidated by the consummate statesman Cornwallis, under whom a regular

2. Parasnis, *Poona in Bygone Days* pp. 128-131.

consular service came to be built up at the various Indian Courts, paving the way for a studied domination which the Wellesley brothers planned and achieved. So far as Poona and Western India were concerned, the twelve years period of Malet's residency significantly affected not only the course of Maratha politics, but the social life of the nation in its various aspects as well. The charming descriptions of sport, amusements, athletics, horsemanship, visits, dinners, fireworks given by Malet in his correspondence, disclose significant influences upon Maratha life centring round the Peshwa's Court.[3]

Surgeons Crusoe and Findley, surveyor Reynolds, artists Wales and Daniel, Asst. Residents Uhthoff, Hiern and Ward, are a few of the many Europeans that lived and influenced life in Poona at the time. A great judge of men's character himself, Malet had about him a select band of men possessing calibre and capacity. His own Secretary and Persian interpreter Nuruddin Husain Khan, once friend and counsellor of Ghasiuddin the younger, was a man of deep learning and upright character. His historical writings take a high rank in Indian literature. He had four able sons, Kamal-ud-din, Fakhruddin, Nasiruddin and Kamruddin, who all made a name in the history of the time by serving at different Courts. While at Cambay Malet made a collection of Persian manuscripts which he later presented to the Royal Asiatic Society of London.

Vaccination was first introduced in Poona during Malet's time. The surgical and medical help offered by the Residency doctors was freely availed of by Indians as it was found superior to the crude Indian methods then prevailing. The artist Wales came out to India in 1791 and made sketches of many important persons of Poona. They were painted by Daniel and have now become widespread by reproductions like the Darbar scene of Sawai Madhavrao and the life size portraits of several celebrities like Nana and Mahadji, which

3. Malet's descriptions of dinners, darbars, camp life, social customs and such topics are highly entertaining and may be read in P. R. C. Vol. 2. They minutely illustrate Maratha life and society of those days, including etiquette, superstitions, intrigues and rivalries, altogether forming a picture of Maratha weakness which hastened the fall of the State. Also consult *Poona in Bygone Days* by Parasnis, p. 53.

in the absence of photography are the only authentic pictures now available. At Malet's inducement the Peshwa established at his palace a school of drawing and painting under the supervision of the two English artists. Many Indians received training in that subject, among whom the name of Gangaram Tambat has been handed down. Wales caught fever while sketching at the Kanheri caves and died at Thana on 13th November 1795 aged 48 years. His daughter Suzane who had come out to India with him returned to England with Malet and there married him. They left behind 8 sons who all became famous in Anglo-Indian service. Sir Charles Malet died on 24th January 1815. Malet and his companions presented to the Peshwa various articles of European make such as globes, clocks, watches, telescopes, glasses, cutlery &c. Findley gave lessons to the Peshwa in astronomy and geography and received handsome rewards in return. Malet freely attended the various functions at the Peshwa's palace, such as the Dassara and the Ganapati processions, the celebration of the Holi and other festivals of which he has left graphic accounts. He also attended by invitation similar functions at the houses of private noblemen of Poona. All this cordial sentiment and contact for 12 long years on the part of Malet created a silent revolution in the society of Poona. The political change he effected can be seen in every page of his correspondence in which Maratha diplomats, generals and chiefs appear dwarfish in comparison. The downward march of the Poona Government which Malet's correspondence copiously reveals, becomes obvious to observers and was the root cause of the irritation felt by Mahadji Sindia at the opposition to progress and advancement offered by the Poona Ministers. Maratha downfall was slowly unfolding itself.

3. **The origin of the Maratha-Nizam hostility.**— The victory of Kharda was the last triumph achieved by Maratha arms and has remained as fresh in Maratha memory as the disaster of Panipat. To complete the parallel with Panipat, the glory of Kharda was marred by the sudden calamity of the promising Peshwa's death coming within seven months of that victory and nullifying all the grand results that were

expected.[4] A student can closely follow and accurately set down the sequence of a long chain of events which ultimately culminated in that famous battle. The actual campaign commencing with the march of the opposing armies did not occupy a period longer than two months. There was hardly any fighting at all, no strategic manoeuvres involving military skill or personal valour. Kharda is only 125 miles due east of Poona. The importance of the victory is to be looked for in a different direction. It was a test case in which Maratha supremacy in the Deccan was on its trial. The British were expected to contest that supremacy; and Indian Powers anxiously looked to the result, feeling intense concern as to whether the British would take up arms in support of the Nizam and put an end to Maratha ambitions finally. Malet, Cornwallis and Shore advocated a waiting game and decided against British participation in the Maratha-Nizam struggle. What happened in 1803 was expected eight years earlier. This accounts for the all India interest in this short contest. The immediate result proved a sore disappointment to the Nizam and to those who desired to profit by the fall of the Marathas. Nana Phadnis in particular began to entertain a high opinion of British integrity and of their policy of non-intervention in Indian disputes.

When two Powers try to gain possession of one and the same piece of land, perpetual hostility between them becomes inevitable. The Marathas started with the idea of being masters of their own land of Maharashtra, releasing it from Muslim domination which had continued for centuries. Many fondly ask why the Marathas, before doing short work of this immediate neighbour, went to such distant places as Attock, Burdwan or Trichinopoly. The answer is to be found in the peculiar course of Maratha politics varying with its main architects. When the first English-Maratha war was over, the relations between Poona and Haidarabad became strained mainly on the question of the payment of Chauth, which had been imposed by Bajirao I upon the Nizam's dominions and which

4. This coincidence of victory and death has become a favourite theme for the country ballads. At least ten such songs dealing with the subject of Kharda have been printed.

had accumulated to large amounts by the time of the treaty of Salbye; and as soon as the Maratha Government were free from other troubles, they pressed this demand upon the Nizam.

Nizam Ali was never a ruler of strong nerves or fond of fair play and was solely guided by the exigencies of his situation, with an intense regard for self-interest. Nana Phadnis all along pressed his demands, and Nizam Ali as often evaded them. This wrangling continued between the two Courts until Mahadji Sindia arrived at Poona in the summer of 1792, bringing an increase of power and prestige which terrified most Indian chiefs. With Sindia's support Nana Phadnis now peremptorily demanded payment of all past arrears from Nizam Ali, whose affairs were then managed by his astute minister Ghulam Saiyad Khan, who is known in history by the various titles he obtained from time to time, viz. Main-ud-Daula, Azim-ul-Umra, Aristujah and Mushir-ul-mulk, and whom the Maratha Government held responsible for all the troubles that arose. Mushir-ul-mulk had come from Persia and secured service under Salabat Jang nearly forty years ago. He helped Nizam-Ali in putting down Salabat Jang and on that account continued to be his favourite and received from him the various titles mentioned above. Nizam Ali's first minister, his younger brother Mir Mughal Rukn-ud-Daula, came to be murdered in 1775 and then Nizam Ali appointed this Mushir-ul-mulk to the post of his minister. This position he continued to hold for some forty years till his death. The antagonism between Poona and Haidarabad mainly concerned the principal Ministers of the two states, Nana Phadnis and Mushir-ul-mulk, and formed a feature of the Deccan politics for a long time preceding the battle of Kharda. The main plank of Mushir's policy was to crush the Maratha dominance with British friendship.

There was another man in Nizam Ali's service named Mir Alam, who also played a significant part in the politics of the day. For several years he had lived at Calcutta as Nizam Ali's ambassador with Warren Hastings, trying to serve British interests in opposition to the Marathas. Mir Alam possessed a softer temperament and lesser abilities than the Minister

Mushir-ul-Mulk, but higher literary powers. During 1794 Mir Alam was deputed to Poona to adjust by negotiation the growing dispute between the two Courts over the payment of Chauth. Mir Alam failed in his mission and the dispute was settled by the arbiterment of the sword.

This happened in the period of the minority of the Peshwa Madhavrao II, for whom Nana Phadnis acted with full authority at Poona. On behalf of the Poona Government Krishnarao Kale, an able Marathat diplomat had lived long at Haidarabad since the days of the great Peshwa Madhavrao I, and tried to maintain amicable relations between the two Powers for over twenty years. Krishnarao died on 13th September 1786 and was succeeded by his son Govindrao Bapu, whose voluminous despatches are now available in print for study.

Nizam Ali, at heart a lover of peace and unwilling to risk a recourse to arms, exerted himself to maintain friendship with the Maratha Government till the last moment. For a time Mahadji courted Nizam Ali's friendship in organizing a strong opposition of the Indian Powers against the British. But he found Nana Phadnis inexorable on the point of recovering the arrears of Chauth from Nizam Ali, which had by then grown to the huge total of three crores. A year was spent in composing the differences between Sindia and Nana, whereupon a joint demand was inssued in the name of Nana and Mahadji to the Court of Haidarabad for the liquidation of the amount, hinting that the alternative would be a recourse to arms. In addition Mahadji demanded the possession of Bid where his guru had his shrine. With a view to strengthening his position Mahadji called to the south his trained battalions from Agra. Nizam Ali on his part decided to accept the challenge and with a view to hostilities took his station at Bidar on 23rd April 1793. It was at this time that he proposed to visit the young Peshwa personally at Poona for the purpose of attending his marriage. Probably he earnestly desired to bring about a reconciliation of the dispute in a personal visit. The Poona Ministers, however, interpreted this move as an invasion of their capital : says a report, " War preparations continued at Bidar in hot haste. Nizam Ali's spies were detected and arrested in Poona trying to seduce the Maratha chiefs. Even the

amounts of bribes paid were traced." Nizam Ali used to pay to the Bhosle of Nagpur a certain proportion of the revenues he collected from Berar. He now refused to make the stipulated payment and announced a complete repudiation of all Maratha claims by Nagpur.

At this time the British Governor General Lord Cornwallis was about to retire and he avoided embroiling the British Power in a war with the Marathas. Nizam Ali and his minister, however, made insistent importunities for British aid to support them in their prospective struggle. Kennaway, the British Resident at Haidarabad, most sedulously implored the G. G. to lend active British help to Nizam Ali or at least to undertake mediation of the growing dispute. Malet at Poona was decidedly against any such move, strongly urging that it would be a folly to rush into a war with the Marathas when they were united and strong as never before. Cornwallis acted on the advice of Malet, and turned down Kennaway's proposal of armed intervention.

4. Mushir-ul-mulk incorrigible.—When happily the differences between Nana and Mahadji had been fully composed in the autumn of 1793, the demand for the Nizam's Chauth was vigorously renewed. Haidarabad decided to settle the dispute by war and started hot preparations at Bidar, reports of which poured in increasing volumes into Poona. Lord Cornwallis retired on 28th October 1793, handing over charge to his senior Councillor Sir John Shore. Kennaway the British Resident also retired in the following December, making over charge of his office to Kirkpatrick, Captain Stewart acting for a short interval between the two. Mahadji Sindia's death on 12th February 1794 for a time paralysed the activities of the Poona Court. Before his retirement Cornwallis urged his two representatives to do their utmost towards settling the dispute by negotiation between the two antagonists, and to advise finally on the course the British Government should follow. Acting on this suggestion Malet from Poona and Stewart from Haidarabad met near the Ellora Caves in May 1794, discussed the situation of the two antagonists and decided finally that they should on no account embroil the British Power in the

impending war ; and that they should confine their advice only to a friendly mediation. The British Government stuck steadfastly to this course. Their mediation could have proved effective but for the inveterate personal animosity that existed between Nana Phadnis and Azim-ul Umra. Kirkpatrick[5] reported to the Governor General, "Nana Phadnis urges that the dispute would not be settled unless Nizam Ali removes his minister from office. But our government have nothing to gain from such a change. I am conscious of the many severe drawbacks of the minister, but there is none better to take his place. And even supposing a worthy successor were available, the very fact of the Poona Government being able to dictate the removal of his minister to Nizam Ali, reduces the latter to a most humiliating position ; and what better results could a new comer produce ? And if the new minister began working at the dictation of Poona, then where remains the independence of Haidarabad and the balance that at present exists in the Deccan politics ? Nizam Ali would never accept such a degradation. In reality the present dispute is not incapable of adjustment on its own merits, but the real difficulty is Nana's insistence on Azim-ul-urma's removal. The Peshwa is now the Vakil-i-mutalak of the Emperor and can use that power in compelling Nizam Ali to dismiss his minister. This seems indeed the Poona Minister's aim in assembling their full armed strength." Nana had never openly demanded the removal of Mushir-ul-mulk, as such a blunt demand would have been contrary to diplomatic procedure ; but the subject centred round this main theme.

Tipu Sultan also had a hand in increasing the Maratha-Nizam tension. When Nana discussed with Mahadji Sindia the general political situation in India, he realized that his alliance with the British against Tipu Sultan, had brought him no advantage and that it was detrimental to Maratha interests to annihilate the power of the ruler of Mysore. Tipu himself brought this contingency to Nana's notice in no uncertain terms, He hated Nizam Ali bitterly and warned Nana against playing into the hands of the English. The specific demands from Poona were eight, as communicated to Nizam Ali in 1794 and

5. Kirkpatrick assumed charge of his office in February 1794.

reported to Sir John Shore by Kirkpatrick who strongly advised Nizam Ali to settle the dispute by negotiation and held out no hope of an armed help from the British if the two went to war on their own account.

Hastings Frazer says that the Maratha Government was conducted on the sound basis of justice and morality, quite unlike the administration of Nizam Ali, and that the demands made by Nana were all reasonable. Shore himself accepted both these statements and held out no promise of help to Nizam Ali. He at the same time intimated to the Peshwa's Government through Malet not to precipitate matters by a sudden attack without previous intimation. Shore also called upon the Residents to take such steps as they considered necessary to safeguard British interests in case actual hostilities broke out. Shore, however, did not omit to impart a serious warning to Mushir-ul-mulk in these words, "It is not right that you should make light of Maratha communications and use undignified language in your replies, which should be mild and respectful. Disrespectful and excited language will only lead to further trouble. I understand both parties desire an amicable settlement of the points at issue. It becomes us all, that every effort should be made to preserve the friendship that has long subsisted between us three powers".[6]

Mushir-ul-mulk admitting the force of the Governor General's advice, added in reply, "While the points of difference can all be adjusted in mutual negotiation, the tone of the Poona communications has of late become intolerable and their demands altogether haughty. My predecessors in office observed a mild tone in their behaviour towards the Poona Government. I have deliberately changed this course and have scrupulously tried to preserve both the interest and the dignity of my master. This change has naturally upset Nana. But I don't care what he feels. I am not going to be submissive to him. He has now begun to hate me personally for my friendly advances towards Mahadji Sindia, the Deputy Regent of the Empire. Unless Nana gives up his unreasonable conduct, no

6. Letter of 14th May 1794, quoted by Fraser in the supplement to his work "*Our Faithful Ally the Nizam.*" The author's father was then in Haiderabad Service ; so the account written by the son may be accepted as authentic.

adjustment seems possible. In fact it is up to you, our friends, to exert and compose the dispute. Indeed Nana is very jealous of my warm friendship with you ; and that is why I solicit your mediation, not minding even if you decide the dispute in the Peshwa's favour. Have you not in the past mediated in disputes between, say, the Nawab Wazir or the Nawab of Arcot and other Powers ? Why can you not do the same in this case as well ?"

This argument did not at all appeal to Kirkpatrick. There was a world of difference between the status of the Nizam and that of the two Nawabs mentioned above. Nizam Ali was an independent prince, while the Nawabs of Oudh and Arcot were already subordinate allies. The Peshwa would not for a moment accept British mediation. Kirkpatrick brought this point pertinently to the notice of both Nizam Ali and his minister, Nizam Ali refused to dismiss his minister, saying "I have full faith in my minister. He looks after my interests as no one else would do, and I have, therefore, no desire to remove him from his post".

While Nana was in certain respects obstinate, he always preserved the utmost dignity of diplomatic etiquette : but quite the reverse was the case with Mushir-ul-mulk. When the account papers were received from Poona and the Maratha envoy Govindrao Kale presented them to the Minister, the latter said, "I cannot follow these accounts : Nana must come here personally and explain them". To this Govindrao mildly answered, "Nana is too busy to come here himself". Then Mushir replied bluntly, "I will myself bring Nana here, you will see." Kale reported this to Poona adding that a similar tone was adopted by the whole Court of Haidarabad. They openly boasted, they would attack Poona, burn it down, and compel the Peshwa to come here begging for alms with an earthen pot in hand". Such language is unbecoming to any Government worth the name ; and when it was reported by Kale to Poona, it occasioned extreme indignation. Its import was rightly understood.

With such bitterness growing in intensity every day, the only course that Nizam Ali could follow was to put off the evil day as long as he could. Kirkpatrick was insistent upon

a negotiated settlement ; while Nizam Ali continued briskly to prepare for war under the advice of his minister. With a view to satisfying Kirkpatrick, he contrived a show of negotiation with Poona and for that purpose sent there Mir Alam and Govindrao Kale early in July 1794. Mir Alam was accompanied by Raghuttam Haibatrao and another chief named Rai Rayan Renukadas Dhondaji. Mir Alam continued hollow discussions, referring to Haidarabad on every trifling point, as he admitted he had no full powers to conclude a final arrangement. The minister's explicit instructions to Mir Alam were, "You have no business to try for a friendly undertaking between me and Nana, unless Nana himself makes a proposal". In reply Mir Alam wrote from Poona, "No one here cares to solicit a friendship with you. They don't refer to you at all ; they do not blame you nor make any accusations against you. During our discussions they have never once even distinctly referred to you personally".[7]

In the meantime Shore fully warned the Nizam's Government against the serious consequences of a war with the Marathas. "The Maratha Government", he wrote, "was superior in a high moral tone ; their army too was stronger." In this way while the British Government and that of Nizam Ali were pulling in different directions, Nana Phadnis at Poona fully saw through these tactics and earnestly prepared for any eventuality. As Mir Alam had no powers, Nana discontinued the negotiations. The mission of Mir Alam waited uselessly long in Poona and returned to Haidarabad on 20th November 1794. Thereafter Nizam Ali's son Alijah tried his personal hand in composing the dispute, but he too attained no success. In fact such efforts to settle the dispute without recourse to arms, continued by all parties up to the day of the actual battle.

After the return of Mir Alam's mission Nana Phadnis realizing the inevitability of an armed conflict, issued definite orders for the march of the Maratha armies in the direction of Bidar, Sindia and Holkar's brigades were already on their way

7. The affair is well summarized in Shore's own minute of 2nd March 1795. It is a pertinent and lucid document clearly defining the political situation of the three parties. Vide Appendix Q, Hastings Frazer's " our faithful Ally the Nizam ".

to the south from their bases in the north. De Boigne himself had a desire to accompany the brigades, but being prevented by an ailment, deputed his assistant perron for that purpose. Nana had engaged C. A. Boyd (an American) at Poona and trained a battalion for the Peshwa's own command. Tukoji Holkar, with Dudrenec's brigade, Raghuji Bhosle and Parashuram Bhau all quickly assembled and the armies began their march in the direction of the Nizam's forces early in January 1795, Shore instructed both the Residents of Poona and Haidarabad to take no part in the hostilities if such ensued, and pointedly asked them to discontinue their presence with the respective armies the moment they entered hostile territories. There was already a British contingent force at Haidarabad intended to keep internal order only. Shore instructed its commandant to take no part in the ensuing war, adding "both are our allies : and we have no desire to show undue favour to either. We must remain strictly neutral". As the last recourse Shore suggested that the two principals should perfectly meet and compose their differences. But this did not prove feasible. The plain issue was the payment of the huge arrears of Chauth, which Nizam Ali never disavowed. The difference was as to the actual amount. Nizam Ali never repudiated the entire amount.

Govindrao Kale did his utmost to speak personally to Nizam Ali and bring about a reconciliation. The latter entertained a high personal regard for Kale who had a free access even to his private apartments.[8] Kale was dignified and clever in speech, being an adept in the Hindustani language and Muslim etiquette.

5. The battle of Kharda.—When news arrived at Poona that the Nizam's army had advanced from Bidar, the Peshwa

8. In 1790 Govindrao wrote that he met Nizam Ali in his private room and noticed the boil he had on his body. It was this well-known Maratha diplomat who even after Nizam Ali's rout at Kharda, tried his utmost to obtain for him as easy terms as possible and restore the former amicable relations between the two Courts. Thus Govindrao did his best to avert an open war. In April 1794 Nizam Ali celebrated his son Sikandar Jah's marriage for which he sent a cordial pressing invitation to the Peshwa. Nana Phadnis, however, did not allow a personal meeting taking place between the two.

entered his tents in December and the Maratha armies started their journey to the east early in January. Madhavrao Ramchandra Kanade was posted in Poona for the defence of the capital. As Bajirao and Chimnaji, sons of Raghunathrao, might create trouble, they were removed from Kopargaon to Junnar for close custody and their guards were strengthened. The Maratha armies advanced towards the east via the Ghod river, Mandavgan and on to Mirajgaon on the Sina. Kharda 150 miles east of Poona was to midway station between it and Bidar, in the vicinity of which the two opposing armies pitched their camps. The Marathas performed their Holi festival at the village of Dhanod on 5th March, when the Nawab had halted on the river Khar about 4 miles west of Kharda. That day light skirmishes started between the advance parties of the two armies. Both had their spies in the opposite camps who reported full news of the plans and movements of each. Reports arrived in the Maratha camp purporting that the Nawab had with him a harem of 150 ladies besides 80 concubines carried on as many elephants, each elephant carrying two women in a closed haudah. For a week the two armies stood facing each other waiting for an action. One day Haripant Phadke's son Baba, as he was reconnoitering the enemy's positions, was suddenly attacked and he ran away to save his life. When this was reported to Mushir-ul-mulk, he arranged a dance in the presence of his master that very night in which Nana Phadnis, Daulatrao Sindia, Parashuram Bhau and others were represented in hideous garbs. The Maratha ambassador Kale who was present at the performance, left the audience abruptly to mark his displeasure at the indignity. This shows how feelings ran high.

For a long time no person had been named as the accredited Commander-in-chief of the Maratha army, as Nana was unable to solve the delicate question. Parshuram Bhau was the senior veteran, but inferior in rank as compared with Sindia and Holkar. Daulatrao was an inexperienced boy of fifteen and Tukoji Holkar was in his dotage utterly unfit to hold a supreme command. Jivba Bakhshi was doubtless experienced but not well-versed in the intricacies and susceptibilities of the various elements in the Maratha Government. Nana wanted to appoint a man in his own confidence, one who would be tractable in any emergency and fall in with his own views. So

at Ratnapur on the afternoon of 6th March, the day of the dust-play in the Holi celebration, he held a Darbar in a specially erected audience tent named Dal-Badal. Here Nana read out the full story of the transactions that had taken place with the Nizam's State and after appealing for a supreme co-operative effort, he called forth Parashuram Bhau and proposed him for the chief command, saying "You are the most senior and experienced general in this assembly ; and you must now bear the burden of the campaign as you consider best." Bhau in reply urged that there were men of power and prestige like Sindia and Holkar, to any of whom the task might be entrusted. Nana thereupon explained the situation and fastened the responsibility on Parashuram Bhau, naming Baba Phadke as his immediate Quarter-Master General. The whole assembly gave a cordial assent to this arrangement.

The Maratha army mainly occupied the bank of the Sina river. The Mughals, as the Nizam's party were termed in Marathi records, were encamped with their front at Talsangi on the river Khar about 4 miles from Kharda. After some desultory skirmishes for two or three days, the Commandant of the Nizam's army happened to effect some manoeuvres on the Rangpanchami day (11th March) with a view to changing his front into a rear, a movement which excited the attention of some Maratha chiefs who at once advanced against them for an attack. Parshuram Bhau who was in the front looking out for some place to plant his guns, was immediately assaulted by the enemy and wounded in the forehead. His cousin Vithal Baba who was standing by him was killed outright. This occurrence proved a signal for a general charge. Sindia's men made a vigorous advance and were followed by Holkar's. An artillery duel started between the two combatants but there was no general action.[9] At this stage Nizam Ali out of fright sought shelter in the citadel of Kharda, which the Marathas at once invested, stopping the entire supply of food and water, and directing artillery fire on the walls all through the night. Some of the enemy's guns and articles were seized by the Marathas. On the morning of Thursday 13th

9. P. R. C. Vol. IV Nos. 178 and 178 A.

March a messenger of Nizam Ali arrived requesting the cessation of fire and terms of peace.

Nana Phadnis in reporting the affair to the Chhatrapati thus describes the action :—

"We tried our utmost to settle the dispute with the Nawab by negotiation ; but his minister Main-ud-daula employed despicable ways and methods to encompass the utter destruction of the Maratha State, planning to capture Poona and plant there the Nawab's flag. He also employed assassins to effect murders in Poona, who were arrested and documentary proof of their evil designs was secured. The Mughals openly talked of driving the Marathas out of their homeland. Main-ud-daula so poisoned the Nawab's mind that no peaceful settlement could be secured. We exercised the utmost patience and avoided any extreme action. But when news came that the Nawab with a well-equipped force was directly marching upon Poona, we were compelled to take up the challenge. We assembled our armies and ordered Sindia's regiments from the north. We advanced in the direction of Bidar and leaving the Shrimant some twenty miles behind prepared for an attack. The two armies closed with each other on the afternoon of 11th March. Guns, spears, swords and daggers were freely employed in a short but deadly combat. The Nawab sustained a defeat and retired, but we continued our fire even after nightfall. During the night our Pindaris entered the enemy's camp and secured some plunder. The Nawab took shelter within the walls of Kharda. Throughout the 12th also artillery action continued, when towards the evening of that day, the Nawab sent us men asking for terms and requested that the fire should cease. We demanded the surrender of Main-ud-daula the sole author of the mischief. The Nawab hesitated ; but Main-ud-daula himself came forth boldly and saved his master from the awkward situation, saying, " Here I am ready to surrender, do what you like with me." We decided to keep him in our confinement if he gave his word that he would do no harm to our State. He was then respectfully received and kept under proper custody. We thus stayed our hand against the advice of Sindia, Holkar and others, who with one voice urged the subjugation of the whole Nizami State. Negotiations were then commenced

for settling the payment of past dues. Three crores on account of the Chauth and two more for the expenses of the war was agreed to, to be paid in instalments extending over three years. The fort of Daulatabad was to be made over to us in addition. The territory of the Bhosles of Nagpur recently captured by the Nawab was to be restored together with its accumulated revenue. The papers will be ratified now within a week. Jivaji Ballal, the Bhosles, the Holkars, our Huzurat all helped zealously towards this grand success, which has been achieved through your Highness' blessings and under providential grace".[10]

This quick success was due doubtless to the efficient French-manned artillery of Sindia which executed a havoc that none could stand. Thus the affair of Kharda proved a short performance of a day or two, in severe contrast with the days and months which the old guerilla methods required to bring an enemy to submission. Raymond, the Nizam's French General wanted to renew the combat the next day, but Nizam Ali strongly dissuaded him from such a course. The following figures of the two combatants may be noted[11] :—

The Marathas	84,000 horse	+ 38,000 foot	+ 182 guns.
Nizam	45,000 ,,	+ 44,000 ,,	+ 108 ,,

Although the action was joined round about Kharda, Nizam Ali's original intention was to have it in the region of the Godavari between that river and Aurangabad.

Some interesting details of the negotiations that took place after the action of the 11th March have been recorded by Govindrao Kale and deserve to be reproduced in substance.[12] As soon as Nizam Ali entered the walls of Kharda he called Kale to his side and said, "Give me two months time and I will remove Azim-ul-Umrah from his post." Kale declined to entertain this proposal, adding "you are the master, do what you like". Govindrao returned to his tent and prepared to quit the Mughal camp. Nizam Ali learning of this, at once despatched Ghasi-Miya and called Kale again to his side. This

10. Ai. Pat. 313.
11. Malet's full report in P. R. C. IV no. 202.
12. The records of this Kale are huge, partly printed in Raj. Vols. 5, 7, 22, and in Itihas Sangraha. Vol. 5 deals with 1795 June to October.

was a game to gain time for obtaining a personal interview with the Peshwa in order to arrange a reconciliation between Nana and Mushir-ul-Mulk. Govindrao replied, "I am a mere servant, a well-wisher of both the States. I will faithfully convey your message to my master and his reply back to you. But let me humbly remind you that unless you actually remove your minister from office, no proposal will be entertained". As Govindrao stepped out to the door, three of Nizam's officers accosted him. Govindrao told them that he was going to communicate the Nawab's message to Nana. "If he does not agree, I will no longer return to this camp. I am now going away finally." This was communicated to Aristujah, who immediately wrote to his master, "You must without the least hesitation accept the Peshwa's demand. Hand me over, and settle the trouble. Otherwise your State will suffer". Upon this Nizam Ali invited the minister to his private apartment in the Zanan Khana. Main-ud-Daula told him, "you keep me confined at Ousa and find your way."

Nizam—Be perfectly at ease. I have my own plans about you. Let me see how I can manage them.

In the meantime Govindrao returned with a reply from Nana to say, "unless you remove the minister, the Peshwa will not receive your visit. We have no desire to continue the fight ; but if you do, we are ready with our reply." Nizam Ali then called in Sharf-ud-Daula and asked his advice. Sharf-ud-Daula then wrote to Parashuram Bhau and others whom he knew well. They all replied that "until the minister was in the Maratha Camp, no talk of any kind would be entertained". Thus Nizam Ali and his advisers realized that no other way was left and they yielded to the demand. On 27th March full fifteen days after the battle, Mushir-ul-Mulk came into the Maratha camp escorted by Kale and Rangopant Godbole. Nana Phadnis proceeded some eight miles in advance to receive him. They met and conversed together freely. Then the minister was brought to interview the Peshwa. The Peshwa came out and received him at the gate. Daula descended from his elephant and Govindrao brought him to the Peshwa's presence, with his hands tied with a kerchief. The Peshwa descended from his elephant, and touched the minister's

hand in compliment. Thereupon all the three, the Peshwa, Daula and Nana mounted an elephant and arrived at the large Darbar tent. Here the guest was received with full honours. He had hung down his head all along. After the ceremony was over, Daula was taken to the quarters specially prepared for him and lodged there in the charge of Bajaba Shirolkar. "The Peshwa's stars are in the ascendant", remarks the chronicled. "This is how grand things beyond one's conception take place". "The Peshwa immediately started for Poona which he reached on Friday 1st May 1795, when he received a grand ovation and an unprecedented welcome from the Maratha capital. He marched in procession through the brilliantly illuminated city when gold flowers were showered upon him. Mushir-ul-Mulk was lodged in the house of the Treasury well. Nana Phadnis' highest desire came thus to be fulfilled". The Haidarabad minister remained in confinement just for a year. The Peshwa died the same year in October ; further changes came about and Mushir-ul-Mulk was set free on 5th June 1796.

It will be evident from this narrative that this great victory of the Marathas, resounding as it was for the time being, availed them practically nothing. Out of five crores promised on paper, only about 30 lacs was realised with a territory of another 30 lacs. The rest of the amount never came to be recovered and things eventually were so shaped, as history knows, that the Maratha State came to be extinguished and the Haidarabad State still remains flourishing. Only two articles of the treaty of Kharda are worth notice, as they should be perhaps still in force in that State, viz.—

1. There should be no cowslaugher in the Deccan : similarly the Muslim religion, the Tazias, the Khuda-Parasti and so on should be practised unhampered in Maharashtra.

2. The Hindu and the Muslim are both equal children of God. No molestation to Hindu shrines should be offered by the Muslims. The Hindus have shown no disrespect and done no harm to Muslim shrines, to their Pirs or their Paigambar. In the same way no molestation should be offered by the Muslims to Hindu worship. Both should practise their respective creeds freely without interfering with each other."[13]

13. *Ait. Patravyavahar* No. fl. 314. p. 290.

Darbar-Kharach or the Minister's perquisites used in those days to be an invariable item attendant on all transactions of State. The enactors of the treaty of Kharda received 15 lacs from the Nizam's treasury on this account, of which Sindia received 4 lacs, Parshuram Bhau and Baba Phadke a lac each and the rest was distributed among the others in the usual proportion.

A report of 20th April 1795 from the Maratha camp says :—

"Peace has been concluded. The Nawab is on the river Manjra. Agreements have been ratified. Sindia is to receive one crore and the district of Bid. (These articles were never carried out). Bhosle made a separate treaty with the Nizam. The Nawab feels extreme humiliation. Mahadjipant Guruji was present in the camp advising on all delicate affairs. Baba Phadke has well maintained the reputation of his father Haripant."

6. Nana and Kale outwitted by Nizam Ali.—Kale was entrusted with the task of executing the terms of the treaty concluded at Kharda and accompanied Nizam Ali to Haidarabad. Mir Alam was the latter's minister from whom Kale was to exact the fulfilment of the terms. Nizam Ali was faced with the rebellion of his son Ali Jah who declared his independence at Bidar in June 1795. Govindrao lacked the sternness necessary for his mission and yielded to the sweet promises and hollow entreaties of Nizam Ali. This was an occasion for rescuing the Maratha homelands from Muslim control. But Govindrao busied himself in saving the Haidarabad State as it then existed. He writes to Nana, "My highest and constant concern has been to bring about such a position that the two States of Poona and Haidarabad should not be looked upon as separate and that such a union be effected between them that the one should never stand in fear of the other." This was a vain dream beyond the limits of practical politics. The two hereditary enemies could not be united into a harmonious neighbourhood. Nizam Ali was in a sad plight on account of his son's rebellion and Kale instead of utilizing the situation to Maratha advantage, did his utmost to save Nizam Ali. In

July he wrote to Nana, "you must not remain apathetic at this moment, but save this State by putting down the rebel. The two States should form a united whole. You must do a good turn to Nizam Ali. I know if you had any evil design against this chief, it was within your power to finish him at Kharda. But you staid your hand and saved the State. The Shrimant of Poona and the Hazarat of Haidarabad are not two different persons. His son is in open rebellion, but the father would not part with his treasure to meet the expense required to suppress him." Thus Kale found himself helpless in exacting the promised instalments of the huge indemnity and himself wrote, "I am myself partially responsible for such a result. I advocated Nizam Ali's cause with you and stood as the guarantee for the payment. Now he conveniently forgets to make good his word and accuses me as the chief ruiner of his State."

Nizam Ali thus unburdened his mind to the British Resident Kirkpatrick in September 1795, "The Pant Pradhan of Poona is a source of great annoyance to me, and I am constantly anxious to avenge my wrongs upon him. You are our friend and ally. Should you not help me in my distress? Kirkpatrick replied, "I cannot answer this proposition without orders from my masters."

It is thus clear that severely smarting under the defeat Nizam Ali had sustained at Kharda and the heavy fine and territory he had to yield, he began to find all sorts of excuses for escaping from the Maratha demands. Kale writes "Nizam Ali has set his heart upon getting out of these harsh conditions. He is not inclined to fulfil the terms. Honesty, promise, pledges have no value with him, steeped as he is in crafty devilry. On his return from Kharda his look changed. He says he must meet the Peshwa personally before he can execute the treaty. He goes on delaying these matters. His son's rebellion has added to his troubles. He is full of mischief and is playing only a waiting game." Thus the whole affair of Kharda proved a ridiculous farce and brought no good to the Maratha State. The Peshwa died in October and Maratha politics took a different turn. Nana and Kale lost the game despite their spectacular victory.

7. **Bright promise blighted.**—All the faults in the upbringing of the Peshwa and the perennial differences between Nana and Mahadji sink into insignificance when viewed against the tragedy that took place less than six months after the glorious victory of Kharda. Nana had arranged that whole campaign with great ability and foresight and there was every prospect of the Maratha State flourishing in future as before. About the month of July 1795 things began to wear a gloomy aspect for Nana's policy, when he discovered a sinister plot in which the Peshwa was found to be conducting a secret intrigue with his youthful vicious uncle Bajirao, then in confinement at Junnar.

Whether the Peshwa died by an accidental fall from the balcony of his palace or whether he deliberately threw himself down to the ground floor is a question which cannot be finally determined. Suicides cannot often be proved on unimpeachable evidence. We can only narrate the story as it is found recorded in contemporary papers.[14] One account says : "Nana Phadnis had kept the three sons of Raghunathrao in confinement at Junnar with Balavantrao Nagnath as the guardian. This Balavantrao contracted a friendship with Bajirao who asked him to arrange for him a visit to the Peshwa. Balavantrao in reply said, "if you will give me a letter for him, I will have it delivered secretly to him, and obtain a reply." Accordingly Bajirao wrote a letter to the Peshwa requesting a personal visit. Balavantrao took the letter to Poona and delivered it personally. The Peshwa was delighted with Bajirao's request, and told Balavantrao that he would be happy to meet Bajirao and would soon arrange the visit. He gave Balavantrao a reply in his own hand to that effect. Thereupon Balavantrao went to his home in Poona. In the meantime one of the Peshwa's servants on duty communicated information about the letter to Nana Phadnis. The latter at once recovered the Peshwa's letter from Balavantrao's clerk and went with it to the palace. He asked the Peshwa what letter he had written to Bajirao. The Peshwa denied the fact on oath, when Nana produced the letter and questioned if it was not his. At this the Peshwa hung down his head in mortification, and Nana spoke to him

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14. Raj, Vol. 10, No. 415.

some harsh words, explaining how dangerous it was to contact Bajirao. Nana immediately arrested Balavantrao and kept him imprisoned in a fort. This so distressed the Peshwa that he called Nana and explained to him that it was all his own doing and that Balavantrao should not on that account be punished. To this Nana turned a deaf ear, and reproved him for his entreaties. Then came the Dassara celebration. During the interval the Peshwa was very sullen and agitated. On the 13th day of Ashwin the Peshwa suddenly jumped down from the upper storey, fracturing his hands and feet. While remedies were being applied, he died". This is the available account of the Peshwa's death, recorded at the time. It shows that the Peshwa was bitterly chafing under the rebuff he had received from Nana. This is the primary cause of the Peshwa's end.[15]

After Mahadji's visit to Poona the Peshwa's thoughts took a rapid turn for personal freedom. He began to realize his position as the master of the State and longed to exercise his power independently of his mentor Nana. This was the very purpose for which Mahadji had come to Poona. Once, while driving out, the Peshwa noticed his own escort and that of Nana riding together on an equal footing, a lapse in etiquette which he resented and at once corrected (June 1791). The affairs of Ghasiram Kotwal (August 1791) and the Sachiv of Bhor (1793) became standing instances of the Peshwa asserting his power against Nana's decision. The Peshwa at the same time never showed disrespect to Nana and had personally induced him to give up his resolve of retiring to Benares. Madhavrao seems to have developed a temperament in which he quickly felt hurt when his dignity or self-respect was touched, as he had sought out the precedents and methods followed by his eminent predecessors in his position. Nana possibly failed to notice this change in the Peshwa's growing manhood, and did not relax the strict supervision which he had exercised during the early years. For a quarter of a century Nana had acted as an autocrat, having successfully overcome rivals like Sakharam Bapu and Moroba Phadnis. Every one in the

15. The account termed "Peshwaichi Akher" confirms the story of Balavantrao Nagnath.

State had bowed down to his will and tried to secure his favour. The situation of the Peshwa at his palace became tense and unworkable in July 1795 when Balavantrao Nagnath came to be punished for a crime not of his own seeking. The Peshwa bitterly felt this humiliation at the hands of his guardian whose legal position was only that of a servant. An exact parallel is to be found in the story of young Akbar chafing under the control of his guardian Bairam Khan. Whatever the crimes of Raghunathrao had been, the Peshwa now discovered his own kith and kin in Bajirao and his brothers with whom he wished to mix freely, particularly as he had not a single relation of his own family about him for company or social intercourse. Possibly Bajirao himself managed to impress upon the Peshwa's mind that the Shrimant had no more freedom in his palace at Poona than he (Bajirao) had in his cell at Junnar. This was at any rate the subject of common talk at the time. Things now began to move fast.

Sometimes young vivacious minds are easily upset by real or fancied wrongs and lose their balance. They need some sedative in such moments, some steadying agency. Born of young, almost immature parents, Madhavrao did not inherit either a robust body or a strong vigorous mind. He was too tenderly brought up to experience privations or learn self-control. He had grown up a self-willed, fondled, delicate youth with the dominant sentiment that he was the master of all he surveyed. Mention is made that he began to develop a fever from the day of the Ganapati festival (17 September) : an entry of 27 September says, "the Shrimant had to forego his bath and prayer for these twelve days on account of a rise in temperature. Alms were offered to annul the evil influences." On the Dassara day (22nd October) he had to undergo an abnormal strain on account of the unavoidable ceremonials. He headed the customary procession on an elephant in the afternoon. During the ride he swooned and would have lost his balance had not the driver tied him to the posts of the hauda with his scarf. He was immediately brought back to the palace. Three days after, on the morning of 25th October when the Peshwa was in bed weak and feverish, possibly a little delirious, he suddenly left his bed and walked into the balcony, but a servant made

a sign for him to go back. At this he fell down the railings (not very high in those days), into the water-tank below on the ground floor, fracturing his right thigh and losing two front teeth. He was at once removed to the mirror-hall. Nana arrived on the scene. A bone-setter was brought in, the wound was stitched and fomentation started. In a couple of hours the patient opened his eyes and recovered consciousness to some extent. On Tuesday 27th October he expired a little after sunset.

Tukoji Holkar the only prominent chief on the spot at the time, wrote the following news to his son at Indore. "This Sunday morning (25th October) Ashwin Shudh 12th, the Shrimant after his morning wash sat in the verandah upstairs leaning against the railing with his grand mother Tai Sathe and servants in attendance. He suddenly rose and unable to support himself fell down in a swoon on the water-tank below. He was unconscious for about an hour and then recovering his senses, began to speak. Fortunately his life has been saved through God's blessing". Nana Phadnis reported nearly to the same purport to the Chhatrapati.

Another paper offers a few more details of the last moment. "On 27th October the Peshwa, quiet and conscious called Nana and a few others to his bedside and told them that he was now passing away, and they should bring in Bajirao and manage the State". All accounts agree that the Peshwa became ill in September and gradually grew weaker. Whether he wilfully took a jump from the upper storey cannot be definitely proved. As a rule no one would put on record any such desire. Grant Duff writing 25 years after the event from information supplied by contemporaries, says, he deliberately took a jump down, his words being,—"but the Peshwa's spirit was wounded to desperation, a fixed melancholy seized his mind, and on the morning of 25th October he deliberately threw himself from a terrace in his palace, fractured two of his limbs and was much wounded by the tube of a fountain on which he fell."

The British Resident at Poona thus wrote to the Governor General on 2nd November 1795, "Reports are various as to the cause of this melancholy affair, scarce one even of the most moderate, considering it mere accidental, but at least

originating in imprudence. The most prevalent account is that the Peshwa in a temporary fit of delirium or derangement jumped or fell from an upper gallery or terrace into a fountain below. However strange this may appear, I assure you I do not trouble you with it on mere vague rumour, but from accounts through many different channels. It is even added by some that the Peshwa had been out of order for two or three days, but I must confess that I did not hear this before the accident and indeed on 22nd inst. the event was a public procession, one of the principal Hindu festivals, when nothing of the kind appeared. Within these seven weeks, I have paid two visits to the Peshwa, the last on 22nd ultimo (September) and though he conversed even more than usual, I did not perceive the slightest symptom of derangement ".[16]

Out of the many accounts quoted above a few facts appear quite convincing, viz. the intrigue of Balavantrao Nagnath and the Peshwa's chagrin at Nana's high handed action. Fever and weakness had impaired the Peshwa's health for some time. The people in general believed at the time that the Peshwa deliberately put an end to his life. A critical student thus comments on this episode of Maratha history :—

" After Mahadji's death Nana stopped all free and indiscriminate access to the Peshwa, appointed his own favourites to keep a constant watch over him; and restricted his outdoor activities. Nobody, not even chiefs and sardars were allowed to see the Peshwa without Nana's express permission. Thus after Mahadji's death, Nana carried his policy to the opposite extreme. The Peshwa became a melancholy prisoner in the hands of petty spies and interested menials. The young lively lad soon lost all the brightness of his disposition and mental vigour and was overcome by a sense of hopelessness and despair. Thus the guardianship of this shrewd, crafty, obstinate, extremely timid and jealous Minister so galled the young freedom-loving Peshwa, that he ended his life by committing suicide. But this did not open Nana's eyes to the right course of duty".[17]

Before concluding our account of this luckless youth's

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16. P. R. C. Vol. II pp. 392-393.
17. Natu's Life of Mahadji Sindia, pp. 253-258.

tragic end, a passing notice is necessary of the many prominent personalities who served him with affection and devotion. Besides Nana Phadnis and Mahadji Sindia, Haripant Phadke and Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan who used to be in frequent attendance on the Peshwa, there was a good many more who had an important share in shaping the fortunes of the youthful Peshwa, Ram Shastri Prabhune lived long to preside over the judiciary of the State until his death on 20th October 1789. He was succeeded by Aiya Shastri of whom not much is known. Raghuji Angre of Kolaba was another respectable member of an old Maratha family who frequently visited Poona, supported Nana's schemes and took a keen interest in the welfare of the young Peshwa. Raghuji died on 27th March 1793 and after him his family dwindled rapidly. The Bhosles of Nagpur were also in close contact with the affairs of Poona and generally supported Nana Phadnis. Mudhoji Bhosle died at Nagpur on 19th May 1788 and left three sons, the eldest Raghuji inherited the chiefship of Nagpur, and later figured in the Maratha war against the British in 1803. His brothers Khandoji Chimna Bapu and Venkoji Manya Bapu are names with which the later Maratha history is much concerned. They developed particular relations with the British Power, whom they tried to resist in co-operation with other Maratha chiefs to the best of their capacity.

CHAPTER XI

CHRONOLOGY

1750	Sharzarao Ghatge born.
1775 Jan. 7	Bajirao II born.
1778	Sharzarao employed by Nana Phadnis.
1793 March 27	Raghuji Angre dies.
1795 Aug. 13	Ahalyabai dies.
„ Oct. 27	Madhavrao II dies.
1796 Jan. 6	Jivba Dada dies.
„ Feb. 12	Parashuram Bhau proceeds to Junnar.
„ Feb. 25	Bajirao and his brother brought to Poona.
„ Mar. 21	Nana Phadnis leaves for Satara.
„ May 12	Chimnaji brought to the palace, Bajirao confined by Sindia.
„ May 25	Chimnaji adopted by Yashodabai.
„ June 2	Chimnaji receives robes of Peshwaship.
„ June 5	Mushir-ul-mulk released in Poona, continues there one year.
„ June 5	Nana Phadnis at Mahad.
„ Oct. 7	Nana Phadnis effects a secret agreement with Nizam Ali.
„ Oct. 26	Parashuram Bhau and Baloba Tatya confined.
„ Novr. 25	Nana Phadnis returns to Poona.
„ Dec. 6	Bajirao receives robes of Peshwaship.
„ Dec. 31	Bajirao makes an agreement with Nana Phadnis.
1797 Feb. 21	Malet retires from Poona, Uhthoff takes charge.
„ Apr. 13	Fracas at the Murlidhar temple, Poona.
„ May	William Tone employed by Bajirao.
„ May 10	Complete discharge granted to Nizam Ali from the Kharda terms.
„ Autumn	Amritrao tries reconciliation between Bajirao and Nana.

1797	Aug. 15	Tukoji Holkar dies, succeeded by Kashirao.
„	Sept. 14	Malharrao Holkar killed : Vithoji and Yeshwantrao run away.
„	Sept. 30	Nana declines to join the Dassara procession.
„	Dec. 31	Nana arrested and confined by Sindia.
1798	early months.	Reign of terror in Poona by Bajirao, Sindia and Sharzarao.
„	Feb. 26	Baizabai married to Daulatrao Sindia.
„	March 24	Palmer takes charge of the Br. Residency from Uhthoff.
„	March 25	Raymond dies.
„	Apr. 6	Shore retires from G. G.ship.
„	Apr. 6	Nana Phadnis confined at Ahmadnagar.
„	Apr. 15	Appa Balavant swallows poison.
„	May 15	Ghate illtreats Sindian ladies.
„	May 17	Richard Wellesley G. G. at Calcutta.
„	June 25	Amritrao and Sindian ladies routed near Poona.
„	July 15	Nana Phadnis released from confinement.
„	July 16	Shahu II defeats Raste near Satara.
„	July 16	Parashuram Bhau set free : proceeds against Shahu.
„	August 14	Parashuram Bhau route the Chhatrapati and confines him.
1799		Sindian ladies move to Kolhapur.
„	Aug.	Truce with the ladies by Sindia.
„	Septr. 17	Parashuram Bhau killed at Pattankudi.
1800	Jan. 14	Mahadji's widow Yamunabai stabbed.
1809	July 26	Sharzarao mūrdered.
1863	Septr. 16	Baizabai dies.

CHAPTER XI

EVIL GENIUS AT WORK

[1796—1798]

1 Intrigues in search of a successor.
2 Nana's surprise move from Mahad.
3 Bajirao becomes Peshwa.
4 The wicked trio.
5 Nana Phadnis imprisoned.
6 War by the Sindian ladies.
7 The Chhatrapati's move to be free.

1. Intrigues in search of a successor.—The death of Madhavrao II immediately let loose all the evil forces inherent in the Maratha character, destroying the unity and cohesion and hastening the final ruin of the State in less than a quarter of a century. This tragedy left Nana Phadnis as the only pilot of the ship of the State. His efforts, however, seemed foredoomed to failure. A dreadful scramble for power began, in which precious time was lost before a successor could be installed in the Peshwa's seat at Poona.

Mahadji Sindia at his death left behind him a highly trained powerful army, superior to any then owned by an Indian ruler. But its control fell into the hands of his adopted son Daulatrao, a boy of fourteen with no experience of the world. Mahadji also left behind him three widows Laksmibai, Yamunabai and Bhagirathibai, who in themselves were a power, being supported by the old and experienced followers of Mahadji. Thus the Sindia house was divided between two factions. The Maratha State had developed as a loose confederacy of powerful chiefs and had all along been administered by individuals without any settled constitution to which the various elements could remain bound. This has always been the misfortune of autocratic rule. Nana Phadnis was by common consent the ablest surviving minister, but he derived his power from the master under whose authority he held his office. Deprived of that support his power counted for little.

Bajirao and Chimnaji Appa, sons of Raghunathrao, with Amritrao his adopted son, were the only surviving direct mem-

bers of the Peshwa family, strictly guarded in confinement at Junnar and full of hatred towards Nana Phadnis. Chimnaji was then only eleven years old, too young to think and act for himself. Bajirao was watching the situation carefully with a view to securing the Peshwaship, for which his father had long yearned and fought in vain. Nana had promised to make a final settlement for them after the conclusion of the war against the Nizam. But as Nana did not attend to their grievances, they directly approached the Peshwa through Balavantrao Nagnath with the result already indicated. Nana was determined in his own mind to keep Bajirao and his brothers out of any share in the Peshwa's Government, but he lacked the armed force necessary to ensure the success of his measures. Since Haripant's death Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan was his sole supporter at Poona, as he could not well trust Sindia and Holkar, although then present at the capital. Raghuji Bhosle also was there during the rains of 1795, but he had been allowed by the Peshwa to depart for Nagpur a few days before his death. He had hardly proceeded as far as the Bhima river when he heard that the Peshwa had died. Nana immediately after the tragic event called Parashuram Bhau from Tasgaon for concerting measures about the succession. Bhau arrived at Poona on 4th Novr. as also Raghuji Bhosle's agents in that connection. Nana in his resolve to keep out Raghunathrao's sons tried to adopt a young boy from the collateral relations, to which most of the prominent chiefs strongly objected, on the ground that Bajirao was the nearest heir and should be preferred to an unknown stranger. But Nana could not overcome his prejudice against Bajirao and his family, and precious time was wasted in useless conferences of the leading statesmen and feudatory chiefs.

Nana was conducting the provisional government and brought several boys to Poona for selection and adoption against the sober and far-sighted advice offered by most experienced members even of his own party such as Mahadajipant Guruji. Nana argued the point separately with each and by using his personal influence obtained a grudging consent to his proposal of adoption. This policy came to be violently opposed as time passed. If a boy must be adopted, Sindia and Holkar suggested that Chimnaji Appa

be given in adoption to Yashodabai, a via media, to effect a bridge between the two views. But this course too had its own disadvantages. It involved the supersession of the elder brother Bajirao, whose claim could not be lightly set aside. In the meantime Sindia's influential minister Jivba Dada Bakhshi, who was Nana's friend, died on 6th January 1796 and Baloba Tatya Pagnis became the chief adviser of Daulatrao Sindia. He openly opposed the adoption of Chimnaji Appa and supported Bajirao's right to become the Peshwa. Bajirao himself had not been idle all this time, but tried his best to turn the situation to his advantage by all the arts of dissimulation and cunning of which he was a master. He won over both Daulatrao and his minister Baloba under a solemn contract promising to pay them a crore and a quarter Rs. in cash and lands worth 25 lacs annually. Nana knew nothing of this secret move till he was awakened to the danger through the agency of Nizam Ali Khan. In order to avert this danger, Nana arranged to forestall Bajirao by bringing about Chimnaji's adoption by Yashodabai. This rather aggravated the evil. On 12th February he despatched Parashuram Bhau to Junnar to fetch Chimnaji Appa to Poona, even by force if necessary. There was a peculiar reason for Nana to adopt such an intricate and tortuous course. He had contracted large loans from various bankers in the name of the late Peshwa, and if a son had not been properly adopted and the succession were to pass to a new man like Bajirao, the latter could easily repudiate these debts, as it was a time-honoured obligation of a son to pay his father's debts.

But this project involved Nana in further trouble. Parashuram Bhau on arrival at Junnar found Bajirao utterly obdurate. He refused to hand over Chimnaji, claiming that the Peshwaship was now his by right. After days of argument and persuasion, it was decided that they should all proceed to Poona and there find a solution in consultation with the responsible officials. Bajirao's wife and Amritrao remained at Junnar and the rest left that place on 25th February 1796, reaching Kharadi in the vicinity of Poona on 3rd March. Here Nana, the British Resident Malet and other prominent persons came and called on Bajirao. Bajirao and Nana held private consultations and arrived at a compromise according to which

Bajirao was to become the Peshwa and Nana his principal minister. On 11th March they exchanged solemn documents confirming the arrangement. But this was only a patched up affair, none of the parties having faith in the other's sincerity. Besides Sindia felt great irritation at such a reconciliation independently effected betweeen Nana and Bajirao, as in that case Sindia was likely to lose the large amount which Bajirao had agreed to pay to him. Another factor in the situation was Amritrao who had been left in the lurch at Junnar. Sindia prepared to direct strong forces upon Poona. Bajirao put off his entrance into the city on the pretext of having found no auspicious day for it. Sindia obstructed every proposal that Nana put forth, to which the latter replied by attempts to seduce the chiefs of Sindia's army. Baloba received reports that his life was in danger from Nana's agents. The atmosphere at Poona became charged with suspicion, hatred and fear of each other's motives, and the parties drifted into hostile camps. In the midst of such a situation Nana finding that his own life was in danger, suddenly left Poona on 21st March and proceeded to Satara. Bajirao called upon the Chhatrapati not to admit Nana into his presence, so that whatever power that minister possessed was thus lost.

Bajirao at the same time repudiated his promise to Sindia of the payment of a crore and more on the ground that he came to Poona on his own account without the help of Sindia. But he took care to sugar his language towards Sindia and spoke of him as his best and most loyal friend. Bajirao was anxious to secure the robes of Peshwaship from the Chhatrapati, for which he needed the good offices both of Sindia and Nana. For a moment the Chhatrapati became a source of power. Nana in his anxiety to put an end to all the troubles at Poona, proposed to the Chhatrapati to exercise his full power and stifle the plans of both Sindia and Bajirao. But the Chhatrapati refused to act on the single advice of Nana, unless he was supported both by Bajirao and Sindia. Nana visited the Chhatrapati at the Satara fort and returned to the city below, having decided to obtain the robes for Chimnaji Appa. In the meantime Sindia and Bajirao formed a plan of their own at Poona to remove Nana altogether from the administration ; and they obtained for it Parashuram Bhau's concurrence on condition

that no injury was done to Nana's respectability or security. Bajirao and his brother were at this time lodged in Sindia's camp and securely guarded by Parashuram Bhau.

While each party was thus trying to outwit the other, Parashuram Bhau on the initiative of Nana forced Chimnaji Appa against his will into a palanquin on 12th May and conveyed him to the Shaniwar palace, keeping his brother Bajirao a close prisoner in Sindia's charge. Robes of Peshwaship were immediately ordered from Satara by Sindia and Baloba. They visited Yashodabai in the palace and counselled her to adopt Chimnaji as her son. The poor girl then hardly fifteen years old could not refuse. Some of the Pandits present declared the adoption illegal ; but some others were found to support it, probably by means of some tempting offer. The ceremony of adoption took place on 25th May, and a week later on 2nd June Chimnaji was invested with the robes of Peshwaship in a grand Darbar at which Sindia. Holkar and other prominent chiefs were present. Thus after full seven months of uncommon intrigue and vexation, the Peshwa's vacant seat at Poona came to be filled.

2. Nana's surprise move from Mahad.—The delay in choosing a legitimate ruler for the Maratha State proved altogether fatal. It encouraged not only the dissentients but also the jealous enemies outside like the Nizam and the English. Sindia's continued residence in Poona completely disorganized his power in the north. Poor Chimnaji, a Peshwa in name, merely filled the vacant seat, but the real power lay in the hands of Sindia, to whose superior force Parashuram Bhau had to yield. If Nana had completely retired from politics at this time, there was some chance of unity being established in the central Government. But unfortunately Nana started an independent game and to that end all the arts which money and diplomacy could provide, in upsetting the arrangement effected at Poona. There was no ostensible reason except greed of power why he should have now undertaken to undo Chimnaji's succession, which he had himself once proposed and which would have kept out the evil genius of Bajirao, whom Nana had done all he could to offend throughout life. Nana feared Sindia's armed power and the greedy eye he had fixed upon

Nana's hoard of money. Sindia on the other hand was jealous of Nana's prestige and influence in the State. This dread of Sindia became a nightmare with Nana who now directed all the engine of his wealth and diplomacy to escape from Sindia's clutches. He knew Mushir-ul-mulk, now a prisoner in Poona, was equally anxious not only to effect his release, but to nullify by all available means the exactions imposed upon Nizam Ali by the treaty of Kharda. Now Nana in his sore need approached Mushir-ul-mulk secretly and arranged to secure Nizam Ali's armed support against any mischief that Sindia might do to him. This secret move was not long in reaching the ears of both Sindia and Parashuram Bhau, who were now acting in concert. They got wild at Nana's throwing himself into the hands of his life long enemy and took prompt measures to restrain his wicked activities. Parashuram Bhau had all along been Nana's friend and now sent his private agents to Nana at Wai to dissuade him from the evil course he was following and induce him to retire from politics altogether and reside at Benares. Nana refused to accept this friendly call and Sindia's forces marched upon Wai to secure his person. When the report of this move reached Nana, he left Wai on 4th June and suddenly decamped to Raigad, closing behind him the mountain passes from Mahableshwar to Mahad.

For full four months (10th June to 10th November) Nana Phadnis exercised all his diplomatic skill and spent much of his treasure from Mahad not only in keeping back Sindia's forces from approaching him, but in enlisting the support of several outside Powers with such secrecy and stratagem, that this episode of Mahad diplomacy has been extolled as a singular chapter of Nana's life, although it in no way contributed to the welfare of the State and even aggravated the existing evils. Had it not been for the monsoon months when the routes of communication are practically closed for the march of armies, Nana could not have so long held out against Sindia's attack. The course he followed at Mahad, necessarily involved the rupture of his life-long friendship with Parashuram Bhau and of his relations with Sindia.

Sindia's greatest need at this time was money, having to maintain a large army at Poona with absolutely no income.

His only resource for supplying his need was to attack Nizam Ali and exact payment of the indemnity stipulated for in the treaty of Kharda. This was a dangerous course as it would involve him in a fresh war ; the only other alternative was to squeeze whatever he could out of Nana, then reported to have amassed a fortune of several crores. To escape from Sindia's clutches, therefore, became Nana's sole immediate concern. He easily won over Mushir-ul-mulk and his master Nizam Ali by bartering away the hard won gains of Kharda, and contrived as well to secure British support through his friend Malet. Indeed Malet at this time looked upon Sindia's French trained army with serious apprehension and readily responded to Nana's request as a means of humbling Sindia. In Europe the situation was then fast changing. The French power was rising under Napoleon and involved England in a long war ; and in India the British looked upon Sindia as an ally of France and so their enemy, although Daulatrao and his subordinates had no notion of these European complications. Baloba Pagnis tried hard to secure Nana's person in order to make him disgorge his wealth under threat of rigorous confinement.

Parashuram Bhau out of regard for the old Minister stoutly opposed any severe measures against Nana, who in search of an asylum arranged for a residence at Thana under British protection. All these precautions he effected by oral communication in order to avoid written letters being seized and produced as evidence of his guilt. Thus from his safe retreat of Mahad the ex-Minister wove a net-work of intrigue to wrest back power and defeat Sindia's overgrown authority in the Poona Government. In Poona itself Nana formed a party of supporters consisting of Baba Phadke, Tukoji Holkar, Raghuji Bhosle, Manaji Phakde and some others. Moreover, he won for his cause the support of various neighbouring Powers as well. He obtained the sympathies of the Raja of Kolhapur, of the Siddi of Janjira and of Tipu Sultan too, forgetting for the time being all the traditional antipathies of these chiefs in a blind rage against Sindia and Parashuram Bhau, who had driven him from power. Nana made an unwise contract with the Kolhapur Raja to support him against his enemies the Patwardhans, a step which later involved the Minister in serious consequences.

Nana's activities could not long remain secret. They were closely watched by Sindia and served to enrage Baloba and Parashuram Bhau all the more. Nana had friends in Sindia's camp too, such as Aba Chitnis, Ramji Patil and Rayaji Patil, who by insidious suggestions persuaded young Daulatrao to look upon the advice of Baloba as detrimental to his interest. Mahadji Sindia's favourite mistress Kesarji entertained a high regard for the Poona Minister and used her influence with Daulatrao to induce him to make peace with him. Nana left no stone unturned, and spared no measures for recovering his power. By lavish expenditure of his treasure and making all round concessions to his traditional enemies, he hoped to stage a come back.

But more than all else Nana managed to win over Bajirao himself to his plan. Bajirao was now a prisoner closely watched by Sindia, who was going to deposit him as a life-prisoner in the fort of Asirgad, so as to have an entirely free hand during the minority of Chimnaji Appa. To avoid such a fate Bajirao readily listened to Nana's overtures and the two became temporarily reconciled to each other. Sindia's minister Baloba Tatya took immediate measures to counteract Nana's design. He approached Mushir-ul-mulk and set him free from confinement on 5th June 1796, so that one more prominent element was added to the prevailing intrigues. Mushir continued to stay in Poona to utilise the situation to the advantage of his master. Both Nizam Ali and Mushir-ul-mulk were more friendly towards Nana than to the young Sindia, as he now talked of opening a war upon the Haidarabad State for recovering the tribute promised at Kharda. Mushir-ul-mulk being free, worked the ruin of the Maratha State by taking advantage of its confused situation. He left Poona in May 1797 and reached Haidarabad in July.

The principal agent in conducting Nana's intrigues from Mahad was Govindrao Kale who worked in concert with Mushir-ul-mulk. Govindrao arranged a secret treaty between Nana and Nizam Ali, which was signed on 7th Oct. 1796. By this contract all the huge war indemnity and cession of territory imposed upon the Haidarabad ruler, were entirely annulled, on condition that Nizam Ali wholeheartedly assisted

in installing Bajirao in the Peshwaship with Nana as the sole administrator. Nana undertook to get this pact confirmed by Bajirao when he became the Peshwa.[1]

A similar secret pact was effected with the Bhosle of Nagpur also. The weakest link in the chain was Bajirao himself who accepted no guarantee or responsibility for the observance of these secret moves. Later on he actually repudiated the agreements and spared no pains or trick to work Nana's ruin. For the present he stood forth as a consummate diplomat.

Although the Government at Poona gave formal leave to Mushir-ul-mulk on 6th August 1796 to return to Haidarabad, he lingered there on one excuse or another watching the developments and counteracting the Sindian party. Nana to gain his own ends introduced another evil genius into the counsels of Sindia, viz. Sharzarao Ghatge, a character the like of whom is hardly to be found in the annals of history and who materially contributed to the ruin of the Maratha State. Tuljoji alias Sakharam was a member of the Ghatge family of Kagal (about 10 miles south of Kolhapur) who had inherited the title of Sharzarao by which he became known in history. Born about 1750 and possessing an eccentric but dashing spirit, he left home after a quarrel with his relations and enlisted as a trooper under Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan. During Moroba Phadnis' rebellion of 1778 in Poona, when Nana Phadnis found his life insecure, he borrowed a special body-guard of 500 devoted men from Parashuram Bhau. Among these Sakharam Ghatge came into Nana's employ and continued to serve him for a long time with courage, loyalty and resourcefulness. When in March 1796 Nana Phadnis suddenly left Poona for Satara, he allowed Sharzarao to enter Daulatrao's service, probably as his own spy. He soon earned a high place in Sindia's estimation and became his trusted officer for the delicate duty of guarding eminent prisoners like Bajirao, who were then in Sindia's custody. Thus Sharzarao acquired a high position of trust and responsibility offering him opportunities for making a fortune. In order to conceal his venality and gain control over the young Sindia's mind, he contrived to give his beautiful daughter the famous

1. *Treaties and Engagements* by Mavji and Parasnis No. 10 p. 22.

Baizabai in marriage to Daulatrao.[2] Besides her personal charms which captivated young Daulatrao, there was an additional reason why he earnestly sought this girl in marriage. Daulatrao like his father Mahadji was looked upon as not a well-born Maratha. The Ghatge family was considered high in the social hierarchy and Daulatrao tried to have a marital connection with it. The orthodox section of Maratha society bitterly opposed this match and for a time even Sharzarao himself refused to entertain it. Baizabai was then fourteen years old and the marriage took place on 26th February 1798 at Poona. Sharzarao now rose to higher power at the Court of Sindia owing to the backing he had both of Nana and his son-in-law. Henceforward he practically managed not only Sindia's State but wielded great power even in the administration of Poona. In course of time be became overbearing and intolerable to Daulatrao also. He ruthlessly plundered Poona and committed cruel atrocities upon its innocent inhabitants. Baizabai lived to a good old age and died in 1863 after experiencing strange vicissitudes of fortune.

3. **Bajirao becomes Peshwa.**—Sharzarao was introduced into the Maratha Government through the agency of Nana Phadnis. By his unscrupulous selfishness and wanton cruelty, he sapped all the moral greatness with which the several Peshwas and their helpmates had endowed the Maratha State. While Nana was maturing his schemes at Mahad, Bajirao was pining away his life in the confinement of Sindia's camp, chafing, swearing, and often threatening to starve himself to death. Sharzarao Ghatge was then his keeper, through whom Bajirao opened communication with Nana at Mahad for being raised to the Peshwa's seat. Nana readily accepted the proposal and managed to persuade Sindia to arrest and confine both Baloba Tatya and Parashuram Bhau (October 26, 1796) who were then conducting the Government. Sharzerao managed this affair so dexterously through Daulatrao, that the two

2. Broughton in his charming penpictures has immortalised both Baizabai and her father who came to be murdered at the desire of his son-in-law on 26th July 1809 by a son of Manaji Phakde. Baizabai had many children but they all died in infancy.

ministers had no suspicion of the coming storm. Sindia sent a corps of his men under Captain Boyd (an American mercenary) to Mahad, ostensibly to capture Nana and bring him a prisoner to Poona, with secret letters that he should accompany Boyd and assume his former power. One more item of the programme that was to be executed was strangely conceived by Sindia. He arranged that as soon as Nana should arrive in Poona, Mushir-ul-mulk and Yashavantrao Holkar should together make a sudden raid on the Peshwa's palace and arrest Chimnaji to make room for Bajirao. This news reached Parashuram Bhau on 27th Oct. He immediately ran to the palace himself with a party of his men, mounted Chimnaji on his own horse and field with him in all haste to Junnar, thus escaping capture by Sindia's men. They were quickly pursued by Holkar with whom Parashuram Bhau fought on his way at the Shivner ridge. He received wounds in the scuffle, was overpowered and carried prisoner to Mandavgan where he was kept closely confined. Chimnaji Appa was captured, carried to Sindia's camp and lodged safely with his brother. The houses of Parashuram Bhau and his partizans were plundered and all their property carried away.

This was a wonderful coup cleverly managed by Sindia under Nana's planning, a treacherous stroke against such veterans as Baloba and Parashuram Bhau, who only four months before had executed the same Sindia's wishes in conveying Chimnaji Appa from Junnar to Poona. This sudden reversal was the result of the lure offered by Nana. The removal of Chimnaji from Poona was immediately communicated to Nana at Mahad. He left that place and reached Poona on 25th November. At Nana's invitation Raghuji Bhosle also arrived there at the same time. The next day Nana paid his first formal visit to Bajirao in Sindia's camp at Hadapsar, when all the principal members, Sindia, Holkar, Bhosle and Mushir-ul-mulk as Nizam Ali's representative, were present. In this ceremonial visit Bajirao was openly acclaimed by all as their master. As the result of these intrigues and betrayals, a Maratha's word and promise came henceforth to be a synonym for falsehood and treachery throughout India and the race has not been able to work off the stain even in a century. Baji-

rao himself became an heir to all this Maratha degradation and his word never came to be believed. He gave a solemn promise in writing to Nana to do him no wrong and to allow him to exercise during his life the full executive power ; similarly Nana also gave his solemn word to serve Bajirao loyally. The faithful observance of these promises was guaranteed by Daulatrao on behalf of Bajirao and by Nizam Ali and Mushir-ul-mulk on behalf of Nana, bitterest enemies only a year ago. It was all a hollow temporary truce, a deliberate hoax as it soon proved.

The poor raja of Satara was now called upon to send fresh robes of Peshwaship with which Bajirao was invested on 5th December. None of the principal chiefs, not even Sindia and Holkar cared to be present at the ceremony. On 6th December Bajirao proceeded in a procession through the city and entered his ancestral palace, vacated by the late Peshwa in October of the previous year.

Thus the year 1796 proved highly eventful for Bajirao. With little education or experience of any kind, and having passed his most formative years in confinement having no contact with the outside world, Bajirao by a mere freak of fortune came to occupy the first place in the Maratha State, and from the very start he had to contend against adverse circumstances, although his own treacherous and wicked heart was responsible for most of his troubles. Even his immediate friends did not escape his suspicion and wrath. He soon fell out with Nana and told him he was not going to remain a mere puppet in his hands like the late Peshwa Madhavrao. All the conferences, agreements and promises that had been made between Nana and Bajirao, were meant only to conceal the real intentions of the parties, and hardly a week passed after Bajirao's installation before the mutual antagonism of the two came to the surface. The first thing that Bajirao did on becoming the Peshwa was to liberate and bring near his person all those advisers and associates of his father who had been severely punished in the last regime. These now sought to inflict retaliation upon Nana for the wrongs they had suffered at his hands. Nana protested to Bajirao on this subject, but the latter insisted on having about him only those whom he liked. Nana asked the

Peshwa to remove the Sindian guards that had been stationed at the palace for his protection and employ for that duty men of his own Huzrat regiments. Bajirao rejected this sound advice scornfully, saying, "These Huzrat people are all your men, whom I cannot trust." Bajirao equally refused to ratify the agreement contracted with Nizam Ali remitting the Kharda indemnity and the territorial cessions. Mushir-ul-mulk was then in Poona and demanded a solemn annulment of the Kharda treaty. Bajirao would not agree to it. He began to spend lavishly on his unworthy favourites, showering on them gifts and rewards without the least regard for the interest of the State. Nana thus found it impossible to conduct the administration, and within a few days the tension between them became so acute and intolerable that both the Peshwa and the minister suspecting each other ceased to meet in open Darbar. Afraid of being suddenly attacked they began to live in the midst of armed guards all day and night. The normal administration fell into abeyance.

A few papers typifying the relations between Bajirao and Nana deserve citation. A solemn agreement was mutually concluded by them on 31st December 1796,[3] i.e. only three weeks after the Peshwa's installation. It contained 6 articles laying down the principles on which the administration should be conducted ; they repeat the precedents followed by the previous Peshwas. Another paper contains a humble petition of 12 articles submitted by Nana for the gracious acceptance of Bajirao. The substance runs thus :—"My schemes for your Highness' welfare have now been happily accomplished and have given me the supreme pleasure of being restored to your affection. But as my body has now grown unfit for further service, I humbly crave your permission to retire to a quiet place where I can spend the remainder of my life in peaceful contemplation, ever offering prayers for your continued welfare. With this object I submit the following requests for your Highness' sanction :—

1. You have already granted me permission to adopt a son and I shall soon perform the adoption. I beg

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3. Ait. Tip. 1.4 ; Itihas Sangraha P. D. No. 21 p. 172.

your Highness to confer my office of the Phadnis upon the adopted son and continue to him all the emoluments that I am now enjoying. You must cast off all suspicion about me from your mind.

2. In addition to the present military guard at my service, an increase of one thousand men should be sanctioned to remain in attendance on me wherever I would stay.
3. A landed jagir worth 25 thousand a year be granted to me.
4. I wish to proceed to Benares and there spend the remainder of my days. I request a formal written permission that you have allowed me willingly to retire (that I may not be looked upon as a rebel).
5. The political contracts and instruments I have entered into with Sindia, Nizam Ali, Bhosle, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and others, should be duly observed and executed according to the needs of the time.
6. I should be reimbursed for whatever I might have been required to spend out of my private funds for governmental work.
7. Haripant Phadke's sons, Aba Shelukar, Dada Gadre, Bajaba Shirolkar, Dhondopant Nijsure, Raghopant Godbole, Naropant Chakradev, Govindrao Pingle and others who have so long served the State loyally, should continue to receive the same kind treatment as heretofore.
8. Formal agreements contracted either with the Maratha chiefs or with foreign Powers, should be faithfully carried out. Sindia, Holkar and the other chiefs will continue to advise on State matters, and due weight should be given to their advice."

This eloquent document hardly reflects any credit upon the political sagacity of Nana, when one remembers that for twenty years his relations with Bajirao were too deeply embittered to be easily rectified. For Nana to expect kindness from Bajirao was self-deception. His request for conferring on his adopted child his own office and emoluments is ridiculous when the fitness of the person to be adopted was yet an unknown quantity.

The main cause of Nana's trouble was his hoarded treasure supposed to run into several crores, at least nine as ascertained by his learned biographer Khare, illegally got together at the cost of the State as both Bajirao and Sindia believed. Bajirao was penniless and possessed not even the means of buying his daily food. He was, therefore, at his wits' end how to get along without money. He sent his brother Amritrao to Nana to adjust matters asking him to be a father to all the brothers. Amritrao could effect nothing. Then Bajirao suggested that Moroba Phadnis be released from confinement and entrusted with the administration. A report records, "What has so far happened is nothing compared with what appears likely in the future," meaning that the end of the State was approaching. Anxiety and trouble darkened the atmosphere. The bankers of Poona began to remove their wealth to safer places outside. Bajirao could not venture out of his palace for fear of violence. He annulled his brother Chimnaji's adoption by a counter ceremony of penance.

It was the Patwardhans whom Bajirao hated most bitterly as the worst enemies of his father, particularly Parashuram Bhau who had forcibly brought Chimnaji Appa from Junnar and opposed Bajirao's succession to the Peshwaship. He was being treated harshly in his confinement at Mandavgan, and the other members of the family suffered more or less at the hands of Bajirao. Fortunately for the Maratha State the British policy was then not aggressive, with the non-interfering Shore at its head, and the equally quiet Uhthoff conducting the Residency at Poona in Malet's absence. One more year was wanted for the next proconsul Wellesley to arrive on the Indian scene. Bajirao did not feel the least concern for the cares of the State and occupied himself with prayers, worship, religious rites in public and gross sensual enjoyment in private. Nana remained sulking and a pathetic onlooker unable to exercise any effective control over the administration, which had come to a stop.[4]

4. As since Bajirao's accession the British authorities exercised increasing influence on Maratha affairs, we should note the names of the Residents at Poona :—

1. Charles Malet 3 March 1786—21 February 1797 ;

In the midst of such a situation Poona suddenly witnessed a small commotion, of which local memories are still green. A temple of Murlidhar was built in Poona by Nana's father-in-law Vishnupant Gadre a banker, and at the inauguration ceremony on 13th April 1797 military bands were ordered to play their music. There were two bands then employed by the Maratha Govt., one of the Arabs and the other of a Regiment headed by Capt. Boyd. The two bands arrived on the scene at the appointed time but started a stiff quarrel on the point of precedence, each party insisting on playing first. The quarrel suddenly flared up into a serious fracas in which several men of the two parties came to be slain. The ceremony had to be put off on account of such ominous blood-shed and the shrine is still called "the Murlidhar of murders". Although the incident in itself had no grave consequence, it illustrates how feelings were then running high in the Maratha capital.

Bajirao in sore need of money imposed several fresh taxes upon the people, one of which is called "Santoshpatti" meaning a gift for peoples' joy at Bajirao's accession, an ingenious method of exacting the peoples' money, invented by the new Peshwa's fruitful brain. Mushir-ul-mulk was still in Poona demanding full satisfaction of his claims. This was with difficulty effected on 10th May 1797; a complete discharge was ratified by the Peshwa of all the stipulations of Kharda, and the Nizam's Minister who was brought in as a prisoner and hostage of war, returned in the glory of a full triumph.[5] Raghuji Bhosle who had also been in Poona was satisfied as to his claims and given leave to return to his capital in June. Daulatrao Sindia was given the fort of Ahmadnagar to secure his good will in future.

2. Uhthoff 21 February 1797—24 March 1798;
3. William Palmer 24 March 1798—7 December 1807;
4. Barry Close 7 December 1801—29 July 1809;
5. Henry Russell 29 July 1809—28 February 1811;
6. Elphinstone 28 February 1711—3 June 1818 when he became the first Governor of Bombay.

5. All this was manouvered by Nizam Ali's ambassador Raghuttam Haibatrao who lived in Poona since the time of Maratha-Nizam tension and acted behind the scene to the detriment of the Maratha State.

4. The wicked trio.—Bajirao and Nana so openly disagreed that the latter refused to meet the Peshwa at his palace and transacted whatever he could of State business in his own house. Another man to share their troubles was Sindia who tried to profit as much as possible at the expense of the other two. Thus these two principal chiefs of the Maratha State, wasted their time in mutual rivalry without the least thought of their duties outside, or the military need of meeting the enemies lying in wait on all sides. The only man who keenly resented and highly regretted this state of affairs was Amritrao, who did his utmost to exert his sobering influence, on the one side upon his brother Bajirao and on the other upon Nana and Sindia to improve matters. But his very conciliatory efforts were interpreted as treachery by the other parties and he could effect little improvement as he possessed no power of his own. He, however, persuaded Bajirao to prepare a well-trained regiment of his own to strengthen his position. Bajirao then took into his service the same American Captain Boyd who had been in Nana's service since the days of Kharda.

An Irishman named William Tone was also appointed at this time to work under Boyd. Boyd, however, did not stay in Poona for more than a year hereafter, but Tone continued in the Maratha service for some five years (1796-1801), till he came to be killed in a battle between Sindia and Holkar on the Narmada near Maheshvar. Tone was then in Holkar's service.[6]

Bajirao managed to pass the summer months of 1797 merrily in nuptial ceremonies along with his friend the youthful Daulatrao only six years younger. Tukoji Holkar was in Poona but an old invalid now, and unable to control his refractory sons and divided household. The sobering influ-

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6. Tone's name survives in Maratha history on account of the valuable letters (later published) which he wrote to Col. Malcolm during the five years of his service. They graphically describe the condition of the Maratha State and supply important historical material without any partizanship. Tone's letters were first published in the Asiatic Annual Register for 1803 and later in the Bombay Courier. They give excellent pen-pictures of many eminent personalities, Bajirao, Yeshvantrao Holkar, Manaji Phakde and others. They also contain useful observations on society and religion as they came to the writer's notice.

ence of Ahalyabai on the family ended with her death on 13th August 1795. Tukoji himself passed away in his camp at Poona on August 15, 1797, leaving four sons, Kashirao, a grown up idiot, Malharrao, Vithoji and Yashvantrao the youngest. The last three were capable and brave but, with no one to control and direct their energies in a good cause, proved rather an evil than an asset to the family. Kashirao was the legal heir, but was unfit to manage his affairs. The old rancour of the Holkars against Sindia and the memory of Lakheri smouldered in their hearts. Daulatrao with Bajirao's ready support now made up his mind to pay back the old scores. He managed to obtain control of Kashirao, whom Bajirao raised to the position of Tukoji's successor. The other three brothers united themselves in a common bond against Kashirao and having enlisted the support of Nana Phadnis, came out openly to deprive Kashirao of his position. Bajirao having committed himself to support Sindia's nominee, failed to exercise his impartial voice in preventing an open war. After their father's death, the three younger brothers formed a separate camp and having gathered an independent following of their own, took up their residence near the suburb of Bhamburda.

Their plan was to capture Kashirao and secure the chief command for the intrepid Malharrao and if possible raid the territories of Sindia. Daulatrao with his large armed force was more than a match for the slender resources of the Holkar brothers. He took immediate measures either to capture Malharrao the leader of the Holkar party, or put him to death in a scuffle if that appeared feasible. The result was a foregone conclusion when two such desperate youths as Malharrao and Daulatrao determined to go to any length and when their common master the Peshwa looked on them with light-hearted indifference, hardly realizing that this little civil fracas once begun would ultimately grow big enough to swallow him and the whole State. On 14th September exactly a month after old Tukoji's death, Daulatrao acting under Sharzarao's advice sent under cover of darkness an armed detachment to capture Malharrao. The latter obtained news of Sindia's move and made ready to face his antagonists boldly. He kept awake the whole night with his few companions ready to repel a surprise attack by

Sindia's men. The night wore away without any incident. As the morning dawned, Malharrao feeling that the expected trouble was over, undressed and retired to rest. In this unguarded state he was suddenly attacked and killed along with a few of his comrades. His wife Jijibai then a few months advanced in pregnancy, was removed for safety to the house of Kesopant Kunte, Holkar's agent in Poona. In due course she gave birth to a son who was named Khanderao. Daulatrao managed to take possession of the lady and her child and kept them secure in his camp.

But Daulatrao failed to take note of the other two brothers of Malharrao, viz. Vithoji and Yashvantrao who at once fled away after Malharrao's death and took to a life of brigandage devastating Sindia's territory in retaliation. The trio Bajirao, Daulatrao and Sharzarao fastened the responsibility of the whole trouble upon Nana's head and concerted measures to get rid of him, as they feared harm from the immense popularity that the minister enjoyed among foreign Powers. The Patwardhans, Amritrao, Mahadji's wives, the officers of Sindia's Indian cavalry and his secretaries were all more or less disaffected towards Bajirao and Daulatrao, and felt impelled to join any opposition that would be formed.

The dispute in the Holkar family was symptomatic of others of a similar character. When the State fails to provide a legitimate channel for the innate activities of all able-bodied men, they take to a life of lawlessness and brigandage. Such restless elements have to be properly directed to useful purposes by the State, as had been the case in previous times. A similar dispute arose in the Angrian family of Kolaba upon the death of Raghuji on 27th March 1793. Daulatrao Sindia's mother came from this family and Daulatrao was later called on to interfere in the Kolaba succession dispute in favour of his maternal uncle Baburao Angre. For a time Baburao succeeded in his object of securing possession of Kolaba, but he wisely withdrew from the contest and avoided unpleasant developments by accepting service under Daulatrao.

Sindia's armed strength joined to Bajirao's wicked tendencies and guided by Sharzarao's vile counsel, became now a terror to all chiefs, bankers and leaders in the Maratha State. Spies were posted all over the capital and reported on every

man of means, making honest life impossible. The blow was now to fall on Nana. He lost all interest in State affairs and offered advice only in such matters as were referred to him. Bajirao would not allow Sindia to depart for Hindustan or even to withdraw his armed guard from his own palace. While Nana offered Daulatrao a large sum for leaving Poona and going away, Bajirao at the same time went still further, promising Sindia two crores for saving him from Nana's vengeance. Which of these two conflicting plans was to be adopted became a puzzle for Daulatrao. The stipulated amounts in both cases were to be wrested from Nana's coffers. After a long and anxious deliberation the trio decided to take the latter course, viz., to seize Nana's person and keep him closely confined in some inaccessible fort, as in that case they could easily secure all his money and obtain a free hand in the administration. To counteract these evil designs, a few sober politicians started a move to place Amritrao in charge of the administration. During the wet months of 1797 Amritrao sedulously busied himself in working out a compromise by asking Nana to retire voluntarily, as he was considered the sole cause of the trouble. Amritrao was supported in this scheme by some of the veteran well-wishers of the State and partizans of Nana, such as Kale, Pingle, Chakradev and Shelukar. The plan was matured and was on the point of being put into action when the evil genius of Bajirao once more wrecked it. He was mortally afraid of his brother Amritrao and did not like to be controlled by him. Instead of taking him into confidence, Bajirao contrived to remove him from Poona, asking him to retire on a fixed annuity for his expenses. Thus the last effort to check the evil tendencies of the trio equally failed.

About this time the British relations with Tipu Sultan were strained and hostilities appeared imminent. The Peshwa was approached by the President for the revival of the former tri-partite alliance of 1790, and Nana advised Bajirao to join in, as in his opinion, the two allies, the Peshwa and Nizam Ali standing together, would be able to counteract Sindia. But Bajirao and Sindia were such close friends and essential to each other, that they sensed their ruin in this proposal of Nana and rejected it, losing British sympathy into the bargain.

5. **Nana Phadnis imprisoned.**—At this time the widows of Mahadji Sindia were giving serious trouble to Bajirao and Daulatrao. They both considered Nana as the author of the trouble, by having instigated the ladies to the desperate course of war. So Sindia and Bajirao decided to remove Nana from the scene altogether, ignoring the solemn oaths and written engagements which they had so profusely given him not long ago. Matters came to a head on the Dassara day of 1797 (30th Sept). Nana refused to take part in the usual procession and do homage to the Peshwa. This caused a severe irritation and Sindia stationed armed forces around Nana's premises to watch and prevent his free movements. A fortnight later Sindia visited the Peshwa at his palace with a large armed following and invited Nana to a conference. The latter attended the meeting and advised Sindia at once to depart for the north. Daulatrao urged he could not move unless his troops were paid off and demanded money from Nana. Bajirao said he could not supply funds to Sindia and that he was so poor that he had no oil for the lamps to light his palace, no betel leaves, nor rice for his daily food. He held Nana Phadnis responsible for his miseries and was determined to end them any how. Thereupon Bajirao gave written permission to Sindia to seize Nana's person and take away his treasure by force and whatever else could be obtained from Nana's followers and partizans, among whom his store of cash was said to have been distributed for custody.

A sensational report went round that Nana was going to be arrested. Sindia and Bajirao applied constant pressure to make him disgorge his treasure. Nana replied that he would make the stipulated payment to Sindia after he had left Poona and reached Burhanpur on his way to Hindustan. Daulatrao urged that his troops would not move unless they were paid at once. He demanded hostages from the Minister that he would do no harm to Bajirao's person in his absence and asked that Dada Gadre, Bajaba Shirolkar, Govindrao Pingle and Aba Shelukar be at once handed over to his (Sindia's) custody. This meant an open rupture about which Nana consulted Amritrao. Michael Filose popularly known as Mukel, a Neapolitan Captain in Sindia's service, was deputed to meet the Minister and settle the question of Sindia's departure for his

dominions and the payment due to his troops. Nana himself had got so disgusted with the whole situation and felt so insecure in the life he was leading for nearly a year, that he made preparations to quit Poona for some unknown destination. This report greatly alarmed Sindia, since if once Nana got away, he was sure to move heaven and earth and launch both him and Bajirao into serious trouble. Sindia in his emergency took counsel with Sharzarao and contrived through honeyed words and reassuring messages to put Nana off his guard through the mediation of Filose, in whose veracity Nana had a special faith. Filose played into the hands of Sharzarao and the two together fixed up the details of the plan for Nana's arrest at an unguarded moment in order to avoid an open scuffle or bloodshed. Daulatrao invited Nana for a parting dinner in his camp. Nana accepted the invitation on the Italian Captain assuring him that no harm would result. Filose placed his hand on the Bible and swore to Nana that he personally stood guarantee for Sindia's departure and for the honest motive of the host. December 31 of 1797 was fixed for that function. Yashvantrao Ghorpade, a cousin of the famous Murrarao and well-known friend of Nana, played a treacherous game by swallowing Sharzarao's bait and persuaded Nana to go forth fearlessly into Sindia's camp for the dinner. The British Resident at Poona thus reported the visit to the Governor General on 1st January 1798 :—

"Nana accepted the engagement and proceeded in the afternoon with between one and two thousand attendants to the camp of Sindia, who received him in the usual respectful manner at the entrance, and after being seated for some time, they removed to another apartment for private consultation, where four of Daulatrao's men were present and Nana was accompanied by Dada Gadre, Aba Shelukar, Bajaba Shirolkar, Raghopant Godbole and a brother of Dhondopant Nijsure. Shortly after Daulatrao withdrew, when Col. Filose's infantry surrounded the place of meeting and some twenty of Daulatrao's people rushed into the room and secured Nana and his adherents, stripped them of all their jewels and even most of their clothes. Sindia's men then began a general attack on Nana's attendants who were plundered, killed, wounded or dispersed. Large bodies of Sindia's troops were immediately

sent into Poona and plundered almost every person that came in their way." All accounts agree that Col. Filose had the chief hand in this affair.[8]

Bajirao accomplished this disgraceful stroke through the agency of Sindia and Sharzarao, doubtless out of greed of Nana's treasure and a long pent up sentiment of revenge rankling in his heart.

Nana's removal from the active scene of the Maratha Govt. brought new miseries upon the populace of Poona. The main object of the perpetrators was to squeeze as much treasure from the Minister, his friends and collaborators as possible. The British Resident at Poona made full reports to his superior of the iniquities which the Peshwa and Sindia committed in the name of the Maratha Govt. For a time they could cloak their misdeeds under one pretext or another. But it was impossible for them to deceive all people for all time. They soon came to be thoroughly exposed. Nana had in his employ some four thousand Arab guards considered as brave and faithful soldiers, and they now threatened to break out against the Peshwa's authority, unless they were paid all their arrears at once. As they assumed a riotous demeanour, Sindia's regiments were brought in to disperse them ; but they could not be lightly removed. They surrounded the city and offered a sternfight. The Peshwa got so terrified at the prospect of severe bloodshed taking place near his palace, that he quietly paid the Arabs their wages and so got rid of them. They at once sought employment with the bankers and citizens of Poona and continued to harass the Peshwa throughout his regime. They gave a stiff fight even to the British at Malegaon in the summer of 1818 during the course of their last war with the Marathas.

When Nana Phadnis was secured, Bajirao removed the Sindia guards stationed at his palace and in their place raised his own force known as Huzurat, to whose command he appointed his own favourite Aba Kale, who had no notion of the mili-

8. P. R. C. VI 64 "Filose was soon after driven from Poona for his treachery to Nana and is now living under the E. I Co.'s protection in Bombay." P. R. C. VI 166, Col. Palmer's letter to the Governor General dated 11th Dec. 1798.

tary craft. Nana was arrested on the last day of the year 1797 and continued to remain a prisoner in Sindia's camp at Poona for some three months. During this period Sharzarao and his henchmen perpetrated indescribable atrocities on the populace of Poona and its neighbourhood. They first pressed Nana and his co-prisoners to disclose their wealth. But they could get little information from them. Nana's partizans in the town Narayan Baburao Vaidya, Trimbakrao Parchure, Gangadharpant Bhanu, Chintopant Deshmukh and others were severely belaboured and made to disgorge all their wealth. Narayan Vaidya when whipped and subjected to corporal ill-treatment for extortion of money, made a bold answer to the Peshwa. He said on 1st March 1798, "You invited me to the place and have kept me here these several days. Let me plainly ask you. "Why do you demand money from me?" If I have committed any wrong, you can punish me by all means. That you are in need of money is no excuse for you to deprive your servants of their earnings. I will not pay anything in such a case. You are under a delusion about my possessions. I have no savings to give away. If you ask me to borrow and pay, I simply refuse to do so. I can get no loan. If after all this you won't let me go home, I resign myself to my fate. Do what you like with me. The Shrimant is in duty bound to be good, kind and righteous. I shall suffer the consequences".

Appa Balavant Mehendale, a respectable old servant of the Peshwa's house, when similarly hardpressed, swallowed poison and died on 15th April 1798 in order to escape the threatened indignities. As has been already mentioned, when Nana Phadnis was detained, some of his colleagues were also seized and confined. Under severe threats of ill-treatment they were compelled to pay several lacs each, before they were set free. The same course was followed both by Bajirao and Sharzarao with regard to a large number of the friends and partizans of Nana. A systematic search for wealth and unscrupulous plunder were effected by Sharzarao, who for that purpose took up his own residence in the city house of Nana himself. Says one writer, "On the 10th day of his daughter's marriage Sakharam Ghatge took up his residence in Nana's house, where goats are being slaughtered every day in the sacred room of Nana's daily worship. Ghatge now occupies the seat of Nana in his office room,

the populace of Poona look upon this man as the God of death incarnate. The Peshwa and his brother Amritrao are not on good terms. Worthless men are now exercising power. Sindia looks upon a Brahman as the vilest being. God's will be done." In this base business Ghatge was associated with another evil genius Baloji Kunjar, who was the Peshwa's nominee co-operating with Ghatge in this wanton plunder and harassment.

It was in the midst of this grand plunder that the marriage of Daulatrao and Baizabai was solemnized on 26th February 1798 with such lavish pomp and display as were unprecedented in the history of Poona. The father of the bride was suddenly exalted from a common citizen to the ministership of Sindia and to be indirectly the sole controller of the Maratha State. Sharzarao had won the complete confidence of Daulatrao and is reported to have addicted him to wine and opium, under the influence of which Ghatge extracted Sindia's consent to whatever measures he contemplated. He accomplished this base purpose with all the greater facility, as his daughter became an additional support of his power.

6. **War by the Sindian ladies.**—But all this enjoyment of pleasure and power was suddenly marred by the outburst of a war started by the Sindian ladies, which came to a head towards the end of 1797. Mahadji Sindia left behind him three wives Lakshmibai, Yamunabai and Bhagirathibai, who demanded sufficient independent provision to be ensured for their maintenance. Daulatrao, before his adoption, gave them a solemn promise, but failed to carry it out on account of his financial straits, which went on increasing on account of his prolonged stay in the Deccan. Out of the three ladies all having experience in military and administrative matters, Bhagirathibai was reported to be attached to Daulatrao's interest, while the other two who lived at Ujjain were compelled by their distress to take up arms, and were supported by the strong Saraswat faction in Daulatrao's service. A regular civil war was conducted for four years by the spirited Lakshmibai and Yamunabai, over an extensive field from the south to the north, from Poona and Kolhapur to Ujjain and Bundelkhand.

We now come to the summer of 1798, a time in Indian history full of grave portents. Sir John Shore retired on 6th

April and Lord Wellesley the architect of India's future destiny, took charge as head of the Company's Government on 17th May at Calcutta. He had landed at Madras on 26th April. On 25th March died Nizam Ali's French Commander Raymond, thereby facilitating the introduction of the British power at the Court of Haidarabad. To these foreign developments both Bajirao and Sindia were perfectly blind. They likewise treated lightly the complaints of the Sindian ladies. But the widows' cause was just, it had received popular support at the hands of impartial observers. Aba Chitnis, Narayanrao Bakhshi (son of Jivba) and most of the army captains of Sindia took an active interest in the cause of those ladies as they had served and respected them since the days of Mahadji.

With a large following these ladies marched from the north upon Poona, determined to get redress of their grievances at the hands of Daulatrao. Several discontented spirits welcomed this sudden outburst. In the last week of March, Narayanrao Bakhshi, Deoji Gauli, Rayaji and Ramji Patil and many others suspected of partizanship with the ladies, were, at the suggestion of Sharzarao either arrested and confined at Ahmadnagar or driven out of the camp with ignominy. As Nana Phadnis' presence in Sindia's camp was supposed to encourage the ladies' rising, he was also removed to the fort of Ahmadnagar suddenly on 6th April 1798. Baloba Tatya too was similarly removed to the same place. As the ladies advanced upon Poona, Sharzarao Ghatge offered to meet them and convey them to Jambgaon. But they refused even to see his face ; they looked upon him as the most sinful and wicked person alive, unworthy of their sight. Then Daulatrao himself saw them and composed their ruffled spirits by arranging for their residence at Burhanpur. But they refused to move unless all their ornaments and property which had been seized, were restored to their possession. Thereupon Sharzarao tried upon them his methods of force. Things were arranged for their journey to Burhanpur. On 15th May palanquins were brought for their journey ; but the ladies would not come out, believing they were going to be removed to Ahmadnagar for confinenent under the pretext of going to Burhanpur. Sharzarao thereupon entered their apartments, whipped them severely and dragged them out.

Another military chief in Sindia's service named Muzaffar Khan went over to the ladies' party and a civil war on a vast scale broke out in the vicinity of Poona. The ladies and their following came marching from Koregaon upon Poona, demanding the surrender of Sharzarao as the author of the whole trouble. At this moment Amritrao who had not been invested with the office of the Peshwa's Diwan promised to him after Nana Phadnis' arrest, felt highly aggrieved against his brother and leaving him in disgust joined the ladies. Having received such formidable additions to their cause, the ladies' army came on in fury under the direction of Lakshmibai riding a state elephant in front. On 8th June they attacked Sindia's camp at midnight and created a great havoc with their artillery fire. Daulatrao was so terrified that he sent Aba Chitins, with Rayaji and Ramji Patil as mediators to explain to the ladies that he was ready to accede to all their demands. This was indeed a mere ruse advised by Sharzarao to gain time and concert measures for seizing their persons. A few days passed in useless negotiations, the ladies demanding the surrender of Sharzarao's person which Daulatrao refused. The ladies then moved their camp to Khadki. Daulatrao, learning they were off their guard, suddenly attacked them with his full force, particularly Amritrao's camp on 25th June as his men were returning after the immersion of the Muharram tazias. Amritrao was completely routed ; he lost all his camp equipage and his personal goods. His wife and son fled to a neighbouring village for shelter, while he himself withdrew to a distance where he was later joined by his family on the 27th. Thereafter the Sindian ladies took to a running fight, with which Daulatrao's trained infantry could not cope. Thus this victory at Khadki availed Sindia in no way. In his extremity he went and begged Bajirao in all humility to mediate in the dispute in his capacity of a common master and stop the war. Bajirao then arranged a meeting with the ladies at Vithalwadi, but they would not budge in their demand for the surrender of Sharzarao and his five advisers. This was not complied with and the negotiations failed. Daulatrao and Bajirao became so helpless now that their only recourse was to appeal to Nana Phadnis, begging him to come back to Poona and take charge of the administration, reconcile the

ladies and restore peace. On 15th July Nana was set at liberty at Ahmadnagar and brought to Poona. Bajirao at this time also set free Moroba Phadnis who had been confined ever since 1778, now at Ratangad (near Trimbakeshvar), and brought him to Junnar as an alternative hand if Nana Phadnis failed to stop the war. In the meantime the ladies seduced even the European officers of Daulatrao.

It was well known that the main cause of the ladies' trouble was Ghatge, and Daulatrao too realized this fully. He now suspected the loyalty of his European officers, as Nana Phadnis, being now free might wreak his vengeance on him any moment. In this predicament Daulatrao decided to have Ghatge removed from his presence. A suitable excuse for such a step was immediately found. Some men of the regiment commanded by Michael Filose's son were wounded by Ghatge's agents. The young Filose got wild, went and captured Ghatge along with four others of his party, tied them with strong ropes, paraded them through the regimental bazaar beating them with the butt ends of their rifles and consigned them to a dirty room during the night. They were taken out the next day, and their camp plundered, when Ghatge received a wound. He was at once confined in the fort of Ahmadnagar.

The ladies had strong sympathisers in north India also, where Lakba Lad espoused their cause and commenced a general rebellion against Daulatrao's mismanagement. Lakba sent monetary help to the ladies and was reported to be coming to the south to lead their army. The forces of Nizam Ali and of the Bhosles of Nagpur also marched from their bases at the call of the ladies. Bajirao got terribly afraid of this impending danger and called upon the citizens of Poona to protect themselves by running to their country places. All this while Nana was being importuned to undertake the responsibility of the administration, but he stoutly refused to do so, unless Nizam Ali and the British agreed to guarantee that no outrage would be offered to his person and dignity. Evidently such a guarantee was impossible to obtain. In order to lessen one opponent, Bajirao at the suggestion of Nana allowed his brother to retire on an assigment of a landed estate yielding seven lacs a year. This was effected on 1st Oct. 1798. Henceforth Amritrao took up his residence at Junnar and practically de-

tached himself from Bajirao's concerns.

Two years had by now passed since Bajirao's accession and there was no prospect of the administration running properly and smoothly, on the contrary it had deteriorated in every direction. People felt disgusted with constant insecurity and harassment at the hands of the two reckless chiefs and with wars and unrest desolating the land, the result was a conviction that Bajirao and Sindia were quite unfit to rule. A change of Government became the paramount need of the moment for saving the Maratha State. There was no dearth of capable men, but no combined move was allowed by Bajirao and Sindia, nor did they themselves entrust power to capable hands. Nana Phadnis fully witnessed this miserable decline, but by nature he lacked boldness and dash, and had now visibly declined in body and mind on account of his recent sufferings. In the absence of a competent leader coming forth, the two youths gave full vent to their evil propensities and carried the State to ruin. Things began to grow worse every day. All credit and honesty vanished. The British put pressure on the Peshwa for participation in a war which they proposed to open against Tipu Sultan. Thus utterly perplexed in the midst of growing trouble, Bajirao was urged by Sindia to recall Nana and entrust the administration to him on any conditions that he would dictate. Acting on this advice, late in the night of 14th November 1798 Bajirao with only one servant appeared suddenly before Nana, and falling prostrate before him implored him with tears to take charge of the State. He said in effect "I am innocent and helpless. You are in the position of a father to me. Protect me and save this Brahman Raj". At this theatrical performance of the crafty Peshwa, Nana melted and resumed his work of the administration.

The first thing Nana now insisted upon was to compel Sindia to depart for the north. Bajirao gave him formal leave on 17th January 1799. Before, however, he left Poona, Bajirao began to quake for his life on account of Nana and begged Sindia not to go away leaving him to the tender mercies of the Minister and of men like Baloba and Parashuram Bhau, who, Bajirao urged, would bring about his deposition any moment by bringing in Amitrao. Need we wonder that once more Sindia cancelled his departure !

The pressure of outside circumstances was fast gathering weight against the Peshwa. But before taking up these developments, we must first conclude the affair of the war waged by the Sindian ladies, although it overlaps future events.

The ladies had so far obtained nothing for their maintenance and would not trust any oral or written pledge given by Daulatrao, unless they had a direct guarantee from Sindia's old servants like Baloba Tatya and Abaji Raghunath. When the negotiations failed, the two ladies joined by Narayanrao Bakhshi and Deoji Gauli, made a common cause with the rajas of Satara and Kolhapur and moved southward at the beginning of 1799. Two of their followers Yeshwantrao Shivaji and Balaji Krishna started independent depredations in the Peshwa's districts of Nasik and Khandesh. The ladies plundered Sangola, Kasegaon and other places on their southern route and exacted whatever they could from the innocent inhabitants. They sent their agents in advance to Kolhapur, and arranged for their visit to the Chhatrapati. He came and met them near the Krishna and gave them some money for their expenses. For two months they and the Chhatrapati had conferences together and formed plans of removing the Peshwa and Sindia from their power. On this occasion one of the Maharaja's illegitimate sons was married on 14th May to a daughter of Mahadji Sindia at Akiwat, near Kolhapur. Their friendship thus cemented, the ladies now offered such threats to Sindia that in his perplexity he hurriedly brought Baloba Tatya out of his confinement at Ahmadnagar and despatched him post-haste to effect a settlement with the ladies. Baloba and Aba Chitnis advanced to meet them as they were returning towards Poona. A settlement was made for the performance of which Baloba and Aba stood guarantees, and by the end of August 1799 Daulatrao's war with the ladies was temporarily closed. A little later however, on 14th January 1800 one of the Sindian ladies Yamunabai, was suddenly stabbed in bed by assassins employed by Sharzarao. Thus exasperated, the ladies then moved to the north and there renewed the hostilities which had been happily closed in the south.

7. **The Chhatrapatis' move to be free.**—It is tedious to wade through such sordid details of unrest and disturbances.

In themselves trivial, they painfully illustrate how the edifice of the Maratha State had begun to totter. Like the Sindian war with the ladies, Bajirao had to wage wars against the two Chhatrapatis of Satara and Kolhapur, both with more or less tragic consequences in which, Bajirao's unfitness to rule became all the more evident. Both the Chhatrapatis were anxious to free themselves from the thraldom exercised over them by the Peshwa ; and strangely enough writers style them rebels, although in reality they were the masters of the Maratha State and the Peshwa their servant. The Peshwa Madhavrao I was generous enough to keep up the dignity of the royal house of Shivaji's descendants, but during Nana Phadnis' regime the Chhatrapati of Satara was reduced to utter indigence ; and his miseries increased tremendously during the last three years, when there was no fixity in the administration at Poona. For a time Nana for his own personal end held out the hope of restoring the Chhatrapati to his old position of Shahu's days. But this hope did not materialize. The Maharaja Shahu II had a younger brother named Chhatrasinh or Chatarsinh, a spirited lad possessing ambition and capacity. The chequered life of this youth itself supplies a glaring instance of the degradation to which the Kshatriya families of olden days had now been reduced. The only function that the Chhatrapati was at this time called upon to perform was to supply robes of Peshwaship to anybody at a requisition coming from Poona, at the sweet will now of Nana, then of Bajirao, again of Sindia or Parashuram Bhau, whether the person to be so invested had fitness to rule the State or not.

The recent rapid changes at Poona so enraged the susceptibilities of Chatarsinh and the Court of Satara, that they determined to put down these vagaries. They were incited by the Sindian ladies, whose war against Daulatrao and the Peshwa, was a clear call for all thinking men to effect a healthy revolution in the present wicked Government. Chatarsinh of Satara went to Kolhapur and obtained the co-operation of that Maharajah for a joint effort to effect a political change. Bajirao after having detained Nana Phadnis through the agency of Sindia, incited the Satara Chhatrapati to put down Nana's

agents. This was excuse enough for the Chhatrapati to take instant action. It was a welcome call which the Raja Shahu and his brother seized with alacrity. They at once collected a few followers and attacked the residences of the Peshwa's managers Apte and Abhyankar in the town. They were quickly overpowered and kept in confinement (March 1798). The Chhatrapati thus became his own master both in the fort and the town of Satara below. This success of the Chhatrapati so frightened Bajirao, that he despatched Madhavrao Raste to put down the king and take possession of the town and fort. Raste reached Satara in April but could make no effect against the rebels led by Chatarsinh, who with a considerable force descended from the fort upon the city on 16th June 1798 and drove away Raste several miles back. This reverse threw Bajirao into extreme consternation, and having no armed force of his own, his only recourse was to approach Parashuram Bhau, then confined at Mandavgan, begging him to go and restore the situation at Satara. Very reluctantly Bajirao set free Bhau who immediately advanced, joined Raste, defeated Chatarsinh on 4th August and took possession of the city and the fort. Chatarsinh fled for life to Kolhapur. At this critical moment the Kolhapur party failed to bring timely succours to Satara ; otherwise there was every chance for Chatarsinh to take up an offensive against the Peshwa's forces. Thus the Satara Chhatrapati's attempt to obtain his freedom failed.

But the affair of the Chhatrapati Shivaji of Kolhapur assumed a different character, as it involved the tragic end of his lifelong opponent the veteran Parashuram Bhau. Kolhapur had at this time a clever, intrepid Brahman officer named Ratnakarpant Rajadna, who organized the power of that State and in a short time seized the territories of the Patwardhans and the Peshwa in the southern region, practically right upto the Tungabhadra river. For such a result Nana Phadnis himself is partly responsible. In his distressful predicament at Mahad in the autumn of 1796, and thirsting for revenge against his life-long friend Parashuram Bhau, Nana encouraged the Kolhapur Chhatrapati to put down the power of the Poona conclave and supplied him with funds out of his own purse. In addition Nana gave the Kolhapur raja a solemn pledge that if he were attacked by the Patwardhans, he would

use all his power to save the Chhatrapati. This opportunism of Nana was fully utilized by the Chhatrapati and his clever minister Ratnakar in extending their power at the cost of Poona. A delicate situation thus developed in which Nana tried to persuade Parashuram Bhau not to go to war against Kolhapur. This was an impossible position for the Patwardhan chiefs to accept, as it menaced their very existence built up by generations of effort and sacrifice of blood and money. Parashuram Bhau and the rest of his large family were compelled to take up arms against Kolhapur in self-defence. Parashuram had built a palace of his own and embellished his town of Tasgaon with care and labour for years as a permanent residence for his family. The Chhatrapati burnt down all his houses and the city, thus exhausting Bhau's patience. He started eagerly determined to avenge the wrong. It was at this juncture that the Sindian ladies made a common cause with the Kolhapur raja and the intrepid Chatarsinh helped their offensive. A bloody war ensued for several months during 1799.

Parashuram Bhau had four valiant sons, with whose co-operation he organized an extensive campaign and attacked the Kolhapur territories towards the end of 1798. A long and arduous struggle continued through the following year, the details of which need not be described at length. Parashuram Bhau fixed his camp at Pattankudi near Nipani about 300 miles south of Kolhapur. This was suddenly attacked by the Chhatrapati on 16th Septr. 1799, when Parashuram Bhau being taken unawares was killed fighting for life. His dead body was taken to the Chhatrapati's presence. The latter was so highly gratified at this success that in a fit of revenge he inflicted indignities on the dead body and prevented the funeral rites being performed. But Bhau's sons, particularly the eldest Ramchandrapant, were equal to the task. They fearlessly waged a heroic fight, besieged Kolhapur and inflicted severe hardships upon the Chhatrapati. Both Sindia and Bajirao found it necessary in self-defence to put down the Chhatrapati as he was in league with the ladies. So Sindia sent his strong artillery from Poona under Capt. Brownrigg to help the Patwardhans. The war thus dragged on through the summer of 1800, when

Sharzarao Ghate again coming into power managed to stop Sindian help to the Chhatrapati and recalled Brownrigg to Poona. On 30th April Ramchandrapant raised the siege of Kolhapur and retired to Jamkhindi where his descendants are still ruling. This second civil war emphasises the degeneration that had attacked the Maratha State.

CHAPTER XII

CHRONOLOGY

1742 Feb. 12	Nana Phadnis born.
1796 Feb. 26.	Nizam Ali seized by paralysis.
,, end.	De Boigne retires from Sindia's service, Perron takes charge.
1797 Feb.	Arthur Wellesley comes out to India.
,, Octr. 4.	Richard Wellesley appointed G. G.
,, Novr. 7.	Richard Wellesley starts for India.
1798 March 25.	Raymond dies.
,, Apr. 26	Richard Wellesley lands at Madras.
,, Apr. 26	French help arrives for Tipu.
,, Septr. 1	Nizam Ali's French Officers dismissed.
1799 Apr. 26	Baloba Tatya released.
,, May 4.	Tipu killed, Arthur Wellesley put in charge of Mysore.
,,	Yeshwantrao Holkar flies to Nagpur.
1800 March 13.	Nana Phadnis dies.
,, May 31.	Sindia puts his officers to death.
,, July 8.	Narayan Bakhshi killed.
,, July 8.	Yeshwantrao Holkar seizes Ahalyabai's treasure and plunders Ujjain.
,, Nov. 1.	Yeshwantrao raids Sindian ladies near Ujjain.
,, Dec.	Daulatrao leaves Poona for the north.
,, June-Septr.	Dhondia Wagh pursued by Arthur Wellesley.
,, June 30.	Dhondia surprises Gokhale.
,, Septr. 10.	Dhondia killed near Bellary.
1801 early.	Vithoji Holkar raids Peshwa's territory.
,, Apr.	Bapu Gokhale captures Vithoji.
,, Apr. 16.	Vithoji Holkar put to death.
,, May-Octr.	Yeshwantrao and Daulatrao fight actions near the Narmada.
,, May-Octr.	Perron defeats Mahadji's ladies near Jhansi.
,, Decr. 7.	Palmer makes over charge to Close at Poona.

1802	Feb.	Holkar moves to Thalner, Parashar Dadaji at Poona.
,,	Feb. 7.	Lakba Lad dies of wounds.
,,	Apr.	Yeshwantrao moves towards Poona.
,,	Oct. 25	Yeshvantrao defeats the Peshwa at Poona, the latter flies to Bassein for safety.
1803	Aug. 6.	Mushir-ulmulk dies.
1820—25.		Pretender Yashodabai Peshwa appears in the north.

CHAPTER XII

HEADING TOWARDS A CRISIS

[1798—1802]

1 The Great pro-consul on the Indian scene.
2 Wellesley's first harvest.
3 Death and character of Nana Phadnis.
4 The rebellion of Dhondia Wagh.
5 Rise of Yashvantrao Holkar.
6 Vithoji Holkar put to death.
7 Yashvantrao Holkar stands out as champion.
8 Yashvantrao moves south.
9 Bajirao routed at Poona.

1 The great pro-consul on the Indian scene.—During the last decade of the eighteenth century when there was no strong central power anywhere in India that could put down anarchy and disorder with a firm hand, civil wars and disorders continued throughout the land with more or less violence. At such a juncture there appeared on the Indian scene Richard Wellesley, who towered over his contemporaries in vision and driving power. He at once breathed a new life into British Indian diplomacy and war, and in his seven years' pro-consulship changed the whole course of Indian history. Wellesley who had been nominated to the Governor General's post in England on 4th October 1797, started on his voyage on 7th November. At the Cape of Good Hope he met Major W. Kirkpatrick, an Indian diplomat then on his way home, with whom he held long discussions on the Indian situation and obtained full written answers to a series of questions containing intimate information on the Indian situation in which he was destined to play a decisive part. On 26th April 1798 Wellesley landed at Madras, and after making a few days' halt at that southern Presidency, reached Calcutta on 17th May, and that very day assumed charge of his office which he held for more than seven years, resigning it on 30th July 1805. Possessed by an inordinate ambition to increase the greatness of his country, he combined in himself indomitable courage, intense love of power and the supreme gift of choosing able instruments and exercised imperious authority by compelling his subordinates to submit to his will. Thus he proved perhaps the greatest pro-consul among the Bri-

tish rulers of India. The French Revolution of 1789 had roused the innate forces of the French nation and its victorious armies were marching triumphantly to the four corners of the European Continent, and carrying its message of liberty, equality and fraternity to its enslaved peoples. England alone barred the way to such a world revolution. General Bonarparte dominated Austria and Italy in 1797 and turned his attention to the East, aiming at the conquest of India by reaching there via. Egypt and Syria. He wrote to Tipu Sultan offering him French help and asking him to send his agents to Mocha and Muskat for supplying necessary information on the enterprise he was contemplating. Wellesley paid particular attention to these French plans and immediately on his arrival determined to eliminate all French power from India.

Earlier in the century, India had produced some outstanding personalities like the Peshwa Madhavrao I and Mahadji Sindia, but now the national source appeared to have dried up. There was none left to stand up to the great champion of imperialism that had now been sent out. While Wellesley was crossing the seas to India, Bonaparte pursued his overland march with the object of putting down British ambitions. Wellesley on his way while meditating how best to counteract the French General's plans, accidentally discovered a document worded in French purporting to be a proclamation issued by the Governor-General of Mauritius, calling upon Frenchmen in that island to enlist in a corps intended to help Tipu Sultan of Mysore, who had offered to defray their expenses and who had sent his agents to Mauritius for that purpose. These agents collected some two hundred French recruits and sailed with them for Mangalore where they disembarked on 26th April, the very day on which Wellesley landed at Madras.

Tipu Sultan, Nizam Ali and Daulatrao Sindia were the only three chiefs in India who had then enlisted a noticeable number of Frenchmen in their service. Since Bussy's days there was a craze with Indian chiefs to remodel their armies on the Western pattern, particularly developing their artillery branch and supporting it by sufficient trained infantry in which the Indians were woefully deficient. Nizam Ali employed for this purpose General Raymond, and Daulatrao was served by

Perron who had taken De Boigne's place after the latter's retirement in 1796. Why these Indian armies could be styled French any more than English, an impartial student cannot understand ; for although the head commandant in each of these two cases happened to be a Frenchman, the rank and file were purely Indian and if there were a few French officers in command, there were not a few English as well. But Wellesley in order to suit his theory (viz. give a dog a bad name and hang him), chose to call them all French armies and therefore enemies of England. One wonders whether Daulatrao and Nizam Ali even understood the difference between a Frenchman and an Englishman. To Indians all Europeans meant one category of hat-wearers (topiwalas), as they were called in Indian languages, all supposed by Indians to be equal experts in military matters even if they had no special training. Tipu Sultan had certainly good reason to look upon the E. I. Co.'s Government as his enemies, for it was they who had threatened his very existence.

How Daulatrao managed his military commanders or how far he understood the political situation of India, was demonstrated by the course of the events to follow. It was Daulatrao's French General Perron who at a critical moment deserted his master and allowed Lord Lake to win easy victories. Wellesley on arrival was determined to neutralize these three Indian chiefs, Nizam, Tipu and Daulatrao. The first was now an utter invalid, smarting under the humiliating blow he had received at Kharda, followed soon after by his son's rebellion, which was extinguished by Raymond. On 25th February 1796 Nizam Ali was seized by a stroke of paralysis but, thanks to the kaleidoscopic change in the politics of Poona after the death of the Peshwa Madhavrao II, the ruler of Haidarabad was saved. His minister Mushir-ul-mulk was released from Maratha captivity, and not only was Nizam Ali absolved from all the rigorous terms imposed upon him at Kharda, but his active support was now solicited by men like Nana Phadnis. During the seven years of Nizam Ali's illness (he died on 6th August 1803), his affairs were successfully managed for him by this minister, Mushir-ul-mulk, an ardent lover of the British connection, while most other great Indian States went down.

Immediately on assuming charge of his office, Wellesley put before himself three main tasks for immediate execution : (1) destruction of Tipu Sultan (2) dissolution of Nizam Ali's French corps, replacing it by an English force and (3) the control of the Maratha Government of Poona by driving Daulatrao Sindia to his northern sphere, where he was to be weakened by Zaman Shah the Afghan King then trying to invade India. In order to compass these ends Wellesley abandoned the pusillanimous non-intervention policy of Shore and formulated in its place his famous Subsidiary System, as affording the fullest scope for intervention in the concerns of Indian chiefs, binding them in *subordinate alliance* to the British power.[1] It had already become clear that there was no paramount Power in India, that could preserve a balance between the various warring elements ; and no chief was now able to hold his own without foreign aid. Col. Palmer the Resident at Poona received full instructions from Wellesley on this new policy and its detailed procedure. J. A. Kirkpatrick the Haidarabad Resident also received the same plan for working out. The procedure was communicated to the Government of Madras for execution in the case of Mysore, as war with that State appeared imminent.

On the 5th day after taking office, Wellesley in informing the Peshwa of his having assumed charge of the Government impressed upon him the necessity of continuing his friendly relations towards the British power, almost insinuating a threat against non-compliance. At the same time he wrote to Palmer to induce the Peshwa to accept British help against his enemies. Raghunathrao had pawned some jewellery with the British Government for the loan he had contracted. These jewels worth about 6 lacs were still in British possession at Calcutta. Wellesley to gain the Peshwa's confidence now returned them immediately to him without recovering the loan.[2]

2. **Wellesley's first harvest.**— Fortunately for Wellesley his path for introducing his favourite system into the Haidara-

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1. This phrase is curious and meaningless as the two words are contraditory in their import.
2. P. R. C. Vol. II. p. 533.

bad State was smoothed by the death of General Raymond,[3] on 25th March 1798, i.e. a month before Wellesley's arrival. He immediately proposed his scheme of subsidiary alliance to Nizam Ali, who signed its acceptance on 1st September 1798. The French officers were replaced by British, not without a deal of trouble. This easy victory made Wellesley more confident in his projected trial of strength with Tipu Sultan.

For three months, July to September 1798, Palmer pressed Bajirao and Nana to give their decision whether they were going to join in or keep aloof from the suggested alliance for a war against Tipu and whether and when Sindia would proceed to the north. The Peshwa received a special letter from Wellesley on 1st November, requesting Maratha armies to proceed to the war against Mysore, and forwarding for the Peshwa's consideration a copy of the subsidiary treaty executed with Nizam Ali, in expectation that the Peshwa would come forward of his own accord to do the same. Bajirao answered that he would take two months to send his quota of troops for the Mysore war. At this time Tipu Sultan's ambassadors arrived at Poona requesting the Peshwa's help against the British. The ambassadors were received with great cordiality and ceremonial, and were reported to have paid 13 lacs to the Peshwa in cash for his help. Palmer strongly protested against this conduct of

3. Raymond born on 20 September 1755, came out to Pondicherry for trade in 1775 and first enlisted under Haidar Ali, and in 1785 transferred his services to Nizam Ali, working on the same lines as De Boigne's in Sindia's service. He trained for Nizam Ali a force of 20 battalions of infantry, that is, about 15 thousand men with an efficient park of artillery. He had about 124 European Officers under him and received for his expenses an assignment of separate districts yielding 52 lacs a year. He served his master faithfully and acquitted himself creditably on the field of Kharda, the Nizam's defeat on that day being in no way due to him. That battle took place on 11th March 1795 and in June next Nizam Ali's son Alijah rebelled against him declaring himself independent at Bidar. Nizam Ali entrusted Raymond with the task of defeating his son and taking him alive. Alijah was hunted from place to place and captured by Raymond. While he was being taken to Haidarabad on an elephant, he swallowed poison and put an end to his life (September 1795). Raymond was in close touch with the revolutionary regime in France and entertained the ambition of restoring French influence in India. Wellesley arrived as Governor General, and at once sensed severe danger to British power from this capable French soldier at the Court of Haidarabad.

the Peshwa. Nana at this time was in extreme anxiety about his own safety and would not undertake to decide the point of the Peshwa's participating in the war, either for or against Tipu. He left the choice entirely to Bajirao. The only man fit to lead the Maratha troops was Parashuram Bhau who was then engaged in a life and death struggle with Kolhapur. Bajirao never possessed decision and as usual wasted time by assuring Palmer that he was preparing for the expedition, fully believing that the war would go on for quite a long time and that he would ultimately join the winning side. Nana, however, gave the Peshwa a written warning against delay. News soon arrived that Tipu had been killed in one swift action on 4th May and Bajirao was dumb-founded. Tipu's dominions were reduced, a major part being handed back to the old Hindu Raja of Mysore, some territories were appropriated by the Nizam and the English as suited their existing frontiers, and a small portion was reserved for Bajirao's acceptance if he complied with the following conditions :—

1. That the Peshwa should contract a subsidiary treaty with the British ;
2. That he should help the British if they came to war with the French ;
3. That in case of a dispute arising between him and the Nizam, the Peshwa should accept the decision given by the British ;
4. And that the Peshwa should relinquish his rights of Chauth against the new raja of Mysore.

As compliance with these terms clearly meant the loss of independence of the Maratha State, Bajirao refused to accept them. Wellesley understood why the Peshwa was holding out and henceforth regulated his relations with him in that sense, i.e. a waiting game to overcome him. Nana did not fail to warn Bajirao from the fate of Tipu Sultan, saying, "Tipu is finished ; the British power has increased ; the whole of east India is already theirs ; Poona will now be the next victim. Evil days seem to be ahead. There seems to be no escape from destiny."

But the two youths Bajirao and Daulatrao learnt no lesson and went on heedlessly in their course. As a counterstroke to Tipu's fate, they declared their intention of making a war

upon the Nizam. Palmer communicated this news to the Governor General, who wrote to the Nizam telling him emphatically, "So long as you remain on friendly terms with the British power, we are ready to run to your help with all our forces against any enemy that may attack you. You need entertain absolutely no fear of an attack from Sindia". A copy of this letter was presented by Palmer to Bajirao and Daulatrao, and had the desired result. Their dream of going to war against the Nizam vanished into the air. Bajirao, a pigmy before the giant Governor General, did in his own foolish way try to build a confederacy of Indian Powers to oppose the British. He expected Tipu to hold on for some time so that he would join him at the right moment. In this policy he tried to win over Raghoji Bhosle of Nagpur. Daulatrao and Bajirao sent secret emissaries to Mysore to instigate the new Hindu raja and the sons of Tipu to rise against the British, hardly realizing that another giant, the Governor General's younger brother Arthur Wellesley was now posted to Mysore. Arthur detected the intrigues of Bajirao and took prompt action to counteract them.

During 1799 though Nana continued to be the ostensible minister, he had neither the will nor the strength to take any responsible part in the administration ; nor went the two youths disposed to give weight to his advice. He knew that his hoarded treasure alone was their object. The minister, therefore, occupied himself during that year in handling some second rate subjects, the settlement of the affairs of Amritrao, of the Sindian ladies, of the two Chhatrapatis and so on.

Sindia's affairs rapidly went from bad to worse. He brought Baloba Tatya to Poona from his confinement at Ahmadnagar on 22nd April 1799 and asked him to accept his minister-ship. Baloba flatly refused this offer and adopted the same apathy and indifference which Nana had evinced towards Bajirao. When Nana Phadnis died next year all restraint upon Bajirao was gone. Baloba and Aba Chitnis who had settled the ladies' dispute, soon became obnoxious both to Sindia and Bajirao, as Sharzarao came to exercise full control over them. Under Sharzarao's advice Sindia decided to get rid of all his old servants one by one. The method he employed against them was extremely cruel and detestable. Baloba, his nephew Dhondiba,

Sadashiv Malhar, Krishnoba Modi, Devji Gauli were all put under arrest, severely ill-treated and sent to Ahmadnagar for detention. Baloba's wife actually broke her head in agony when her husband was thus torn away from her. On 31st May 1800 Tulaji Sindia and Manaji Wable were blown away from the mouth of a gun on the ground that they had supported the ladies' cause. On 8th July Yashvantrao Shivaji and some others had their noses and ears cut off, were paraded through the lines and put to death. Dhondiba Pagnis suffered a similar fate. Rockets were tied round Narayanrao Bakhshi' body and he was blown up like a kite in flight. Daulatrao and Bajirao thus wiped out every sane element in their administration under the suspicion that their victims had been planning to effect a revolution, by deposing both Bajirao and Daulatrao and making Amritrao the head of the State. Baloba himself had long been ailing and died at Ahmadnagar on 1st November 1800. Sadashiv Malhar alias Bhau Bakhshi the confidential and able foreign minister of Mahadji, similarly died two weeks before Baloba. Thus within a few months of Nana's death all links with the past were finally snapped.

These atrocious deeds while they disgusted the general public, gave fresh courage to men like Yashvantrao Holkar and to the two wīves of Mahadji Sindia, who now took up their old war with renewed vigour. Wellesley carefully watched these events and patiently prepared for a final stroke.

Against these blind thoughtless movements of Bajirao and Daulatrao, there was a body of sane experienced, wide awake opinion supporting Amritrao as the only alternative for saving the Maratha State. Baloba Tatya, Nana Phadnis, Narayan Bakhshi and some others desired to bring about such a change, but their efforts were wickedly crushed. Indeed Bajirao would have reached his doom much earlier than he actually did, if the British Resident had fully entered into the grasping schemes of the Governor General. But Palmer was a quiet uninterfering man, who had made friends with Sindia's European officers at Poona during more than two years (1798-1800), so that Lord Wellesley had to transfer him for his inattention to the prevailing politics, for not manoeuvring Bajirao into the acceptance of British suzerainty. Col. Close was appointed in his place and took charge at Poona on 7th December 1801.

Close had earned a good reputation during his two years' management of Mysore under Arthur Wellesley's supervision. After four years of mischievous activity in Poona, Daulatrao ultimately left that place at the end of 1800 and reached Burhanpur in the following February. Henceforward Bajirao found himself unable to maintain his position at the capital.

3. Death and character of Nana Phadnis.—Nana Phadnis did not live long after he was readmitted into the administration. Daulatrao's treachery in having him arrested and confined against all principles of morality or reason, so worked on the high-strung mind and delicate constitution of that Minister, that he rapidly declined in health. Although he accepted office towards the end of 1798, he never was his former self again, and did not transact any important measure during that short period before his death. His was a temperament which corroded internally and sapped all his vitality. He now found himself forlorn and helpless with no friend or companion upon whom he could rely. The humiliations and insults which his enemies heaped upon him were unbearable. A report of 1st March 1799 says, 'Nana has been in great distresses and has been getting fever intermittently." Another report of 7th April records "Nana has not recovered from his ailment. His ears give him trouble. He only walks to his Belbag temple". A report in December 1799 runs, "Nana has now absolutely no strength. He cannot even walk to the Peshwa's palace next door." Since February 1800 he began to have a rise in temperature every day. On 4th March Bajirao paid him a personal visit and enquired after his health. On Thursday 13th March he expired at midnight. When his body was being removed for the funeral rites, the Arab guards on duty created a row, demanding their arrears of pay, which Bajirao discharged before the body was allowed to be taken away. Capt. Brownrigg paid a call and said, "Nana is gone and with him the Brahman raj. Poona has fallen." The British Resident Palmer reported to the Governor General, "With Nana has departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government." Writes Sir Richard Temple "Maratha administration lost all vestige of honesty and efficiency by the death of the great Minister." Writes Grant Duff, "Nana Phadnis was

certainly a great statesman. His principal defects originated in the want of personal courage and in an ambition not always restrained by principles. His life was entirely public. In private he was a man of strict veracity, humane, frugal and charitable. His whole time was regulated with the strictest order, and the business personally transacted by him almost exceeds credibility. Nana doubtless shines out as the last genius produced by the Maratha nation."

Nana was not at all old in years ; born on 12th February 1742 he was only 58 years and one month in age, five months younger than the Peshwa's son Vishvasrao with whom he was brought up. He was of medium height, thin in body and half fair in complexion. His countenance was grave and he was hardly ever seen to laugh. He possessed regular and studious habits, used measured language and despatched work with his pen more than in open discussion. Of all characters in Maratha history he claims the highest amounts of the extant records. He married several wives, of whom the names of nine are available. His last wife named Jiubai who became a widow by his death, was then nine years of age. She experienced strange vicissitudes in life for preserving her character against Bajirao's wickedness.[4]

The office of Phadnis meant the control of accounts or the public purse, and was concerned with the earnings and expenditure of the State. In this task Nana was perfectly adept and has not been approached by any other Indian in recorded history. He acquired this efficiency under the rigid task-master Madhavrao I, whom he served for ten years. After that Peshwa's death Nana conducted the whole administration practically on his own responsibility, improving the system of accounts and never letting the State remain in want, in spite of the numerous wars and other concerns which he was called upon to handle. The charge usually made against him is that he accumulated his private fortune reputed to be several crores at the expense of the State. For a man of his times Nana's greatest drawback was his ignorance of fighting. This compelled him to depend upon others and launched him into all sorts of trouble and suffering.

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4. She adopted a son in 1835 who died in 1877. The latter's adopted son is still living (1948).

The greatest credit that goes to Nana's statesmanship pertains to the success he achieved in co-operation with Mahadji Sindia over the British Power in the First Maratha War. Similarly his most glaring failure was his deplorable handling of the situation of the Maratha State after the death of the Peshwa Madhavrao II. So long as Haripant Phadke his loyal co-operator lived, Nana's administration was successful, but after the former's death Nana had no fixed policy and allowed vacillation and temporary shifts to have their course. During the last five years of his career his confusion of mind betrayed itself at every moment. A similar crisis had happened in the Maratha State at the death of Shahu, but Nanasaheb handled the situation with discretion, having convened a responsible conference and secured the co-operation of the leading members.

If immediately after the Peshwa's death Nana Phadnis had called together an open conference of responsible chiefs, Sindia, Holkar, Bhosle, Angre, the Patwardhans etc. and the senior advisors like Jivba Bakhshi and Baloba, there was every chance of Amritrao being selected for the Peshwaship as he had been pronounced even by the English as the most competent on the existing claimants. Thus Bajirao could have been kept away. But Nana's method gave rise to low intrigue and selfish venality damaging the prospects of a smooth administration. One cannot but deplore Nana's lack of magnanimity under these trying circumstances and his failure to sink his own individuality for the public good. He well knew the characters of the men in power about him and should have so formulated his policy as to prevent degeneration.[5]

5. In this connection one is remained of another contemporary celebrity, viz. Purnayya, the minister of Mysore, almost Nana's equal in age and career, but handling different situations. He served loyally both Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan and like Nana Phadnis ws noted for his financial acumen. At the fall of Tipu, Purnayya's character was known to be so upright and his reputation so high, that Wellesley selected him as the minister of the Hindu raja whom the victorious British restored to the Kingdom of Mysore. Purnayya then laid the foundation of the prosperous rule which Mysore enjoyed during that revolutionary period of India's fortunes. Purnayya was five years older than Nana and died fifteen years after him. He could earn credit from different masters like Haidar Ali, Tipu, Krishnaraj Wadiyar, Wellesley and Close, whom he served in succession.

The death of Nana Phadnis marks a distinct change in our history and presents a strange contrast and an irony of fate in the Maratha and British personnel. Mahadji Sindia, Hafipant Phadke, Ahalyabai, Madhavrao II, Tukoji Holkar, Jivba Bakshi, Baloba Tatya, Parashuram Bhau and lastly Nana Phadnis all these and more died within a short period, leaving the political field in the hands of two incompetent youths Bajirao and Daulatrao. Side by side appear on the stage of history some brilliant British names like the three Wellesley brothers, Metcalfe, Kirkpatrick, Close, Elphinstone, Malcolm, Jenkins, Munro, who all formed a brilliant band the like of which is hardly found in the whole history of British India. The blemishes of Warren Hastings' regime had been removed by fifteen years of peaceful reform and these men of superior calibre had been attracted to the Company's service by the Scottish clannishness of Dundas. The destiny of India came thus to be decided by the singular genius of these British statesmen, at the close of the 18th century.

4. **The rebellion of Dhondia Wagh.**—The coming of Lord Wellesley and the deaths of Nana Phadnis and the Sindian chiefs were events of far reaching importance. The year 1800 began with a marked decline in the Maratha fortunes. Wellesley resented the Peshwa's refusal to join in his war against Tipu Sultan, but the significance of the event was lost upon Bajirao. The large army raised by the Governor General for his Mysore War was not disbanded after its purpose had been served. The settlement of the territories conquered from Tipu Sultan and the establishment of orderly rule there, required a strong army under a capable commander. Wellesley appointed to this post his own brother Arthur, afterwards Duke of Wellington.[6]

Arthur Wellesley was then a young Colonel just thirty-two, having seen no actual fighting before the day of Shrirangpattan. The Governor General appointed this brother Arthur

6. Arthur Wellesley had arrived in India in February 1797 as an officer in the Indian army with a strong recommendation from Lord Cornwallis to Sir John Shore. Richard Wellesley came out later and brought with him as his secretary the third brother Henry Wellesley. Richard the G. G. arrived in April 1798.

to the chief command of the Mysore State, superseding General Baird, "the leader of the stormers". But Arthur possessed both administrative and military capacity in an eminent degree. Barry Close and John Malcolm, two clever young officers, were appointed as Arthur's assistants. Munro, Webbe, Tod, Elphinstone, Metcalfe, Jenkins, these and other future celebrities figuring in Maratha history, received their early training under the rigorous discipline of the Wellesley brothers.

While in charge of the Mysore administration Arthur Wellesley was called upon to perform a curious piece of service which had indirect results for the fate of the Maratha State, and which gave the British officers and their armies their first experience of conducting operations in Maratha territory. It proved of inestimable value to them in overcoming the Maratha State at a later date. The affair was the singular rebellion of a Maratha freebooter named Dhondia Wagh, who for some time played havoc through the Karnatak regions and invited Arthur Wellesley's attention.

Dhondji was descended from an old Pawar family owing allegiance to the Adilshahi rulers. During the latter part of the eighteenth century Dhondia served several masters in turn, the Patwardhans, the Raja of Kolhapur and the Desai of Lakshmeshvar, a small principality north of the Tungabhadra. His extraordinary resourcefulness, boldness and address were found highly useful by those whom he served. He, however, practised wanton plunder and depredation upon innocent populations on both sides of that river, now the boundary line between the Mysore and Maratha dominions. He was severely checked by Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan. The latter captured and converted him to Islam. After the British conquest of Mysore he once more took to his old activities of plunder and destruction. In June 1800 Arthur Wellesley attacked and drove him into the Maratha territories north of the Tungabhadra. He then became a curse both to the Patwardhans and the Raja of Kolhapur. Gokhale was then the guardian of the Peshwa's fort of Dharwar, whom Dhondia molested, so that it became an urgent task both for the Peshwa at Poona and for Wellesley in Mysore to destroy this troublesome despoiler. Wellesley for this purpose made a pact with the Patwardhans for joint measures to put him down. This involved penetration by

British forces into the Peshwa's territories. The Governor General no stickler for political niceties, ordered his brother to lead his forces in pursuit of Wagh into the Maratha territory along with the Patwardhans.

General Wellesley accordingly formed his plans, crossed the Tungabhadra in the summer of 1800 and was joined by Ramchandra Appa and other Patwardhans. They jointly pursued the rebel for four months in the district of Dharwar, undergoing severe hardships on account of the monsoon floods of the river Malaprabha, along which Dhondia conducted his raids, being well served by the local populace imparting him correct timely information of the plans and movements of his pursuers. On 30th June Dhondia suddenly surprized the Peshwa's troops near Kittur when Dhondopant Gokhale was killed and his nephew Bapu Gokhale (the future general of Bajirao) was wounded. This success appears to have turned Dhondia's head and induced him thereafter to commit boundless iniquities. Arthur Wellesley thereupon tracked him with a grim determination, and dividing the combined forces into three bodies began to scour the country, two moving along the two banks from west to east, and the third pursuing the adventurer closely. The plan was doubtless arduous on account of the rains which made the terrain almost impassable. Wellesley's ingenuity was put to a severe test, but his measures and ample resources, proved effective against the poor lonely rebel. In a couple of months he came to his last gasp, being deserted by most of his followers. His pursuers were on him wherever he turned. In his sore straits he wandered breathlessly and proceeded south-east towards Bellary in the vicinity of the Tungabhadra. At last he was compelled to stand an action at Bhanu near Bellary on 10th September 1800, when he was killed fighting along with six hundred followers. He was then sixty years of age.

Wellesley acquired the distinction of having successfully conducted his first independent campaign in co-operation with Indian allies. He came into close contact particularly with the Patwardhans and obtained valuable information about the Maratha administration in general and the present troubles and ways of the Poona rulers. Col. Wellesley thus gained a close acquaintance with the Maratha character, their Govern-

ment, their leaders, the calibre and methods of their troops. The friendship which the Patwardhans were able to form with Col. Arthur Wellesley in their present close association, went on increasing, cemented as it was in the brotherhood of war. It is this friendship which saved the Patwardhan chiefs from Bajirao's enmity in the long run and enabled them to hold their former positions to the present day. The campaign in addition enabled Arthur Wellesley to go through a most valuable rehearsal of the process of fighting in the Maharashtra country, which proved of inestimable benefit in the war which came three years later.

After the destruction of Dhondia Wagh Col. A Wellesley stayed on in the Maratha territory seemingly without any purpose or necessity and to the wonder of the Indian public. He had received confidential order not to return to Mysore. We now know the real object. Bajirao, then undergoing strict surveillance in his own palace under Sindia's guards, told Resident Palmer that he could no longer endure Sindia's domination and that he feared being deposed by him. Palmer reported the situation to the Governor General and the latter was glad to seize the opportunity of inducing Bajirao to accept a British Subsidiary Force for his own protection. This is the reason why the Governor General asked his brother to stay on near Dharwar with instruction to march upon Poona in case either Sindia put Bajirao in confinement or the Peshwa ran away from Poona. But as neither of these contingencies occurred, Col. Wellesley was compelled to return to Mysore. On 6th September 1800 Col. Palmer wrote, "Bajirao has great reliance on his own wisdom and dexterity in intrigue and on this reliance he will probably trifle with his situation until he is ruined". Prophetic words indeed. For a time Bajirao experienced the glee of having outwitted the Wellesley brothers.

5. **Rise of Yashvantrao Holkar.**— When a situation becomes intolerable, it seeks strange channels for its remedy. This cannot be better illustrated than by the rise of Yashvantrao, one of the illegitimate sons of the late Tukoji Holkar, probably of the same age as his adversary Daulatrao. The cruel fate that Tukoji's son Malharrao suffered at the hands of Daulatrao

Sindia, filled the outraged Yashvantrao with a grim resolve to avenge the wrong. Along with his elder brother Vithoji and several young spirits of the Holkar house, such as Kumar Haranathsinh, Achbesinh, Bharmall etc., Yashvantrao left Poona, prayed to the family deity at Jejuri, and begged for strength and blessing in the pursuit of his object. From Jejuri the youth wandered far and wide without a penny in his pocket in search of fortune, forming friendships and dreaming wild projects. For two years Yashvantrao and his companions roamed about gaining valuable experience of the condition of the country and gathering the sentiments of the oppressed souls, so as to judge for himself who could be his friends in adversity. Daulatrao's minister Baloba Tatya strongly but in vain protested against the harsh measures that Sindia pursued towards the house of the Holkars, an equal partner with the Sindias in rearing up the Maratha State. Towards the end of 1799 Yashvantrao went to Nagpur to persuade the Bhosle raja to help him. Spies reported Yashvantrao's activities to the Peshwa and Daulatrao, who threatened the raja with reprisals as the consequence of harbouring the rebel Holkar. The raja at their suggestion put Yashvantrao under arrest on 30th January 1800 and communicated the step to Poona. Yashvantrao managed to elude his custodians and escaping from Nagpur, wandered again through the wild regions of the Tapti and the Narmada. Here he picked up a faithful servant and adviser named Lala Bhavani Shankar, who thenceforward stuck to him through weal and woe. The two wanderers collected a couple of hundred Bhil followers and commenced raiding the territories of Sultanpur and Nandurbar in north Khandesh. Hearing that his brother Kashirao was marching against him, Yashvantrao crossed the Narmada and fled to Dhar where Anandrao Pawar gave him an asylum for some time and employed him in his army. But Anandrao was intimidated by Sindia and compelled to expel Yashvantrao from his territories. The latter had, however, amassed by now a large treasure with which he raised a considerable number of horse.[7]

7. For Yashvantrao's early activities refer to Phalke's Kotah papers vol. 2. 128, 129, 138, 142, 143 : his seal in 151.

Fired with an intense spirit of revenge, he freely laid his hands on the Sindian territory in Malwa and declared open war against his brother Kashirao to wrest from his custody Khanderao, Malharrao's posthumous son, proclaiming the latter as the rightful heir to the Holkar estate. In this resolve most of the old servants of the Holkar house joined Yashvantrao with their following. Though disabled in one eye by an accidental shot, he soon gathered momentum in his career. He fell upon the large treasure of Ahalyabai preserved at Maheshvar and with the resources thus obtained, he conducted a relentless war against Sindia. During the summer of 1800 the two opponents entered upon a deadly combat. At this time the widows of Mahadji Sindia renewed their hostilities in the north, having been joined by Lakba Lad who managed the northern possessions of Sindia. When the ladies arrived in Malwa, Yashvantrao paid them a visit and offered them his help for deposing Daulatrao and putting some one else in his seat. But before a final agreement was reached the ladies when camping at Ujjain were suddenly raided by Yashvantrao on 1st November 1800. Lakba, however, soon arrived on the scene and effected a reconciliation between Yashvantrao and the ladies. The latter retired towards Gwalior and Yashvantrao returned to the Narmada to face Daulatrao's forces that rapidly came to overcome him. Daulatrao left Poona in December 1800 having appointed Baloji Kunjar to remain with Bajirao as his administrative officer and also Sharzarao Ghatge with a sufficient force to defend Bajirao as well as to keep a watch on his movements. Malharrao Holkar's wife and her son Khanderao were removed to Bajirao's palace for safety. If Daulatrao had had the dash that Yashvantrao was gifted with, he could easily have crushed the latter. But Sindia took a long time to reach the Narmada.

In the meantime the Sindian ladies were not idle. Having established their sway in Central India they tried to get the Emperor on their side. He sent Begam Samru to their help, so that Daulatrao's position became critical. But happily Perron at the head of his battalions remained perfectly loyal to him. He attacked the ladies near Jhansi on 2nd June 1801 ; the action was grimly contested but no decision was reached. Lakba received serious wounds of which he died later on 7th

February 1802, thus weakening the ladies' cause. Yashvantrao worked havoc in Malwa with his phenomenal activity. He plundered Ujjain and carried away all the wealth he could find there.

6. **Vithoji Holkar put to death.**— While Yashvantrao was thus occupied in the region of the Narmada, his brother Vithoji was not idle. He carried fire and sword through Maharashtra, having been joined by all the refractory elements that had so long suffered at the hands of Bajirao and Daulatrao. The region between Khandesh and the Krishna became one general scene of anarchy and chaos. Plunder and fire raged furiously everywhere. There hardly remained a sign of Bajirao's rule beyond the limits of his capital. Reports of the prevailing misery poured into his ears daily from all quarters.

Vithoji Holkar proclaimed himself as an agent of Amritrao throughout the regions he devastated, adding that Bajirao had proved himself incompetent and unworthy of his position and that he (Vithoji) was maintaining the rule of Amritrao with the sole object of saving the Maratha State from the approaching ruin. This anti-Bajirao campaign began in 1799 and continued in ever increasing violence up to the end of 1802 when it culminated in the treaty of Bassein. These four years of disturbances and outbreaks, clearly disclosed to the world how at the hands of Bajirao no improvement was possible. The two brothers Yashvantrao in the north and Vithoji in the south practically destroyed all the vestiges of the power which the Peshwa and his henchman Sindia exercised. The Peshwa felt so terror-stricken that he thought Amritrao and Vithoji had finished him. In his embarrassment he hurriedly collected whatever men he could secure and sent them under Baloji Kunjar and Bapu Gokhale against Vithoji. The insurgence, however, broke out sporadically in diverse localities, so that Bajirao could easily encounter and crush his enemies separately; many of them were secured and many slain. Bapu Gokhale captured Vithoji Holkar alive and brought him in chains before the Peshwa, who in a fit of insane rage had him tied to the feet of an elephant, dragged about in the palace compound and killed with horrid cruelty, a sight which Bajirao and his minister Kunjar gleefully watched from the terrace

above. The dead body was exhibited for full twenty-four hours before the funeral rites were allowed to be performed. This event took place on 16th April 1801. How this rash and thoughtlesss deed would recoil on himself, Bajirao in his infatuation failed to realize. Several well-wishers of the Maratha State earnestly pleaded for softer measures against a member of the Holkar house, but the Peshwa paid no heed to them.

7. **Yashvantrao Holkar stands out as champion.**—The Peshwa's action sealed his doom. While Vithoji was being dragged under the feet of an elephant at Poona, Yashvantrao was locked up in a deadly struggle with Sindia's troops on the Narmada. It took him some months, up to the end of October 1801, before he could extricate himself from Sindia's clutches, so as to pay attention to the Peshwa in the south. The fight on the Narmada during these summer months has become memorable in history. Here the trained European commanders of Sindia were pitted against the untutored wild spirit and innate genius of Yashvantrao. The theatre of war extended from the southern bank of the Narmada to Indore and Ujjain in the north, affording a variety of natural obstacles created by the river and the Vindyan range beyond. Intense fighting continued for four months from June to October 1801 with fearful slaughter of life on both sides in bloody actions. The whole region between the Narmada and Ujjain was reduced to a wilderness. Daulatrao reached the Narmada at the end of May, but took full three months to be able to cross over. He sent repeated urgent calls to Sharzarao at Poona to come to his help with all expedition. But this devil was occupied there in collecting the promised subsidy from the Peshwa and miraculously escaped even being murdered by Baloji Kunjar. This curious incident may be studied with profit, as it illustrates the vile intrigues to which most people had then succumbed. Sharzarao extricated himself with difficulty and left Poona on 12th July to join his son-in-law on the Narmada.

On his way north Sharzarao left behind a trail of plunder and devastation and reached the Narmada on 9th October. The two then inflicted a crushing defeat upon Yashvantrao and recovered both Indore and Ujjain, wreaking terrible vengeance on

the former city for the havoc that Holkar had perpetrated upon the latter the previous year. Bribes and inducements were freely employed by both the combatants to seduce each other's followers. On 30th October Holkar managed to inflict a severe defeat upon Ghatge and thereupon the two opponents separated and began different tactics, in which Sindia alone stood to lose what he already possessed, while Holkar starting from nothing had everything to gain. On the whole victory may be said to have crowned Holkar's efforts. Daulatrao offered to negotiate peace with him, recognizing him for the first time as a party in the dispute. The Peshwa in the capacity of a common master communicated definife instructions to both Sindia and Holkar calling upon them to cease fighting ; but the master's voice had lost its weight.

Although Yashvantrao in his campaign of the Narmada had not scored a decisive victory, he had by now undoubtedly built for himself a reputation for leadership much higher than that of his antagonist Daulatrao, and collected round himself a band of devoted followers, Shyamrao Mahadik, Fatehsinh Mane, Jivaji Yashvant, Haranath Sinh, Amir Khan and above all a sober experienced counsellor in Parashar Dadaji, an old servant of the Holkar family, who had been present on the field of Panipat. The above mentioned names frequently occur in the historical records of those days.

Thus the year 1801 wore out, but the opening of the next brought with it fresh calamities for Bajirao and his State. Yashvantrao's star was now in the ascendant. A homeless wanderer three years before, he was now acclaimed as the saviour of the Holkar house and a terror to Sindia and Bajirao. His only weakness was his uncontrolled passion heightened by an addiction to drink which often sapped his reasoning powers. He was doubtless a born hero.

8. **Yashvantrao moves south.**—The climax of the drama now began to approach fast. The year 1802 opened for the Deccan with the resounding exploits of Yashvantrao ; and people quaked in uncertainty as to where his axe was going to fall next. His immediate purpose was to obtain possession of his nephew Khanderao out of Daulatrao's custody. He had already secured Kashirao and kept him well guarded in the

fort of Sendhwa. In obedience to Bajirao's commands Yashvantrao now took up his residence at Thalner in Khandesh and pitched his camp on the bank of the Tapti. From this place he began making representations to Bajirao, first through Parashar Dadaji whom he deputed to Poona for obtaining satisfaction of his grievances. For speedy communication he established a special postal service. Raghuji Bhosle arrived at Poona and advised Bajirao to effect an honourable compromise with Holkar.

Parashar arrived at Poona in February 1802, but the Peshwa would not care to listen to him. Yashvantrao urged that the Peshwa as the master both of Sindia and Holkar, should deal out even justice to both, and demanded Khanderao Holkar from Sindia's possession. But Bajirao showed no disposition to render him justice. Yashvantrao, chafing at the waste of time, despatched two of his chiefs Fatehsinh Mane and Shahamatkhan to exact retribution from Bajirao's domains and soon moved south from Thalner himself. Bajirao now got frightened for his life. As the first proof of his sincerity Yashvantrao demanded restoration of Khanderao Holkar, disavowing any retribution for his brother Vithoji's murder. Bajirao's only answer was a show of negotiation on paper, recording oaths and promises but protracting action on one pretext or another. Parashar and Ahalyabai's trusted secretary Govindpant Ganu, pleaded to Bajirao on bent knees to pacify Holkar, lest some terrible calamity should happen. But no heed was paid to them. On the contrary Sharzarao removed Khanderao Holkar and his mother to fort Ashirgad and kept them strictly confined with some of their followers in fetters, thus exasperating Yashvantrao even more. At the same time Daulatrao marched his forces to the south in support of Bajirao in order to prevent mischief on the part of Holkar. Yashvantrao was thus compelled to force a decision upon the Peshwa. His captains ravaged Bajirao's territory right up to the river Krishna with merciless fury. Still Bajirao paid no attention to Yashvantrao's solicitations and pursued with perfect unconcern his daily routine of pleasures and enjoyments in the garden houses adjoining Poona. At the same time he issued orders confiscating the whole estate of the Holkars, a climax which aggravated the quarrel beyond remedy.

Bajirao at this very moment invited further trouble upon himself by confining the Pratinidhi at Poona and confiscating his estate. He also secured in close custody at Raigad the late Peshwa's widow Yashodabai,[8] as a possible source of danger to his own position. These side episodes, so many in number, must now be passed over without detailed narration, although they deteriorated Bajirao's position in no small measure. He confiscated the property of the Rastes and persecuted the Patwardhans, suspecting their loyalty. It was Yashvantrao Holkar's attack upon Poona, which compelled Bajirao to leave his capital and which saved many old chiefs who had long served the State, from a worse fate. As the summer advanced, the atmosphere grew threatening at Poona, the representatives of the various chiefs holding night and day deliberations, but Bajirao showed no disposition to attend to Yashvantrao's grievances.

Finding Bajirao utterly impervious to his solicitations, Yashvantrao moved south from Thalner in April and learnt that some forces of Sindia had arrived at Burhanpur. Bajirao at this moment sent a personal emissary to Yashvantrao asking him to return but without any reference to his demands. Yashvantrao moved on, crossing the Kasarbari pass near Chalisgaum and sent humble respectful letters to the Peshwa, begging for justice, with presents of elephants and horses. Bajirao's only response was to ask him not to proceed further. He evidently meant to gain time for the disciplined corps of Sindia to arrive. Yashvantrao detected this trick and pressed on to the Godavari. Bajirao became utterly confused and implored Holkar's agent Parashar to persuade his master to return to the Tapti, promising that if he so returned, his demands would be favourably considered and all his lands and property would be restored. These empty professions deceived no body. Parashar made a strong protest adding, "Here I am sitting at your door begging for justice for four months. Have you till now substantiated a single promise? How can I ask my master to return"? The two Nagpur agents of Raghuji Bhosle

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8. A pretender impersonating this lady appeared after her death (in 1811) in north India between the years 1820-24. Elphinstone's correspondence alludes to this pretender.

were present at this interview and strongly supported Parashar. Bajirao was half inclined to yield and offer some satisfaction to Holkar. But at this stage Baloji Kunjar, who was mainly responsible for the severe punishment meted out to Vithoji Holkar, treated Holkar's complaints with contempt and warned Bajirao against the disastrous course of conciliating his devilish enemy. Bajirao then resumed his former stiffness and began to punish even a slight whisper in favour of Holkar, at the same time mustering all available forces to meet the contingency of an attack upon the capital. He appointed his favourites and menials as his military commanders to oppose a man of Holkar's calibre.

9. Bajirao routed at Poona.—Determined to exact retribution for all the wrongs he had suffered, Yashvantrao descended upon Ahmadnagar, now a possession of Sindia, with the greatest fury. He plundered the city and the fort and proceeding further dug up and burnt Sindia's palaces at Shrigonda and Jambgaon. The glorious edifices erected by Mahadji and his chiefs were razed to the ground. This frightfulness so worked on the timid mind of Bajirao that he hurriedly despatched Parasharpant to Yashvantrao with dresses and presents and with messages begging him to adopt a peaceful course and abandon destructive methods. At this moment Sindia's forces were coming rapidly in pursuit of Holkar, and as they crossed the Godavari, their chiefs, obtaining the news of Bajirao yielding to Holkar's threats, sent him strong protests and stopped the dresses and presents from reaching Holkar. Bajirao felt himself utterly distracted. Overwhelmed by consternation, he went about the town asking advice from his friends and acquaintances how to meet the danger. Baloji Kunjar quaked at the prospect of retaliation by Holkar.

Holkar's captains, Fatehsinh Mane and Mir Khan, had been long devastating Maharashtra. Mane descended upon Pandharpur when the priests and religious managers of the place held a large congregation for a week conducting fervent prayers night and day for the safety of the shrine from spoliation. Mane arrived but refrained from doing any harm and even gave some presents to the deity. At Baramati on 8th October he had a stiff battle with Bajirao's forces led by Nana

Purandare. Mane declared his intention of not raising his arm against the Peshwa their common master ; but Purandare opened fire and Mane was compelled to reply. Several chiefs were wounded and the Peshwa's forces were dispersed in different directions. Just a week after this Yashvantrao himself arrived at Baramati and being joined by Mane organized his camp at Dhond, after visiting his family god at Jejuri. Mane had carried away the Peshwa's proud flag which later he returned to Purandare, saying, "We are all one, equal servants of the same master and no rebels".

The little action at Baramati was only a precursor of great events to come. It altogether unnerved Bajirao, and the inhabitants of Poona left the city in search of safety outside. The Peshwa sent his jewellery and valuables to Sinhgad and himself prepared to flee to Raigad. But Baloji Kunjar opposed this course urging that it was not meet for the master to exhibit such cowardice. "If you run away, who will oppose the invader ?"

While Bajirao was hourly imploring his dearest friend[9] Sindia to come immediately to his aid, the latter beset with all kinds of difficulties could not move from Ujjain. He had no money and no resources as all his territory and administration had been convulsed by Holkar. He, however, sent his Bakhshi Sadashiv Bhaskar in all haste with whatever forces he could spare to support Bajirao. This general reached Paithan at the end of August and Ahmadnagar on 8th September. He rapidly moved on and encountered Holkar's troops under Shahamat Khan whom he gave a running fight, and arrived at the capital on 22nd October when he pitched his camp at Wanavdi. This put some fresh courage into Bajirao's heart. Sindia's Bakhshi talked in a confident manner of blowing away Holkar's rabble with his guns. The Bakhshi was in great need of money and Baloji Kunjar relieved his need by paying three lacs. Yashvantrao Holkar was well served by his spies and prepared to meet any contingency with boldness and foresight. He had no desire to cause any personal harm to the Peshwa. He had been wronged by Sindia whom he wished to bring to

9. Letter addressed by the Peshwa to Sindia, in which occur the words **प्राणसख्या मित्राची भेट होईल ?**

justice through their common master. A large section of the populace which had similarly suffered at the hands of the Peshwa, welcomed Holkar's activities. From Baramati Yashvantrao sent the Peshwa a final warning in these words, "You are the master ; I have not the least desire to raise my arm against you. It behoves you to effect a peaceful solution of my dispute with Sindia. The English are waiting at the gate for a chance to seize the Maratha State. This can be prevented only by Sindia and Holkar co-operating with you in sincere service. I have no time to waste in useless talks and am determined to force a solution by my own strength. This is the last chance I give you for a peaceful settlement. If you wish to avoid blood-shed, send to me at once Baloji Kunjar and Dajiba Deshmukh on your behalf, and Baburao Angre and Nimbaji Bhaskar on behalf of Sindia to negotiate terms. These alone can speak with responsibility and come to a decision. I will not talk to any others. If these agents do not turn up and an armed decision is forced on me, I call upon you to remain entirely aloof yourself. I do not wish to do any harm to you or to your partizans. I will engage the Sindian men only. If such an engagement turns out unfavourable to Sindia, you should not leave Poona. You must remember I am as loyal a servant of yours as Sindia. My dispute is with Sindia only, which I am prepared to settle in my own way. You are playing altogether into Sindia's hands and ruining the State. The English are at the door. You have only to act the master, let me act the servant."

This emphatic warning reached the Peshwa on the morning of 23rd Oct. and filled him with abject terror. Not a single soul in that large capital of the Maratha State came forth to advise Bajirao to see Holkar, stop the war and save the State. After continuous discussions for one full day Bajirao sent three men on his behalf to meet Holkar along with Baburao Narayan Vaidya and Parashar Dadaji. Yashvantrao refused to meet them saying, "Why should Kunjar avoid to see me ? If he has no faith in my word, I am ready to send such hostages to the Peshwa as he would name. Kunjar alone opposes reconciliation and unless he comes, all talk of peace must end. I will obtain redress to-morrow on the battle-field. I implore the Peshwa not to quit Poona. I will do nothing to

endanger his life or position. He is under the magic spell of Sindia, that magic I will destroy with my sword to-morrow."

The Peshwa's messengers brought back this reply and begged Kunjar to go and meet Holkar in person. But the Diwan rejected the suggestion, saying, "We will destroy Holkar on the battle-field, and call his bluff once for all." Holkar's agents knelt and appealed to the Peshwa to adopt the ways of peace and conciliation towards their master. But the promptings of his own cowardly heart and the advice of his villainous favourities, drove him to the suicidal course of hostilities.

At last the fateful Monday of the Hindu Divali, October 25th 1802 arrived, on which Maharashtra was to have the customary bath not in oil and hot water but in blood. Both armies knew what was coming and prepared the previous night (the Hindu *Dhana-trayodashi*) to do their best on the morrow. Yashvantrao sent word that he would wait for two hours of the morning and then act as God would guide him. Bajirao ate a hurried breakfast very early and as he began flying away, he was forcibly carried to Sindia's camp by Baloji Kunjar. At about 8 o'clock Sindia's men opened a cannonade upon Holkar's forces. Yashvantrao restrained his men until 25 shots were received from the opposite side. Then Holkar delivered his charge up to 11 o'clock. Bajirao and his brother Chimnaji stood by the Peshwa's standard at Wanavdi. At the commencement of the action Holkar personally, in answer to the Sindian fire, galloped boldly to the enemy's guns, took and turned them upon their own ranks with great effect. When the Peshwa and his brother noticed the Sindian regiments discomfited and their standard removed, they left their position and proceeded towards the Parvati, but seeing Holkar's men arriving in pursuit, Bajirao fled to the neighbouring village of Wadgaon and thence on to the foot of Sinhgad. Young Chimnaji wished to stay on and encourage his men to fight, but Bajirao carried him away against his will. It was the intense personal courage of Yashvantrao and the equally earnest devotion of one and all of his chiefs, that won the day for them. The Sindian party although numerically stronger had no burning faith in their cause. Sadashiv Bhaskar was killed and his men admitted their defeat and submitted to Holkar's mercy.

in the absence of a commanding personality to lead them. They lost nearly six thousand killed and about four thousand wounded. Holkar lost nearly half that number. During the thick of the action Yashvantrao moved about fearlessly watching the whole field, guiding his men and quickly checking any wavering that he noticed in his men. This success was perhaps the greatest achievement of his life. None of Bajirao's chiefs lost his life, as they, like him, ran away to a place of safety. The battle was fought on the plain of the three villages, Ghorpadi, Wanavdi and Hadapsur, but is usually known after the last named village.

CHAPTER XIII

CHRONOLOGY

1796	Elphinstone enters E. I. Co's service.
1798 Oct. 1	Bajirao assigns provision for his brother Amritrao.
1802 July 29	Gaikwad of Baroda forms Subsidiary Alliance with the British.
„ Oct. 30	Bajirao applies to the Bombay Governor for protection.
„ Nov. 7	Amritrao arrives at Poona.
„ Nov. 18	Parashar Dadaji dies.
„ Nov. 28	Close leaves Poona and joins Bajirao at Bassein.
„ Dec. 1	Bajirao boards a British ship at Harnai for Bombay.
„ Dec. 16	Bajirao arrives at Bassein and starts negotiations for British help.
„ Dec. last week	Amritrao's son Vinayak receives robes of Peshwaship at Poona.
„ Dec. 31	Treaty of Bassein concluded, (ratified by the G. G. on 10th March 1803).
1803 Feb. 27	Collins arrives at Sindia's camp, Burhanpur.
„ Mar. 9	Arthur Wellesley leaves Harihar for Poona.
„ Mar. 13	Holkar leaves Poona after plundering it for four months.
„ March 11 to Aug. 3	Collins presses for a definite answer from Sindia and Bhosle.
„ Apr. 20	Wellesley arrives at Poona and prepares the palace for defence.
„ May 13	Bajirao restored to his seat at Poona.
„ July	Wellesley detaches Amritrao from the Maratha coalition.
„ July 16	Wellesley detaches Holkar from the coalition.
„ Aug. 7	Wellesley opens war with the Marathas.

Peshwa Bajirao II

CHAPTER XIII

THE PESHWA BARTERS AWAY INDEPENDENCE
[1802—1803]

1 Bajirao's flight, a grievous blow.
2 The treaty of Bassein, Poona musters strength.
3 Bajirao's restoration to Poona.
4 Amritrao acts as a traitor.
5 Bajirao freed of concern and responsibility.
6 King Collins with Sindia.
7 Holkar deserts the coalition.

1. **Bajirao's flight, a grievous blow.**—For six and a half months after the battle of Hadapsar Bajirao was absent from Poona, passing most of his time at the Maratha outpost of Bassein practically under British protection, to prevent himself from falling into the hands of Yashvantrao Holkar. The latter did his best to persuade the Peshwa to return. Yashvantrao could have easily seized his person, but scrupulously refrained from any violence towards his master. He sent him cartloads of food on the day of his flight that he might not starve. On 27th October the Peshwa with his brother, Baloji Kunjar and a few Sindian guards crossed the western Ghats at mid-night and made for Raigad. He spent a month at Birwadi near Mahad negotiating with the British for their support. On 30th October he wrote the following letter to Jonathan Duncan the Governor of Bombay :—

"My servants Holkar and his party are carrying on intrigues and wrongs against me. Much alarmed at their base conduct, I have resolved to seek an alliance with your Honour on condition that should any of these rebels demand my person, it should be positively denied. Nor must your Honour tell me to go. Should these propositions meet with your approbation, you must make provision for my expenses. Also be pleased to furnish me large armed vessels in the harbour of Mahad. For further particulars on this head I refer your Honour to the bearer Naro Govind Avty."[1]

1. Refer to Forrest's Maratha Series for further correspondence.

The Governor discussed this letter with John Malcolm who was then in Bombay, obtained his written advice on the future course and acted on it in all his future negotiations with the Peshwa. As during the interval Bajirao feared he would be captured by Yashvantrao, he sent back a large part of his party to Poona and himself proceeded with a considerable following to Suvarnadurg (Harnai) where on 1st December he boarded a British ship named the *Herculean* provided by Capt. Kennedy, then the British agent at Bankot, who had received specific instructions from the Governor to welcome Bajirao. A sum of two lacs was supplied to meet his personal needs. Khanderao Raste, then the Peshwa's Chief Officer in the Konkan, came and paid him his respects at Suvarnadurg and helped him with his advice. During his journey to Bombay Bajirao received salutes of gunfire and splendid reception from all British ships and local agents on the coast. The ship with Bajirao on board halted at his request at Revdanda for two days and reached Bassein on 16th December. Here he was in his own jurisdiction, safe from his enemy and within easy call for British armed forces.

Bajirao immediately pressed his negotiations with the Governor for British help to regain his position at Poona. The celebrated treaty of Bassein came to be finally concluded on the last day of the year 1802. Baloji Kunjar who was the only adviser responsible for this transaction, soon realised the suicidal character of the step. In the meantime Panse, Purandare and some other chiefs at Poona, as soon as they learned that their master had run away, tried their utmost to persuade him to return, conciliate Holkar, and with the help of Amritrao work out a fresh scheme for regenerating the administration as the only means of saving the State. Bajirao was more than once inclined to accept this suggestion, but was each time dissuaded from such a course by Baloji Kunjar. In the meantime Yashvantrao took up his residence in Sindia's palace at Wanavdi and posted special guards for the protection of the city, hunting out all forces and officers of Sindia. He liberated from confinement the partizans of Nana Phadnis and also Moroba Phadnis and the Phadke brothers. He sent a deputation to bring Amritrao to Poona, who arrived, after a great deal of

reluctance and persuasion, on 7th November, and was received with signal honours and salutes. Unfortunately Holkar's old sober adviser Parashar Dadaji died of a short fever on 18th November, a severe loss not only to Holkar, but to the Maratha State as he had all along been a great universally respected cementing factor between the two warring elements.[2]

The crucial point before all lovers of the Maratha nation was how to preserve its independence against British intervention. A strong coalition was organized in Poona under the lead of Holkar with Amritrao replacing the Peshwa, and it was supported by all important chiefs except the Gaikwad of Baroda who had already accepted British protection by a separate treaty on 29th July 1802. Arthur Wellesley and Col. Close were inclined to support the plan of this coalition. But the Governor-General would have none of it, being determined to put an end to the Maratha supremacy by fully utilizing the present crisis of the Maratha State to further his own aims, which he unfolded only in gradual steps.

Resident Close's conduct after Bajirao's flight from Poona was singularly enigmatical. He was entirely pleasant to both Amritrao and Holkar, apparently approving the course they were following. They begged him to remain in Poona, but he replied he had orders from the Governor-General to leave the place at once as the Peshwa had left it. Close departed from Poona for Bombay on 28th November, being in the know of the movements and plans of Bajirao. The Resident's departure made Amritrao and Yashvantrao very uneasy as they had no indication what line of action he would adopt. Close had little voice in the matter, and was called upon to execute what Wellesley at Calcutta and Duncan in Bombay would decide. Bajirao left Birwadi and Mahad only after receiving intimation of Close having reached Bombay. The whole affair was carefully planned and regulated by Close. While on his way to Bassein Bajirao and his brother Chimnaji paid a short visit from Revdanda to Bombay to meet the Governor, who received them with great hospitality and entertained them

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2. Bhavani Shankar gives him a high compliment. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has equally praised him for his sagacity in the affairs leading to the battle of Lakheri.

with dinners and presents. The younger brother Chimnaji strongly remonstrated with Bajirao against the evil course he was pursuing, saying, "If we are fated to pass our life in confinement somewhere, why may we not prefer our own brother Amritrao as our captor to these foreigners who are clearly following their own selfish game?" Bajirao saw the force of this argument and was on the point of returning to Poona. But tempting offers of support from the British and the opposition of his advisers like Baloji Kunjar proved too strong for the weak-minded Peshwa to resist. He thought himself capable of facing any situation that would arise.

Amritrao, Yashvantrao and other wise men of Poona deliberated long and anxiously upon their future course. A council of administration was named to govern, until Bajirao actually resigned, consisting of Amritrao, Holkar, Bhosle and the Patwardhans. Sindia was also proposed to this council and he almost consented, as it was the only way to keep out the British. It was decided to give Amritrao's son Vinayak Bapu in adoption to Yashodabai and make him the Peshwa. But that lady was strictly confined by Bajirao at Raigad and Holkar's forces failed to extricate and fetch her to Poona. Such a change in the Peshwaship was long in agitation and had been advertised in a colloquial code phrase, meaning "a new diamond was to be set on the old ring."[3] Holkar sent Fatehsinh Mane to Satara and brought from the Chhatrapati robes of Peshwaship for Vinayakrao in the last week of December, when Bajirao was negotiating his treaty at Bassein. A new regime was then started in Poona with most of the old officers restored to their posts and letters of assurances issued to the various members of the State. But at this critical moment the evil genius of Sharzarao Ghatge appeared on the scene to destroy the concert. He was now Sindia's principal minister and bragged of putting down Holkar. He called upon Bajirao to stay at Mahad and collected considerable troops at Burhanpur, where Begam Samru arrived from Delhi and joined the Sindia forces. Thus while measures were being pursued at Poona and Burhanpur to arrive at a settlement, Bajirao left Mahad at the end of November and put himself under British protection, a step

3. अंगठीवरचा हिरा नवीन बसवायचा.

which changed the whole character of the Poona situation. What was till then a Sindia-Holkar struggle, was now transformed into a British-Maratha trial of strength. The Poona administration suddenly cracked and once more the old trio, Bajirao, Daulatrao and Sharzarao proved the bane of the Maratha State. Amritrao and Yashvantrao omitted to do nothing that would ease the situation. They implored Bajirao to return and desist from the ruinous course he was following. Sindia's adviser Baburao Angre met Bajirao at Revdanda and tried to dissuade him from throwing himself into the British arms. But Bajirao proved adamant. He now bitterly hated his brother Amritrao, and repeatedly asked him to join him at Bassein. Daulatrao Sindia too asked Bajirao not to take an irrevocable step. He hurriedly left Ujjain in December for Poona.

2. **The treaty of Bassein, Poona musters strength.**— Since the day of Bajirao's arrival at Bassein (16th Dec.), comprehensive and intricate negotiations continued between the two parties and Bajirao found himself more and more enmeshed as one by one fresh sacrifices on his part came to be unfolded before him. Every item when discussed convinced Bajirao that he was going to be tied hand and foot. A severe tussle went on during all that time, the British tightening the bands, and Bajirao trying to escape from them. Bajirao had no farseeing adviser by him at this moment, only two insignificant self-seekers Balavantrao Nagnath, and Raghunath Janardan Chinapattankar, a Maratha agent who had long worked at Madras and was a confirmed British underling with the only qualification that he knew English. These two men spoke highly of British integrity, magnanimity and regard for their plighted word. Yashvantrao Holkar, apprized of what was passing at Bassein, offered to go there himself and meet the Peshwa all alone warning him against any unilateral commitment. Bajirao refused to see him, being extremely anxious to meet Sindia and Bhosle before concluding the treaty. At such a vacillation Col. Close threatened Bajirao that he would close in with the offer which he had received from Amritrao and Holkar. The moment was urgent and serious, said Close ; and the British were free to make whatever arrangement they thought

best in restoring the Government of Poona. This threat had the desired effect and Bajirao signed the treaty with the greatest trepidation and reluctance. Its main stipulations were :--

1. The two contracting parties agree that the friends and the enemies of the one should be treated as the friends and the enemies of the other.
2. That the British should protect Bajirao's territory as their own.
3. For this purpose a subsidiary force of not less than 6000 regular infantry with the usual proportion of field artillery, should be permanently stationed in Bajirao's dominions.
4. For the expense of this force Bajirao should cede to the British, districts yielding 26 lacs of Rupees a year.
5. The Peshwa was not to entertain in his service any European hostile to the English.
6. In case of a dispute arising with the Nizam Bajirao should accept British arbitration.
7. Bajirao should also respect the treaty of friendship recently contracted by the Gaikwad with the English and accept British arbitration in case of a dispute.
8. The British and Bajirao should give each other more military help whenever necessary.
9. The Peshwa binds himself to engage in no hostilities with other States without a previous consultation with the British Government.[4]

The news of Bajirao having concluded an agreement to engage British forces for his protection reached Poona the very next day, the New Year's day of 1803 and greatly dismayed Holkar and Amritrao. They held a conference on 2nd January with Moroba Phadnis, Baba Phadke and others of their party. Holkar pointedly declared "Bajirao has destroyed the Maratha State. Now the British will deal the same blow to it that they did to Tipu Sultan". The problem before these Poona ministers now was how to resist Bajirao's return to Poona.

4. This agreement was signed by Bajirao and Col. Close on 31st Dec. 1802 and ratified by the Governor General on 18th March 1803.

Once more Holkar tried in vain to bring Yashodabai to Poona for creating a legal status for Amritrao. The next few months upto the outbreak of war in August, witnessed a glaring contrast between the English and the Maratha methods of opposing each other both in war and diplomacy, the former exhibiting sagacious planning as well as swift action and military preparation. The result was a foregone conclusion.

When Bajirao learnt at Bassein how Amritrao was occupying himself at Poona, he wrote to him on 12th January, "Yashvantrao is a rank rascal, you must desert his company and come to me at once. Don't offer any excuse." Col. Close at the same time wrote thus to Holkar, "Bajirao by solemn agreement has accepted our armed protection, and we are bound in duty to uphold it. In doing so the Governor General is intensely anxious to effect a reconciliation between Bajirao and you, You have often expressed your readiness to remain loyal to Bajirao. Now is the time for you to prove your bonafides by at once leaving Poona with your forces and going back to your jurisdiction. If you do so, the Governor General will get all your grievances redressed by Bajirao. You have all along been friendly to the British power. Do preserve that sentiment by quitting Poona. If you don't do so, there is every chance for our relations being disturbed."

This unmistakable threat Holkar and Amritrao properly understood and they did their best to organize a Maratha confederacy for an eventual war. They despatched Baba Phadke to Haidarabad to sound Nizam Ali and secure his co-operation. This was an idle dream as that Chief had already lost his independence. Holkar personally explained the situation to the two agents of Bhosle at Poona, Shridhar Lakshman and Krishnarao Madhav, and asked them to induce Raghuji Bhosle to stand forth boldly and save the State in this crisis. They saw the force of Holkar's earnest pleading and immediately left for Nagpur to arrange an agreed plan. Daulatrao Sindia also sent his special agent to Nagpur to solicit Bhosle's help in a common endeavour to oppose the British aggression and preserve national independence. All except Sindia enthusiastically agreed to oppose the English by means of arms, if they should bring Bajirao to Poona. But Sindia did not dis-

close his intentions and Holkar decided not to risk a fight with the English at Poona.

The new regime installed in Poona on 12th November lasted for four months till Holkar left the city on 13th March 1803 on his journey to the north. This period was doubtless one of abnormal trouble and anxiety for both Amritrao and Holkar. They had to form a new government of their own, for which a large army had to be entertained at an enormous cost. Holkar had won the victory, but being all along an exterprising soldier of fortune had no assured income. He demanded a crore from Amritrao for payment to his soldiery, urging, "I have done my part of the game, have put down Sindia and raised you to the first position. You must now pay my expenses." Amritrao had no funds and did not covet the position either. What could he do ? A conference of prominent chiefs was held and it was therein decided to raise funds by contributions from the members of the Govt., the bankers and well-to-do citizens, a fresh tax, that is to say, to meet the cost of the revolution. A decision to raise money was passed on paper, but the actual realization proved most obnoxious. Holkar was compelled to use force and nominated for that purpose three of his commanders, Mir Khan Pathan being one of them. The Pathans were let loose upon the helpless city and caused it terrible suffering. They showed no mercy. They dug up houses, and carried away everything they could lay their hands on, not only silver and gold, but vessels, clothes, furniture and what not. Even the Peshwa's gold ambari or the riding canopy of his elephant, was seized. For four months this plunder and sack raged through the city, which looked like a veritable residence of the God of Death. Some large towns in the districts suffered the same fate in a greater or less degree. With all this Holkar was not able to collect more than fifty lacs, only half the amount he actually needed. For the other half he had to look elsewhere.

Bajirao's action in accepting British protection produced throughout Maharashtra a general resentment and unrest, unsettling peoples' minds and their normal avocations. The Berads, the Bhils, the Ramusis, the Kolis, the Pindaris and bands of unemployed roving classes, began their traditional depredations making life insecure everywhere. Maharashtra look-

ed in vain for a leader to appear on the scene and end this anarchy and confusion. When Bajirao learnt at Bassein that another Peshwa was being set up in Poona, he became furious against Amritrao and ordered his palace at Bhivandi, not far from Bassein, to be plundered and destroyed. Henceforth Amritrao became his worst enemy.

It would thus be seen how the three months, January to March were differently employed by Holkar's party and by the British representative in developing their respective plans and preparations. On 9th March 1803 Col. Wellesley left Harihar on his advance upon Poona to place Bajirao in his seat. Before starting he issued the following appeal :—

"The Peshwa Bajirao has sought the friendship and protection of the Company's Government. It is at his invitation that we are entering the Maratha country as friends. We have no desire to harm or hate anybody. We call upon the Mamlatdars and all officials to join us cordially. We are stationing our guards to see that no damage is done to any peaceful members of society. Whatever provision of grain and other articles is needed for us, will be strictly paid for according to current rates." This action of Col. Wellesley prevented opposition and allowed him an easy unmolested passage to Poona.

Col. Wellesley sent assurances to Holkar at Poona that the British would not disturb him if he did not interfere with their arrangements. In order to avoid a clash of arms Yashvantrao considered it advisable to withdraw from Poona before the British forces arrived. He, therefore, visited the Peshwa's palace and on 25th February, received robes of departure from the wife of Bajirao and that of Amritrao, and left the city finally. He was not reconciled to Sindia as his demand for having young Khanderao in his possession was not complied with.

3. **Bajirao's restoration to Poona.**—Col. Wellesley was now entrusted with the mission of restoring Bajirao to his Peshwaship at Poona in consonance with the terms of the treaty concluded at Bassein. The early months of 1803 were full of bustle and excitement for the two Wellesley brothers, who together directed the machinery of their Government to attain the supreme object of overcoming the Maratha Power.

To secure this object they had to break the Maratha combination by suitable diplomacy backed by sufficient military force. This meant that Holkar and Amritrao had to be appeased and made innocuous, and Bajirao was to be lulled into inactivity. The Bhosle of Nagpur and the Gaikwad of Baroda, who were growing restive, were to be properly controlled and kept from joining the hostile combination. Sindia alone was to be singled out for an attack and his trained army destroyed. A major part of this last undertaking was to capture Sindia's possessions in the north and to take the Emperor of Delhi under British protection. This programme virtually meant the imposition of peace on the warring powers of the whole Indian continent. Lord Wellesley, a wonderful organizer, is seen rising to the highest pitch in handling the Indian situation during the year 1803. Lord Lake who was the Commander-in-Chief was entrusted with that portion of this huge plan which concerned northern India.

The sphere south of the Narmada was entrusted of Col. Wellesley. He was asked to advance upon Poona and be ready to receive Bajirao on return there from Bassein accompanied by Col. Close. Jonathan Duncan Governor of Bombay and Lord Clive Governor of Madras were asked to be ready to fall in with the scheme and take timely action to co-operate with Col. Wellesley. The Bombay army was organized under Col. Murray and the Madras one under General Stuart. The Nizam's Subsidiary Force under Col. Stevenson was stationed at Parinda to move wherever required. The total British forces numbered a little above sixty thousand, by far larger than any put in the field on any previous occasion in India. Besides these the Governor General appointed one Major Frith for the special task of seducing the European and other officers of the Indian chiefs. The Governor General also stationed his own confidential agent named Col. Mercer to remain with Lord Lake and keep an eye on all north Indian chiefs either for securing their co-operation or keeping them out of mischief. One particular measure adopted by the Governor General was to keep the general Indian populace fully informed by timely proclamations of the British intentions and plans and of certain special advantages that they offered to the general masses. These

precautions were comprehensive enough in their scope and effect. Such proclamations were distributed gratis among the general populace and among the families of those who were serving either in the British armies or with the Indian chiefs. If men who served the Indian chiefs left their service within three months and joined the British armies, they were assured of their present emoluments being continued to them, and that they would be treated with proper respect and attention without any distinction being made on racial grounds. Those who would raise their arms against the English and help the Maratha cause, were warned that they would never receive any British protection. Drafts of such proclamations were sent to the various officials with instructions for necessary changes being made to suit local conditions or particular situations.

The Governor General also despatched detailed notes and suggestions to all his military and civil officers as to how they should co-operate in the war when it was started, what objects were to be achieved, how provisions should be procured, how harm, molestation or loss to the general populace at the hands of the field armies should be avoided. Col. Wellesley was invested with full powers of the Governor General himself in case of emergency in order to avoid the delay which a reference to Calcutta necessarily involved. The objective of the north Indian campaign was clearly defined and communicated to Lord Lake,

All this was accomplished in advance of the actual war. But no step was omitted to secure the same object by diplomatic moves avoiding open hostilities.

Col. Wellesley entered Poona on 20th April. On 22nd he visited the Peshwa's palace and noted its situation for purposes of defence. He sent intimation of his arrival at Poona to Col. Close at Bassein, when the latter left that place with Bajirao, who had grown extremely impatient for his return to Poona. The party arrived at Chinchwad on 6th May and a week later on 13th Bajirao entered his capital and regained his seat amidst gun salutes and shouts of joy. The event was announced throughout India by gunfire, at Calcutta, Surat and other important towns. Col. Close was accompanied at this time by his assistant Mountstuart Elphinstone, who had entered the Co.'s service in 1796. So the restoration of Bajirao was peacefully effected by British diplomacy without provoking any of the

hostile elements. Holkar remained at Chandwad waiting upon the turn which events would take in future. Amritrao retired to Junnar. Sindia, a friend of Bajirao halted at Burhanpur, concerting measures to meet the possible danger from the British. Wishing to join hands with Bhosle, he commenced hurried negotiations with Nagpur. Though the distance between the two places, Burhanpur and Nagpur, was quite short, it took the two chiefs eight long months before they could meet, a criminal folly as it turned out.

4. Amritrao acts as a traitor.— Now begins the saddest chapter of Maratha history, which almost defies clarification on account of the rapidity with which events marched forward, As Bajirao had proved incompetent, Amritrao was by common consent acknowledge to be the fittest member of the Peshwas' house to hold the collapsing State together. But this is just the reason why Bajirao hated him bitterly, and now that he had joined Holkar and obtained the Peshwaship for his son, Bajirao stopped the allowance of 7 lacs which he had granted him long ago (on 1st October 1798) at the intercession of Nana Phadnis. So Amritrao now found himself in an utterly helpless condition with no forces or resources of his own to defend himself against Bajirao's wrath. He had not the courage openly to head the anti-British coalition ; and Wellesley was not slow to take advantage of Amritrao's difficulties in order to weaken his hostility. Bajirao himself took no decided line of action either in favour of or against the anti-British movement. While he regretted bitterly the grasping methods which the British now adopted, he had not the courage to go back upon the commitment he had made and openly repudiate the treaty. This vacillation itself ruined him and was utilized by British diplomacy to further their ends.

Col. Wellesley succeeded in preventing Amritrao from joining the coalition. He offered Amritrao British protection against either his own brother or any other chief, and on his own responsibility confirmed to him not only the jagir of seven lacs he had once held, but increased it by a lac. Against this unwarranted interference of Col. Wellesley, Bajirao protested violently and even approached the home authorities of

the E. I. Co., who later called upon Col. Wellesley to explain his conduct. The reply which the latter made is a terse comment on the subject. It runs, "Amritrao is the adopted son of the Peshwa's father. He was a very able man in the civil and political affairs of the Maratha Empire and had been deeply concerned in all the intrigues and disturbances which had taken place since the death of the former Peshwa. His reputation for ability was higher than that of any other Maratha, because all the adherents of Nana Phadnis and people of business in the country were attached to him. And he had uniformly been opposed to the government of the reigning Peshwa. It had been intended by Holkar to place his son on the musnud as Peshwa, if the British Govt. had not interfered in consequence of the treaty of Bassein. When Holkar was obliged to retire from Poona by the advance of the British corps under my command, Amritrao was the last to retire from that city. When I brought back the Peshwa to resume the exercise of his government, it appeared to me and to Col. Close necessary to reconcile Amritrao and the Peshwa. But the latter feared and detested his brother. We considered it important to secure the neutrality and support of Amritrao in the impending contest and we persevered to ascertain his terms, which turned principally upon what he had before and what he had lost by the treaty of Bassein. We thought it then reasonable to effect a settlement with an income at least equal to that which he had previous to the treaty. Negotiations were carried on and when the war broke out in August 1803, I found it necessary to take decided steps to bring it to a conclusion on account of the military inconvenience resulting from the position of Amritrao's force. I therefore concluded a treaty with Amritrao confirming to him a jagir worth 8 lacs. I must say that thereafter Amritrao performed a service for us which never ought to be forgotten".[5]

On 24th July 1803 Genl. Wellesley wrote to the Governor General, "The Peshwa would not agree to the proposed arrangement for Amritrao. He meant to place Amritrao in the state of a prisoner under the most degrading circumstances; and

5. *Wellington's Despatches*, by Owen, p. 348, letter to Dundas.

I was convinced that if I had communicated this to the vakil of Amritrao, he would have instantly joined with the confederates against us. In the meantime his vakil pressed me for a decision. He urged that at my desire Amritrao had separated himself from the councils of Holkar and Sindia nearly three months ago ; that those chiefs were now become his enemies ; that he was now liable to be attacked by them and also by the Peshwa as his enemy. I therefore thought it proper to write to Amritrao a letter giving him assurances that the British Govt. would take care that he should have a provision agreeable to him. I then signed a treaty as much for military considerations as those of a political nature already adverted to."[6] Arthur Wellesley further writes :—

"By reference to the records of the day it will be seen what pains were taken by the confederates to bring Holkar into active operation against us. If Holkar had performed his engagements with Sindia, I cannot pretend to say that I should have gained the successes I did. Amritrao intercepted a letter from Sindia in which he urged the Peshwa to break his alliance with the English and promised that as soon as we should be defeated, he (Sindia) would join with the Raja of Berar and the Peshwa to destroy Holkar. Amritrao sent this letter to Holkar and the consequence was that Holkar after he had made two marches to the southward with a view to cooperate with the confederates, returned and crossed the Narmada and in point of fact never struck a blow. On the contrary he was in friendly communication with me throughout the war. I may conclude by asserting that I did right in making a lasting arrangement with Amritrao securing him a fair stipend of seven lacs."[7]

Thus Amritrao proved the first traitor to the Maratha State by accepting a permanent provision from the British Government.

6. Owen p. 271. P. R. C. VII 194 dated 6th July 1805 says, "the G. G. in council has uniformly supposed that the engagement concluded with Amritrao by Sir Arthur Wellesley first on 14th August 1803 and confirmed in the month of January 1804 was final, amounting to 8 lacs of Rupees inclusive of the pensions of one lac granted to his adherents."

7. Owen p. 348.

5. Bajirao freed of concern and responsibility.—Let us now see how Bajirao reacted to the responsibilities he had incurred towards his British protectors and the members of his State by his treaty. His main complaint to Col. Wellesley was that he had no faithful servants or followers and he could not distinguish between the loyal and disloyal ones. Wellesley, therefore, suggested to him that he should compel every officer to take the oath of loyalty, as is done to-day in the case of members of legislatures. Apart from the merits or otherwise of such an oath, this was an innovation in Maratha politics never resorted to in previous regimes. Bajirao readily adopted it and began to compel everyone to take an oath of loyalty. He invited people to dinners and parties and made everybody take a sacred oath in the presence of the family deity before the dinner was started. Most of the people resented this infliction but reluctantly submitted. Genl. Wellesley took up his residence in Poona while conducting negotiations with Sindia, Holkar and others.

Bajirao appointed Balavantrao Nagnath as his agent to convey messages from him to the General. Vithoji Naik was made the police prefect of the city, and Sadashiv Mankeshvar his chief ministerial adviser in the long absence of Baloji Kunjar, whom Bajirao had deputed to Sindia from Bassein to explain to him the present situation and the implications of the treaty. Khanderao Raste, who had served Bajirao in his flight from Poona was made the household manager. There was hardly any business of a political nature on Bajirao's hand now, as such functions were quietly appropriated by Genl. Wellesley. Bajirao held no Darbars, received no visitors and held no conferences. The concerns of the State had to be referred from the extinct head of a once mighty Empire directly to the General. Thus Bajirao found himself reduced to the position of a mere figurehead with a private establishment at the palace. A reporter thus comments on 1st July, "The Shrimant is now quiet and happy with his routine of baths and prayers, eating, drinking and making merry, having no bother of any outside concern. During the four monsoon months he has on hand religious rites for which eminent priests have been requisitioned. Sumptuous dinners with profuse decorations for plates and sweet music are arranged daily. One day the Peshwa had

a fever for the alleviation of which alms were given and prayers held. Hot discussions take place on the selection of dishes for feeding the priests. Two good looking dancing girls adept in singing bawdy songs (lavnis), have been brought from Bassein, whose performances in secret with only a select group occupy most of the Peshwa's time. Since last year he has been affected with an unmentionable disease. One Moroba Mone a menial who looked after his comforts during his flight has been rewarded with the honour of a palki. He now constantly wears on his person costly ornaments of pearls and diamonds. Fireworks were let off last Tuesday at Parvati, where he had his evening dinner. He likes being invited to dinners and parties outside by friends and officials."

This description of the life that Bajirao led during the four months in which the most momentous war of Maratha history was fought, is enough to indicate the low level to which the Peshwa had sunk. Wellesley[8] has recorded the following opinion about Bajirao, in a letter to Col. Close on 24th January 1804. "It is proper that the Peshwa should be informed that from the highest man to the lowest in his State, there is not one who will trust him or who will care to have any connection or communication with him, excepting through the mediation and under the guarantee of the British Government. He has no public feeling and his private disposition is terrible. He is without subjects except when a British force is actually at his back, and he has no desires except money for sensual pleasures and that what he called "rebels" should be caught by his protectors and handed over to his vengeance."[9]

Bajirao could not keep on friendly terms either with his British protectors or the Maratha confederates. He ardently wished to see Holkar severely punished and himself freed from the British thraldom. General Wellesley foreseeing that a war was likely to result, called upon Bajirao to issue orders to all chiefs to join the English and punish the rebels including Sindia.

8. Arthur Wellesley became Col. on 3rd May 1796, Maj. Gen. on 29th April 1802, Lt. General on 25th April 1808 and General on 31st July 1811.

9. Owen's Despatches of Wellington, p. 365, and p. 393, letter of May 12th 1804.

Under pressure from Wellesley Bajirao placed formal orders of that import into his hands, but at the same time secretly asked the chiefs, Patwardhans, Vinchurkar, Purandare, Panse, Raste and others not to join the English in the war. He invited Ramchandra Appa Patwardhan for an interview and asked him to explain why he had joined the English. Patwardhan answered point blank, "Like master, like servant."

Wellesley proved more than a match for the Peshwa's duplicity. When he asked the latter to join in the war with his forces against Sindia and Bhosle, Bajirao became utterly confused and puzzled. It was to save himself from the tyranny of Holkar that he had contracted for British military aid. In agreeing to the treaty of Bassein his intense desire was to have Holkar properly punished. But instead of such an event coming to pass, he now found Wellesley and all the British chiefs bent upon reducing his friend Sindia and his ally Bhosle. How this happened will be presently seen.

6. **King Collins with Sindia.**—The Wellesley brothers' main object during the Bassein negotiations and thereafter, was to destroy Maratha independence and establish British supremacy in its place ; and in this connection they mainly feared Sindia's disciplined army. As soon as the treaty was signed, the Governor General called upon Sindia to give his accord to its terms. For this purpose he immediately despatched Resident Col. Collins from Fatehgarh to Sindia's camp. Col. Close sent Sindia a copy of the treaty contracted by Bajirao. Sindia received the copy on 9th January at Burhanpur with an invitation to join the British in putting down the enemies of Bajirao. Sindia replied that as Collins was soon to arrive, he would discuss the situation with him and then communicate his answer. This reply was interpreted by Wellesley to mean that Sindia was not opposed to Bajirao's restoration to Poona under British protection. Collins arrived in Sindia's camp on 27th February, but days passed before Sindia gave him a hearing. Their first meeting took place on 11th March. From this day to 3rd August, when Collins left Sindia's camp at Fardapur at the foot of the Ajanta hills as a signal of war, is a period when hot discussions continued between Sindia and Collins,

each trying to circumvent the other with diplomatic ingenuity, the reports of which now form an instructive study. It would be convenient to present the story in the form of an abridged dialogue between the two principals often assisted by their consultants. We have already known Sindia's ways and character, but Collins was of quite a different type, a small-sized but very pompous and proud man, always dressed in full formal robes. His temper made it impossible for Elphinstone to act as his assistant. Arthur Wellesley paid him a visit in 1803 and was received with a salute of all the artillery in the Resident's camp, when Wellesley told his A. D. C. Capt Blackiston, that Collins reminded him of a little monkey dressed for the Bartholomew Fair. On account of his vanity and pomposity Collins was familiarly known to the other British officers as "King Collins."

In his first interview with Sindia Collins asked :—

Coll.—You have a dispute with Holkar, which we shall adjust ; but you must accept the treaty of Bassein and form a separate agreement with us in order that our relations may remain as cordial as, you have admitted, they have been in the past, and that the peace between us may not be disturbed.

Sind.—We must have a little time to think on this subject ; as regards our dispute with Holkar, we do not stand in need of British mediation.

On 16th March Sindia's vakil informed Collins, "We have every desire to maintain peace and continue our former friendship with the British Govt. Our dispute with Holkar is our own concern. On this subject we must first consult the Peshwa. The treaty of Salbye contracted by Mahadji Sindia is still binding upon us both. In that treaty you well know that Sindia was accepted as the guarantee for the execution of the engagements between the Peshwa and the British, and hence it was wrong on the part of the British to have formed a treaty with the Peshwa without reference to the Maharaja."

Coll.—The Peshwa is the master and Sindia his servant. Do you maintain that a master must seek his servant's permission to act as he likes ? We have violated no stipulation of the treaty of Salbye and the Peshwa is perfectly at liberty to form any new treaty with other Powers on his own respon-

sibility. Besides we are still ready to enter into any fresh agreement with you. When you say that you must meet the Peshwa before giving a final reply, you certainly indicate that you don't believe what we tell you ; and we are, therefore, at liberty to infer that you don't accept the treaty of Bassein. Is it so ?

Sindia's vakil declined to answer this question. On 24th March Collins asked.—In his sore need we came to the help of Bajirao and saved him from being destroyed by Holkar. He would have destroyed you both. Therefore you must now frankly tell us what attitude you wish to maintain towards the British Power.

Sindia.—What the British did was their concern. But it is strange that Bajirao has not made any communication to me on this grave question ; and unless we know what his object is, I cannot give you a definite answer. Bajirao's agent Baloji Kunjar, I am informed, is on his way to my camp to explain matters. Let him arrive and then we will answer you. This does not mean we reject the treaty. I have no desire to oppose it, nor to violate our traditional friendship with the British Sarkar.

Soon after this news came of Genl. Wellesley having reached Poona with his forces and Sindia then asked, "What is the object of British forces coming to Poona ? You must write to the Governor General to have them recalled.'

Coll.—You say you accept the treaty of Bassein. It is in consonance with that treaty that the British forces have arrived in Poona. How can they be recalled ?

While such wrangling proceeded between Collins and Sindia, the latter's vakil called on Collins on 18th April and asked whether the British were prepared to make good the damage they had caused to Sindia by contracting the treaty of Bassein without his knowledge ?

Coll.—We have not the least desire to offend Sindia, or damage his prestige.

During these parleys Sindia, Bhosle, Holkar and other chiefs were busy organizing a grand coalition against the British, the news of which reached the Governor-General. On 4th May Sindia left Burhanpur and began his march to meet

Bhosle who moved from Nagpur with his forces to meet Sindia. The Governor General asked Collins to demand from Sindia whether these moves meant a war against the British and to warn him that if he really entertained friendly relations towards the British as he professed, he must at once return to his possessions in north India, as his presence in the south with large armed forces spelt danger in the present delicate situation. If in spite of such a warning Sindia persisted in marching towards Poona, the Governor General would understand that Sindia meant to violate the treaty of Bassein, a hostile action which the British would have to prevent with all their power. The Governor General also added that it was the duty of the British Govt. to protect Nizam Ali who was their ally ; and that if Sindia should attack the Nizam, the British would conclude it to be a declaration of war.

The Governor General despatched a strongly worded remonstrance from Calcutta on 3rd June and called upon Collins to obtain Sindia's reply and communicate it directly to Genl. Wellesley at Poona. The Governor General also wrote a similar remonstrance to Raghuji Bhosle through the Nagpur Resident Josiah Webbe. Genl. Wellesley was at the same time called upon to take whatever action he thought necessary after receiving answers from the two Residents. In addition the Governor General wrote a full separate letter to the Peshwa explaining the situation and calling upon him to co-operate fully with his forces in the manner that Close and Genl. Wellesley would desire of him.

Thus during June and July Genl. Wellesley busied himself in preparing for a war if it should break out. He ordered British troops to move from their various stations and concentrate upon Sindia's camp in Berar. He tried to secure as many chiefs for allies as possible and seduce such as were inclined towards the general confederacy. Wellesley approached every Maratha chief, small or great from the Tungabhadra to the Narmada, and strongly exerted himself to weaken the opposition.

Genl. Wellesley decided upon south Berar as the theatre best suited for military movements during the monsoon months when the campaign appeared likely. He issued clear timely instruc-

tions to that effect to the various agents and chiefs with whom he was concerned. The Governor General formed his own plan on similar lines and entrusted it for execution to the Commander-in-Chief Lord Lake in the region of Delhi.

These activities created quite a sensation throughout the Deccan. Collins in Sindia's camp pressed him incessantly for a decision, the latter as tenaciously tried to evade it. When Collins in exasperation demanded a definite answer, he was told that Bhosle was on his way and until the two chiefs met, no decisive reply could be given. This evidently meant that Sindia and Bhosle wished to gain time for preparation, a dodge which Collins tried to defeat. Therefore the Governor General asked Collins to put a definite time limit for Sindia's decision, "peace or war" ?

At last Sindia and Bhosle had their first formal visit on 4th June at Bodwad near Malkapur. Collins at once demanded a decision from Raghuji. The latter replied, "I learned the news of the treaty of Bassein only yesterday, and I must have time to consider the situation." On 8th June the two chiefs had their first consultation, after which Collins pressed for a reply. The chiefs delayed. On 12th June Collins gave them a written threat that he would leave Sindia's camp if a definite reply was not immediately given. The affair thus moved towards a crisis. The two confederates were then negotiating with Holkar, who was not within easy reach. On 19th June Collins wrote a letter to Sindia, saying "If you don't give me your final reply within two days, I shall leave your camp on the 22nd inst." Thereupon Sindia asked for six days time for a considered reply to be given. Accordingly Collins demanded a reply on the 28th. After a time the two chiefs informed Collins, "We have not yet received a full copy of the treaty of Bassein, and unless we get it and discuss it personally with the Peshwa, we are not in a position to come to a final decision." On 1st July Collins called on Daulatrao and administered to him this emphatic warning, "By delaying your decision you are simply increasing our difficulties. You are here with your full armed forces. If Genl. Wellesley is then compelled to open hostilities, the responsibility is yours."

On 4th July the three met again when the Bhosle's vakil

Shridhar Lakshman said that the British had no business to contract a separate treaty without reference to all the chiefs. The Resident asked why these chiefs did not run to Bajirao's rescue when he was compelled to leave Poona. It was no fault of the British to have protected his life and position. Thereupon the chiefs informed the Resident that they had no desire to violate the treaty. They would undertake not to move their forces to Poona, provided the British did not commit hostilities. Here the Resident asked that as both Sindia and Bhosle were forming a coalition with Holkar and others and preparing for war, how could thier pacific professions be relied upon. If they had no intention to fight, let Sindia march at once to his dominions beyond the Narmada and Bhosle to Nagpur. "When you both have reached your destinations", added he, "I will advise Col. Wellesley to retire."

After this Sindia and Bhosle prepared letters for the Governor General and gave them to Collins to forward. At this moment the Governor General learnt at Calcutta that Sindia was instigating the Gosavi Himmat Bahadur and Gani Beg in Bundelkhand to prepare for war against the British. The Governor General, therefore, asked Collins to demand from Sindia whether he was not inciting north Indian chiefs to rise against the British. On 16th July Collins called on Sindia and put the question.

Sindia.—No, I have not written such letters to nortn Indian chiefs. On the contrary I have warned them against any offensive move.

Coll.—If so, when do you propose leaving for the Narmada ?

Sindia.—I will answer the question after I get replies to the letters I gave you for the Governor General.

On 14th July Daulatrao received a letter from Genl. Wellesley calling upon him to move away from the frontier of the Nizam's dominions, which, he said, the British in a solemn treaty had engaged to protect. "If you don't move away and if we are compelled to act, the responsibility for war will rest on you." Sindia and Bhosle deliberated on this letter and the following remark was made.

Bhosle.—I am camping within my territories. What right have the British to ask me to move away ?

On 25th July in a personal meeting Daulatrao informed Collins, "We are both within our jurisdictions. We have already given you an undertaking that we shall not march upon Poona, nor do we wish to violate the treaty of Bassein. It is thus plain that we don't desire war.

Coll.—General Wellesley is unable to put faith in your oral word or writing. You must substantiate them by action, by at once moving away. You have no enemy here who can attack you. You have no need to stay here with large forces. Why should you not move away ?

Sindia.—We will reply on 28th July. On that day Collins called and asked—When can I come to receive your reply ?

Vakil.—Sindia and Bhosle are having a meeting to-day. Thereafter the reply will be given.

Coll.—If I don't receive a reply before to-morrow noon, I shall finally leave your camp.

Collins repeated the same threat on 31st July. Thereafter he was invited for a personal talk by Sindia and Bhosle and was informed at the meeting, "We are both ready to leave this camp (Fardapur), and return to Burhanpur, but before we do so, Genl. Wellesley also must return to his headquarters at Shrirangpattan." Collins did not accede to this proposal, when the two chiefs asked him to fix a day on which Genl. Wellesley would start on his return march, so that they too would begin their retreat the same day. Collins could not do this without consulting the Genl. Thereupon Sindia and Bhosle proposed that they would themselves fix a day on which all the parties should make a simultaneous move. The Resident then asked this proposal to be given in writing so that he would forward it to the authorities and obtain a reply.

These visits and talks after all settled nothing, and Genl. Wellesley concluded that Sindia and Bhosle were merely trying to gain time to win over Holkar, and he asked Collins to leave Sindia's camp at once, pointing out to him that the allies' proposal was absurd, because Sindia would reach Burhanpur within two days, while Wellesley would take two months to reach his destination. This intimation reached Collins on 3rd August, and he at once left Sindia's camp and proceeded to Aurangabad. On 6th August Daulatrao received the following letter from Genl. Wellesley :—

"I have received your letter. While we have no desire to open war against you, you two chiefs have given me clear indication of your intention to attack us, since you have collected large forces on the Nizam's frontier and have refused to move away from your positions. You have rejected the hand of friendship I offered you, and I am now starting hostilities without further parleys. The responsibility is entirely yours."

The next day 7th August 1803, Genl. Wellesley issued a general proclamation recounting the circumstances under which he was compelled to open war against Sindia and Bhosle, and calling upon the general populace not to take part in the war as they would receive no harm.

Thus we see how the war was precipitated. Power politics always finds plausible excuses to support its action. Whether Bajirao resigned the Peshwaship or whether he had the power to sign an independent agreement without the knowledge and consent of his responsible chiefs, are questions to which history demands an answer. Whatever that answer be, can the British claim that they executed the treaty of Bassein in word and spirit? Bajirao engaged British help to put down his antagonists Amritrao and Holkar. Instead of doing this they put down his friends Sindia and Bhosle. As a matter of fact Holkar might have escaped scot-free or even have been rewarded if he had not later declined to submit to British dictation. And into the bargain Bajirao lost all his power and leadership in the Maratha Confederacy.

7. **Holkar deserts the coalition.**—Yashvantrao on his way to Khandesh attacked Aurangabad and exacted 11 lacs by way of tribute. He also plundered and burnt Paithan and Jalna. This spoliation of a British ally was a direct challenge to them, but Col. Wellesley bore the insult and directed his attention to Sindia and Bhosle, who in their alarm coaxed Holkar to join them. Kashirao Holkar began to reconcile Yashvantrao, who realising the common danger agreed to join the confederacy. Daulatrao and Raghuji had their first meeting at Bodwad on 4th June and, as a measure to meet the threat delivered by Collins, they promised to concede all the demands made by Holkar. Khanderao Holkar was handed

over to the latter in July, but the districts seized by Daulatrao were not yet restored. In the mean time Wellesley commenced the war by attacking Ahmednagar on 7th August and Bhosle called upon Holkar to join the coalition at once. Yashvantrao made the following reply to Raghuji on 23rd August.

"I have alreay explained my requirements to your vakils at Poona and have repeated the same to you in writing. I have kept myself perfectly ready to join you in defence of our State and religion. Instead of complying with my request you simply asked me to return from Khandesh to Chandwad. I at once came back. You know how during the last few months I have been begging you for the restoration of the Holkar territories seized by Sindia. As soon as he satisfies this request, I am ready to join you. I await your reply at Bhikangaon (near the Narmada)."[10]

But Sindia under the advice of Sharzarao failed to satisfy Holkar and did not release the territories he had seized. Wellesley precipitated matters and managed to prevent Holkar from joining the allies. He wrote to Holkar desiring a personal visit, to which the latter made a curt reply, saying "the visit can take place as things come to be shaped."[11] This requires a word in explanation.

A letter written by Daulatrao to Bajirao was intercepted by Amritrao and placed in General Wellesley's hands. Wellesley had it diverted to Yashvantrao. In this letter Daulatrao asked Bajirao not to worry over Yashvantrao; "Let us make a show of satisfying his demands. After the war is over, we shall both wreak our full vengeance upon him."[12]

This deceitful conduct of Daulatrao opened Yashvantrao's eyes and, giving up all thought of joining the coalition, he marched straight to Malwa. Wellesley cleverly managed to lessen one antagonist in the war by letting that important letter fall into Yashvantrao's hands. He wrote to Malcolm on 20th June, "Sindia, Holkar and the Raja of Berar and possibly others, will be separate and independent Powers in India, very

10. Ait. Patr. 373.
11. "जशा भेटी व्हावयाच्या तशा घडतील."
12. Owen's Despatches of Wellington p. 350.

probably leagued for the present in a defensive alliance. We must look to that and must not reduce our military establishments. I have not touched upon the disinclination of the Peshwa or his inability to perform the conditions which must be in his power. Has he not now daily communications with Sindia's Darbar and even with Holkar? His very letter to Sindia which has been extracted from him almost by force contains a breach of the treaty. In it he desires that chief to remain where he is, pointedly, whereas he knows that the requisition of the Governor General and the only event which can ensure peace, is Sindia's recrossing the Narmada."[13]

On 23rd June Wellesley wrote to Col. Close, "The confederates have not yet arranged their matters and Holkar has not yet come into their views; and for that reason they wish to delay the decision. Holkar's object would appear to be to get hold of the Holkar territory and his game to effect it by a war between Sindia and us. If there should be no war between Sindia and us, he will get hold of that territory, but not so certainly either by a peace mediated by Bhosle or by his continuation of his contest with Sindia. Holkar's object must obviously be to keep himself out of the contest with us and to urge the others into it. But it is probable Sindia and Bhōsle perceive that inclination and want to urge him to go hand in hand with them. They have now a fair opportunity of doing this by apprizing him that he is to be attacked by the English; and upon this ground it is unfortunate that Col. Collins' Munshi should have said that we intended to attack Holkar. In addition to the impolicy of such a declaration at the present moment, it is anything but true and ought in my opinion under the instructions of the Governor General to be firmly contradicted. If you should be of that opinion, it would be well if you were to make a suggestion upon the subject to Col. Collins."[14]

It proved indeed a master stroke of policy on the part of Genl. Wellesley that he did not direct his attack against Holkar, as the Peshwa wished, but singled out Sindia and Bhosle for that purpose, preventing Holkar from joining the confede-

13. Owen, pp. 243-244.
14. Owen p. 246.

rates. Although Holkars' attitude towards Gen. Wellesley was stiff, he later saw through Sindia's game and remained aloof. On 16th July Gen. Wellesley wrote to Holkar :—

"I am anxious to cultivate the good understanding which has subsisted between the Co.'s Govt, and you. With this view I now send you a copy of the treaty concluded at Bassein between the Hon. Co. and the Pandit Pradhan, from the general defensive terms of which you will observe that the peace and security of India are provided for. You will also perceive that the 12th article provides effectively for the security of all the great Maratha Jagirdars among whom the Holkar family is particularly named. You will see that the interest and security of the family are connected with this treaty and that in fact they can be provided for in no other way. That being the case, I have little doubt but that you will conduct yourself in the manner which your own interests will dictate and that you will continue in peace with the Co. I send this letter with Qadarnawaz Khan a respectable officer, who enjoys my confidence and who will explain anything you desire to know respecting my wishes."[15]

This letter had the desired effect and Holkar did not join the coalition. For this beneficial result Genl. Wellesley later congraulated Holkar. Yashvantrao was in great distress for money, which he demanded from Sindia and Bhosle along with his territory. On 10th July Collins writes, "Yesterday afternoon Yashvantrao Holkar took charge of Khanderao ; and Daulatrao has sent instructions to deliver over the whole Holkar territory." On 4th August Col. Close reported, "Holkar is still near the Tapti and although Sindia has largely reconciled him, he does not appear to have an immediate intention of joining Sindia against us."[16] Holkar evidently waited for the issue of the war that had started, hoping to join in at an opportune moment. Holkar and Amritrao being thus separated, from the confederacy, the Patwardhans and the smaller chiefs followed their example, so that the British task in the war became lighter.

Above all it was the supreme effort of Gen. Wellesley which

15. Owen p. 262.
16. P. R. C. IX 201, 22.

deserved to win. He left nothing to chance. He reduced the strength of the Maratha confederacy to the lowest limit. He chose the best season and the most suitable terrain for the operations. He pinned down his opponents to a particular position without giving them the opportunity for their usual guerilla tactics He remained near enough to Poona to control the sinister activities of Bajirao and other disturbing elements. By contrast the Marathas appear as of very poor capacity in conducting this political game.

At this momentous crisis the situation at Poona is thus described. "Close Saheb came to visit the Peshwa and said, "All the turbaned chiefs have coalesced. Do you then mean we should adopt whatever measures we deem proper ?" The Shrimant replied, "You should remain entirely at ease. I shall never desert you. I invite Sindia to the Godavari and reconcile him to your views." The Shrimant was then pressed for supplying the stipulated quota of troops. He feels highly offended at such conduct of the British. They are false, he says. He has secretly through Balavantrao Nagnath instigated both Sindia and Bhosle to put down the British. Holkar's co-operation has been secured and the three chiefs are now ready for a war."[17]

17. Khare 6655, 6656.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER XIV

1755	Perron born.
1780	Perron arrives in India.
1795 Decr.	De Boigne retires, Perron takes charge.
1803 June	G. G. defines objectives of War.
„ Aug. 6	Nizam Ali dies.
„ Aug. 7	Lake leaves Cawnpur against Sindia.
„ Aug. 8	Wellesley marches against Ahmadnagar.
„ Aug. 12	Wellesley captures Ahmadnagar fort.
„ Aug. 29	Wellesley reaches Aurangabad.
„ Septr. 3	Perron deserts Sindia's service.
„ Septr. 5	Lake captures Aligarh.
„ Septr. 6	Sindia and Bhosle join near Jalnapur.
„ Septr. 14	Lake enters Delhi, meets the Emperor.
„ Septr. 18	Jagannath Puri captured by the English.
„ Septr. 24	Marathas routed at Assai.
„ Septr.-Decr.	Rajputs and other chiefs accept British protection by separate treatise.
„ Octr. 2	Lake captures Mathura.
„ Octr. 15	Stevenson captures Burhanpur.
„ Octr. 17	Agra captured.
„ Octr. 21	Ashirgad surrenders.
„ Octr. 29	Bhosle marches upon Aurangabad.
„ Octr.	Cuttack occupied.
„ Novr. 1	Battle of Laswadi, Sindia defeated.
„ Novr. 6	Sindia asks for truce.
„ Novr. 29	Battle of Adgaum, British victory,
„ Decr. 17	Bhosle makes treaty at Devgaon.
„ Decr. 30	Sindia accepts treaty at Surji-Anjangaon.
1804 January	Wellesley warns Holkar.
„ January 29	Lake administers a warning to Holkar.
„ Febr.	Holkar offers a challenge to Lake.
„ Febr. 27	Treaty of Burhanpur concluded with Sindia.

1804	March	Holkar plunders Ajmere, Pushkar and Jaipur territory.
„	April 16	G. G. declares war upon Holkar.
„	April-May	Wellesley and Close at Bombay.
„	June	Lake returns to Cawnpur, ordering Monson to guard the Malwa passes.
„	July-August	Fight of Holkar with Monson.
„	July 1	Monson captures Hinglajgad.
„	July 8	Monson retreats from Malwa.
„	July 8	Murray reaches Ujjan.
„	July 16	Monson crosses the Chamball
„	August 31	Monson reaches Agra on retreat.
„	Aug-Octr.	Arthur Wellesley at Calcutta.
„	Sept. 3	Lake advances against Holkar.
„	Octr. 8	Holkar attempts assault on Delhi.
„	Novr. 17	Holkar routed at Farrukhabad.
„	Dec. 13	Lake captures Dig.
„	Dec. 19	Lake arrives before Bharatpore.
1805	Jan. 7	Lake invests Bharatpore, fails to capture it.
„	Apr. 10	The Jat Raja makes peace with Lake.
„	Apr.-May	Maratha assemblage at Sabalgad.
„	June-Sept.	Resident Jenkins restrained by Sindia.
„	July 30	Lord Wellesley resigns, Cornwallis succeeds.
„	Octr. 5	Cornwallis dies, Barlow takes charge.
„	Novr. 21	Sindia forms treaty of Mustafapur with Lake.
„	Decr. 24	Holkar concludes treaty of Rajghat.
1806	May 26	Wellesley charged in Parliament.
1808	Octr.	Yashvantrao Holkar becomes insane.
1811	Octr. 27	Yashvantrao Holkar dies.

CHAPTER XIV

MARATHA INDEPENDENCE GONE

[1803—1805]

1 War in the South.
2 North India campaign, Perron's treachery.
3 Bhosle and Sindia make peace.
4 Arthur Wellesley's attitude.
5 Holkar's exasperation.
6 Col. Monson's disaster.
7 Impregnable Bharatpore.
8 The Assemblage of Sabalgad, Indignity to the British Resident.
9 Wellesley recalled, policy reversed.
10 Exit Yashvantrao Holkar.

1. **War in the South.**— Early in August 1803 General Wellesley opened his war against the two Maratha Chiefs Sindia and Bhosle, and in less than four months brought it to a victorious end, as much by clever diplomacy as by the sheer weight of arms. The forces under Wellesley and the other British commanders in the south numbered about forty thousand. Nizam Ali died on 6th August, the day on which Wellesley marched upon Ahmadnagar from his camp at Walki. Sindia was then at Burhanpur within twenty miles of the Nizam's frontier, having taken a position very convenient either for a march on Poona or an attack upon the Nizam's territories. With all their countless drawbacks, the Marathas on the whole gave a very creditable account of themselves by responding to the call of their country. Their national pride and their fierce and determined fighting excited the admiration of General Wellesley. Their greatest handicap was their master Bajirao, whose extreme vacillation affected almost every Maratha soul.

Maratha papers allude to the seduction attempted by General Wellesley at Bajirao's Court, but Col. Close indignantly refused to stoop to such unworthy devices. General Wellesley wrote to Close on 5th August 1803, "I am convinced that it is absolutely necessary that you should have an accurate knowledge of all that passes in the Peshwa's Darbar, that it is not possible you should have that knowledge without paying for it. You ought forthwith to pay Raghuttamrao (the Nizam's agent at Poona)." General Wellesley also obtained written

permission from the Peshwa for all the moves and measures he adopted for putting down the Marathas.

Wellesley's objective was to destroy Sindia's armed power, concentrated between his two strong posts Burhanpur and Ahmadnagar. The latter was well stocked with munitions, arms and supplies, and was strongly defended by Sindia's men. That fort claimed Wellesley's first attention. He left Walki on 8th August and started bombardment of the fort on 10th. Sindia's European officer in charge of the defence who had been already bribed and seduced, immediately went over to Wellesley. The Brahman killedar finding his position untenable asked for terms and surrendered the place on 12th. The Killedar was removed to Bombay and the Peshwa's flag was hoisted on the fort, thus concealing the foreign conquest. This success ensured the British communications with Poona and compelled Sindia to direct his attention to the territory of the Nizam.

Wellesley at once crossed the Godavari and ran to defend Aurangabad which he reached on the 29th. He had already stationed Stevenson at Jafarabad a few miles to the south-east to prevent Sindia's advance. Skirmishes immediately commenced between Sindia's foraging parties of the Pindaris and Stevenson's outposts. Bhosle joined Sindia near Jalnapur and from 6th September stiff actions began between the two opponents, culminating in the battle of Assai on 24th September. Gopalrao Bhau (of Lakheri fame) and Vithalpant Bakhshi of the Bhosles were the principal commanders on the Maratha side. General Wellesley had secretly learned and now took full advantage of the trouble Sindia had with his men on account of the non-payment of their wages. His artillery bullocks were out grazing when a little after the noon of 24th September, Wellesley launched his attack on Sindia. Sindia's Bakshi Yadavrao Bhaskar was killed, in the action. Gopalrao Bhau met it boldly and replied with singular effect, so that although the English gained a decisive victory, it was at such an enormous cost of men that pursuit was found impossible. Wellesley reported, "At length the enemy's line gave in all directions and the British cavalry cut in among their broken infantry ; but

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1. *Wellington Despatches* by Owen No. 154, p. 277.

some of their corps went off in good order and a fire was kept up by them on our troops from many of their guns. Lt. Col. Maxwell was killed and some time elapsed before we could put an end to the straggling fire which they kept up. The victory has cost us dear. Our loss in officers and men has been very great (663 Europeans and 1778 natives as the report shows)."[2] The news of this success highly gratified the Governor General's heart and relieved him from painful anxieties. Sharzarao Ghatge and the Peshwa in Poona wrote comforting letters to Sindia, rousing his fallen spirits for a greater effort and advising him to adopt guerilla tactics with the help of his Pindaris.

The shattered Maratha armies retired towards Burhanpur in order to defend that important post together with its covering fort Ashirgad, from falling into British hands. Wellesley remained in the southwest and sent Stevenson northward to seize those two places. Bhosle, however, suddenly swooped round and stationed himself in front of Aurangabad on 29th October with a view to cutting off Wellesley's supplies which came through the Nizam's dominions. Stevenson advanced upon Burhanpur and easily captured the place on 15th October as Sindia had not arranged for its defence. Thereupon Stevenson immediately appeared before Ashirgad, whose keeper surrendered the fort on 21st October on receiving cash to clear up the arrears of the garrison amounting to seven lacs. Nine European officers and some men of Sindia's service went over to the English, taking advantage of the proclamation which Wellesley had issued. The news of the rapid successes won by Lord Lake in the northern sphere, depressed both Sindia and Bhosle in the south and made their final defeat easy and certain.

Bhosle after separating his forces from Sindia made a sudden dash to the west with the object of cutting Wellesley's communication with Bombay and Poona. But the latter was quite prepared to thwart his schemes. The Peshwa's brother Amritrao was also at large at this time and claimed Wellesley's attention, as he was being invited to take the lead and save the Maratha State in this crisis.

On 6th November Sindia's agent Yashvantrao Ghorpade (grandson of Maloji, brother of the famous Santaji) arrived

2. Owen No. 172, p. 299.

at Wellesley' camp to arrange terms of peace for his master ; and on 12th November Amritrao also came and joined Ghorpade in the same mission, having been convinced that the English had won the war. Hereafter Wellesley entertained Amritrao in his own camp and used his high status to effect such a peace as was calculated to destroy all Maratha pretensions to independent sovereignty. Stevenson advanced against Bhosle's strong fort of Gavilgad. He left Balapore on 26th November, was joined by Wellesley, and the two together made a dash against Bhosle's force which had in the meanwhile been reinforced by Sindia in violation of the truce he had already made. On the 29th the two English commandants discovered the enemy forces camping together on the field of Adgaum a few miles north of Balapore, and immediately attacked them the same afternoon, though it was late in the day. Wellesley's troops had no sooner come within the range of the enemy's guns than those of his battalions which had behaved with conspicuous gallantry on the field of Assai under a far hotter fire, broke their ranks and fled. Fortunately the General happened to be at no great distance and succeeded in rallying them and re-establishing the battle, or it would have been inevitably lost. The Raja of Berar abandoned all his 38 pieces of cannon and ammunition into British hands. This battle of Adgaum completed the Maratha ruin. Gavilgad was next attacked and captured on 25th December.

2. **North India Campaign, Perron's treachery.**—The operations in north India must be recounted before taking up the story of the negotiations which closed this short but bloody war. Ever since Mahadji Sindia returned to Poona in the summer of 1792, his northern possessions were guarded and managed first by De Boigne, and, after his retirement in December 1795, by his second-in-command Perron. "De Boigne was intellectually the greatest, and in moral character the most attractive of the European adventurers of India. He was an able soldier and a great leader of men. Perron was altogether a smaller man and far less attractive in character, although a painstaking administrator.[3]" He used his supreme position in

3. *India Under Wellesley*, by P. E. Roberts ; *Proceedings H. R. C.* 1943, paper by Dr. Halim. "Born in France in 1755 Perron arrived in

acquiring power and fortune and bringing prosperity to the lands in his charge. All his Indian subordinates pressed Daulatrao to remove him from power, at least to take away Agra from his charge. Collins had reported in February 1802 that the Frenchman was in secret collusion with Yashvantrao Holkar and had immensely enriched himself by appropriating the revenues of Sindia's districts to himself for years. In his talks with him the Resident noticed his strong antagonism to Daulatrao and his Indian chiefs. He told Collins he would soon seek British protection at Fatehgarh.

When the war opened, Perron's five brigades had a total strength of 45 thousand men plus the best artillery establishments at Agra and Aligarh with which he could have boldly faced Lake. The G. G. on 23rd June defined and communicated to the Commander-in-chief the following objects to be achieved in the event of war :—

1. To seize all Sindia's possessions between the Ganges and the Jamuna ;

2. To take the person of Shah Alam under our protection ;

3. To form alliances with the Rajput and other States for the purpose of excluding Sindia from the north, and

4. To occupy Bundelkhand.

Lord Wellesley added,—"Sindia's late General De Boigne is now the chief confidant of Bonaparte, I leave you to judge why and wherefore. I empower you to conclude any agreement with M. Perron for the security of his personal interests and property accompanied by any reasonable remuneration from the British Govt. which shall induce him to deliver up the

India in 1780 in the naval squadron led by Suffren. Deserting the French flag he became a soldier of fortune serving alternately the Rana of Gohad, the Raja of Bharatpore, Begam Samru, and finally joined De Boigne's battalion in 1790, succeeding him in the chief command in 1796 and maintaining the position till 3rd September 1803. His assignment fetched a revenue of 40 lacs Rs. a year. He possessed the monopoly of salt and enjoyed the extraordinary privilege of coining money : these two items alone yielding him an annual revenue of 16,32,444. On the lowest estimate his monthly emoluments derived from various sources amounted to one lac of Rs. in addition to the heavy interest he earned on his investments".

whole of his military resources and power into your hands."[4]

Lake left Cawnpore on 7th August and reached the boundary of Sindia's possessions on the 28th, having already issued proclamations to Sindia's officers to come over to the British service. On 20th August Perron conveyed his desire to adjust the troubles by peaceful negotiation. Upon this Lake sent his personal agent on 29th to meet Perron and attacked his troops near Aligarh. The latter though 15000 strong, quietly retired without firing a shot. The important fortress of Aligarh with its great arsenal and depot of arms and a huge treasure of 70 lacs in coin, fell into Lake's hands. Lord Wellesley considered this as one of the most extraordinary feats.

A week later Perron having heard that an order for his dismissal had been passed, at once resigned the service, requested Lake's permission to retire with his family, his suite and property through the British territories to Lucknow. Lake enabled him to reach that city under his own escort. Thereafter Perron left Lucknow on 8th November for Chandernagar where he embarked for Europe with all his property, two copper-skinned children, a son and a daughter, born of a half-caste woman whom he had married. Napoleon declined to see him for having proved a traitor to his profession. He invested 280000 in the East India Co.'s stock. The general contemporary view of him is thus recorded. "Perron under the protection of the British escaped the just vengeance of the Marathas, Sikhs, Rajputs and all the people in India. He returned to France to exhibit as a trophy of his infamy the diamonds and the millions he stole from the miserable Sindia whom he betrayed. The conduct of this traitor assured the English the supremacy of Hindustan". He died in France in 1834.[5]

On 5th September Lake took possession of Aligarh and immediately marched upon Delhi. On 9th he reached Shahdara, where Sindia's General Bourquin who had succeeded Perron crossed the Jamuna and advanced to oppose him. He was a wretched substitute, of low origin, who had been a cook in Calcutta, a pyrotechnist and a poltroon. He was routed and

4. Vide this masterly document No. L. P. p. 208 Wellesley Desps. Vol. III.

5. P. E. Roberts—*India under Wellesley*, p. 224.

three days later he with three of his officers surrendered to Lake. The Emperor in a previous communication with General Lake had expressed a strong desire to accept British protection. Lord Wellesley had already granted it in a secret correspondence. On 14th September the British entered Delhi, hoisted their standard over the battlements and took into their possession the sightless Shah Alam II, still considered the fountain head of all honour throughout India. On 16th September the Commander-in-chief was ushered into the royal presence in the magnificent palace built by Shah Jahan and found the Emperor oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age, degraded authority, extreme poverty, under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal state. Leaving Col. Ochterlony in command at Delhi, Lake marched on 24th September upon Agra still held by Sindia's troops.

After taking possession of Mathura, Mahadji's favourite capital, on 2nd October, Lake arrived before Agra on the 4th, having concluded a treaty with the raja of Bharatpore, the first Indian chief to seek an alliance with the British Government in the north. Agra capitulated on 17th October and the treasure found in it, 28 lacs of Rs., the General allowed his officers and men to appropriate as prize-money, a procedure which roused the G. G.'s ire against the Commander-in-chief.[6]

These rapid successes of Lake in the north alarmed and confused Sindia beyond measure. Early in August when the war started, he had sent fifteen of his disciplined battalions across the Narmada to protect his possessions in the north. These were considered the flower of his army and usually designated the "Deccan Invincibles." But before they arrived on the scene, Agra and Delhi had been lost and Sindia's army already in that region had been annihilated, except two battalions which now joined those that came from the south. Lake left Agra on 27th October in order to prevent this force from making any fresh trouble. Leaving his heavy baggage near Fatehpur Sikri marched about twenty miles south of Bharatpore when on 1st November he came up with the enemy's encampment at Laswadi entrenched in a formidable position covered by a deep nulla. Lake at once attached this camp

6. *Wellesley Despatches* III P. 414.

and although he won the day, it was after paying a very heavy toll in precious lives, including many distinguished English officers, Maj. Genl. Weir, Maj. Griffiths and others. Sindia's men gave an excellent account of themselves in valour and performance although they lost 71 pieces of cannon and nearly half of their numbers out of thirteen thousand. "Our cavalry were beaten off and the loss had been great in officers and men. About 11 o'clock we began the attack with our infantry upon the enemy's cavalry which were soon repulsed. Their fire was extremely heavy from the villages of Laswadi and Malpura. In about three hours the whole of the enemy's guns, tumbrils and colours were in our possession, although they cost us dear, thirteen officers killed and forty wounded."[7]

This action of Laswadi exhibited the high state of efficiency to which the French training had brought Sindia's troops. Lake himself remarked that if they had been led by their French officers, the result would have been exceedingly doubtful. This defeat completed the destruction of Sindia's power, although Lord Wellesley had not been slow in attacking the Marathas in other minor spheres in Gujarat, Bundelkhand and Orissa. Broach and Pawagad were two strong places held by Sindia in Gujarat. Baroda had already accepted British protection and now formed the main base of their operations in that quarter Col. Murray managed to detach a party of his men against Broach, the rampart of which was captured on 29th August yielding to the British a district worth 11 lacs income annually. The same party proceeded thereafter to the east and captured the town of Champaner together with the adjoining fort of Pawagad on 17th September. Thus all Sindia's power in Gujarat came to an end.

British operations were directed to Orissa also. There on September 18 the post of Jagannath belonging to the Bhosles was captured and Balasore surrendered. Cuttack was occupied in October and all the province submitted, offering the British an unbroken line of communication from Calcutta to Madras.

The Peshwas since the days of Bajirao I had acquired an overlordship in north India by not only controlling the

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7. War and Sport in India, p. 219.

Emperor of Delhi, but subordinating to their influence most of the Rajput and Jat princes, the Nawabs of the Doab and the Bundela chiefs. All these were now liberated from Maratha domination and brought under British suzerainty by means of separate treaties specially contracted with each. A large number of minor chiefs were likewise detached from Maratha allegiance, such as the Gosavi leader Himmat Bahadur, Shamsher Bahadur, the grandson of Bajirao and Mastani, the chief of Jhansi and Ambuji Ingle an erstwhile soldier of eminence in Mahadji Sindia's service. The Rana of Gohad was also similarly dealt with. How each of these chiefs was roped in into a general system and how the affair reacted on British prestige, forms an instructive study in the politics of the time.[8]

3. **Bhosle and Sindia make peace.**—Thus the war which opened in August practically ended before the year 1803 expired, and made the British supreme masters of India. General Wellesley dealt separately with Bhosle and Sindia, the only two chiefs that had come forward to defend the Maratha State. This move of General Wellesley to close the war was not appreciated by the G. G., whose instructions were, that "Daulatrao and Raghuji be captured and sent to Calcutta personally to beg peace at the feet of the Lord." General Wellesley wrote in reply, "I have no power of injuring Sindia any further. His army now consists of horse only, which we cannot distress and which might do to us much mischief. Gujarat is our weakest point for defence. I see no inconvenience from the conclusion of peace which I have effected. I declare that I think I have done what is right. I believe I have made a better peace than the G. G. expected."[9]

The moment that General Wellesley chose for offering peace was quite opportune. The two Maratha chiefs having been severely shaken, wanted time for a renewed effort by warding off the immediate danger in which they found themselves placed. They tried their utmost to conclude a joint peace, as they had jointly conducted the war. General Wellesley, however, insisted upon treating separately with each, imposing up-

8. The reader is referred to the case of Gohad which General Wellesley has treated in No. 220 of his Despatches, Owen, p. 390.

9. Owen's *Wellington Desp.* Nos. 184, 191 and 192.

on all Powers a general provision that in case of internal dispute, the subordinate allies bound themselves to accept the British decision as that of the suzerain authority.

General Wellesley offered terms to Bhosle who was compelled to accept them to avert an attack upon his capital Nagpur. On 17th December he affixed his signature to the following terms at Devgaon, a few miles north of Ellichpur :—

1. The Province of Cuttack with its whole coast to be ceded to the English ;

2. The Province of western Berar up to the river Wardha to be ceded to the Nizam ;

3. Bhosle to respect the treaties concluded with his feudatories by the British.

4. Bhosle to dissolve the Maratha Confederacy and entertain no enemy of the English in his service.

By this treaty Bhosle was detached from Sindia, thus allowing Wellesley to concentrate all his power against the latter. Realizing that he could not prosecute the war any longer, Sindia sent his agents Kamalanayan Munshi and Vithalpant his chief Minister, to discuss terms with General Wellesley. Vithalpant was much advanced in age and was considered the first native diplomat of the time. After days of discussion Sindia accepted the following terms and signed the famous treaty of Surji-Anjangaon on 30th December :—

1. Sindia to cede to the British the Jamuna-Ganges Doab, the Delhi-Agra region along the Jamuna, parts of Bundelkhand, Broach and some districts of Gujarat, the Fort of Ahmadnagar and the Ajunta region up to the Godavari ;

2. Sindia to renounce his control upon the Emperor, and also ;

3. To relinquish all claims on the Peshwa, the Nizam, and the Gaikwad and recognise the independence of all those feudatories who had made separate engagements with the British ;

4. Sindia not to entertain in his service any Frenchman or American or any other enemies of the British. Sindia was asked to accept a British Subsidiary Force which he declined to do. On further representation Burhanpur and Ashir-

gad were restored to him. The territory of Berar ceded by Bhosle was given to the Nizam for his cooperation in the war.

On the whole General Wellesley displayed a soldierly spirit of leniency and large-heartedness towards the two defeated chiefs. He was fully aware of the difficulties of the British situation and knew how to exploit his success without coming to a breaking point. He considered it a better policy to make the subdued chiefs innocuous than to humiliate them. The war had put a severe strain on the Company's resources. The General wisely restrained his hand and removed bitterness from the Maratha mind by moderating his demands. He was conscious of the activities of Yashvantrao Holkar, who, though temporarily lulled into neutrality, was not likely to submit to British domination without a blow, particularly as Bajirao from Poona was doing his utmost to exasperate him. The rapid revolution which so suddenly changed the traditional politics of the country, created unrest and resentment in India. Raghuji Bhosle's attitude is typical of this change. Having suffered serious losses in the war, in which he came to be precipitately involved, he renounced all political activity in the future. When asked by the British whether he was their friend or enemy, he aswered, " Neither, I am not your friend, nor your enemy. I do not understand the exact meaning of these terms." Mountstuart Elphinstone was appointed Resident at Nagpur and worked there for four years.

Wellesley similarly managed to remove Amritrao to Benares, as he was likely to be the rallying point of a general national rising. He had at first been accommodated with his family in the fort of Ahmadnagar both as a place of safety against possible harm to him from his vengeful brother, and at the same time for watching his activities towards reviving the Maratha Power. He gathered his effects, wound up his personal concerns, and finally left his homeland for Benares at the end of 1804 with an assignment of eight lacs for his expenses.

Daulatrao Sindia presented a different picture. His situation was indeed pitiable. From the pinnacle of glory and power he now found himself hurled to the lowest depth of misery and want. He lost his powerful army, the source of his power and the glory of Mahadji Sindia, his most fertile dominions in the

north, his precious possession of the Emperor and his Capital. A crushing load of debt left him no means of raising his head again. His antagonist Holkar remained intact, able now to exercise the domination over the Rajput princes which Daulatrao had lost. John Malcolm who had negotiated the treaty with Sindia, was appointed Resident to his Court. He and Elphinstone became now the custodians of the Maratha destinies for more than a generation, both concluding their careers as Governors of Bombay. Yashvantrao Holkar daily grew aggressive in the north and Daulatrao had no means of saving himself from his wrath. This made Sindia so helpless that within two months of the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon he begged Malcolm to supply him with a British subsidiary force. For this a supplementary treaty was concluded on 27th February 1804, which is known as the treaty of Burhanpur. This was a move for the destruction of Yashvantrao Holkar. Daulatrao would not now dream of forming any coalition against the British, and in return the British offered him a guarantee to protect him against any of his enemies and to abstain from any interference in his internal administration. Daulatrao thus fondly hoped to regain his lost power in the Maratha State.

4. **Arthur Wellesley's attitude.**— The war just closed is usually termed the Second Maratha War. This is right in one sense in so far as its object was to destroy the sovereign power of the Marathas. The Peshwa and the Gaikwad were laid low by diplomatic means, while Sindia, Bhosle and Holkar were destroyed by actual fighting. It must, however, be borne in mind that the whole Maratha nation did not join in the war. The southern chiefs remained entirely aloof. The whole affair was frightfully bungled by the Peshwa. Lord Wellesley was determined to destroy the Maratha State any how. If he had the desire to sustain it, he could have supported Amritrao as the fittest person to wield the Maratha power.

Gen. Wellesley's report of 15th January 1804 is itself a sufficient condemnation of the G. G.'s policy. He writes, "In fact, My Lord, the Peshwa's Govt. is at present only a name. Bajirao has not settled even the country 5 miles from Poona. It is at this time already a waste overrun by thieves. He is incapable of conducting his Government himself and gives no

confidence or power to any one else. He has no person about him able to conduct the common business of the country. Amrit-rao could certainly settle the Govt., but the Peshwa's aversion to him is so deeprooted that he cannot be persuaded to receive him as a brother and employ him in a confidential situation under the Government. The only mode that appears practicable is to release the large number of old servants of the State who are unjustly imprisoned and detained in difficult hill-forts."[10]

While at Poona General Wellesley had a long talk with the Peshwa's minister Sadashiv Mankeshvar, which he thus reported to the G. G. "I observed to Mankeshvar that in my opinion it would be much better for His Highness after seven years of difficulty and civil wars, in the course of which very nearly every man in the Empire had been opposed to his Government and his armies, to endeavour by pardon and conciliation to settle his Government and country, than to enter on any system of revenge so extensive as that proposed and so dangerous and so imprudent." All this wholesome advice, it is needless to say, was wantonly thrown away with the consequences which history has permanently recorded.

General Wellesley did all he could to improve the situation with a hopelessly bad man like Bajirao on the one side, and the imperious G. G. bent upon having his orders whether right or wrong promptly executed on the other. A close study of the papers reveals the fact that there was not much love lost between the two brothers in office then handling the destinies of India.[11]

10. Owen's *Wellington Desp.* No. 207, p. 364.

11. After the conclusion of the war the General returned to Poona in March 1804 ; here he and Col. Close exchanged visits with the Peshwa and after enjoying the dinners and entertainments offered by him at Hirabag, the two Englishmen went together to Bombay, where they spent two full months in discussing the future position of the Maratha State. Thereupon they returned to Poona in June, whence General Wellesley proceeded to his permanent post at Shrirangpattan, but went immediately to Calcutta at the invitation of the G. G. for a consultation on the activities of Yeshvantrao Holkar. After spending four months at Calcutta, August to November, Genl. Wellesley returned to Shrirangpattan in December 1804. In the following March (1805), General Wellesley embarked precipitately from Madras for England to meet Napoleon's aggression.

5. Holkar's exasperation.— "The distraction of the Maratha Empire had been the great source of Yashvantrao's new-born greatness. His power resided not in the extent of his territorial possession, but in the number of his adherents. His standard was the common rallying point of all the disbanded soldiery of upper India and of all those lawless spirits who desired rather to enrich themselves by plunder than to rise by honest industry or professional desert. He had no settled government. His empire indeed was the empire of the saddle. He was bold, lawless and unscrupulous ; and he had sixty thousand horsemen and an imposing park of artillery at his call".[12]

Yashvantrao's movements upto the battle of Assai have been already described. The burden of the recent war had fallen only upon Sindia and Bhosle. Holkar then made the blunder of his life by keeping aloof as he well knew that single-handed he could not match his strength with the British. On 5th January 1804 Arthur Wellesley thus wrote to him, "I am glad to inform you that I have been able to re-establish our former amity with Sindia and Bhosle in a treaty of friendship. I congratulate you on having remained aloof from the contest and enabled me to attain this result. I very much appreciate the wisdom and foresight of your conduct during the war and assure you that so long as you do not interfere with the legitimate interests of the Company or their allies, we shall have no desire to come in your way. Malcolm will personally deliver this letter to you and is instructed to communicate to me, whatever you may have to say, in order that your relations with the Company may continue to remain undisturbed."

In the summer of 1803 Holkar collected tribute from Aurangabad, which Genl. Wellesley took no steps to prevent. In October of the same year when Sindia and Bhosle were locked in Berar fighting against the English, Holkar plundered Ujjain and hurried on towards Jaipur collecting his usual tributes. The Rajas of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bharatpur had already accepted British subsidiary forces in separate engagements, so that Holkar's action against Jaipur was a direct challenge to

12. Kaye's *Life of Malcolm*, Vol. I, p. 305. *Wellesley Despatches* IV, p. 107 ; Mill's History VI p. 465.

the British. Holkar, however, assured Lord Lake that he highly valued British friendship and that he was only exercising his traditional claims upon Jaipur. At the same time he sent special messengers to Nagpur calling upon the Bhosle Raja to join him in resisting the British aggression and thereby defending their State and religion. Holkar sent similar agents to the Raja of Jodhpur, to Ambuji Ingle and to several others. He wrote to the Rao Raja of Machedi calling upon him to rise against the all-grasping British power. The Rao Raja put this letter of Holkar in the hands of Lord Lake. The British authorities thus became convinced of the double game that Holkar had now begun to play. Lord Lake, therefore, could not disband the forces which he had engaged during the previous year for prosecuting the war against Sindia and requested orders from the G. G. for dealing with Holkar. Lord Wellesley was not prepared to sanction the usurpation of the Holkar estate by Yashvantrao and wanted him to retire in favour of Kashirao, with an adequate provision for life. With this view the G. G. asked Lord Lake to give a written warning to Yashvantrao to the effect, that while the British Government were anxious to preserve their friendly relations with him, they would no longer tolerate any aggression on his part against their allies. Lord Lake communicated these sentiments to Holkar in a letter dated 29th January 1804 and himself took up a position in the vicinity of the latter's camp. Thereupon Holkar sent his two agents to Lord Lake asking compliance with the following demands :—

1. The British should not interfere with his traditional claims of Chauth upon the Indian chiefs ;

2. Certain Parganas in the Doab and in Bundelkhand such as Itawa, Haryana and others, should be restored to Holkar's possession as they belonged to his family

3. That he was ready to enter into an alliance with the British on the same terms as had been already concluded with Sindia.

Lord Lake considered these demands extravagent, turned out Holkar's agents from his camp, and wrote to him clearly that he must present only such proposals as would be reasonable and acceptable. This drew from the Maratha his

famous challenge to the British. In February 1804 he wrote, "In the event of war although unable to oppose British artillery in an open field, countries of many hundred koss would be overrun and plundered and burnt ; and calamities would fall on lacs of human beings in a continued war by the attacks of his army which overwhelms like the waves of the sea".[13]

Lord Lake found himself so embarrassed on account of Holkar that he wrote to the G. G. "I never was so plagued as I am with this devil. We are obliged to remain in the field at an enormous cost. If we retire, Holkar will come down upon Jaipur and extract a crore from that state and thus make his army more formidable than ever. If I advance and leave an opening, he will give me the slip, get into our territories and burn and destroy."

Yashvantrao under the pretext of a pilgrimage went to Pushkar near Ajmere and plundered both those places. He sent urgent appeals to Sindia to join him. He descended upon Jaipur with a ferocity at which the whole of north India took fright. The Governor General could no longer tolerate this situation. On 16th April he directed Lord Lake and Genl. Wellesley to start an immediate war against Holkar. The General ordered Col. Murray to advance from Gujarat into Malwa and seize Holkar's possessions. Lake moved with his forces into the territory of Jaipur. Daulatrao Sindia became so nervous and confused that he resigned himself into the hands of Resident Malcolm as a helpless onlooker. Nor was Bajirao in Poona immune from the sinister plots and intrigues which Holkar's agents started in that quarter. Col. Close watched Bajirao's activities with intense concern. For Bajirao, while deadly opposed to Holkar's increase of power and influence, gave no genuine support to the measure advocated by the British Government.

6. Col. Monson's disaster.– The Commander-in-Chief advanced against Holkar with a vanguard under Col. Monson one day's march ahead ; and Col. Murray was expected to march from Gujarat into Malwa. Holkar was forced to retreat southward from the Jaipur territory. Lake's soldiers had

13. Mill's History of India VI p. 465 ; Wellesley Desp. IV p. 107.

suffered terribly from the heat, and believing Holkar's flight too rapid to be followed up, decided to postpone active operations till after the rains. He withdrew his main army to their quarters at Cawnpore at the end of June and ordered Monson to occupy and guard the passages of Bundi and Lakheri so as to obstruct the return of Holkar from Malwa north of those passes. Murray was expected to be in Malwa to hold Holkar in check in cooperation with Sindian contingents. Monson, however, not content with his safe defensive position, marched forward beyond those passes into Holkar's territory without sufficient forces or the necessary provisions. Accompanied by one of Sindia's corps under Bapu Sindia, Monson crossed the Chambal and anxious to effect his junction with Murray pressed after Holkar through the Mukundra pass about 30 miles south of Kotah. When at the southern end of the pass, he discovered that his provisions had run short. He advanced fifty miles further south to the fort of Hinglajgad belonging to the enemy. He easily took possession of the fort on 1st July.

Holkar already in Malwa was in great need of funds and to replenish his coffers, he plundered the town of Mandsaur, a rich possession of Sindia. As he was making ready to cross the Chambal, Monson considering it a favourable chance to destroy him, attacked him in the act of crossing. But he found that Holkar had already safely crossed over with all his huge force which he was unable to face. At this very moment he received a hurried message from Col. Murray at Badnawar, that as he had no sufficient force to oppose Holkar, he had decided to return to Gujarat where Holkar's attack was expected. In this predicament on 8th July Monson began his retreat towards Mukundra from the Chambal to save himself from an immediate attack by the enemy. But only five days after Murray had sent his message, he (Murray) learnt that Holkar was not descending into Gujarat ; he therefore changed his plan, immediately started back and reached Ujjain on 8th July, i.e., the very day on which Monson began his retreat before Holkar. In fact both Murray and Monson had come so close to each other, that they could have easily joined and warded off the danger. A strange mistake in mutual communi-

cations was thus responsible for a terrible disaster to the British arms, upsetting the policy of Lord Wellesley both in India and England. The Holkar Chronicle thus narrates the affair of Monson's retreat.

"Yeshvantrao came upon Mandsaur with his light cavalry and passed a month in plundering it. Here he learnt that some English troops under Col. Monson with the contingents of Kotah and Bapu Sindia had arrived at Hinglajgad. He at once launced a surprise attack on them on 7th July with about 80 thousand of his swift light cavalry. Monson being routed before this huge body, beat a precipitate retreat back to the Mukundra pass. His Kotah contingent was entirely annihilated. Lt. Lucas was killed on his elephant. The Raja of Kotah assisted Monson to cross over the Chambal safely with all his men. But Holkar came upon them in fury having been assisted by the Bhils of those hilly regions. The small British force was plundered and stripped of their belongings while they were flying away for safety. Another severe action took place on the river Banas on 24th August in which Monson lost a great number either killed or drowned in the river, in the close pursuit which he had to suffer at Holkar's hands. In this action on the Banas Monson was able to capture a number of Holkar's guns after killing his artillery officer Makansinh. But Yashvantrao boldly advanced in person and killed a large portion of the enemy. He could not get his heavy artillery through the flooded river, his cavalry alone rapidly swam across and resumed the pursuit. In this way Monson succeeded in reaching Agra and Holkar formed his camp at Fatehpur."

A few more details of this regrettable affair deserve to be added from the able narrative given by P. E. Roberts in *India under Wellesley*. "As the Raja of Kotah dared not receive the retreating British, they had to struggle on to the banks of the Chambal. The river was crossed and on July 16th the heavy guns were spiked and abandoned. On 27th Monson reached Rampura, but owing to the increasing assaults of Holkar's marauding hordes, he was obliged to continue his retreat further. He reached the Banas river on August 24 and was attacked at a disadvantage while crossing the river. He abandoned the baggage and reached Kushalgad the next day.

Here he was now almost surrounded by a cloud of the enemy's horse, but he struggled on and reached Hindaun Fort on 27. Worn out with fatigue and hunger and almost at the end of their tether, the broken army streamed into Agra on August 31 in utter demoralization and disorder, fifty days after the retreat had commenced". This disastrous retreat of Monson inflicted a signal disgrace on the British arms and for a long time formed a fruitful subject of comment by many able soldiers and diplomats.

The Governor General feeling extremely nervous about the conduct of the war against Holkar, immediately called to his side his brother Arthur, who was then about to leave Poona for his permanent post in Mysore. For two months, September and October, the two brothers deliberated hard and long. There was a general cry for entrusting the conduct of the war to Gen. Wellesley, but he declined to work under Lord Lake and returned after writing a cool analysis of the Monson episode, which later was highly admired. He finally left for England.[14]

7. **Impregnable Bharatpore.**—Monson's disaster put fresh vigour into Yashvantrao Holkar, who now with all his forces marched northwards, captured Mathura and fell upon Delhi on 8th October. Lord Lake reformed his forces, left Cawnpore on 3rd September and came up in hot pursuit of Holkar, in order to save Delhi from falling into his hands, a contingency which would have increased Holkar's power beyond measure. After a desperate attempt for a week to secure Delhi, Holkar had to move away in order to avoid Lake's onslaught. He then crossed the Jamuna at Baghpat with his cavalry in order to devastate the rich territory of the Doab and penetrate into Oudh, thus creating a difficult problem for the British General. The latter divided his forces into two, quickly came upon Holkar's heels, and surprised and routed him near Farrukhabad on 17th November. Being utterly defeated, Holkar abandoned his former plans of attacking the main British base at Cawnpore, hurriedly recrossed the Jamuna and escaped to Dig. Lake immediately came on his track.

14. Owen's *Desp. of Wellington* No. 247 dated Fort William 12th September 1804, p. 426.

and laid siege to that fort on 1st December. The strain of the two months' incessant campaign and the hardships of marching never less than 25 miles a day and often about 70, exhausted both the fugitives and the pursuers. But Holkar realised he could not hold out long.

Ranajitsinh, the Jat Raja of Bharatpore, now openly espoused Holkar's cause, repudiating the treaty of alliance he had signed with the British Government the year before. Holkar was thus allowed a little longer lease of predatory activity. Sindia also at this time exhibited an equivocal attitude as he could not afford to see Holkar completely crushed. The Jats were a martial race bent upon defending their liberty as they had often done against the Marathas. They welcomed Holkar as a saviour of India. Every effort was made by the G. G. and the Commander-in-Chief to detach the Jat Raja from Holkar, but it did not succeed. Lake invested Dig and captured the fort on 13th December 1804 after a fearful loss of men on both sides.

The two allies then went to Bharatpore a fort of impregnable stone-walls where they prepared to continue the war, the Raja defending the fort from inside and Holkar harassing the besiegers from without. Lord Lake arrived before the place on 19th December. Here now began a furious and heroic struggle which has earned an imperishable epic fame in the annals of India. The place was invested on 7th January 1805 and foiled the unprecedented efforts of the besiegers to capture it. The siege was given up on 10th April. During these three months a series of determined attacks to carry the place by storm proved of no avail and entailed enormous losses.[15]

Writes P. E. Roberts, "Between January 9 and February 21 Lake launched four separate storming attacks, all of which were repulsed with terrible loss. It was an appalling blunder and unpardonable because it was unnecessary. It was the impetuosity of Lake's temper which would not brook the delay necessary for a proper preliminary breach of the walls before the storm. To Lord Wellesley Lake's failure came as

15. The Holkar Kaifiat gives a graphic description of the struggle, p. 102. Also John Shipp.

a terrible and culminating blow. The Raja of Bharatpore in spite of his amazing success, seeing his ultimate defeat inevitable, sent his agent asking terms of peace." A diarist says, "The Raja's vakil was received by Lord Lake in his camp; and from the terms he proposed it was conjectured that a peace would be concluded. After so much bloodshed and the loss of so many gallant officers and men, it was expected that a complete surrender of the place would be demanded. But situated as we were, all our battering guns rendered useless, our heavy shot completely expended, nearly one-third of our officers and men killed and wounded; under all these calamities a peace was an object desirable to be obtained. The accounts of Sindia's movements made an additional inducement to Lord Lake to come to an honourable reconciliation with the Rajah. Sindia having heard of the failures of Bharatpore and of the shattered state of our army, thought it a favourable opportunity to break his treaty and join the confederacy against us. He advanced towards us with an immense army and 180 pieces of heavy artillery. He had not declared war against us, but we must expect a further effusion of blood before we quit the field. Such is the soldier's sad fate and glory."[16]

A separate treaty was concluded with the Raja on 10th April. He agreed to pay 20 lacs for expenses to the British by instalments, and the British agreed to let the Raja keep all the territory that belonged to him before the war. Holkar hereafter left to himself, became a fugitive.

8. The Assemblage of Sabalgad, indignity to the British Resident.—The British having succeeded in separating the Jat Raja from Holkar, could now direct all their strength against the latter. A Pathan soldier of fortune had become his faithful adherent. This was Mir Khan who for a time sustained Holkar's falling fortunes. While Yashvantrao was occupied in the north, all his possessions in the south, Chandwad, Lasalgaum, Dhodap, Galna etc. were seized by the British during September and October 1804. A similar fate occurred simul-

16. *War and Sport in India*, (p. 392), in which an officer's Diary gives a running account of Lord Lake's campaign in north India between 1802-1806.

taneously to his territory in Bundelkhand, where for a time Mir Khan and Ambuji Ingle joined hands and resisted the British with considerable success.

The aggressive and violent policy of the G. G. and his scheme of subsidiary alliances began to produce evil consequences, instead of bringing peace to this distracted land. When his brother Arthur gave him no relief, he invited Malcolm for a personal consultation, but as he too exhibited open disagreement, he was displaced from Sindia's residency on the ground that he was unable to control Daulatrao Sindia, who had become restive and who tried to shake off the galling yoke of the British Power. Sindia left Burhanpur and proceeded to Bundelkhand with a view to joining Holkar and organizing an anti-British Confederacy. The moment was critical and the prevailing unrest is significantly reflected in the vast amount of English literature on it that is now available for study.[17]

Sindia's mind was being torn between two conflicting loyalties, his alliance with the British Govt. and his duty to the Maratha State. He had lost all sources of income, with a large army on hand which he was unable to support. Resident Webbe who had succeeded Malcolm, died in November 1804 and his assistant Mr. Jenkins, who had assumed charge of that office, found it difficult to cope with the shifting situations created in consequence of the war on Bharatpore during the early months of 1805. Ambuji Ingle openly repudiated his recent alliance and joined the Maratha cause, which now received added support from the evil genius Sharzarao Ghatge. While camping at Saugor the Resident's camp was raided by Sindia's Pindaris which added insult to injury. Lord Lake and Malcolm, however, succeeded in closing the war before Bharatpur and separating the Jat from the evil influence of Holkar. The latter with his huge force of sixty thousand now joined Sindia at Sabalgad, where the best brains and arms of the Maratha nation then assembled in a grand concourse for concerting measures towards undoing the recent British successes. Even the Chhatrapati of Satara was represented there

17. Vide Kaye's Life and Correspondence of Malcolm along with the Despatches of the two Wellesley brothers, and Sindia's letter to the G. G. of 18th Oct. 1804 quoted in Mill's History Vol. VI p. 502.

by his intrepid brother Chatarsinh. In a moment of exasperation, the British Resident Mr. Jenkins' threatening attitude resulted in his being physically restrained, with Sindia's guards keeping him a prisoner in the Maratha camp for some four months, June to September. Holkar could not impart his own ardour to Sindia, " whose weakness and indolence combined with habits of levity and debauchery " ruined his own cause and that of his nation. The scene quickly changed with the recall of Lord Wellesley and the arrival of Cornwallis on the Indian scene.[18]

9. Wellesley recalled, policy reversed.—Wellesley inaugurated his system of subsidiary alliances with a view to establishing under British supremacy peace and order in the disturbed territories of India. The position of suzerain authority which the Marathas had built up for nearly half a century under the shadow of the Mughal Emperor, crumbled after the deaths of Mahadji Sindia and Nana Phadnis and received its final blow when the Peshwa himself accepted British protection by the treaty of Bassein. Lord Wellesley certainly helped the process of Maratha dissolution, but he tried to bring it about with undue precipitation. Even the sanest Maratha opinion clearly foresaw that the Maratha State could not long hold out and would soon succumb through its own glaring shortcomings. In a long despatch of July 18, 1804 Lord Wellesley himself summed up soberly and correctly the advantages that he had gained. He claimed to have controlled the causes of the internal warfare in India, which had for many long years desolated her many fertile provinces. "These claims", says P. E. Roberts "revealed a blindness, which looks almost wilful and which lay in the assumption that the Indian Powers entirely acquiesced and that the future was secure. The truth was that in the hearts of the Maratha chiefs all possible benefits were outweighed by the fact that their power to plunder and

18. A vast amount of literature for study exists on the epoch-making career of Lord Wellesley such as his own despatches, those of his brother Arthur, Malcolm's Pol. Hist. of India, Vols. 1.2, Kaye's Life of Malcolm, Vols, 1, 2. Thorn's Maratha War, War and Sport in India, P. E. Roberts India under Wellesley and the Vols. of the P. R. Correspondence.

destroy others, was taken away from them. Wellesley's plans and measures aroused the alarm of the English Cabinet."

"Lord Wellesley in utter defiance of the authorities of the Home Government had been engaged in wars from the south to the north, had broken the power of prince after prince, completed a gigantic revolution and seated the Company on the throne of he Great Mughal and invested it with the responsibility of governing one half directly and controlling the other half of India. Even his friend Lord Castlereagh, President of the Board of Control, regarded with a feeling of consternation the vast extent of the new British conquests and the ruinous consequences which seemed inevitable. The announcement of war with Holkar filled the measure of Wellesley's delinquencies and the news of Monson's disastrous retreat, caused almost a feeling of consternation. Lord Cornwallis was entreated to proceed to India and restore Indian politics to what they were in 1793 at his own departure. Even after his return to England Wellesley did not escape the censure of the Directors. On 22nd May 1806 a motion was brought forward in Parliament "with articles of charge of the crimes and misdemeanours committed by Marquis Wellesley in his transactions with respect to the Nawab of Oudh." The House was assured that "from the accursed day that Lord Wellesley set foot in India till the day of his departure he has exhibited a constant scene of rapacity, oppression, cruelty and fraud, which goaded the whole country into a state of revolt." Happily the affair came to be dropped in Parliament. The Directors of the Company and the Court of Proprietors, however, impugned Lord Wellesley's policy with a lavish expenditure of public money in schemes of conquest and extension of Empire."[19]

Prime Minister Pitt declared that Cornwallis was the only cure for every disorder in India; and he was persuaded to accept the task much against his own inclination and failing health. He arrived on 30th July 1805 and on the same day assumed the Government. He was pledged to the public authorities in England to overturn the existing polity. So far as related to the princes of India, he said his primary object was to remove the impression universally entertained of a syste-

19. Marshman II p. 182.

matic design to establish British control over every Power in India. For effecting this purpose he started for the scene of war to terminate the hostilities with Holkar by negotiation without a sacrifice of honour.

Cornwallis found the state of the finances most deplorable. Lord Lake's army was five months in arrears. To meet the dire want, a sum of 25 lacs was taken out of the cash meant for China.

Lord Wellesley's system of alliances had given rise to fresh troubles. Princes like the Peshwa under the guarantee of British protection gave up all concern for a proper administration and became solicitous of personal ease and indulgence and vice. The responsibility for rectifying administrative abuses and suppressing civil commotions fell upon the British Government. British protection altogether vitiated the administrations both of the Peshwa and the Nizam. Daulatrao, Bajirao, the Nizam, the Nawab Wazir of Oudh became glaring examples of the misrule and oppression attendant on Wellesley's system, which led to the encouragement of evil and suppression of good. Munro has severely criticised this system of stationing a subsidiary force with Indian Princes. "There are many weighty objections to the employment of such a force. It has a natural tendency to render the Government of every country in which it exists, weak and oppressive, to extinguish all honourable spirit among the higher classes of society and to degrade and impoverish the whole people. The presence of the British force renders the prince indolent by teaching him to trust to strangers for his security, and cruel and avaricious by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects. Wherever this system is introduced, the country will soon bear the marks of it in decaying villages and decreasing population. I can, therefore, have no doubt that the subsidiary system must destroy every government which it undertakes to protect. The advantages of British protection are dearly bought. They are purchased by the sacrifice of independence of national character and of whatever renders a people respectable. The natives can never aspire to any thing beyond the mere animal state of thriving in peace ; none of them can look forward to any share in the legislation or civil or

military government of their country. No elevation of character can be expected among men who cannot hope for any thing beyond some petty revenue or judicial office. The consequence therefore of the conquest of India by the British arms would be, in place of raising, to debase the whole people. We cannot expect to find in a nation fallen under a foreign dominion the same pride and high principle as among a free people. It is not only ungenerous but impolitic to debase the character of a whole people."[20]

All such controversy of Wellesley's career is now relegated to history and one can readily accept P. E. Roberts' judgment when he says, " I must record my deliberate conviction that Wellesley was an administrator and ruler of wonderful achievement and glorious capacity. His countrymen knew at last that in his own peculiar sphere of work and in his destined hour a great ruler of men had walked in their midst."

Immediately on his arrival Cornwallis started for the upper provinces and on the 5th of October sank to rest at Ghazipur. Thereupon the charge of Government fell upon the senior member of the Council Sir George Barlow, who faithfully and rigidly carried out all the measures sketched out by the late Governor General. Malcolm and Lake were on the spot to execute these measures. They considered it to be of the first importance that none of the concessions should appear to be wrung out from them by their inability to prosecute the war. The main portion of this responsibility fell upon Malcolm, for Lord Lake was a mere soldier with many of the prejudices of his class, plain spoken, straightforward and thoroughly a man of honour. He had no small contempt for civilians and pen-men. " D-n your writing, mind your fighting "[21] was the exhortation which he blurted out in the language of the camp. Malcolm wrote in Lord Lake's name a strong letter to Sindia, demanding the immediate release of the Resident Mr. Jenkins and threatening a war in case of non-compliance. Such a letter at once excited the hopes and fears of Sindia. His desire of obtaining possession of Gwalior and Gohad was gratified. Sharzarao was dismissed and Munshi Kamalnayan

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20. Gleig's *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, 1st. ed., V. 1 p. 460.
21. Kaye I, 343.

who had long lived in retirement, was now invited to become the means of communication between the British Government and Sindia's Court. He became the sole adviser of Sindia and meekly carried out all that Malcolm desired. Mr. Jenkins was released on 13th September and Sindia finally separated himself from Holkar by a fresh treaty concluded on 21st November known as the treaty of Mustafapur signed by the Munshi. This Munshi, a north India Brahman became a convenient tool in Malcolm's hand on being given ample gratification in the form of a jagir in perpetuity which his family still enjoys. He had hardly any love for Maratha aspirations or national interests. The words defence and offence were deliberately omitted in the text of this treaty, in order to make Sindia believe that he was the same independent prince that he was before the last war. This fresh treaty confirmed the main items of that of Surji-Anjangaon. The Chambal was made the boundary between the two States. Four lacs a year in cash allowance was granted to Sindia personally and two lacs each to his wife Baizabai and to his daughter. The British Government gave up their recent alliances with the Rajput princes of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kotah and others in Malwa and Mewar and undertook to enter into no engagement with Sindia's tributaries, nor to interfere with respect to Sindia's conquests from Holkar between the Tapti and the Chambal. A special article was introduced whereby Sindia pledged himself never again to admit Sharzarao into his service or counsels. This last provision was rather honoured in the breach.

10. Exit Yashvantrao Holkar.—Thus was Yashvantrao Holkar once more let down by the weak-kneed Sindia in the daring project the former had formed of leading a coalition against the English. He quitted Sindia's camp at Sabalgad and proceeded to Ajmer, where he in vain solicited the Raja of Jodhpur to join him. Thereupon he pushed on to the north of Delhi towards Patiala, hoping to receive support from the Sikhs and the Afghans. Lord Lake followed closely on his track. This was the first time that a British army crossed the Satlaj and encamped on the Beas. Holkar writes to his cousin

on 29th November 1805, "I have met the Sikh princes of Patiala and other places. They are ready to join in my plans of resisting the British. I have also received friendly approaches from Ranjitsinh of Lahore and the Shah of Afghanistan. In order to concert further measures I crossed the Satlaj on the 13th and arrived near Amritsar and Lahore. I am sanguine of getting the support of the Sikhs. Sindia's withdrawal from the concert is a severe loss. He fell a prey to temporary selfish gain and ruined the State. I am still hoping to recover the lost position."[22]

Evidently Yashvantrao was under a great delusion. Personal heroism however great is no match for an organized power like the British. Ranjitsinh visited the British camp in disguise and concluded an agreement with Lord Lake and Malcolm in which he engaged not to support Holkar. Under the strong advice of his supporters Yashvantrao gave up the contest and accepted the British overtures for putting an end to the war. Two British agents visited him in his camp where a treaty came to be concluded on 24th December which is known as the treaty of Rajghat. Holkar renounced all claim to the territories north and west of the river Chambal; and the British guaranteed him his possessions to the south and east of it. Holkar's possessions to the south of the Narmada were also restored to him.

After the conclusion of the treaty, Holkar turned back and on his way through Rajputana he exacted 18 lacs from the Raja of Jaipur in addition to similar exactions at other places. He reached Indore in triumph, declaring that he had saved his ancestral State. Whatever may be said about his methods, it cannot be denied that Yashvantrao rose to power from initial nothingness entirely by dint of his personal valour and spirit of adventure. He was the last typical Maratha soldier to make a name in history, on the merits of which it is possible for opinions to differ. He wrote to Vyankoji Bhosle of Nagpur on 15 February 1806, "The Maratha State had been grasped by foreigners. To resist their aggression, God knows, how during the last two and a half years I sacrificed every thing, fighting night and day without a moment's rest. I paid a

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22. *Holkar State Papers*, Marathi, Vol. 2 No. 72.

visit to Daulatrao Sindia and explained to him how necessary it was for all of us to join in averting foreign domination. But Daulatrao failed me. It was mutual cooperation and good will which enabled our ancestors to build up the Maratha State. But now we have all become self-seekers. You wrote to me that you were coming for my support, but you did not make your promise good. If you had advanced into Bengal as was planned, we could have paralysed the British Government. It is no use now talking of past things. When I found myself abandoned on all sides, I accepted the offer which the British agents brought to me and concluded the war."[23]

As a result of the reversal of policy, British protection was withdrawn from the State of Jaipur, whose raja was now given up to the vengeance both of Sindia and Holkar with the result that the British incurred the severe odium of having abandoned an ally who had helped them in their hour of peril. In consequence Lord Lake resigned his post and retired to England.

Yashvantrao Holkar hereafter found himself in a dreadful predicament with a large following on hand, and no funds to maintain them and no genius for civil administration. His restless spirit would not allow him to take to a peaceful life. Utter disappointment stared him in the face everywhere. He became fretful and impatient of opposition, unable to distinguish between friends and foes. Convinced that a strong artillery alone was the means of overcoming the British, he opened a gun-factory at Bhanpura and exerted himself night and day in that work through excessive heat which affected his brain. Some time in October 1808 he was seized with a fit of insanity, induced probably by the grief at the death of his nephew Khanderao and excessive use of spirituous liquor. He lingered in that condition for three years and died at Bhanpura on 28th October 1811, aged 30, being nearly of the same age as Daulatrao Sindia. He had several wives of whom Tulsibai figured in future history. His short career of nine years is packed with daring incidents and hair-breadth escapes. He was both loved and feared by his men and his wrath was un-

23. Ait. Patv. 394.

controllable. He had lost an eye in early life. Thorn has given an excellent pen-picture of this singular personality, having long watched him at close quarters.[24]

For some years at the beginning of his career Yashvantrao acted in the name of his brother's son Khanderaō, but this pretence gradually became inconvenient and in 1805 he himself figured as the master of the Holkar State. That nephew Khanderao died of cholera at the age of ten of 3rd February 1806 at Shahpur near Kotah. Yashvantrao's elder brother Kashirao was killed in a scuffle near Bijagad in the year 1808. Both these deaths are said to have been brought about by Yashvantrao himself, but this does not appear to be borne out by evidence. Yashwantrao left a son named Malharrao born of his wife Kesarbai, who succeeded him, when he was about ten years old. After Yashvantrao's death Tulsibai conducted the administration in the name of this Malharrao until she came to be murdered in her camp at Mahidpore on 20th December 1817.

24. Memoir of Lord Lake's War in India pp. 497-498.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER XV

1793 Dec. 19	Govindrao Gaikwad leaves Poona for Baroda with Ravji Appaji and Gangadhar Shastri.
1800 Septr. 9	Govindrao Gaikwad dies.
1802 Jan. 20	Maj. Walker arrives at Baroda as Resident.
„ June 6	Anandrao Gaikwad accepts British protection in a special treaty.
„ July 29	Subsidiary treaty confirmed.
„ July 29	Shastri accepts service at Baroda Residency.
„ July	Ravji Appaji dies.
1804 Octr. 2	Ahmadabad farm leased for ten years by the Peshwa to the Gaikwads.
1806 March 27	Pratinidhi defeated and wounded at Vasantgad.
„ Novr. 17	The Peshwa confers a separate assignment upon his brother Chimnaji.
„ Novr. 17	Regency Commission established in Baroda.
1809 Feb. 26	Chimnaji Appa's wife dies of burns.
1810	Maj. Walker resigns : Rivett Carnac succeeds as Resident at Baroda.
„ May 25	Khanderao Raste swallows poison.
„ Octr. 10	Bapu Gokhale appointed to command the Peshwa's army.
1811 Feb. 18	Elphinstone takes charge of the Residency.
1812	G. Shastri proposed to lead mission to Poona.
„ May 29	Chimnaji Appa marries a second wife.
„ July 19	Treaty of Pandharpur, ending the Peshwa's dispute with his Jagirdars.
„ Octr. 1	Peshwa's treaty with the raja of Kolhapur.
1813 Feb.	Peshwa appoints Col. Ford to a special corps.
„ May	Shastri appointed Mutalik in Baroda service.
1814 Feb.	Shastri arrives at Poona.

1814	Feb. 9	Shastri meets the Peshwa.
,,	June 17	Rupram Chaudhari dies.
,,	Octr. 23	Ahmadabad lease expires.
1815	Feb. 27	Khursetji Modi commits suicide.
,,	Apr. 19	Shastri performs thread ceremony of his son.
,,	May 7	Shastri accompanies Peshwa to Nasik.
,,	July	Peshwa and Shastri leave Nasik for Pandharpur and Elphinstone for Ellora.
,,	July 20	Shastri murdered at Pandharpur.
,,	August 6	Elphinstone returns to Poona.
,,	Septr. 19	Trimbakji Dengle arrested by the British.
,,	Septr. 26	Dengle imprisoned at Thana.

CHAPTER XV

JUST RETRIBUTION

[1806—1815]

1 Bajirao's troubles.
2 Bajirao's dispute with his Jagirdars.
3 Bajirao's Administration.—Sadashiv Mankeshvar, Khanderao Raste, Khursetji Modi, Trimbakji Dengle.
4 The Gaikwad signs a subsidiary treaty.
5 The Peshwa-Gaikwad dispute. The Shastri's mission.
6 The Shastri murdered.
7 The aftermath,—Trimabakji surrendered.

1. **Bajirao's troubles.**—The treaty of Bassein put an end to Maratha independence established by the great Shivaji. For this deplorable result Bajirao and his friend Daulatrao Sindia are primarily responsible. Both lived to see the tragic end in 1818 and survived it for many years after. Bajirao's ways of life and administration have already been noticed in detail. History can hardly supply another example of such perversity and wickedness in spite of varied experience and ample opportunity for improvement. Bajirao learnt nothing and forgot nothing in the long course of his regime. Close, Malcolm, Elphinstone, apart from many interested Indians tried their utmost to bring him to the right path of conduct ; but all this was lost on the Peshwa. The bulky volumes of the Poona Residency Correspondence are a sad commentary on this man's life, just as Broughton's letters disclose a similar story in the case of Daulatrao Sindia. The years between 1803 and 1818 covering the remaining regime of Bajirao, are full of incidents and circumstances which will now be set forth.

The traditional position of the Peshwa entitled him to exercise control over all the members of the Maratha State, and Bajirao himself when he contracted the treaty of Bassein had no idea that he was renouncing that position. The representatives of the British Government left this point in a state of ambiguity perhaps with deliberation. There was then no occasion to define the Peshwa's position with reference to the other members. As soon as Bajirao returned to his capital under

British protection, he expected the latter to support him in establishing his authority over all the components of the Maratha State. The war with Sindia and Bhosle ended in their defeat, with the result that they made separate treaties with the British Government, thus ceasing to be under the control of the Peshwa. Thereafter Holkar started his war and similarly accepted a separate treaty. The Gaikwad of Baroda had already separated himself from the Maratha Confederacy, so that these four principal members found themselves detached from the joint concerns of the former Maratha State. The Peshwa's jurisdiction did not now extend anywhere beyond Khandesh in the north and the river Tungabhadra in the south. The territories south of that river had already been lost by the Peshwa after the fall of Tipu. Similarly portions of the Karnatic and the State of Haidarabad bounded the Peshwa's eastern and south-eastern dominions. Thus the Peshwa's State came to be immensely narrowed in all directions.

If Bajirao had any claims either against the four Maratha members mentioned above or any other outside Power such as the Nizam or the chiefs of Bundelkhand, he had bound himself to refer those claims to the decision of the British Government. This plain truth, the result of his own making, was not at first realized by him. For years he continued in vain to wrangle with the British Government on this subject and was compelled in the end to submit to their dictation and cease to deal directly with foreign Powers or control his erstwhile vassals.

As regard the internal administration, the Peshwa was likewise not free to exercise his authority uncontrolled, over his immediate subordinate chiefs, the Patwardhans, Raste, Panse, Purandare and a few others. The Pratinidhi, the Raja of Kolhapur, and that of Savantwadi were a few others whose relations with the Peshwa were more or less of an uncertain nature and took time to be defined. Bajirao contested the decisions of the supreme Power in every case, instead of quietly submitting to the position he had been reduced to. He had no courage openly to declare his hostility to the British Government, and therefore professed perfect amity outwardly : but his action often belied his words. This is the short history

of his sixteen years regime since the treaty of Bassein to 5 November 1817, the day he started an open war, which completed his ruin.

A ruler or his prime minister in managing his business has to recognise the fitness of his instruments and employ them to the highest advantage ; Shivaji and Bajirao I possessed this leadership, but the latter's grandson Bajirao II sadly lacked it. Vithoji and Yashvantrao Holkar or their elder brother the uncontrollable Malharrao, Sharzarao Ghatge, Fatesinh Mane, Baloji Kunjar, Trimbakji Dengle, Baba Phadke, Balajipant Natu, Chatarsinh Bhosle, Balavantrao Nagnath, Dhondia Wagh, these and a number of similar characters who prominently figure through this Peshwa's concerns, were all men gifted with some singular aptitude, which if properly utilized could have benefited the State, but which in the absence of proper direction was wasted and served only to bring about his ruin. Under his suspicious and wicked management all honest labour and honourable career became impossible for any member of his staff or of the general public. The Peshwa had to make constant appeals to the British Resident to punish his supposed wrongdoers. We have now to detail examples of his evil administration.

The Pratinidhi of Aundh was a man of irascible temper and vicious habits. He quarrelled with his mother, ill-treated his married wives and spent his time in the company of a lowcaste mistress, who has become famous in history as Tai Telin (Oil-crusher) for the valour she exhibited by serving her lordly lover in his struggle with the Peshwa, who had deprived him of all his property and lands and transferred them to his captain Bapu Gokhale. The Pratinidhi thereupon took to a life of brigandage and devastated the Peshwa's territory of Poona. Bajirao ordered Bapu Gokhale to put the rebel down. The Pratinidhi was defeated, captured and imprisoned in an obscure fort. His mistress, the spirited Tai collected a large following, attacked the fort where the Pratinidhi was imprisoned, released him, and taking her position in the difficult fort of Wasota, defied Bapu Gokhale and his well armed force. The Pratinidhi now resumed his predatory activities with renewed vigour, declaring that he was the servant of the Chhatrapati

and not of the Peshwa, who had usurped the Chhatrapati's power. Once more Bapu Gokhale came upon him. A severe battle took place on 27th March 1806 below the fort Wasantgad near Karhad, in which the Pratinidhi received severe wounds and lost one arm. He was brought to Poona and there confined. It took eight months of severe struggle to defeat, capture and imprison the woman Tai at Poona.

2. **Bajirao's dispute with his Jagirdars.**—Although by the treaty of Bassein Bajirao lost his possessions outside Maharashtra, he made it up by gaining stability at Poona and began to enjoy an ease and prosperity unknown to him before. For ten years after 1805, there was absolute peace in his dominions and under the strong protection he had from the British, his revenues increased beyond his expectations. Khanderao Raste and Sadashiv Mankeshvar were his principal advisers who sedulously cultivated amicable relations with the Resident Col. Close, a man of large heart and liberal views, who had a mild Governor General Lord Minto to deal with. Minto employed a conciliatory policy towards the Indian Powers to wipe off the bitterness that had been engendered during Wellesley's regime.

Col. Close went to Haidarabad in July 1809, giving over temporary charge of his office at Poona to Henry Russell, till Elphinstone arrived and received permanent charge of his post on 18th February 1811. So Bajirao had the best of his time with peace, prosperity and enjoyment until his troubles began after the arrival of Elphinstone. He busied himself in religious pursuits, pilgrimages and social amenities, usually spending his time at the various pleasure-houses he had specially erected in the neighbourhood of Poona, at Pashan, Kothrud, Wadgaon, Fulgaon etc. With the accumulation of wealth Bajirao's greed was whetted. He appointed Bapu Gokhale to the principal command of his troops on 10th October 1810.

Bajirao had many chiefs under him who had been granted large landed estates for maintaining bodies of troops for the service of the State. Now that the Peshwa had put himself under the British protection, he had no more need for the services of these jagirdars; and he tried to reduce their possessions thereby increasing his own income. The Patwardhans, the

Rastes, the Panses and the Desai of Nipani were the principal sardars who enjoyed large estates in heredity. As he saw no easy way of getting rid of them, he began to harass them and they in turn appealed to the Resident for the redress of their grievances. Col. Close took no action, until the position became aggravated when Elphinstone arrived at the Residency. He studied the situation for a year, collected evidence, held personal discussions with the jagirdars and mediated with the Peshwa for a peaceful solution. The Patwardhans were the most important and numerous of these chiefs. They had obtained assurances of British protection from Arthur Wellesley before the war of 1803. During several years past they had increased and consolidated their holdings on various grounds by seizing lands belonging to the Peshwa and some smaller chieftains. Their relations with the Peshwa were none too cordial. He now came out with enormous demands on them and tried to coerce them into obedience. They resisted and revolted and would even have succeeded in deposing him but for the British arms that protected him. In this situation Bajirao approached the Resident for permission to use the Subsidiary Force to subdue the jagirdars. Elphinstone did not think it right to have the jagirdars crushed out of existence, for they had as much right to their possessions as Bajirao had to his. The Resident proposed a scheme for settlement and submitted it to the Governor-General for approval. It was sanctioned and presented to the Peshwa for acceptance. He strongly resented the interference of the British Government in his internal administration, and resisted the proposed settlement as long as he could. At last at Pandharpur on 19th July 1812 the award was signed under severe pressure by the Peshwa along with the chiefs that were present. This settlement of Pandharpur contained the following provisions :—

1. Past injuries should be forgotten by both parties.

2. The Peshwa was not to make fresh demands upon the jagirdars beyond those that were stated in their sanads or accepted in long practice.

3. The jagirdars should serve the Peshwa with their quota of troops as specified in their sanads.

4. The Peshwa was not to confiscate their holdings without the permission of the British Government.
5. The Peshwa should accord the jagirdars the usual forms of respectful treatment.
6. The jagirdars should cede to the Peshwa all the lands to which they had no title.
7. The personal security of the jagirdars and their relatives was guaranteed by the British Government.
8. In case of disagreement both were to accept the decision pronounced by the British Government.
9. The British Government reserved the right of making any separate treaty with the jagirdars.

The rajas of Kolhapur and Savantwadi were two other chiefs whom Bajirao claimed as his subordinates and who declined to accept his overlordship. These two States proved the source of perpetual trouble to the Peshwa on the one side and the British Government on the other, as their relative positions had never been clearly defined. In former times Peshwa Madhavrao I had brought about a workable understanding with Kolhapur which was upset during the regime of Bajirao II, with the result that the southern jagirdars and the raja of Kolhapur were in perpetual conflict. Elphinstone took up this question also, defining the raja's position with the Government of Bombay and with the Peshwa. The raja unable to decide upon any course, delayed and evaded settlement, and when at last threatened with an attack, submitted to British arbitration. A treaty was drawn up and accepted by the raja on 1st October 1812. He surrendered the fort of Malvan to the English.

3. **Bajirao's Administration.**—Following the example of most other chiefs Bajirao considered it necessary to entertain a disciplined corps of infantry with some artillery attached to it. He obtained the Governor General's approval to the proposal and selected for this post Major John Ford who was formerly working at Poona as a captain attached to the Residency during Col. Close's regime. This new force which was formed in Feburuary 1813, was composed mostly of north India men with only a few Marathas in it. They had all sworn to serve Bajirao loyally and execute his orders faithfully. Its

annual expenditure on a peace footing amounted to three and a half lacs, but it was to be increased during war according to needs. Ford's monthly pay was Rs. 2500. A formal agreement containing 24 articles was drawn up and signed by Major Ford, adding in his own hand, " I will serve the Peshwa loyally and faithfully whenever and wherever so commanded, with all my men, without minding any objection raised by the Company's Government. I will not commit any breach of trust towards the Peshwa's interest and will not mix in any political intrigue against him." These words occur clearly in that solemn agreement, now printed in Marathi. How Ford violated his word will be seen later.[1] At this time Bajirao also enlisted a body of Gosavi fighters headed by Manohargir, who died in 1813, when his place was taken up by Rupram Chaudhari.

One great evil introduced by Bajirao in his revenue administration was the system of farming, that is auctioning the business of collecting taxes to the highest bidder. This measure he adopted in order to amass money and at the same time provide lucrative work for his own favourities in service, irrespective of their merit and efficiency. This method proved ruinous to all classes, especially to the cultivators. It reduced the country to poverty and wretchedness as the revenue farmers made the best of the chance during their period of lease, and harassed the people without mercy. Bajirao's annual revenue was about a crore and quarter of Rupees, of which on an average he managed to lay by at least 50 lacs a year. In 1815 his net savings had reached 5 crores in cash. There were then no investments yielding dividends. As years passed on, Bajirao's friction with the British began to increase and a war appeared probable sooner or later, for which his favourities Khursetji Modi and Trimbakji Dengle advised him to prepare in advance. He began gradually to increase his forces. In October 1814 Bajirao paid a visit to the Kartikswami temple near Bellari,

1. Itihas Sangraha, Saranjam Yadi No. 35, pp. 93-101.

English writers are not correct in stating that in his agreement Ford laid down a specific condition that he would never fight against the British ; and that he committed no breach of trust when he deserted the Peshwa at the opening of the war in 1817.

for which he employed fresh guards, whom he did not dismiss upon his return.

Bajirao's relations with his younger brother Chimnaji were far from cordial. He was always afraid that this brother would conduct intrigues against him and so he allowed him no freedom. Chimnaji's position was no better than that of a prisoner in the palace. He often fretted and chafed and demanded an independent provision for himself. Col. Close mediated to end the vexatious dispute. On 17th November 1806 a meeting took place between Col. Close and the two brothers, when Chimnaji declared he had no desire to have any concern in the administration. Upon this Bajirao assigned to Chimnaji a provision of two lacs a year. Since then he began to live separately in Poona but was always watched and suspected as before. Chimnaji's marital life was not happy and his wife Sitabai died on 26th February 1809 of a serious burn she received in lighting a lamp at the Onkareshwar temple. Thereafter he continued three years without a wife and married a second one on 20th May 1812. When Bajirao commenced his war upon the British in 1871, he carried this brother with him during his flight.

Constant low intrigues and utter lack of honesty formed the essence of Bajirao's conduct, inherited from his father, towards the British Government as well as towards his own subordinates and servants, so that the atmosphere in which he lived and moved, remained always surcharged with suspicion and treachery ; and not even his closest friends and immediate servants could be sure of what might happen the next moment. Sexual indulgence absorbed all his private time and his best energies, though it was concealed under the mask of religious devotion in public. Scheming and spying became a passion with him, particularly in his dealings with the Residency. Col. Close paid no attention to the mean tricks of the Peshwa for obtaining secret information of the Resident's moves and plans. When Elphinstone arrived, he began to resent these underhand practices and resolved in course of time to put an end to them. Vithoji Gaikwad and Bajaji Naik were two agents in Bajirao's employ whom he used for conveying oral messages and communications to the Residency.

Khanderao Raste and Sadashiv Mankeshvar were the Peshwa's executive officers in immediate attendance, to whom was later added Trimbakji Dengle. As Bajirao's administration mainly depended upon these instruments, it is necessary to notice their antecedents and personal character.

Sadashiv Mankeshvar came from Tembhurni near Pandharpur and pursued the profession of a religious preacher, which gave him a ready tongue and the necessary wit. He attracted Bajirao's notice and was employed by him in some of his missions. He possessed no political vision nor any marked sagacity. Col. Close thus speaks of him, "for the conduct if such atrocious machinations Bajirao could not have hit upon a fitter instrument than Sadashiv Mankeshwar, a person more completely at his devotion, more expert at intrigue, and more rootedly inveterate against the British Government. Under such a minister no government in the world could prosper."[2]

Khanderao Raste was of an altogether different type. Belonging originally to the same Raste family to which Balajirao's wife Gopikabai belonged, he inherited no jagir but was an officer in the Peshwa's revenue department, holding the position of the Sarsubhedar of the Konkan district at the time when Bajirao fled from Poona after suffering defeat at the hands of Yashvantrao Holkar. Raste well served the Peshwa at Mahad and cordially helped him to proceed to Bassein. Since then he gained Bajirao's favour and thereafter was employed by him in many important concerns of the State. He was, however, bitterly hated by Sadashiv Mankeshvar, as his uprightness and zeal were invariably applauded by the public. It was Bajirao's game to keep his two ministers at loggerheads and enjoy the accusations which these two luminaries of his court hurled against each other. But Khanderao died suddenly on 25th May 1810, having possibly put an end to his own life. Noticing his death, the British Resident reported, "Bajirao received eminent services from Khanderao in his adversity. But the political enmity between him and Sadashiv Mankeshvar reached such a height that the Peshwa found it

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2. P. R. C. VII. 8 and 190.

absolutely necessary to dismiss the one or the other, and as he found it more difficult to part with Mankeshvar than with his rival, Khanderao was made the sacrifice. His character and talents were in every respect so much superior to those of Mankeshvar and he had done so much more to excite the Peshwa's gratitude and attachment, that in the necessity of a selection between the two, the Peshwa's preference should have fallen on Khanderao. But there was a consideration of a personal and private nature which contributed more to influence the Peshwa's choice. Whatever may have been Mankeshvar's inferiority to Khanderao in all the pooints of political rivalship, there was a point of superiority in Mankeshwar's domestic establishment, which found no rivalship in that of Rastia."[3]

Khursetji Modi's affair was of a different nature. Born in 1755 this Parsi gentleman of Cambay formed the acquaintance of Charles Malet who was the Company's trading agent at the local factory. Malet found him clever and serviceable and employed him on his Residency staff at Poona in 1786. Knowing Marathi and English well, he was employed by the successive Residents as a mediary for explaining matters to the Peshwa's Government. He enjoyed the confidence of Col. Close and attracted Bajirao's notice by his tact in smoothing differences and patching up disputes with the Residency by his sweet and accommodating advocacy. Many influential gentlemen of Poona used Khursetji's mediation to approach the Resident and get their complaints adjusted. Sadashiv Mankeshvar in particular formed a close friendship with him and through him obtained confidential information, for which Bajaji Naik the Peshwa's agent constantly met Modi and set at rest Bajirao's anxieties in many affairs of a political nature. In this way the three persons Sadashiv Mankeshwar, Modi, and Bajaji served for a good long time Bajirao's ends in conducting successfully many affairs of State. Modi continued in Poona in a dual capacity as an employee in the Residency and a revenue collector under the Peshwa. This arrangement lasted for some time until Sadashiv Mankeshvar, growing jealous of Modi's

3. P. R. C. VII No. 355, 30 Septr. 1810 p. 501. Marathi papers say that Raste committed suicide as he incurred Bajirao's displeasure by refusing to allow his wife to visit the licentious Peshwa's palace.

power and out of spite towards him, laid a formal complaint before Elphinstone at the instigation of Bajirao that Modi accepted bribes in discharging his duties and thereby injured public interests. Elphinstone knew Indian languages and needing no interpreter dealt directly with the parties concerned, acquiring full information from available channels and keeping his opinions and knowledge entirely to himself. So he no longer required the services of Khursetji in transacting business with the Peshwa. Elphinstone was well posted with the intrigues of the Peshwa, and discovering that Modi was playing a mischievous game, called upon him to choose any one of the two jobs, either wholly working for the Residency or transferring himself entirely to Bajirao's service and giving up all connection with the Residency. The Parsi gentleman thereupon resigned his connection with the Peshwa's Court, preferring to remain a servant of the Residency.

Gangadhar Shastri arrived in Poona towards the end of Feb. 1814 as an ambassador of Baroda to adjust the latter's dispute with the Peshwa, who appointed Trimbakji Dengle on his behalf to deal with the Shastri's mission. It became a puzzling problem for Bajirao how to gain his point against the able advocacy of the Shastri backed by the British Government. So Trimbakji began secret consultations with Modi to obtain advice in his handling the Gaikwad dispute. Elphinstone was fully aware of this intrigue and thought it necessary to separate the two friends Modi and Trimbakji. Elphinstone reported the situation to the Governor General and obtained orders that Modi should be retired on a pension of Rs. 500 a month and asked to go to his native place in Gujarat. When Modi received these orders, he felt his honour and prestige highly injured. He wound up his affairs in Poona and took his final leave of the Resident. That very night upon reaching home, he swallowed poison and died on 27th February 1815. The incident stirred the whole city to an abnormal pitch of excitement. Modi's Ganapati temple in the city still commemorates the Parsi's name.

Another devoted servant of Bajirao was Rupram Chaudhari who commanded the Gosavi corps and who also died about this time (17th June 1814).

Trimbakji Dengle was a Maratha Patil of Nimbgaon-Jali, having long been a personal servant of Bajirao and recently employed as a jasud (messenger) going about gathering information for the Government. He accompanied Bajirao in his flight to Mahad and earned his favour by conveying an urgent secret letter to the Resident at great personal risk. Since that time Bajirao formed a high opinion of his dash and resourcefulness and employed him in many delicate confidential jobs. Trimbakji wrote a Modi hand and possessed the practical education of his day with sufficient knowledge of accounts and ordinary transactions. Gifted with keen common sense, he was ever ready in executing the Peshwa's wishes without scruple. Bajirao employed him to watch the movements of the Chhatrapati at Satara, who was suspected of carrying on intrigues with the Residency. Trimbakji cleverly captured the Chhatrapati's brother Chatarsinh who had been long trying to bring about Bajirao's deposition from power. Trimbakji exposed Sadashiv Mankeshvar's dealings with the Residency and gained Bajirao's confidence. The Peshwa relied more and more upon Trimbakji for transacting many delicate and important matters of State. Since the Shastri's arrival in Poona Trimbakji became the main instrument of Bajirao in the management of the Gaikwad dispute. Trimbakji cleverly sensed the Resident's schemes and warned Bajirao in advance to be on his guard. This excited Elphinstone's irritation against Trimbakji and was the root cause of the rupture that subsequently took place between the Resident and the Peshwa. Elphinstone for long ignored Trimbakji's mean tricks, as the latter openly boasted of possessing such high talents as would bring the English to their knees if only the Peshwa would follow his guidance. Trimbakji sent secret agents to Nagpur and to Sindia and Holkar, inciting them to rise against the British. This was the time of the Nepal war in which the British had suffered severe reverses, creating for a time a hope among the Indian Powers of overthrowing the British supremacy. Trimbakji in speaking to the Resident on behalf of the Peshwa assumed a tone and expression highly offensive and made himself altogether obnoxious to Elphinstone, who reported to the Governor General that so long as Dengle continued to be the Peshwa's adviser, there was no hope of reclaiming the latter to the path of rectitude, friendliness and

respect for the British Government. In this manner estrangement arose in the relations between the Peshwa and the Residency which required only a spark to burst forth in a conflagration. The Shastri's murder supplied the spark.

4. The Gaikwad signs a subsidiary treaty.—Damaji Gaikwad, the ablest of his house died on 18th August 1768, leaving behind a disputed succession for a long time among his several sons, one of whom Govindrao was ultimately invested by the Peshwa with the robes of Senakhaskhel at Poona, and he left for Baroda on 19th December 1793 to take possession of his patrimony. Nana Phadnis appointed one Raoji Appaji to accompany Govindrao to Baroda as his mentor and guide. Gangadhar Shastri Patwardhan a resident of Menavli near Wai and a family-priest by profession, who had served as a clerk in the Poona Government also accompanied the party. Both Govindrao and Raoji struggled hard to preserve the State, employing for this purpose a large number of Arab soldiers to support their precarious authority, expecting little help from the Peshwa at Poona. Govindao died on 19th September 1800, leaving a disputed succession among his eight sons, four legitimate and four illegitimate. Some of the latter were quite capable but could claim no authority in the administration. Govindrao had a cousin named Malharrao who lived at Kadi and who there established an independent position for himself. Govindrao' eldest son Anandrao succeeded to his father's position with the help of Raoji, but found himself extremely harassed by his Arab mercenaries as he had no money to clear their arrears of pay. In his emergency Raoji acquired financial help from the British factory at Cambay. At this time Jonathan Duncan the Governor of Bombay, anxious to establish British influence in Gujarat, sent his own trusted agent Major Walker to Baroda accompanied by a force of two thousand to examine the situation of Anandrao and deal with his request for military aid.

The Arabs retaliated upon Raoji by capturing his family. Walker on arrival visited Anandrao on 20th January 1802 and found that though personally incompetent to manage his affairs, the prince had full faith in his Diwan Raoji and that he bitterly hated his cousin Malharrao then in rebellion at

Kadi. Walker thereupon decided to support Anandrao's party and follow Raoji's plan, so he at once marched on Kadi to put down Malharrao, in conjunction with the Gaikwad troops commanded by Raoji's brother Babaji. Malharrao was soon brought to submission and was given an estate at Nadiad. Within six months Walker made Anandrao's position safe by putting down all disturbances and in return obtained from him an agreement duly signed on 6th June 1802 granting to the Company in perpetuity the district of Surat Athavisi for their expenses. This agreement is termed Raoji's treaty of Cambay.

Walker immediately proceeded to Bombay and returned with the Governor's sanction for this arrangement. On 29th July 1802 Anandrao wrote to Col. Walker, "I call upon all my people to support Major Walker in every measure that he will take in my administration, as he has helped me out of the dangerous situation into which the Arabs had plunged me. No one should oppose Major Walker. If any mischief-makers act against these wishes of mine, Major Walker is empowered to punish them. He should not hesitate to enforce his measures even in opposition to Raoji Appaji, his sons and relatives, or even against any writing of my own which might hereafter be issued." In this manner the British obtained a strong hold over the Gaikwad State and its policy.

Major Walker's arrangement did not work out smoothly. It provoked a strong opposition in Baroda after Raoji's death in July 1803. The latter's son Sitaram led the opposition. Major Walker thereupon appointed a Regency Commission in 1806 to manage the affairs of the State with Anandrao's brother Fatehsinh as its head. Major Walker resigned office in 1810 and was succeeded as Resident by Captain Rivett Carnac, who continued to hold the post for long period. Strong resentment occurred in Baroda against British intervention and the high handed policy of Carnac, who later became the Governor of Bombay and was responsible for the deposition of Raja Pratapsinh of Satara in 1839.

It has been already mentioned that Gangadhar Shastri, a clever clerk in the Peshwa's office, had accompanied Raoji Appaji to Baroda and when the British Residency was established there in 1802, he entered the British service as the native

Assistant. He at once became the main informant of the Resident, securing his good graces by disclosing to him anti-British intrigues and plots going on in the Baroda administration. He soon came thus to be bitterly hated by most of the influential members of the State, including the Ranis and Sitaram Raoji. In this situation the anti-British party deputed Govindrao Bandhuji Gaíkwad to proceed to Poona in 1814 to enlist the Peshwa's support for undoing the wrong that was being done to Baroda. When Govindrao Bandhuji arrived at Poona, he was befriended by Khursetji Modi and Trimbakji Dengle. Another deputy arrived the next year from Baoda on the same mission in the person of Bhagvantrao Gaikwad. These agents practised seduction even in the Government circles of Bombay and obtained important secret news of British plans and measures. As the Shastri kept the Resident at Baroda well supplied with details of these secret activities, he became thoroughly obnoxious to large sections in Baroda and outside.

5. The Peshwa-Gaikwad dispute. The Shastri's mission.— The Gaikwads owed a very large amount of money to the Peshwa mainly on account of the yearly tribute of 24 lacs and of the accumulated succession fees which used to be pretty heavy in those days and which formed a substantial source of revenue to the Sovereign Government. These accumulations had now amounted to the enormous sum of some three crores, calculating from the year 1753. There were besides serious discrepancies in the accounts as rendered by the two parties. Personal verification of recorded evidence was considered necessary before any settlement could be made. Bajirao earnestly pressed his claims against Baroda, and could bear no delay. Measures were afoot ever since 1807 for effecting a settlement. In 1812 Fatehsinh Gaikwad proposed that Gangadhar Shastri be sent to Poona, and he undertook to pay the expenses of the mission. The Bombay Government agreed, and to induce the Shastri to undertake the task, gave him a special guarantee of his safety. More than a year was taken in arranging the details of the mission between the various parties, the Baroda Government, the Baroda Residency and the Bombay Government, the Poona Residency and the Peshwa's Government. Before leaving Baroda the Shastri made a will of his property and had

it attested by Fatesinh Gaikwad. The Shastri, be it noted, transferred his services from the Baroda Residency on the application of the Gaikwad, to the Government of Baroda in May 1813 with the title of Mutalik and a salary of Rs. 6000 a year. In this connection the remarks of Elphinstone on the Shastri's character as he observed him at close quarters in Poona deserve quotation. He says, "This man is a person of great shrewdness and talent, who keeps the whole State of Baroda in the highest order and here lavishes his money and marshals his *sawari* in such a style as to draw the attention of the whole place. Though a very learned Shastri, he affects to be quite an Englishman, walks fast, talks fast, interrupts and contradicts and calls the Peshwa and his ministers old fools and damned rascals, or rather dam rascals. He mixes English words with every thing he says, and will say of some one (Holkar for instance) "Bahot tricks-wala tha, lekin bada akalmand kukhye (cock-eye) tha !"[4]

Another subject which accentuated the conflict between Baroda and Poona, related to the half share which the Peshwa owned in Gujarat along with the Gaikwad. The Peshwa had leased his half share in the management of Ahmadabad to Govindrao Gaikwad's son Bhagvantrao. This lease was renewed by the Peshwa on 2nd October 1804 for a period of ten years on condition that the Gaikwads were to pay to the Peshwa Rs. 4½ lacs a year. This ten years term of the lease was to expire in 1814 and the British authorities ardently desired that the management of Ahmadabad should be continued to the Gaikwad for a further period. The Peshwa strongly objected to continue the lease to the Gaikwad and on 23rd October 1814 appointed by a written order his favourite Trimbakji Dengle to the management of that concern. The latter did not go there personally, but sent his nominee Vithal Narasinh to manage the Ahmadabad farm.

The Shastri arrived in Poona in February 1814, and immediately the Peshwa took Trimbakji openly into his confidence and appointed him to conduct the negotiations with the Baroda agents. The Shastri's reception was very cold when he was

4. A very tricky person but very intelligent and of oblique sight. Life of Elphinstone by Colebrooke, Vol. I. p. 276.

presented to the Peshwa on 5th May. He had brought presents for the Peshwa which, he insisted, should be delivered in the presence of the Resident, a course to which the Peshwa strongly objected. Negotiations on the subject of the mission were opened in March, but it soon became apparent that there was little chance of a speedy conclusion. In June the Resident of Poona complained to the Bombay Government against the intrigues which Govindrao Bandhuji conducted in Poona.

The Shastri soon realised that the Peshwa was not inclined to accept his mediation in the matter of the dispute. He found that every body was bent upon extracting money out of him, and soon made up his mind to return to Baroda where he was sure of securing the Diwanship. About the Dassara time Elphinstone informed the Shastri that there was no chance of success for his mission and that he might then return. The Shastri, however, felt that if he returned without achieving any useful result, his competitor Sitaram and the rest of the Baroda official world, would get the ascendency and strengthen their opposition. At the same time the Peshwa's Court realized that if the Shastri, whose mission had been sponsored by the British Government, went back in discomfiture, he was sure to wreak his vengeance upon the Governments of Poona and Baroda alike. How to avert such a result became now the concern of Bajirao and Trimbakji. In this vacillation the year 1814 wore away.

At the beginning of 1815 there arrived in Poona Bhagvantrao Gaikwad, a son of Govindrao and illegitimate brother of Anandrao, who started fresh intrigues. He was received in full Darbar by the Peshwa, against the protest of the Resident, on the Vasant Panchami day (14th February 1815) when he delivered the autograph letter he had brought from Anandrao to the Peshwa. At the same time Bajirao received from his secret spies in Baroda the news that Anandrao and Fatesinh were virtual prisoners under British guards and were extremely anxious that the Peshwa should obtain for them freedom of action. Bajirao communicated this state of things to Elphinstone, but the Resident denied the charge, upon which vexatious and protracted discussions took place between the Peshwa and the Resident on the subject of the status of the two cheifs of Baroda and Poona. Bajirao claimed that

the Gaikwad was his vassal of long standing, that it was his duty to see whether he was undergoing any hardship in his present position, and that for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, he would like to send his own trustworthy agents to Baroda independently of the Resident. Elphinstone repudiated the Peshwa's claim of suzerainty ; and the Peshwa urged that the Gaikwad could not make a separate treaty without reference to the Peshwa his overlord, adding, "Must he not come here to accept the robes of his office from the Peshwa ?" Such claims and counterclaims continued under discussion for a long time. Elphinstone's only reply was that the Gaikwad was no longer the Peshwa's vassal. When argument failed, the Peshwa said he would refer the question to the decision of the Governor General. This was in 1815 when the British were engaged in a deadly war with Nepal and the repeated reverses they there sustained, had created a strong countrywide popular discontent against them. At such a crisis, therefore, the British Residents of Baroda and Poona deliberately avoided using a high tone. In February 1815 Elphinstone informed Bajirao, "If you would not give up your claim of exercising control over the Baroda State, there is no point in the British Government offering their mediation in the dispute. At this time the agents of Sitaram, viz. Govindrao Bandhuji and Bhagvantrao are actively conducting intrigues here against us. You must seize and hand them over to me. Otherwise I will ask the Shastri to go back." Accordingly Elphinstone advised the Shastri to quit Poona as his mission had proved a failure. The Shastri did not accept this suggestion, urging "now that other methods have failed, let me have a little time to try my own method with Bajirao independently of you. If I succeed, well and good ; if not, I will return."

When this development reached the Peshwa's ears, he and Dengle felt a bit confused. If the British mediatiōn was given up, how was it possible they asked, for them to realize their debts. If the Shastri returned empty-handed, the British would take it as a personal affront and avenge themselves upon the Peshwa by making him lose both his overlordship and his debt. To prevent such a result Bajirao and Trimbakji introduced a sudden change in their behaviour towards the Shastri. They gave up their former aversion and assumed a

tone of complete cordiality. They begged him not to return immediately but to stay on for a time and try other methods of settling the money dispute. One way which they suggested was, that the Gaikwad should cede to the Peshwa in perpetuity territory worth 7 lacs annually, quite a reasonable proposal, convenient to both the parties and more beneficial to the Gaikwad, as he would thus have been for ever released from his bondage to the Peshwa. The Shastri fell in with the proposal and asked for time from Elphinstone to stay on until it was discussed and sanctioned from Baroda.

6. **The Shastri murdered.**—During March and April the subject was under discussion in which Trimbakji and Bajirao made a show of profuse affability and sweetness towards the Shastri. They applauded his talents and proposed that he should quit Baroda and come to Poona as Bajirao's minister. These alluring prospects captivated the Shastri's mind so thoroughly that he responded to these professions with equal cordiality. Trimbakji in particular became his intimate friend. On 19th April the Shastri performed the thread ceremony of his son in Poona with lavish pomp and grandeur when the Peshwa was present. Thereupon Bajirao offered his wife's sister in marriage to the Shastri's son. The public of Poona were amazed to see this sudden outburst of mutual amity and freely commented upon it. The Government of Bombay disapproved the Shastri's conduct, as it conveyed a direct acknowledgement of the Peshwa's right to interefere in the domestic concerns of the Gaikwad State. For the Shastri was an accredited ambassador come to Poona under the British guarantee. The Bombay Government, therefore, ordered on 8th May that the Shastri's mission be terminated as soon as possible. When the orders arrived at Poona, the parties were on tour and no action was taken. In order to put the Shastri off his guard, Bajirao proposed to him to accompany him on a tour of pilgrimage to Nasik, Trimbak and Pandharpur and to have his son's marriage performed at Nasik. Grand preparations were made for the celebration.

In the meantime news was received from Baroda that Fatehsinhrao did not accept the proposal of ceding in perpetuity territory worth 7 lacs annually to the Peshwa in discharge

of his debt. This decision upset the Shastri's plans. He felt confused and began to think of an honourable escape from his bonds with the Peshwa. He declined to celebrate the marriage of his son. This was an affront which Bajirao was not likely to take lightly. The Shastri's wife received an invitation for a visit to the Peshwa's wife. The Shastri refused to allow his wife to go to the licentious Peshwa's palace. To give up the ceremony of marriage at the last moment when all preparations had been made and the guests had arrived, was an insult to the head of the State, which Trimbakji would not let go without avenging. He and the Peshwa assumed a perfectly calm exterior in this matter and gave out no inkling of their black design.

The Poona Court-party started for Nasik accompanied by Elphinstone, the Shastri and Bapu Mairal, his help-mate, on 7th May, Trimbakji during the journey showing unprecedented intimacy to the Baroda guests. Nasik was reached without any untoward incident and the month of June was spent there in the usual routine. In Jully fell the Ekadashi day when a visit to Pandharpur was considered necessary, and to minimise the expense only a short hurried journey with a small party was proposed. Bapu Mairal was asked to proceed to Poona and Elphinstone was given liberty to please himself. He availed himself of the opportunity to pay a short visit to the Ellora caves, as they happened to be near. The party separated towards the end of June, Bajirao with Trimbakji and the Shastri proceeding from Nasik direct to Pandharpur and the major portion of the party going to Poona. Elphinstone went to Ellora.

While travelling to Pandharpur Bajirao increased his personal guards on the way and warned them to be vigilant in their watch. Shortly after their arrival at Pandharpur the Shastri came across a letter written by Govindrao Bandhuji, in which intimation was given that the Shastri would not see Baroda again. The knowledge of this warning kept the Shastri mostly in his home with a few personal servants attending on him. The Ekadashi was over and the return journey was to commence on the 21st July. In the evening of the 20th Trimbakji arrived at the temple and sent his clerk to invite the Shastri there for offering the last prayer adding, " there

is no crowd here now, so do come to the temple." The Shastri returned a reply with his own man, "I am far from well, so may be excused." Thereupon Trimbakji repeated the same request and pressed the Shastri to come out. The Shastri found it indecorous to decline such pressing friendly calls and proceeded from his home with seven unarmed followers through a short narrow street to the temple. While walking he heard some one asking the question. "Which is the Shastri?" and the reply "That one with a necklace on," with a pointed finger. The Shastri then arrived at the temple, wās received by Trimbakji and the two after bowing to the deity sat down for a few minutes and chatted, when an old priest of the temple spoke to the Shastri and gave him sweetmeats. Thereupon the Shastri started on his return, preceded by Trimbakji's guides through the same lane by which he had come. It was now quite dark and as the party proceeded a few paces, a band of armed men came rushing after them calling out, "make way, make way." They hacked the Shastri to pieces. His four followers ran away after receiving some wounds. A cry arose, as the old priest and the Shastri's three servants came with lighted torches and the sweets in their hands and noticed the dreadful sight. They found five men with drawn swords running back towards the temple. All those who witnessed the affair attributed its authorship to Trimbakji. The next day the Shastri's men requested Trimbakji to make an enquiry, when he replied, "How is it possible to trace the culprits? So many were the Shastri's enemies, Sitaram in Baroda, Kanhoji Gaikwad and others." The next day the Shastri's party returned in a hurried unceremonious manner to Poona and there received a message from the Peshwa that they should no longer come to see him. Bajirao and Dengle did not reach the capital for several days. They led a life of seclusion with strict guards watching over their persons. They made no enquiry into the affairs themselves, and circulated a stern warning that no one should talk of the subject. Spies were posted in the city for preventing such talk.

7. **The aftermath, Trimbakji surrendered.**— The news of the murder of a high class Brahman at a sacred place of ancient repute spread a wave of consternation throughout the land. Elphinstone received the news at Ellora on 25th

July and at once wrote the following letter to the Peshwa. "A foreign ambassador has been murdered in the midst of your Highness's Court. A Brahman has been massacred almost in the temple during one of the greatest solemnities of your religion; and I must not conceal from your Highness, the impunity of the perpetrators of this enormity has led to imputations not to be thought of against your government. I think it my duty to state them that your Highness may see the necessity of refuting calumnies so injurious to your reputation. I beg also to observe that while Trimbakji remains at large, his situation enables him to commit further acts of rashness, which he may undertake on purpose to embroil your Highness with the British Government. For these reasons it is absolutely necessary that immediate steps should be taken to apprehend Denglia as well as Govindrao Bandhuji, and Bhagvantrao. I beg that your Highness's reply may be communicated through some person unconnected with Trimbakji."

The Peshwa now took strong measures for the protection of his own person. New troops were entertained and brought from a distance. During the return journey his palki was surrounded by a thousand Karnatak troops. Elphinstone left Ellora on 26th July and reached Poona on 6th August. Trimbakji arrived there the next day, the Peshwa also making his entry secretly two days later in a closed palanquin without the usual salute. Elphinstone at once took a strong attitude and handled the situation with fearless initiative and firm determination. He immediately wrote a strong report to the Governor General indicating the action he proposed to take and requested necessary powers in that connection. On his way back to Poona he met some people of Pandharpur, from whom he gathered that Dengle was generally held to be the author of the murder, in which Bajirao himself was personally implicated. Elphinstone, therefore, considered it a sufficient punishment for the Peshwa to have his favourite Dengle adequately dealt with, if an enquiry yielded sufficient evidence to prove his guilt. As a measure of protection in case of emergency, he ordered the Subsidiary Force at Jalna to be moved to the camp on the Ghod river and a battalion to be sent on to Poona.

Bajirao and Trimbakji understood the implication of the Resident's action and began preparations for the war that seemed inevitable, destroying every evidence that would prove their part in the crime. Alarming suspension and breathless activity seized the city. Elphinstone acted promptly. On the 11th he demanded an immediate interview with the Peshwa. The latter replied that he was ailing. The request was repeated the next day. Bajirao urged that he was in mourning for three days for the death of a daughter born on that very day. Thereafter Elphinstone wrote a personal letter to Bajirao and sent it to his minister Sadashiv Mankeshvar asking him to deliver it. The latter replied that he could not deliver the letter. Upon this Elphinstone sent his own Munshi with that letter to the Peshwa. But Bajirao refused to see the Munshi and sent two agents to the Residency to inquire what the contents of that letter were. To these agents Elphinstone explained, " We have grounds to prove that Trimbakji is the author of the murder ; he must be delivered into our custody at once for an enquiry. We have nothing to urge against the Peshwa personally. But if he shields Trimbakji from law, the responsibility for the murder will fall on him as well." The letter was then accepted by Bajirao on 15th August in which Elphinstone clearly stated the whole affair, and added, " You are a Brahman and the head of a Brahman State. An open murder has been committed of a Brahman which you will agree cannot remain without investigation. I am afraid the correct facts have not reached you and so I am compelled to bring them to your notice. I have no doubt that Trimbakji is responsible for the murder. The whole public take the same view. So many days have already passed and it is strange that you should not have started even an enquiry into the affair, or should not have arrested the culprits in spite of my repeated demands for an enquiry. Trimbakji too pays no attention to the affair. I have sufficient proof to show that he is the principal author. So I call upon you to keep Trimbakji and the two others, Govindrao Bandhuji and Bhagvantrao Gaikwad, under arrest immediately. If you refuse to take any step, the responsibility for the consequences will be yours. I am giving you this last warning."

Whether the idea of the murder of the Shastri originated with Bajirao or not, it is obvious that he became liable to the charge of not having taken any step to prevent it, when it was being planned by Trimbakji. He remained unconcerned under the belief that he had no hand in it. The available evidence shows that the plot for the murder was hatched in Baroda by the Shastri's enemies aided by anti-British elements in the State, as they considered he was ruining it. The plan reached Poona and was executed by Trimbakji and the two Baroda agents. Bajirao wished to assert his overlordship on the Baroda State, and considered the Shastri as the main obstacle to it. Bajirao took no action to arrest or restrain Dengle. On the contrary he began to persecute Bapu Mairal and the Shastri's party then living in Poona. The Resident gave them his protection and advanced them funds to satisfy their pressing needs. Trimbakji tried to seduce some of them by offering bribes. He collected armed troops in the vicinity of Poona, to which Elphinstone objected. He called upon Bajirao to remove these forces and in case of non-compliance threatened to bring his whole Subsidiary Force to the city.

Bajirao made an evasive reply. He allowed Dengle to roam about and raise the standard of revolt with a view to injuring British interests. Elphinstone saw through the whole game and prepared to meet it boldly. He invited the Nizam's forces to Jalna and appointed Col. Smith to face Trimbakji and capture him. Thus the month of August 1815 wore away. Elphinstone's hands were strengthened by the arrival of instructions from the Governor General commending him for the prompt and vigorous measures he had taken in dealing with the delicate situation. The Governor General also wrote to Bajirao calling upon him to make a full enquiry into the murder and support the Resident in his measures. The Governor General assured the Peshwa that even if found guilty, Trimbakji would not be punished with death and gave a serious warning against the consequences that would follow, if he shirked his duty and shielded Trimbakji from the law. At the same time the Governor General called upon the Resident to cut off all communication with Bajirao and prevent Trimbakji from running away.

On 4th September Elphinstone handed over to Bajirao the Governor General's letter and demanded the surrender of Trimbakji within 24 hours. On 5th September the Peshwa informed the Resident, "I am keeping Trimbakji myself under restraint; you must not demand his surrender." Elphinstone replied, "Let me first hear that Trimbakji is under restraint and then we will proceed further." On 5th September Bajirao sent Trimbakji to fort Vasantgad for secure custody and informed the Resident accordingly. The Resident then urged, "This does not solve the question. Who is to guarantee that Trimbakji is secure. He might escape and start trouble. Therefore he should be surrendered into the Resident's custody. If you agree, the matter will end and your relations with the British Government will remain as before. Otherwise I may be compelled to put into operation such measures as would prove detrimental to your interest."

Indeed, the restraint of Trimbakji reported by the Peshwa was only a show. Soon afterwards Bajirao went to Wai and began to raise fresh levies of troops. Elphinstone called the Subsidiary Force from Shirur and warned Bajirao in the following message :—"Even yet give up Trimbakji and close the affair. Beyond paying some recompense to the Shastri's family, you will have no more trouble. But if you don't comply and leave Poona, you must be prepared for the consequences." On receiving this stern message Bajirao called Col. Ford and asked his advice. Ford replied, "There is no other way of escape than the surrender of Trimbakji." Bajirao then asked Ford to go and inform the Resident that he would soon do so. On 11th September Capt. Hicks was sent to Vasantgad with a party of 850 men, and there on 19th September he took Trimbakji in his charge. Govindrao Bandhuji and Bhagvantrao Gaikwad were similarly surrendered on 25th September. On the 26th they were all removed to the fort of Thana for safe custody.

The Baroda State alone profited by the murder. The ram's plans for thwarting British intervention in Baroda fell Gaikwad's debt to the Peshwa was completely wiped off. Sita- to the ground, and he became for the present a prisoner in

Bombay.[15] The Shastri's son was rewarded with a high office in Baroda. Govindrao Bandhuji and Bhagavantrao were given up to the ruling Gaikwad. Bapu Mairal died of an ailment in Poona.

5. Sitaram Raoji was later recalled to the Diwanship of Baroda in 1819 by Sayaji Rao II. Sitaram died in 1823.

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER XVI

1807	Sindia and Bhosle attack Bhopal.
1809	Mir Khan attacks Nagpur.
1813-14	Siege of Bhopal by Sindia and Bhosle.
1814 Oct. 29	Nawab of Bhopal accepts British alliance.
1816 March	The Nepal war ends.
„ March 22	Raghuji Bhosle II dies.
„ April 27	Appasaheb Bhosle accepts British alliance.
„ Sept. 12	Trimbakji Dengle escapes from Thana.
1817 Feb. 1	Parsoji Bhosle dies.
„ Feb.	Trimbakji appears near Satara.
„ June 13	Fresh treaty imposed upon the Peshwa.
„ July-Sept.	Bajirao at Mahuli.
„ Aug. 9	Malcolm's visit to Bajirao.
„ Aug. 16	British open campaign against Pindaris.
„ Nov. 5	Sindia signs fresh treaty with the British; battle of Kirkee.
„ Nov. 15	Battle of Yeravda.
„ Nov. 16	Bajirao flies from Poona.
„ Nov. 17	British flag planted on Peshwa's palace.
„ Nov. 26	Appasaheb attacks British Residency.
„ Dec. 14	Satara raja joins Bajirao.
„ Dec. 17	Pindaris routed at Shahabad.
„ Dec. 20	Tulsibai Holkar murdered.
„ Dec. 21	Battle of Mahidpur.
1818 Jan. 6	Treaty of Mahidpur with Holkar.
„ Jan. 6	Battle of Koregaon.
„ Feb. 3	Namdar Khan Pindarî submits.
„ Feb. 11	British proclamation against Bajirao.
„ Feb. 15	Karim Khan Pindari submits.

1818	Feb. 19	Battle of Ashta, Bapu Gokhale killed ; Satara raja falls into British hands.
„	March 18	Appasaheb made prisoner.
„	March	Cheetu Pindari killed by tiger.
„	May 12	Appasaheb escapes from custody, is sheltered at Ashirgad.
„	May	Bajirao at Dhulkot near Narmada.
„	May 17	Bajirao's agents meet Malcolm.
„	May 31	Malcolm pays visit to Bajirao.
„	June 3	Bajirao surrenders to Malcolm.
,	June 12	Bajirao commences journey to the north.
„	June 16	Raghuji Bhosle III installed at Nagpur.
1819	Feb.	Bajirao arrives at Bithur.
„	Apr. 9	Ashirgad captured : Appasaheb escapes.
1829		Appasaheb finds asylum at Jodhpur.
1840	July 15	Appasaheb dies.
1851	Jan. 28	Bajirao II dies.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAST EFFORT

[1817—1818]

1 Trimbakji's romantic escape.
2 A fresh treaty imposed upon Bajirao.
3 Appasaheb of Nagpur.
4 The Pindaris and their function.
5 The extinction of the Pindaris.
6 Holkar's power destroyed.
7 The Peshwa's appeal to arms.
8 The Peshwa's flight.
9 British proclamation, Bajirao's woes.
10 Surrender to Malcolm.

1. Trimbakji's romantic escape.— The Governor General ordered Trimbakji to be confined in the fort of Thana under a guard composed entirely of Europeans. Elphinstone communicated his objection to this arrangement, urging that Thana being so near would afford the captive ample facilities for mischief outside. This came true. The prisoner took full advantage of his situation and confounded his captors by escaping on the evening of 12th September 1816, nearly a year after he had come into the British hands.

Trimbakji's guards were all Europeans and did not know the Marathi language. The prisoner was being treated as a gentleman with a room for his residence on the upper storey of a building, the ground floor of which was used as stables. A clever Maratha syce selected by Bajirao took up service with one of the English officers. These syces while grooming the horses usually sing some tunes. This particular man working as a syce in a stable on the groundfloor, communicated by means of his songs to the prisoner above a way for his escape through an old dilapidated wall behind the stable. Bajirao had made arrangements about horses. Possibly Trimbakji replied in the same way and understood the plan. The European guards did not suspect any mischief in this innocent-looking game.[1] On the evening of 12th September 1816 Dengle and

1. Bishop Heber in his Journal (Vol. 2, p. 8) translates these verses:—

Behind the bush the bowmen hide,
The horse beneath the tree ;

the syce disappeared in the darkness and rode through jungles to north Khandesh, and lived for some months with the wild men of the region. A little later Trimbakji moved south and took shelter in the Mahadev hills east of Satara where he was secretly supported by Bajirao.

During all this time the Peshwa assumed a tone of peculiar sweetness and humility in his dealings with the Resident, and so deluded him that he made most favourable reports to the Governor General about Bajirao's conduct and in return communicated to him the Governor General's appreciation of this change. The year 1817 had dawned and the British Government were feverishly preparing for operations against the Pindaris. In this connection, the Peshwa made several useful suggestions and earned the Resident's thanks. Elphinstone never suspected that a huge fraud was being practised on him.

During February 1817 Elphinstone received news of Trimbakji having appeared in the region of the river Nira and asked Bajirao to have him apprehended. It was a time of extreme unrest and disturbance in the southern country, reports of which poured in thickly upon the Resident. Bajirao at the request of Elphinstone ordered Bapu Gokhale to march with his force and capture the rebel Trimbakji. But Gokhale returned reporting there was no unrest and that all was quiet; on the contrary the Resident was apprized of a report that on the Hindu new year's day (18th March) Trimbakji was to raise the standard of revolt. When Bajirao communicated to Elphinstone the reports brought by Gokhale that all was quiet, the Resident declared them all false. Bajirao then offered to go himself in pursuit of the rebel. The Resident refused to accept the proposal, and on 15th March ordered Col. Smith to march with his brigade upon Poona. He also asked powers from the Governor General to open war upon Bajirao as he found it no longer possible to keep peace with him.

Where shall I find a knight will ride,
The jungle parts with me?
There are five and fifty coursers there,
And four and fifty men;
When the fifty-fifth shall mount his steed,
The Deccan thrives again!

2. A fresh treaty imposed upon Bajirao.—The Peshwa also started brisk preparations of war and sent his treasure and valuables to Raigad for safe custody. On 1st April Elphinstone wrote a threatening letter to him that war would be at once opened upon him, if he did not apprehend and surrender Dengle. On 6th April the Peshwa invited the Resident to his palace for a personal explanation and opened his heart to him in a torrent of deceitful oratory, pleading his innocence and entire helplessness. But Elphinstone was not so soft or simple as to be moved by Bajirao's pathetic appeal or misled by his dissimulation. When the Peshwa finished speaking, Elphinstone repeated his stern resolve that he would give him a month's time within which he must secure Trimbakji, and as a guarantee against failure, he must surrender into British hands within 24 hours the four main forts of Raigad, Purandar, Sinhgad and Trimbak. This threat went to Bajirao's heart. He made a show of taking it quietly. In execution of his threat Elphinstone's forces moved from their camp to surround the city. At this Bajirao became quite alarmed and at 10 o' clock in the morning he placed in Elphinstone's hands a written order for the surrender of the four forts evidently under severe mortification. The subject of Dengle's surrender then came under discussion and after a long vacillation between his hot and cold fits, the cowardly Peshwa issued the following proclamation for the arrest of Trimbakji[2] :—

"Trimbakji Dengle has run away from his captivity under the Hon'ble British Government and started a rebellion. Whoever captures and brings him dead or alive, will be given a reward of two lacs cash and an inam village of a thousand Rupees income by the Peshwa's Government. Any person who will give a correct report of his whereabouts will be given a cash reward of Rs. five thousand. Those who knowingly keep back the information will be severely punished." The names of twelve accomplices of Dengle are mentioned.[3]

This was a moment when a grand Indian conspiracy, as has been already indicated, was being organized and Bajirao was being earnestly pressed from various quarters to accept

2. Ait. Tip. 4.23.
3. John Bhiggs's *Memoirs* pp. 44-45 ;

its leadership as the head of the Maratha State. Bajirao's confidant Baloji Kunjar was at this time feverishly active in bringing about such a consummation. These plans were closely watched by Elphinstone, who strove to keep Bajirao out of them, with the result that all anti-British movements finally collapsed. Consummate British diplomacy backed by sufficient force with concerted timely action by all the British agents at the Indian courts, ultimately proved too strong for the crude secretive methods generally employed by Indians, which appear ridiculous. For instance, letters in cipher were then freely circulated by the Indian chiefs, some of which were detected by Elphinstone's spies.[4]

Circumstances had so radically altered since the treaty of Bassein that its provisions were now found to be unworkable, and Elphinstone obtained the Governor General's sanction for a new treaty being made with the Peshwa. On 1st June 1817 Elphinstone presented it to the Peshwa for his acceptance. After discussion and hesitation the Peshwa signed it on 13th June. This treaty declared Trimbakji to be the murderer of the Shastri, finally extinguished the Peshwa's overlordship over the Indian chiefs, ceded to the British Government all the Peshwa's territory outside Maharashtra, compelled him to withdraw all his vakils from foreign courts, and prevented him from any longer keeping correspondence or communication with them. Thus the Maratha confederacy came to be finally and publicly dissolved.[5] These were certainly harsh terms and they were sure to bring forth bitter fruit.

3. Appasaheb of Nagpur.—The imposition of such a

4. Eiphinstone was allowed to maintain a strong secret service with ample funds placed at his disposal for which no audit was to be called for. He liberally paid his Indian agents and obtained vital information from them. Several notable names of his secret agents have survived in local memories, as Balajipant Natu, Ganeshpant, members of the Chitnis family of Satara, Bapu Bhat etc. A number of the Peshwa's own officers and immediate servants were in the secret pay of the Resident. In fact there was hardly any Indian chief who had not been won over by British money.

5. This treaty is given in detail on pp. 176-186 of the Marathi chronicle entitled the End of the Peshwas. See Colebrooke I p. 306 ; Private Journal of Marquis of Hastings p. 290.

harsh fresh treaty upon the Peshwa exasperated him and drove him to the extremity of a war, with which are closely connected two others, viz. the war on the Raja of Nagpur and that against the Pindaris, including the destruction of Holkar's army.

Raghuji Bhosle after his sad experience of war in 1803 continued to maintain an attitude of sullen indifference to all political concerns of the Maratha confederacy, confining his attention only to the protection of his territory of Nagpur. Time and again the British Government pressed him to enter into the system of Subsidiary Alliances, but he steadfastly declined to accept such an alliance. When Yashvantrao Holkar invited his cooperation against the British, he refused to join him. For a time he continued his friendship with Daulatrao Sindia ; and when Cornwallis reversed Lord Wellesley's policy and declared for non-intervention with the concerns of the Indian chiefs, Raghuji and Daulatrao managed to coerce the Nawab of Bhopal in 1807, to cede his two districts Hoshangabad and Shivni, originally belonging to Bhosle and later wrested by the Nawab. The Nawab in the eyes of the Marathas was an upstart who managed to appropriate with British support a slice of Malwa, which belonged wholly to the Marathas by right.

In 1809 Holkar's lieutenant Mirkhan threatened an invasion of Nagpur in co-operation with the Nawab of Bhopal. But Raghuji boldly faced them and forced them to retreat. On this occasion the Governor General Lord Minto sent a British force under Col. Close to Raghuji's help, suggesting thereby that Raghuji should in his own interest entertain that force permanently in his service. Raghuji instead of returning thanks expressed his disapproval of the measure. Thereafter in 1813 and 1814 Sindia and Bhosle jointly attacked Bhopal and laid siege to that post. The Nawab Wazir Muhammad Khan so valiantly defended the place that the invaders had to retreat in disappointment.[6]

When the Nepal war started in 1814, there arose a wave of extreme unrest throughout India. As a measure of security the British Government attempted fresh alliances with the Indian chiefs. One such alliance which they made was with the

6. See P. R. C. Vol. 5.

Nawab of Bhopal. (29th Oct. 1814), who was thereby liberated from his allegiance to Sindia. The Nepal war ended in March 1816. In this very month died Raghuji Bhosle (22 March) facilitating British penetration in Nagpur which he had long resisted.

Raghuji had a grown up son named Parsoji Balasaheb, then 38 years old, but he was paralytic and almost blind, utterly incapable of managing the affairs of his State. Raghuji's brother Vyankoji Manya Bapu had a son Mudhoji Appasaheb then about 20 years old and in every way a capable member in the family, to whom, however, the late Raghuji had never taken kindly. On his death-bed Raghuji called him and enjoined him to take care of Parsoji and maintain the prestige of the house. This situation afforded facilities to self-seekers, who now started fresh activities. The British Resident Jenkins wielded power and watched the developments in the Nagpur administration with a view to imposing upon it a British Subsidiary Force. He induced Mudhoji Appasaheb to accept a subsidiary treaty and had it signed by him secretly at night on 27 April 1816, against the general opinion of the responsible servants of the Government. In due course the Governor General notified the treaty signed by Appasaheb and offered him congratulations for the bold and appropriate step he had taken. In fulfilment of its terms Col. Doveton arrived at Nagpur with his forces. This development was abhorred by Parsoji's mother Bankabai, his wife Kashibai and several prominent officials who all became furious against Appasaheb for having sacrificed the independence of the State to satisfy his personal ambition. Intrigues and confusion followed in consequence, so that Appasaheb felt his life in Nagpur so insecure that he went and lived in the suburban camp where the Subsidiary Force was stationed. Here Appasaheb formed a plot to do away with Parsoji and secure full powers of rulership in his own hands. On 1st February 1817 Parsoji was found dead in his bed. Jenkins made an enquiry into the cause of his death but did not discover any definite proof of murder. Parsoji's wife Kashibai burnt herself on the funeral pyre as a sati. Appasaheb sent his agents to Bajirao at Poona to obtain the robes of his office. But Bajirao was then being deprived of this power of overlordship outside his State. This was

also the time when Bajirao was organising an anti-British conspiracy and Appasaheb began to disclose a marked change in his conduct. Anxious to throw off the state of dependence in which the Subsidiary Alliance had placed him, he cordially entered into the views of the Peshwa and gave him the strongest assurances of support. Early in September 1817 he befriended the Pindari leader Cheetu and enlisted a large number of fresh troops. When he heard that Bajirao had attacked the Poona Residency on 5th November 1817, Appasaheb imitated the same course by attacking the Residency of Nagpur. Bajirao had sent him robes of Sena-Saheb-Subah and decorations which he received in an open Darbar, against the Resident's protest, on 24th November. This ceremony was an open signal for an attack on the Residency, which lay at the foot of the two hills known as Sitabaldi about 2 miles west of the old city of Nagpur. Appasaheb's force amounted to 18 thousand men with 26 guns ; while the British force was considerably smaller. The Raja had engaged a corps of Arab soldiers which attacked the small British force in the morning of 26th November and captured the Sitabaldi hill. Thereupon they closed in upon the Residency below. The British held out but their ammunition and supplies ran short. One fourth of the small force was either killed or overpowered. But the day was saved by the gallantry of Capt. Fitzgerald who commanded the Bengal cavalry. He recklessly charged the main body of the Raja's force and captured two guns. By noon the struggle ended in the complete triumph of the British arms, the highest credit for which was due to the courage and constancy of the Indian troops in British employ. Reinforcements quickly arrived in Nagpur from all directions, and Jenkins was able to dictate terms to the Raja. He was invited to dismiss his troops, to deliver up his guns, and himself come and reside at the Residency. Appasaheb accepted the conditions and arrived at the Residency on the 16th December after his Arab levies at the palace had been routed. On the 8th January following, he was formally restored to his former dignity. But his spirit had not been subdued. The Peshwa was at the moment in flight and had sent his emissaries inviting Appasaheb to join him. A discovery of Appasaheb's clandestine correspondence defeated his schemes. On 16th March Appasaheb was made a pri-

soner in his palace, brought to the Residency, where after an enquiry, the charge of murdering his nephew was proved against him. The case was submitted for orders to the Governor General who directed him to be confined in the fort of Allahabad. Parsoji's wife Durgabai was asked to adopt a son. Baji-ba Gujar, a ten year old son of Banubai (daughter of Raghuji) was selected: the adoption took place on 16th June 1818 and the heir was given the name of Raghuji Bapusaheb. A formal coronation ceremony was performed on the following Dassara, 9th October 1818. The administration of the Nag-pur State came to be reformed on the British model.

In the meantime Appasaheb, a prisoner at the Residency, began his march for Allahabad with a party of his accomplices on 3rd May 1818 under a strong British guard. He had a personal retinue of about 100 men. On 12th May they halt-ed for the night at a village named Raichur near Jubbulpore. During the journey Appasaheb had succeeded in corrupting the fidelity of his guards, whose pity had been excited by the sad fate that had befallen the Maratha prince. During the early morning hours when all was quiet in the camp, a sepoy guard on duty supplied Appasaheb with an additional suit of clothes just like his own uniform. Appasaheb put that dress on and escaped. The occurrence was not noticed till after daybreak when a pursuit was undertaken. Appasaheb travelled into the Gond country of the Mahadev hills and was sheltered by a Gond chief. The rainy season soon arrived and made those wild regions inaccessible to the pursuers. The British Government issued proclamations for Appasaheb's ar-rest offering a reward of one lac with inam lands. The offer was afterwards doubled, but no success resulted. For two years all the Central Indian forests were thoroughly scoured but Appasaheb was not traced. Indeed his wanderings proved dra-matic, the public being sympathetic to this unlucky and miserable prince. The disbanded soldiery of Nagpur and Poona collected round him along with several Pindaris who had been recently hunted down through the plains. All these took to guerilla tactics, which long eluded the British search.

When the British forces came upon Appasaheb through the Gond country and hunted him out of it, he turned to the diffi-cult fort of Ashirgad. Appasaheb received shelter from Yash-

vantrao Lad, Sindia's keeper of that fort. The fort was captured by the British on 9th April 1819, but Appasaheb managed to escape once more.[7] For years he roamed about in north India but found no asylum. He reached Lahore pursued by British troops, but failing to receive the Sikh king's support, he retraced his steps and went to Jodhpur in 1829, where its ruler Raja Mansinh sheltered him, giving a security to the British against any mischief on the part of the fugitive. Here Appasaheb ended his life of 44 years on 15th July 1840.

4. The Pindaris and their function.—The rise of the Maratha Power is closely connected with the activities of the Pindaris, a bandit cavalry which reinforced all Indian armies. Their true history has perhaps not yet been written. The profuse British accounts suffer from a natural bias created by the last years of their activities perpetuating the impression that the Pindaris were the enemies of society and such loathsome pests as deserved to be exterminated. At one time they were a convenient ingredient of the system of warface developed by the Marathas. In that system ever since the days of Shivaji and Santaji Ghorpade, there had always been a class of unpaid auxiliaries attached to each chief's fighting quota, whose duty it was to step in the moment the battle ended and finish the enemy by seizing his property and camp equipage and destroying his power of recovery. These received no regular pay and were expected to live by plunder and devastation of the enemy country. Their first origin is traced to the decadent stage of the Mughal Empire, particularly the last few years of Aurangzeb's reign.[8] Thereafter during the days of the Peshwa Bajirao I and his lieutenants such as Sindia, Holkar, Pawar and others, Maratha commandants had always in their camps a body of these Pindari stragglers. They were skilful marauders with horses of their own but no fixed master

7. A British spy, known as a forest saint named Nakhi Bawa, was in Malcolm's employ. The latter learned through this spy, that Appasaheb intended to go to the Punjab and seek Ranajitsinh's shelter. Ai. S. Sahitya I p. 164, letter of 26 May 1819.

8. The etymology of the Marathi word Pendha or Pendhar is doubtful. It means a body of stragglers, equivalent to Bunga or Bazar-Bunga of the regular armies.

whom they followed, acting on their own initiative as occasion required. So long as the Maratha State worked as an organized unit, controlled by competent chiefs, these predatory bands, unmatched in their long and swift marches and having their own assigned duties, followed their regular avocation and were considered quite helpful and not obnoxious. But since the days of Lord Wellesley when the old Maratha system collapsed, the numerous Maratha cavalry could no longer be employed usefully by the State, and went to swell the ranks of these freebooters. Their numbers grew as one Indian State after another passed under British protection and dispensed with its troops. The temporary abandonment of the British policy of Subsidiary alliances during the regimes of Barlow and Minto gave a sudden fillip to the activities of the Pindaris, halting British expansion for a time and creating conditions favourable to their rapid growth.

During the present unsettled period the authority of the Peshwa and his subordinate chiefs in Malwa and Bundelkhand was slowly dissolving, and in a sullen mood they found it to their advantage to harbour the Pindari hordes and encourage their predatory activities. The supreme British Government of Calcutta was flooded with reports from their provincial subordinates describing the frightful devastations which these Pindaries began to perpetrate in increasing measure year after year. They committed atrocious tortures and rape upon innocent people. They ate up the country like a swarm of locusts. Whatever good they once could do now vanished, making life unbearable.[9] Lord Hastings' attention was seriously drawn to this subject soon after his arrival. He at once obtained the sanction of the home authorities for a regular war upon them. It was delayed on account of the Nepal war that first came on.

The major portion of these Pindari bands was in the service of Sindia and Holkar and had on that account received even the distinctive titles of Sindeshahi and Holkarshahi. Mahadji Sindia was well served by two Pindari leaders Hira and Burhan, and assigned to them for permanent occupation lands in the Nemawar region of the Vindya range north of the

9. See *Autobiography of Lutfullah* by Eastwick.

Narmada, which thus became their main rendezvous. Their rapid marches made pursuit difficult. Hira and Burhan died about the year 1800. The former had two sons Dost Muhammad and Wasil Muhammad, who thereafter became famous leaders. Another Pindari chief Karimkhan rose to fame under Yashvantrao Holkar and became his principal agent for the execution of his designs. Karimkhan's depredations upon the State of Bhopal became most unbearable. He and his companions roamed over the vast region from the mouth of the Chambal to that of the Godavari, levying a blackmail of terrific proportions. Daulatrao Sindia managed to allure him to a personal meeting and had him closely confined in the fort of Gwalior. After five years of confinement he paid a heavy fine to Sindia and obtained his release. He had a disciple named Namdar Khan who harassed Sindia's dominions and took a heavy retribution for the treatment inflicted upon his master. The two together thereafter started depredations on an unprecedented scale in co-operation with another intrepid spirit named Cheetu. These held a grand assemblage in Nemawar on the Dassara day of 1811, when more than 25 thousand souls with fine horses came together in unusual pomp and planned a large scale sweep throughout India, assigning definite duties to each section.

But the two leaders soon fell out and ruined the whole movement. Sindia won over Cheetu to his side and together they attacked Karimkhan. Once more he was captured and confined. This success emboldened Cheetu who emerged from his camp on the Narmada with a following of 15000, and joined by Dost Muhammad with another band of 18000, the two celebrated the Dassara of 1814 and started on fresh adventures in separate sections. They repeated the same exploit the next year (1815), when Cheetu's bands turned to the south in two parties, one following the river Tapti, and the other under Cheetu's own command raiding the Nizam's dominions. The latter reached the Krishna in November, proceeded along its banks right to its mouth on the east coast and returned along the river Godavari. They obtained an incalculable amount of booty, for disposing of which they held a huge market in Nemawar, where an open sale of costly jewels and goods took place. This gives an idea of what havoc these freebooters committed during these few years. Yashvantrao Holkar had two

Pathan captains Amirkhan and Shahamatkhan whose share in his exploits has been already referred to. It is these two companions of valour and courage who helped Yashvantrao to defeat and drive the Peshwa from Poona in the Divali season of 1802. Amirkhan's men extorted money from Hindu merchants of Mandsaur by tying cotton to their fingers and then setting it on fire. It is admitted that the murder of Krishna Kumari of Udaipur was ordered by Amirkhan. Shahamatkhan died in 1814 : but his colleague Amirkhan continued to serve the Holkar State, when on the eve of the battle of Mahidpur, he was induced to quit Holkar's service and to accept the Nawabship of Tonk where his descendants continue to rule.

The Pindari leaders repeated their operations again in 1816. Leaving their headquarters in Malwa in Feburary, they marched raiding the vast territory right upto Masulipatan which they reached on 10th March. Thereupon they entered the British possessions of Madras, covering every day about 40 miles and laying waste at least fifty villages. After plundering Kadappa they turned north, outwitting the British forces that came in pursuit of them. They then laid waste the territories of Haidarabad and Poona, and returned to their base in Nemawar crossing the Narmada on 17th May, an achievement of surprising dimensions performed within three and a half months. One can imagine what tremendous havoc they committed and what irritation they caused to the British administrators of the various localities affected by their destructive activities. During the two years 1815 and 1816 the Pindaris traversed the whole of Peninsular India twice. Minute enquiries held by the British revealed that they roamed in the Madras Presidency for twelve days only, but within that short space of time they killed 182 men, wounded 500, and inflicted various injuries on at least 3500 more, in addition to the acquisition of a treasure of at least ten lacs. They specially selected for their operations the territories of the British Government in order to thwart the measures the latter were contemplating for their annihilation. The Peshwa's agent Baloji Kunjar at this time went about advising Maratha chieftains to ally themselves with the Pindaris in order to oppose the expansion of the British Power. The British plans were therefore directed to round up not only the Pindaris but also all

anti-British elements that were abetting them, forces and offshoots so to say of the combined activities of the Peshwa, Appasaheb of Nagpur and the Holkar Chief of Malwa,—for a simultaneous rise with a vague notion of preserving Maratha independence. The Pindari war and the Maratha war therefore form complements of one and the same objective, with which many individual spirits like Baloji Kunjar, Trimbakji Dengle and others identified themselves. These Indian chiefs smarting under the loss of their power felt a secret satisfaction at the troubles inflicted by the Pindaris upon British administrators, who now moved cautiously in order to keep back each Indian chief from joining the central movement. These measures now deserve to be explained.

5. **Extinction of the Pindaris.**— The Governor General enunciated a comprehensive policy for putting down all opposition and establishing the unquestioned supremacy of British rule throughout India. The various local officials were asked to obtain a written confession from each Indian chief that the Pindaris were a nuisance to peace and that they deserved to be ex tirpated. No one had the boldness to defend the Pindaris, although many at heart sympathised with them. A sweeping movement to encompass the Pindari menace required gigantic measures covering the vast territories of intermixed jurisdictions of such distant States as Jaipur, Bhopal, Nagpur, Poona and Haidarabad with British territories intervening. The Governor General invited all the chiefs to join him in the war, and warned those that did not join, that they would be treated as enemies of the British Government. Naturally it took the Government more than a year to formulate a definite plan of action. The non-intervention policy of Barlow and Minto was openly declared to have been abandoned, and all princes were invited to form fresh alliances with the British Government for the object of suppressing the Pindaris. The Governor General divided the country into two spheres, the northern and the southern with the Narmada river between them. Charles Metcalfe, then the British agent at Delhi was appointed to deal with the chiefs in the north and John Malcolm with those in the south. During the monsoon months of 1817 the two agents conducted the negotiations entrusted to them. Metcalfe

formed special treaties with the chiefs of Kotah, Bhopal, Bundi, Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur, so that none of them could any longer harbour the Pindaris, as they all accepted British supremacy.

John Malcolm similarly visited Poona, Nagpur and Haidarabad ; the last was already in alliance with the British. Malcolm could not rope in either the Peshwa or the Raja of Nagpur, who were creating trouble for the British rulers. Malcolm went round and co-ordinated the plans of British strategy, giving full instructions to the Residents and commandants in charge of the different regions. Malcolm and Metcalfe thereafter visited the Governor General and completed the preparations for opening the campaign as soon as the weather would permit. The Governor General himself took up his station in the British camp on the Jamuna opposite Agra and later moved to Bundelkhand.

The Peshwa in the meantime sent secret messages to the Maratha chiefs to rise simultaneously, and increased his own forces under the plea of the invitation he had received from Malcolm to co-operate in the war against the Pindaris. Sindia on the other hand was torn between two conflicting calls. He had his sympathies with his Maratha confederates, but surrounded by British armies he became helpless and signed a fresh treaty with the British Government on 5th November 1817, binding himself to cooperate with them in fighting the Pindaris. The British army was organized in two large divisions, one for the northern regions posted on the Jamuna under the command of General Ochterlony and the other posted on the Narmada for the southern operations under Sir Thomas Hislop with Malcolm to advise him on political matters. Smaller detachments under those two main divisions were stationed at different strategic points. The Pindaris then numbering about twenty-three thousand, were encamped in three divisions led by Cheetu, Karimkhan and Wasil Muhammad. They earnestly tried to secure the support of the Maratha princes and received a partial response from Poona, Nagpur and Indore.

The Governor General opened the campaign on 16th October 1817 when the British forces left their headquarters, pressing upon the Pindari haunts in Malwa. Karimkhan and Wasil

Muhammad were routed on 13th December at Shahabad near Jhalawar and betook themselves to the jungles of Udaipur. They were soon ousted from their retreat and being hotly pursued they ran towards the Narmada, entirely confused and deserted by their followers. The Governor General offered them amnesty if they immediately surrendered. Wasil Muhammad gave himself up into the hands of Sindia and swallowed poison on being detected in an attempt to escape. Karimkhan submitted to Malcolm on 15th February 1818 and was given a small estate near Gorakhpur. Another leader Namdar Khan submitted to Col. Adams on 3rd February at Devrajpur near Bhopal. Cheetu, the most formidable of the Pindari chiefs was hunted with restless and relentless rigour until he was driven into a jungle near Ashirgad, where he was devoured by a tiger. Thus the Pindari menace disappeared quickly though it had gathered for years.

6. Holkar's power destroyed.— The Pindari war was only a grand British plan for extinguishing all vestiges of the Maratha power and establishing unquestioned British supremacy throughout India. The plan involved a long process, in which besides Poona, Indore, Nagpur, Baroda and Gwalior were all more or less included and were separately dealt with. After Yashvantrao Holkar's death his young and beautiful wife Tulsibai possessing more than common ability for public affairs, assumed power in the name of Malharrao a son of Yashvantrao from another wife, then four years old, and managed with considerable ability the concerns of the Holkar State with the help of her favourite Ganapatrao and his associate Tatya Jog. She secured in this task the co-operation of the old servants of the State and her husband's Muslim colleagues Amir Khan and Gafur Khan and a neighbouring friend Zalim Sinh of Kotah. Her greatest difficulty arose from want of funds, without which she could not maintain the army and without the army she could not govern. Her trouble was further accentuated by Daulatrao Sindia who pounced upon the undefended possessions of Holkar with great vehemence. He even made an attempt on the lives of Tulsibai and Malharrao. In the midst of such an unbearable situation, urgent calls arrived from the Peshwa at Poona for her forces to join in an anti-British drive. Driven

to desperation she left Indore for Rampura with Malharrao and sought shelter with Zalim Sinh near Kotah. The British chiefs closely watched her movements and took prompt measures to prevent the Holkar army from moving south. It was caught between two pincers during the last months of 1817. Malcolm closely watched the situation of Tulsibai and offered her terms similar to those to which Sindia had agreed. Tatya Jog counselled her to accept the terms and put herself under British protection. But real power had now passed from her hands into those of the Pathan leaders who controlled the soldiery, particularly Roshan Beg, who was at the head of the disciplined regiments, and Ramdin who commanded the Maratha horse then considered the finest in India.[10]

Knowing that the acceptance of the British offer would be the annihilation of their power and encouraged by the arrival of considerable sums from the Peshwa and by promises of more, these two chiefs urged a recourse to hostilities and compelled the lady to sanction the movement of the Holkar army to the south. One principal supporter of the Holkar State was Amirkhan, who early in December accepted a British offer of payment of the arrears of his troops and the grant of the Nawabship of Tonk. This desertion of Amirkhan proved symbolic. The other military chiefs believed that Tulsibai and her advisers were willing to sell them to the British and determined to baffle her treacherous design. So on the evening of the 19th of December they seized the Regent and the minister, placed them in close confinement, held a council warmly debating how the prisoners should be disposed of. As day broke on the 20th Tulsibai was taken from her captivity, carried to the banks of the Sipra river at Mahidpur (about 30 miles north of Ujjain) where the head of the unhappy woman was struck off and her bloody remains cast into the stream. She was then under thirty years of age.

The various British divisions under Hislop at once closed in upon the Holkar army's encampment (21st December), and took their post on the opposite bank. Hislop attacked Holkar's force with desperate courage in the face of a severe

10. Mill's History of India, Vol. VIII p. 283 ; Kaye's Malcolm Vol. II p. 201.

artillery fire from his opponents, and gained a decisive victory, though at the great cost of 778 men killed and wounded. Young Malharrao Holkar with the hereditary gallantry of his house, rode on his horse through the fighting ranks imploring his men not to retreat. His sister Bhimabai then a widow of twenty, showed the same valour during the battle, riding at the head of her corps of cavalry on a fine charger to win the day. Harirao Holkar, son of Vithoji fought with desperation and inflicted severe losses upon the British. But such courage and daring proved of no avail before the superior artillery of the British army. Holkar's entire camp with 63 guns and a large magazine of stores fell to the victors. After the battle Amir-Khan and Gafur Khan offered their mediation to Malcolm and in conjunction with Tatya Jog brought about a treaty on 6th January 1818, known as that of Mandsaur, providing that British suzerainty should be respected and all the Holkar territory north of Bundi and south of the Satpura range should be ceded. In addition Holkar agreed to maintain a British subsidiary force and to limit his own troops to the number of three thousand.[11] Gafur Khan received a jagir at Jawra, but the undaunted Ramdin, a north Indian Brahman leader, alone refused to surrender and boldly proceeded to join the fugitive Peshwa with the body of men he commanded.

7. **The Peshwa's appeal to arms.**—Bajirao had signed the treaty of June 13 under severe pressure and agony, nursing in his heart a bitter sense of wrong. He went to Pandharpur on his annual visit and did not return to the capital for some three months, occupying himself in preparations for a war with the British. In the call he received from the British Government to support their operations against the Pindaris, he found a handy excuse for raising fresh levies. Nor was the dissimulation less marked on the part of the British either. The Governor General had made up his mind to finish the Peshwa for all the duplicity he had so long practised. After performing his Ashad worship on 25th June, Bajirao proceeded from Pandharpur to Mahuli ostensibly for the ablutions enjoined by religion during the intercalary month of the Hindu

11. Holkar State Papers (printed 1945), Vol. 2 No. 147.

calendar. His following at this time had swollen considerably. He secretly incited several Indian Powers for an anti-British rise. He carried on an extensive conspiracy seeking the cooperation of even the Burman Empire.[12]

John Malcolm was at this time visiting the Deccan courts for obtaining their cooperation in the Pindari War. He met the Peshwa at Mahuli and thus records his visit : "On 9th August I went to see the Maharaja at seven in the morning. Six years which is the period since I saw him last, had not changed him much, but he looked careworn. He received me with apparent joy, said I was associated with Wellesley and Close in placing him on the musnud, that I had proved I had still a warm heart towards him by coming so far to see him and that he was delighted to have an opportunity of unburdening his heart to one in whom he had such confidence. I had an interview of three and a half hours ; what passed is secret and political, but the result was satisfactory." Malcolm found Bajirao stung to the quick by the humiliation of the treaty of Poona. He was full of compliments and professions. He declared that he had always been the friend of the British and made liberal promises of assistance in the operations projected against the Pindaris. He spoke freely of the difficulties of his position and repeated that he had been harshly treated and bitterly inveighed against Elphinstone. He was obviously both vexed and dispirited. Malcolm exerted himself to soothe and encourage the unhappy prince and believed that he left the Peshwa comforted if not assured. Bajirao may have been sincere at the time, but was utterly without steadfastness of character and no reliance could be placed on his professions. Malcolm returned to Poona on 10th August and urged Elphinstone not to allow his suspicions of Bajirao's conduct to interfere with the military plans of the Government. The chivalrous spirit of Elphinstone gave an unwilling assent."[13]

Elphinstone radically disagreed with Malcolm's suggestion of treating Bajirao more mildly. He considered that he alone from his close experience of years understood the deep dissimu-

12. Private Journal of Marquess of Hastings p. 369.
13. Kaye's *Life of Malcolm* Vol. II. pp. 170—172.

lation that the Peshwa was capable of, and that those who came in contact with him in casual visits were deceived by the man's suavity of manner and volubility of tongue. Acting on Malcolm's advice Elphinstone relented his former rigour towards the Peshwa with the result, as he himself wrote, that the burning of the Residency and all that followed became possible.

The Peshwa did not fail to make the best use of this visit of Malcolm to him at Mahuli in developing his secret plans. An annual fair is held at Mahuli in August, of which wrestling matches and athletic sports form an important item. Bajirao selected strong and useful recruits for his new levy from the competitors at the gathering, and gave Bapu Gokhale his chief commander a sacred oath that he would not interfere with his conduct of the war. He put a crore of Rupees at Gokhale's disposal for creating an efficient army. In order to induce the chiefs and jagirdars under his control to join heartily in his projected campaign, he restored to them the estates which he had confiscated and conciliated others he had estranged. He invited for a personal visit the Patwardhans, the Panses, the Rastes, Appa Desai of Nipani and others, making friendly gestures to each and all for a supreme cooperative effort. He visited the Chhatrapati, explained his views to him and made him swear cooperation and secrecy. Discovering that the Raja was privately conducting a mischievous plot with the British Resident, he kept him and his family securely confined in fort Wasota. Bajirao also pressed into his service the old discarded diplomats Givindrao Kale, Anyaba Mehendale, Dada Gadre and others of Nana Phadnis' regime and gathered their views to strengthen his position in every way possible. From Mahuli the Peshwa returned to Poona at the end of September.

Briggs's reminiscences well illustrate how the two antagonists Bajirao and Elphinstone developed their plans.[14] In order to obtain intelligence of the latter's move Bajirao spent lavishly in bribing the Residency servants and seducing the Company's troops. The English commandant of Bajirao's contingent received two lacs of Rupees from the Peshwa to obtain information of Trimbakji and his proceedings. Elphinstone had a regular postal system for communication with the native courts

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14. *Life of Elphinstone*, by Colebrooke I. p. 301.

of India and the department was managed by the British Postmaster of Poona. Through such perfect arrangements of Elphinstone reports poured in upon him how the Peshwa's agents were busy at the various Indian courts and spending lavishly for their master. It was subsequently ascertained that out of a million and a half sterling of revenue (1½ crores of Rupees at Rs. 10 = £) which Bajirao received, he laid by one-third annually, so that he must have had at his disposal in 1817 upwards of eight millions of treasure in jewels and specie (Rs. eight crores). He bribed every servant of the Residency, but Elphinstone's vigilance proved more than a match for him. Balajipant Natu, Yashvantrao Ghorpade, the Satara Chitnis and a number of others were the secret informants of Elphinstone and kept him in possession of every move and plan of Bajirao. In contrast the methods employed by Bajirao were crude and his agents ignorant of the world outside, so that he became an object of public ridicule. The task of corrupting the Company's sepoys was entrusted to Vamanbhat Karve and the Shankaracharya Swami; and that of corrupting the English officers was assigned to Yashvantrao Ghorpade of the Sandur branch. Yashvantrao accepted the money from Bajirao, and Elphinstone knew the fact from another source. It may thus be gathered with what efficiency the priestly staff about Bajirao must have served him.

As Bajirao had given a solemn undertaking for co-operating in the war against the Pindaris, Elphinstone took over under his own command Captain Ford and his whole corps which Bajirao had so carefully nursed for his own use.

The annual Dassara assemblage occurred on 9th October when the Peshwa behaved with studied disrespect to the Resident. On 14th October the two had a meeting which was destined to be the last. On this occasion the Peshwa used unusually strong language remonstrating against his being so thoroughly distrusted. A clear deadlock resulted in the talks, and the two parted with their own different conclusions about what was to happen next. Elphinstone concluded that Bajirao was decidedly hostile, but would not immediately venture on a war. Except Bapu Gokhale none of his advisers would consent to such a course. Vithalrao Vinchurkar who was intima-

tely acquainted with Bajirao's preparations, gave his emphatic opinion against a declaration of hostilities. Govindrao Kale[15] supported Vinchurkar rather in hesitating terms. Bajirao well knew that Sindia was completely in the hands of the British and that Holkar and the Bhosle of Nagpur could render him no substantial help.

8. **The Peshwa's flight :**—The Resident's quarters were by no means strong against a full attack from the Peshwa. At the Sangam Residency he had his personal bodyguard of two infantry companies ; the regular cantonment was then in the east of the city at Garpir, now the seat of the Post Office, where Col. Burr commanded two battalions of native infantry. As this position contiguous to the town was for some time considered unsafe, Elphinstone withdrew Burr's force to the village of Kirkee, where he could count upon the support of Captain Ford's Subsidiary force, then stationed at Dapuri about five miles northwest. Ford and his officers were on excellent terms with the Peshwa's Court, in particular with Moro Dikshit and Bapu Gokhale. On 30th October Burr received a welcome reinforcement of the Bombay European Regiment and prepared his position at Kirkee in consultation with the Resident to meet any sudden attack by the Peshwa. The whole British force did not exceed three thousand men with five guns.

On November 3rd Elphinstone found his situation so threatening that he despatched an urgent message to Sirur 36 miles away on the Ahmadnagar road, asking for help. When the Peshwa heard of this he sent an ultimatum with Vithoji Gaikwad on the 5th demanding that the Bombay Regiment should be sent away and that the troops ordered from Sirur should be countermanded. Elphinstone refused to comply, replying that the march of the troops had been necessitated by the Peshwa's own preparations. Within an hour after Vithoji's return, large bodies of Maratha horse were seen approaching

15. This Kale was the last Maratha diplomat of the old regime. On his father's death on 13th September 1786, he took up the duties of ambassador at the Nizam's Court and witnessed strange vicissitudes in Maratha politics, dying in November 1823.

the British camp, and the Resident with his staff and escort just managed to quit their houses and crossing the Holkar's Bridge to reach Burr's camp safely. Immediately after this the Residency buildings with Elphinstone's precious library and manuscript materials for a history of India, were burnt to the ground by the Peshwa's troops. The historian Grant Duff was at this time on the staff of the Resident. After setting fire to the Residency buildings Bapu Gokhale launched his attack upon the British camp of Kirkee from the plain of Ganesh Khind. The resulting battle takes its name from either of these places, Kirkee or Ganesh Khind.

The two lines faced each other at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of 5th November and the action was watched by the Peshwa from the Parvati hill. Elphinstone decided boldly to take the offensive and advised Burr to assail the Marathas instead of awaiting their attack. The fearless advance of the British troops immediately destroyed Maratha confidence. There was a deep nullah in front of the British left which proved disastrous to the galloping Maratha cavalry. A separate battle took place on the English right, where Moro Dikshit was killed by a cannon ball while leading the charge. Darkness set in and at Bajirao's urgent summons Gokhale retired to his camp at Ganesh Khind leaving the British in possession of the field. The British losses were trifling, 86 killed and wounded as against 500 of the Marathas. The army of the latter was estimated at about 18000 horse and 8000 foot with 14 guns.

Indecision and fear overcame Bajirao now in his conduct of the war as in his earlier life, and he failed to follow up the fight of the 5th November which he had wantonly commenced, interfering with every move of Bupu Gokhale, although he was now heavily reinforced by most of the Maratha chiefs and Holkar's army under Ramdin. General Smith arrived at Kirkee from Sirur on the 13th and decided in collaboration with the Resident at once to take the offensive. Under cover of their heavy artillery fire, which the Marathas failed to oppose, Smith on 15th November crossed the river at Yeravda near the present Bund and captured Ghorpadi. At two o'clock in the morning of the 16th Bajirao precipitately retreated to Purandar against the earnest solicitations of his advisers, not allowing even his brother Chimnaji to stay on and lead the forces.

This action of the Peshwa made the British masters of the situation. Elphinstone threatened to bombard the city if Bajirao's troops resisted. Balajipant Natu used his influence with Elphinstone to prevent the attack upon the capital and himself hoisted the British flag on the Peshwa's palace. An eye-witness writes :—"While Gokhale and his men were trying to make a determined stand, the Shrimant ran away at night, his troops lost courage, and his State and the capital with all the treasure easily fell into British hands. Bajirao proceeded to Mahuli and Elphinstone to Loni after him. On Monday 17th November Natu and Robinson with only 25 armed men proceeded to the Shaniwar palace and put up the British flag without opposition. Guards have been posted in the city and normal business resumed. Robinson has now opened his office at the palace and conducts the administration."[15]

With the fall of Poona the result of the war became a foregone conclusion. All that remained was to pursue the fugitive Peshwa and run him to the ground. Even in flight he did not fail to exhibit his inborn indecision and cowardice, during the seven months from November 1817 to May 1818. The operations of Nagpur and Mahidpur were also timed to support the Peshwa's action in Poona. From Yeravda Bapu Gokhale turned to protect the fugitive Peshwa, who proceeded via Jejuri to the south with the intention of securing the Chhatrapati and his family, lest they should desert to the English. When he reached Mahuli, Appa Desai of Nipani joined him with a thousand Arab mercenaries. Henceforward the Peshwa endured what may be called a running siege by the British forces. It took long for the pursuers to compel the fugitive to stand a definite action.

From Mahuli the Peshwa despatched Naro Apte to fetch the Chhatrapati from fort Wasota and himself suddenly marched further south to the vicinity of Miraj. Here on 29th he heard that some British troops were coming from the south to attack him ; he asked Bapu Gokhale to take account of them, and himself retreated towards Pandharpur, when on 14th December the Chhatrapati Pratapsinh, with his mother and two

15. Ait. Tip. 1.31.

brothers joined him. The Peshwa's sudden change of direction and his rapid marches made it difficult for his pursuers to keep pace with him. With Bapu Gokhale harassing the British forces in whichever direction they appeared, the Peshwa bent his way towards Ahmadnagar, but was compelled to change his course as he learned that another British force was rapidly convering on him from the east. He proceeded towards Sangamner and was joined by his faithful friend Trimbakji with his bands of marauding troops then ranging in that hilly region.

From Sangamner the Peshwa directed his march towards Junnar and Narayangaon and it was apprehended that he would once more occupy his capital, where there was hardly any British guard to prevent his entry. Bapu Gokhale all along did his utmost to save his master and stoutly braved a personal calamity in the death of his only son Govindrao, who succumbed to exhaustion on 30th December. Bajirao advanced to Khed and Chakan, covering a circuit of four hundred miles in little more than a month.

Elphinstone busied himself in personally directing the campaign, conveying information to the forces engaged in pursuit, and rushing up reinforcements where needed. When the Peshwa arrived at Khed, Elphinstone feared his next objective would be Poona and he sent a hurried call to Captain Staunton at Sirur to run to the defence of Poona with whatever force he had. Staunton at once started with a small force of infantry and two guns manned by 24 Europeans, and halted in the morning of 1st January 1818 on the high ground of Koregaon on the Bhima. The Peshwa happened to be in the vicinity at the moment and ordered Bapu Gokhale to destroy the enemy's force. Staunton, taken by surprise, took cover in the village where a bitter fight raged throughout the day with Bajirao intently watching it from a neighbouring hill. Although tired by their long march, Staunton and his sepoys fought with desperate gallantry throughout the day. Towards evening they showed signs of exhaustion having lost about 175 men including 4 British officers killed and several wounded. Bajirao, however, suddenly resumed his flight, having been apprized of General Smith's approach on his track. Staunton returned to Sirur with his wounded. A monument erected subsequently commemorates the names of those who fell in that glorious action.

Bapu Gokhale

The British divisions allowed the Peshwa no rest. Apprized of General Smith's advance, he once more turned towards the south, where Munro and Pritzler came on his heels. He then turned towards Pandharpur. At Ashta Bapu Gokhale was overtaken by General Smith and was killed in a stiff action on 19th February 1818. This may be said to have been the last severe engagement of the war, since, with the death of his faithful commander, the Peshwa lost all hope of recovering his position. He did not wait to witness the result of the action but fled away hurriedly with his wife and three ladies riding with him in male attire. The Raja of Satara and his party left helpless on the camping ground with all Bajirao's treasure valued at about one crore, fell into the British hands. General Smith wrote the following hurried note to Elphinstone, "I send you a private account of our good luck as the Raja's family is with me and the poor Gokhale is to be roasted this evening with all ceremony. For he really fought like a soldier. I entreat you to relieve me of the Raja's family as I cannot keep up any useful pursuit with them." Elphinstone met General Smith at Belsar on 4th March and took charge of the Raja, who was not a little happy at his deliverance. Elphinstone wrote about him, "He was a young man of about twenty, good humoured and frank and not destitute of intelligence. His mother is a woman of some talent and address, a fine old lady, with very fine eyes, has good manners and, it is said, good abilities."

9. British Proclamation, Bajirao's woes.—In order to hasten the destruction of the Peshwa by inducing his subordinates to quit his service, Elphinstone under orders from the Governor General issued a proclamation, stating the British case against Bajirao. It said, "Since the assumption of the Government by Bajirao, sedition and rebellion prevailed in various shapes. His authority was not at any time established in the country subject to his rule. When Holkar was in a state of rebellion, he abandoned the country and pusillanimously repaired to Bassein where he formed an alliance with the British Government, and being joined by the troops of the Hon'ble Company was by them re-established in his government. The prosperity of the country revived under the Company's protection. In conformity with the principles of equity,

it was the wish of the Company's government to settle his dispute with the Gaikwad's government and the latter despatched his agent Gangadhar Shastri to Poona under the Company's guarantee. This Shastri was assassinated by a public officer of Bajirao on the consecrated ground of Pandharpur. The Company's government demanded the surrender of the murderer Trimbakji ; and a large army had to be assembled before he was put into our possession. Subsequently Bajirao despatched letters to foreign chieftains urging them to put their armies in a state of preparation, the object of which was to plunge the Company's government into a state of war and expose it to injury. He made declarations and reiterated them in various shapes, that he owed his political existence as well as the happiness and tranquillity he enjoyed to the Company's government. In consideration of them a fresh treaty was concluded in order to maintain his sovereignty, but to deprive him of the means of exciting disturbances. Thereafter the Company's government determined to adopt measures for the suppression of the Pindaris, which Bajirao acknowledged as highly beneficial to him and in which he offered his hearty co-operation. Under this cloak he remitted his treasure to foreign chiefs for objects hostile to the Company's interests. Then he suddenly equipped his army and attacked the Company's troops, plundered and burnt the residence and cantonments of the British representative. Two British officers were put to death in the vicinity of Talegaon. The Peshwa recalled to his presence the murderer of Gangadhar Shastri, Trimbakji Dengle. The Company's government are satisfied that Bajirao is unfit to rule over his Empire. Measures are in progress to deprive him of all public authority. A light force has been despatched in his pursuit. In a short period nothing will remain connected with Bajirao, and measures will be adopted for the enlargement of the Raja of Satara, who will be established in a principality for the maintenance of his own rank and dignity and of those of his Court. In prosecution of these measures His Highness's flag has been displayed in the fort of Satara and satisfactory assurances given to his adherents. The Maharaja will administer the territories that will belong to him. In the territories reserved to the Hon'ble Company their authority will be established without prejudice to the watans, inams and allowances.

Every individual will be secured from tyranny and oppression. Those who are in the service of Bajirao should withdraw from it and retire to their habitations within two months; the failure to do this will ruin them. The public officers who are in the employ of Bajirao should report and return to their homes; they should afford no assistance to Bajirao nor make payments of revenue to him. The watans and lands of all public officers who afford aid to Bajirao will be forfeited. Dated 11 February 1818, 5th Rabilakhar."[17]

This proclamation sealed Bajirao's fate. The British installed the Chhatrapati in his seat at Satara and implemented the measures detailed in the proclamation. Taking advantage of the offer, a large portion of Bajirao's following deserted him. The main British army went in pursuit of him, and another special force was organized under General Pritzler to capture the Maratha forts still held by their old keepers.

Bajīrao had now no place to go to. He turned to the north in the hope that Daulatrao Sindia and Appasaheb of Nagpur would give him shelter. But instead he received a distressful call from the latter for aid. Here was a predicament in which two drowning men were calling out to each other for saving them. Bajirao crossed the Godavari and proceeded through Berar towards Chanda without any definite plan. He reached the Wardha early in April and was distressed to learn that Appasaheb had been made a prisoner and was being deported to a distant place. He was compelled to retrace his course and was surprised by Col. Adams who suddenly opened fire on him near Shivni, between Mahur and Umarkhed on 17th April. In a fright Bajirao galloped off to save his life and with only a scanty following speeded through Khandesh. He crossed the Tapti on 5th May, hoping to find shelter at Ashirgad then in Sindia's possession. The keeper of the fort Yashvantrao Lad had indeed received secret orders from his master to admit the Peshwa and offer him safety.[18]

But large parties of British forces poured upon the spot from different directions and Lad found himself unable to ex-

17. Blacker's *Maratha War* p. 462; Mill and Wilson Vol. VIII p. 601.

18. Letter quoted by Mill Vol. VIII, p. 605.

tend any help to Bajirao. A Marathi ballad thus describes the hardships to which the fugitive was exposed at this time :—

"The Shrimant, brought up in the delicacies of the palace,
Is now roaming through forests ;
Under the blazing sun he seeks his path through thorns and brambles ;
He tends and tethers his own horse ;
He spreads his thin scarf on rough ground and uses it as a bed during the night.
He eats his rice from a wooden bowl one day before sunset, another day late after midnight ;
At every stage his favourite servants drop out ;
Never, oh never, has such a fate fallen on any of Balaji Vishvanath's house ;
Elephants, horses, camels, treasure all are being left behind ;
What a fate has Bajirao to bear now in life ;
As he journeys on, he addresses to each with tears in his eyes, the words :—
"This is our last visit, be kind, and meet us if you live."

This pathetic description accurately reflects the Peshwa's agonies. He wrote a piteous letter to Daulatrao, alluding to the kindness and generosity shown to his house by the Peshwa's ancestors and supplicating his help in his critical condition. This letter could not reach its destination, and even if it had reached, what could Daulatrao have done ? It was intercepted by Malcolm, who from his station at Mhow was keenly watching the fugitive Peshwa's movements in the region of the Narmada. He was now deserted by nearly all his chiefs except Aba Purandare and Vinchurkar, and even by his brother. He desperately tried to reach Daulatrao Sindia. But even this he found himself unable to do, as he was closely hemmed in by British forces on all sides near Dhulkot, a post belonging to Sindia in the vicinity of the Narmada. His only recourse now lay in appealing to Malcolm's generosity to save him. So from Dhulkot he sent his emissaries Anandrao Chandavarkar and Ramchandra Bhojraj with a personal letter to Malcolm for discussing the terms of his submission to that officer. These agents of Bajirao arrived at Mhow on 17th May and discovered that Malcolm would not hold out any hope to Bajirao being restored even to a nominal sovereignty. He said he had forfeited all claim to title or dominion. But if he submitted at once unconditionally and terminated the war that he had himself unjustifiably provoked, he might induce his Government to con-

sider his fallen state with mercy and generosity, adding, "all opposition is now fruitless. Let the Peshwa throw himself on the bounty of the British Government and he will save himself from total destruction." Upon this the Maratha envoy implored Malcolm to visit his master in his camp. Malcolm peremptorily rejected the request, but despatched a confidential officer to meet and confer with the Peshwa on the terms of his surrender. For this task Malcolm selected Lt. Low of the Madras Army and gave him full and precise instructions guaranteeing the Peshwa his personal safety. Malcolm himself advanced towards the Peshwa's camp and invited him to surrender accompanied by his family and only his immediate adherents.

10. Surrender to Malcolm.—At this very moment Malcolm received intelligence that Appasaheb of Nagpur had escaped from his captivity. He found it necessary to prevent any repercussions of that event affecting the negotiations he was conducting with Bajirao. He, therefore, decided to try the effect of a personal meeting with him. On 31st May Malcolm escorted by 300 men moved to a village named Khĕri where the Peshwa had arrived with about 2000 horse, 800 infantry and 2 guns. On 1st June the English General went to the Peshwa's camp and found him in a low and dejected state. The two retired to a small tent for a private conference, the Peshwa attended by two advisers and Malcolm all alone. The interview was a painful one. "The wretched Peshwa spoke long and earnestly of his sorrows and his fears. He protested that he was innocent, that he deserved commiseration, and needed a true friend. Even the very members of his family, he said, had been forgetful of the ties of blood. In such a melancholy condition he could turn to no other friend than Malcolm, whom he now entreated with tears in his eyes to give him protection and administer relief."

To this Malcolm replied mildly but firmly, "I am indeed your true friend, but I should ill perform the offices of friendship, if I should inspire you with false hopes. It is now time for you to exercise all the fortitude and courage that you possess and bear misfortunes with manly resignation. It has been decided you cannot remain a sovereign, your residence in any part of the Deccan is an impossibility. The tribe to

Malcolm, although he took exception to the large amount of pension that Malcolm promised. The latter urged that Bajirao could not be offered less than his brother Amritrao had obtained, although he was not the Peshwa.[19]

Bajirao's military following was disbanded when he crossed the Narmada on 12th June. He proceeded to the north with a retinúe of 600 horsemen and 200 footmen with Ramchandrapant Subehdar and Baloba Salkade and other dependents. Lt. Low was permitted to accompany Bajirao at his request. His journey to Bithur was slow, as it took some time to fix up his final residence. He travelled via Ajmere and spent several months at Mathura. He preferred Benares to Monghyr or Gorakhpur that were suggested. Ultimately Bithur near Cawnpur was chosen where he arrived in February 1819 and where he died on 28th January 1851.

At Bithur Bajirao spent his life in religious pursuits without apparent regret or compunction at the loss of his power and position or of the independence of the Maratha State.

19. A controversy occurred on this subject which can be studied in Kaye's *Life of Malcolm*, Vol. 2, pp. 237-254.

CHAPTER XVII

CHRONOLOGY

1777	Shahu II adopted as Chhatrapati.
1789 July 8	Capt. Grant Duff born.
1793 Jan. 18	Pratapsinh born.
1795	Ramchandra Bhau Saheb born.
1805	Shahji Appasaheb born.
„	Chatarsinh at the Sabalgad assemblage.
1808 May 4	Shahu II dies ; Pratapsinh succeeds.
1810 Aug.	Chatarsinh at Baroda.
1811 Feb. 10	Chatarsinh arrested and confined.
1818 March 4	Pratapsinh and Elphinstone meet.
„ April 10	Pratapsinh installed at Satara.
„ April 15	Chatarsinh dies.
„ July	Trimbakji Dengle apprehended and confined in Chunargad.
1819 Sept. 15	Treaty defining Pratapsinh's position.
1820	Yashvantrao Lad dies.
1822 Apr. 5	Pratapsinh invested with ruling powers.
„ Apr.	Grant Duff retires, Briggs succeeds, at Satara.
1824 Sept. 11	Bishop Heber interviews Dengle.
1826	Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas* published.
1829 Oct. 10	Trimbakji Dengle dies.
1830 June	Chimnaji Appa dies.
1839 Sept. 4	Pratapsinh deposed ; Shahji installed.
1847 Octr. 14	Pratapsinh dies.
1848 Apr. 5	Shahji Appasaheb dies : Satara raj confiscated.
1857 June	Nanasaheb joins the sepoy mutiny.
1858 June 18	Rani of Jhansi dies fighting.
„ Sept. 23	Grant Duff dies.

Chhatrapati Pratapsinh

Abhyankar

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRAGIC END

[1818-1848]

1 Chatarsinh Bhosle and the Chhatrapati's house.
2 Installation of Pratapsinh at Satara.
3 Settlement of the conquered country.
4 The tragedy of Pratapsinh.
5 Causes of the Maratha downfall.
6 In Memoriam.

1. Chatarsinh Bhosle and the Chhatrapati's House.— After the death of Shahu I in 1749, the Chhatrapati of Satara not only became a nonentity in Maratha politics, but was gradually reduced to the position of a prisoner in the hands of the Peshwa, being securely guarded in the fort of Satara, with so many restraints that his life and that of his family became a misery. The only function that was left to the Chhatrapati was to bestow the official robes of the Peshwaship whenever a new Peshwa succeeded. Ramraja, the successor of Shahu, died in 1777, after adopting Vithoji, the eldest son of Trimbakji Bhosle of Wavi, as his heir, who now received the name of Shahu II. Trimbakji with his family and his youngest son Chatarsinh thereafter took up his residence at Satara. The new Chhatrapati (born about 1763) was a young man of strong build and took to his high position in strong hopes of improving the lot of his family and serving the Maratha State so far as it lay in his power. But he was soon undeceived, when he discovered that his accession to the Chhatrapati's throne, instead of improving his lot, made it more miserable at Satara, particularly during the long regime of Nana Phadnis, who curtailed the allowances of the royal family, and imposed further restrictions upon them. The Chhatrapati was looked upon by the Poona Government as a costly appendage with no assigned duty to perform. His whole household began to chafe at their servile position and lost no chance of undermining the position of the Peshwa's Government, often co-operating with the Raja of Kolhapur in his wars against the Pesh-

at Sabalgad in the summer of 1805. The conference frizzled out, and Chatarsinh met Lord Lake at Delhi. He could have easily secured employment under British protection, but throwing such a chance away he joined Yashvantrao Holkar in his effort to save the Maratha State from British conquest. He was well received by Raja Mansinh of Jodhpur and the Rana of Udaipur, but nowhere could he detect a ray of hope for regenerating the Maratha State. He met another young spirit, Kanhoji Gaikwad who was struggling like himself to avert the ruin of the Baroda State. The two youths met at Mandsaur in Malwa and moved to Gujarat, but could effect no tangible result. Chatarsinh then returned to Ujjain where he learnt that his brother Shahu II had died at Satara, and that his own wife and son had been thrown into confinement by the Peshwa. The news of Yashvantrao Holkar having lost his mental balance depressed him still further. He then proceeded to Dhar in July 1809 where he busied himself for two years in suppressing the disturbances that had broken out in that State.

Bajirao at this moment ordered his confidant Trimbakji Dengle to put down his rebel Chatarsinh by any means possible. Trimbakji sent his emissaries to Chatarsinh and invited him to Satara under specious promises of advancement in Bajirao's name. Wearied of his wanderings, Chatarsinh reached Baroda in August 1810 and then sought advice from Gangadhar Shastri ; the latter told him that there was absolutely no hope for his plan of reviving the Maratha State against the mighty power of the British, and that the best course for him would be to accept whatever chance the British would offer him. Chatarsinh, rejecting this advice, yielded to the allurements of Trimbakji Dengle and came to meet him at Malegaon on the river Girna. The two chiefs had their camps on the opposite banks. Trimbakji induced Chatarsinh by sacred oaths to come for a personal meeting with him. A dinner was arranged on 10th February 1811, at which Chatarsinh and his comrades arrived. As they retired for a personal discussion, Chatarsinh and all his followers were suddenly surprised and confined as prisoners in the fort of Malegaon. Subsequently Chatarsinh was removed in chains to fort Kongori near Raigad. Here the unfortunate youth spent seven years of wearisome confinement, till death put an end to his miseries on 15th April 1818.

This frustrated life of Chatarsinh is typical of the decay that had seized the Maratha State, owing to the last Peshwa's folly in not properly utilizing the service of many an enthusiastic and patriotic young man.

2. **Installation of Pratapsinh at Satara.**—Pratapsinh was crowned soon after his father's death and began his career of Chhatrapati under the guidance of his mother. They failed to win the good graces of the Peshwa and to have the rigour of their life softened. The murder of Gangadhar Shastri sealed the fate of the Maratha State and every man of position began to look to his own safety. Pratapsinh and his mother made secret approaches to the Resident of Poona requesting his help against Bajirao's wicked plans. When Bajirao opened war with the British, he removed the Chhatrapati with his family from Satara and secured them in the lonely fort of Wasota. It has been already mentioned how Bajirao in his running fight took the Chhatrapati with him and how the latter fell into British hands after the battle of Ashta on 19th February 1818. Resident Elphinstone in consultation with Thomas Munro issued the famous proclamation declaring the criminality of Bajirao and deposing him from his position as the head of the Maratha Government. Elphinstone and General Pritzler captured the fort of Satara on 10th February and there prepared to restore Pratapsinh to his ancestral position. Elphinstone and Pratapsinh exchanged cordial visits at Belsar near Saswad on 4th March 1818. Thence Elphinstone brought the Chhatrapati to Satara, and there on 10th April installed him in his former position, appointing Capt. Grant (the future historian) as his Resident and guardian with his own confidential agent Balajipant Natu as his assistant. Under orders of the Governor General a small territory nearly equalling the present district of Satara was assigned to the Chhatrapati's rule. Elphinstone thus summarises the British situation at the time. "We never before attempted the complete conquest of a country. Even Mysore was saved by the creation of a raja. Now we are doing it at Poona and Nagpur. If we fail (to win success in our policy), Sindia will go to war, Holkar rebel, Sikhs and the Gurkhas join in, Haidarabad burst out. The flame expands to other provinces, some fundamental point is touched, and our

whole Empire tumbles down like a house of cards. It certainly is a very bad plan to swallow more than we can digest. By destroying and diminishing so many States, we have increased the sources of discord which it was our object to remove."[2]

The Governor General, however, decided to annex most of the conquered territory of the Peshwas and left only a small portion for Pratapsinh's rule. The raja was called upon to remain on friendly terms with the British Power. These arrangements did not meet with ready approval from the Maratha public, as the Chhatrapati was now reduced to the position of a petty chieftain. After a time a formal treaty was executed with Pratapsinh on 25th September 1819, defining his jurisdiction and his relations with the suzerain Power. He was not to hold any correspondence with the outside Powers, nor to increase his forces, but remain for ever loyal to the British Government. From the beginning Raja Pratapsinh took a dislike to Natu, who was known to be selfish and intriguing.

Captain Grant, three and a half years older than Pratapsinh, continued at Satara for three years and retired at the age of 34 in 1822, shortly after Pratapsinh was invested with full powers of administration. During this period he occupied himself mostly in collecting materials for a history of the Marathas. He took the materials with him to England and there wrote and published in 1826 his monumental work, tinged with a bias in favour of the ruling race. Captain Grant later added 'Duff' to his original name. He died at the age of 69 on 23rd September 1858.[3]

3. **The settlement of the conquered country.**—The submission of the Peshwa and the restoration of Pratapsinh completed the main object of the war of 1818. The reduction of the forts held by Maratha captains was not a long affair, ex-

2. Colebrooke's *Life of Elphinstone*, Vol. II. pp. 40-44.

3. The conquest of India by a small commercial corporation of England was an astounding phenomenon in explaining which a large number of British officials of the time wrote several works and tracts, which for a century held the place of real national history. Tod, Malcolm, Wilkes, Munro, Jenkins, Walker, the two Forbes, not to mention Duff himself, may be mentioned as only a few of the numerous early contributors in this field. A good deal of white-washing also came later.

cept in a few cases such as Sholapur, Thalner, Ashirgad and Malegaon, which gave no little trouble to the conquerors. Shivaji's capital Raigad surrendered to Pritzler on 7th May 1818, when whatever old records of Shivaji's days had escaped the Mughal siege of 1689, perished as a result of the bombardment. Ashirgad was stoutly defended by Sindia's captain Yashvantrao Lad. He was at last captured, but so impressed the captors by his chivalry that they allowed him freedom to go home instead of putting him to death. He died in misery in 1820. A large amount of secret correspondence of Daulatrao Sindia, Appasaheb Bhosle and others was discovered at Ashirgad, of which Malcolm made ample use in writing his *Memoirs*.

Among the very few Maratha chiefs who remained constantly loyal to the Peshwa, was the chief of Vinchur, Vithal Narsinh. He refused to desert Bajirao to the last and take advantage of British offers, with the result that he was utterly ruined. He later met Governor Elphinstone and asked for the redress of his miseries, urging that his conduct in remaining loyal to his master deserved rather to be rewarded than censured. Elphinstone appreciated his argument and gave him a small jagir which the family still holds.

Trimbakji Dengle, the main agent of Bajirao's wicked deeds, for long remained at large, causing enormous trouble to the victors after Bajirao had submitted. He approached General Doveton for terms of surrender. The latter refused to give him any assurance beyond his life. He was then steadily pursued in his homeless wanderings and secret shelters in different places. He was at last detected at Ahirgaon near Dindori in Nasik and confined in chains in fort Chandwad in July 1818. The British authorities refrained from taking his life and transported him to fort Chunar near Benares, where after suffering imprisonment for more than ten years, he died on 10th October 1829.[4]

With the surrender of Bajirao the history of the Maratha

4. Bishop Heber paid him a visit in his confinement on 11th September 1824 and has recorded an interesting account of him. He told the Bishop that Elphinstone was both his friend and enemy ; friend because he took care of his family, and enemy because he would compel him to waste his life in prison.

State—but not, I feel confident, of the Maratha people,—comes to an end. The present volume need not describe the work of settlement effected by Elphinstone and his successors in office, or the phases which British policy assumed in dealing with Indian questions during the following century. These are a part of the history of British India. But a word is required as to the net British gains. Bajirao's dominions exclusive of the alienated jagirs are reported in 1815 to have yielded a revenue of about 97 lacs. Out of this a territory worth about 23 lacs was set apart for the Satara Chhatrapati. Bajirao's allowance of 8 lacs a year and other charges being paid, there remained a net revenue for the British Government amounting to 62 lacs, to which was later added the income of some 25 lacs of lands that were confiscated. Prinsep says that the net saving that accrued to the British Government after deducting the expenditure of administration out of the Maratha State revenue, amounted to 50 lacs a year.

Elphinstone at once divided the conquered territory into four Divisions or Commissionerships. To the territory south of the Krishna he appointed Mr. Chaplin, a very able Madras Civilian, whose work came later to be much appreciated. When Elphinstone went to Bombay as Governor, Chaplin became the first Commissioner of Poona. Captain Robertson was appointed to look after the territory between the Krishna and the Nira, afterwards assigned to Pratapsinh. Henry Pottinger was appointed to the Central Division extending from the river Bhima to Chandwad. The northern division of Khandesh was consigned to the charge of Captain Briggs. All these four unusually competent officers working under the direction of Elphinstone, have left a permanent mark by having laboriously collected and carefully recorded a vast amount of valuable information on the subject of Maratha administration and government in matters of revenue, police, justice and social, economic and religious conditions. Elphinstone prepared a comprehensive questionnaire for these four Commissioners to answer and collected from them valuable information and statistics highly useful for study. Elphinstone himself wrote a comprehensive report on the basis of the answers returned by these four officers, which now forms a valuable compilation on the past methods of government in this province.

The Patwardhans were never in the good graces of Bajirao. Taking advantage of Elphinstone's proclamation they kept aloof from the war and obtained a confirmation of their jagirs which they still continue to hold. The Pant Sachiv of Bhor, the Pratinidhi, the Nimbalkar Chief of Phaltan, the Chief of Akalkot, that of Jat and the Shaikh Mira of Wai, these six elected to remain under Chhatrapati's rule and continued in that position up to the end of the Satara principality.

4. **The tragedy of Pratapsinh.**—The creation of this small kingdom was a measure of pure expediency, having been entirely conceived and executed by Elphinstone much against the general policy laid down by the Governments of India and England. Thus from the beginning there always existed a strong feeling among British officials to have this innovation annulled as soon as possible. When Pratapsinh and his mother approached Elphinstone for saving them from Bajirao's persecution, they were given to understand that their claims would be sympathetically considered. When they fell into British hands after Bapu Gokhale was killed in February 1818, a small provision was promised to them until permanent arrangements could be effected. Pratapsinh was then twenty-six and quite able to manage his affairs. But a raw British soldier was appointed to train him in the art of administration. This period of tutelage continued for two and a half years, and on 5th April 1822 Pratapsinh was invested with the power of administration. During that period Captain Grant conducted the affairs on his own responsibility with the studied aim of developing the British interests. His reports about Pratapsinh's competency are highly prejudiced and coloured by an impatience for consolidating the British power.[5]

A contemporary Maratha witness thus testifies to Pratapsinh's character. "He possessed a very keen intellect and an uncommon address. An expert rider and brave soldier, a pure generous heart, trained in the traditional lore, he quickly detected the merits and foibles of those he came in contact with. He adjudicated complicated disputes with exemplary

5. These reports form part of Elphinstone's writings, now being published by Government in the *P. R. C.* series, Volume XV.

impartiality and conducted the administration with firmness and regularity. He was ever disposed to forgive rather than to avenge. He was careful in his religious observances and took delight in relieving the misery of the poor and the oppressed."[6] The earlier British officers in attendance have also recorded similar estimates of this Prince's character and work. With a net annual income of only 14 lacs, he spent during his twenty years' administration 40 lacs on works of public utility alone.

How he gradually developed an anti-British prejudice is an interesting question which has given notoriety to Pratapsinh's career. A prisoner of the Peshwa during his boyhood, he contracted no vice and grew up to be a plain soldier, generous and outspoken in his manners and punctilious in the observance of the rules of his caste and religion. He was never afraid of giving out whatever was uppermost in his mind, a trait which perhaps ill-accorded with his position as a vassal of the British Power. One notices this conflict in his inner thoughts in the entries he has made in his diary, which Captain Grant advised him to write every day regularly and which is now preserved in several volumes in the Peshwa's Daftar at Poona. He has herein occasionally reproduced his conversations with the Governors and British officials of note. The diary discloses his kindness to his younger brother and his fondness for hunting. He opened schools in his territory and thus made the first beginning of popular education in Satara. Captain Grant retired in 1822, but Pratapsinh long continued his contact with him by regular correspondence. He often ordered from England rare articles and curios of foreign manufacture, making regular remittances for their cost. He was made a member of the Royal Asiatic Society of England. Thus he received quite a healthy start in life with a distinct promise of increasing advancement in the future. His Senapati Balasaheb was a spirited youth devoted to his master and acted as his executive officer.

At the instance of Col. Briggs, the next Resident, Pratapsinh built a strong permanent road to the plateau of Mahableshvar, which formed a part of his dominion, and in which was established a suitable summer resort for European and

6. Shedgaon Chronicle p. 156.

Indian visitors. The road was later extended to Mahad and the seacoast on the west. This hill resort of Mahableshvar was handed over to the British Government by a special agreement executed in 1829. A bazar was opened on the hill and given the name of Malcolm-peth. In return the fort of Pratapgad with the shrine of Bhavani founded there by Shivaji, was made over to the Raja's possession. The various hills and tops which a visitor notices at Mahableshvar today, commemorate the names of several British celebrities. The Governors of Bombay paid visits to Pratapsinh at Satara and complimented him on the healthy progressive tone of his newly established rule. The home authorities in England appreciated his services by sending him a jewelled sword with a laudatory certificate in 1835. By the time these tokens reached India, the relations of the Raja with the Government of Bombay had become strained and the tokens were withheld. This development deserves to be explained.

The condition in the treaty of 1819 restraining Pratapsinh from communication with the outside world, was found irksome and prevented the Raja from undertaking even marriage negotiations and ceremonial exchanges outside his own jurisdiction. The regimes of the first four Residents, Grant, Briggs, Robertson and Lodwick ran fairly smooth, but when Col. Ovans took charge in 1837 the habitual cordiality between the two began to wane. The Resident's spying and suspicious ways became galling to the Raja. A fresh wave of imperialistic ambition seized the Bombay Government, who began to look upon Pratapsinh as an unnecessary upstart and to search for means of pulling him down, a development which a man of pride and dignity like Pratapsinh could not bear. He was charged with sedition for attempting to overthrow the British Government and was deposed on 4th September 1839 without giving him an opportunity to explain his conduct. He was thereafter deported to Benares, his jailors inflicting heart-rending hardships upon him and his suite, during the long overland journey. His younger brother Shahji Appasaheb, who was known to be notoriously incompetent, was made the Raja. Pratapsinh dragged on a wearisome existence at Benares till his death on 14th October 1847. On 2nd December 1844 he addressed a strong remonstrance to the Governor General Lord

Hardinge, in which he forcibly described the unjust treatment meted out to him. The document is a rare specimen of language and argument, having been drafted by Pratapsinh's agent George Thompson.

Shahji, the successor of Pratapsinh, died childless on 5th April 1848 and the short-lived State of Satara was annexed to the British dominions. The whole history of this old and yet newly created State is a singular commentary on the British policy in India. The annexation of Satara became a predisposing cause of the outbreak of 1857.

The Peshwa Bajirao enjoyed at Bithur the longest life in the Peshwa's family, *viz.* 76 years. He adopted a son named Dhondopant Nanasaheb, who in a fit of anger in not having his father's pension continued to him, joined the sepoy mutineers in 1857 and acquired notoriety in British Indian history. His family became extinct after him.

Bajirao's brother Chimnaji Appa received an annuity of two lacs. After his brother's surrender, he retired to Benares early in 1819 and died there on 9th June 1830. He had no issue and his line became extinct after him. Among his dependents was one Moropant Tambe, whose daughter Lakshmibai, married to Gangadharpant, the Raja of Jhansi, became a famous figure as the Rani of Jhansi in the mutiny of 1857. She fell fighting against the British near Gwalior on 18th June 1858.

Bajirao's adopted brother Amritrao's descendants alone now survive to continue the memory of the distinguished family of the Peshwas, who acquired a permanent place in the history of India.

5. **Causes of the Maratha downfall.**—The foregoing pages have dealt with the main story of the Maratha State, how it rose to power, how it expanded, and how it quickly came to an end. The Maratha upsurge in India has always been a subject of absorbing interest and many able scholars have taken great pains to explain the causes which brought it to such a tragic end as has been narrated in the last chapters. Even to contemporary thinkers it was no small wonder that an edifice reared by the genius of Shivaji and laboriously fostered by the first four Peshwas, should have so easily crumbl ed, as if all the old genius, wisdom and valour had suddenly

disappeared from this gifted race. Why could not the fate be averted in time and India's independence preserved? Such questions have long agitated not only the Maratha mind, but that of many Indian and foreign thinkers too: and many have answered them, but no unanimity of judgment can be expected in such cases of historical reasoning.

That a small western Power should cofe to India from a distance of thousands of miles and subjugate this vast continent full of material races and illimitable resources, is an astounding phenomenon in human history, and any number of theories have been put forth to explain it. Some writers have propounded the flattering doctrine that there is something in the physical and mental make up of the western races of Europe, which enables them to gain an easy victory over the unlettered Asiatic. During recent times many Maharashtrian thinkers and writers like Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, Ranade, Bhandarkar, Tilak, Prof. Limaye and others have all in their different ways suggested cogent reasons in explaining the phenomenon, into which no small amount of prejudice and passion appears to have entered. Rajwade and Khare, two eminent scholars of Maratha history, have in particular profusely written on the subject. Khare has written an elaborate introduction to N. C. Kelkar's work *"The Marathas and the English,"* which appeared in 1918 for commemorating the centenary of the extinction of Maratha rule. Khare in his essay scathingly criticised all the weaknesses and foibles inherent in the character of the average Maratha, quoting examples. He says, (1) The Marathas possessed no national sentiment; (2) internal jealousy and selfish treachery triumphed over the public interest; (3) while individually they were clever and brave, they totally lacked the corporate spirit so essential for national independence; (4) that the scientific spirit of enquiry and improvement was entirely absent among them; (5) that they neglected to develop artillery as the main support of defence; (6) that the pernicious system of allotting lands in lieu of pay for millitary service proved ruinous; (7) that after the death of the Peshwa Madhavrao I no capable leader appeared in Maharashtra; (8) that the Marathas as a race sadly lack the virtue of discipline and methodical pre-arrangement; and lastly (9) that the British were past masters in the art

of diplomacy, in which the Marathas could stand no comparison with them.

As human activity or the working of the human mind, cannot possibly be measured or ascertained with the precision applicable to physical science, any number of such general causes can be adduced in support of one's pet theory or personal experience, and we can easily realize and accept their force. The general tendency of the eastern mind has during recent centuries refused to accept the guidance of science in life, which distinguishes the average westerner. Rulers in Asia were never actuated by democratic or corporate principles and remained always autocratic in their outlook. In eastern lands individuals alone could make or mar a nation's fortune, and individuals are as a rule subject to the weaknesses of character pointed out by Khare in his learned analysis. It is possible to add to his list some more foibles. One serious drawback of eastern policy was the disastrous principle of hereditary service and occupation, which regulated the affairs of both the State and individual life in our society. Hereditary claims irrespective of merit became irresistible throughout the country and could not be set aside even by mighty rulers. This gradually sapped individual capacity and initiative, and led to a fearful social degeneration. Because a father had proved to be a capable man, his son or grandson would not necessarily be as capable or efficient. When a child of 40 days, Madhavrao II was invested with the office of the Peshwa, the result was deplorable. This indeed supplies a strong reason for the Maratha downfall.

Rajwade, however, rejects most of these common arguments and vehemently emphasizes the want of scientific spirit as the main cause which disabled the Marathas from achieving success over their western rivals, well trained in science and discipline. We can certainly agree with Rajwade when he writes in his own characteristic way a dissertation like this :—"If any of the Maratha troopers accompanying the Peshwa Bajirao II in his flight before the British regiments of General Smith and others during the early months of 1818, were asked why he ran away and what particular fright had seized him, he would have unhesitatingly answered that he was not at all afraid of the white biped, but of the powerful long range guns which he handled and the superior scientific

equipment that he possessed in the art of conducting war." This summarizes Rajwade's view of the main cause that brought about the fall of the Maratha Power. It had to yield to the scientific advancement of the West, which began with Columbus and which enabled even the small Portuguese nation to extend their Empire over eastern countries. It was Arthur Wellesley's powerful guns which broke the strength of Sindia's battalions on the fields of Assai and Adgaon. It was British artillery which broke the Power of Yashvantrao Holkar. Clive routed Tulaji Angria with the same powerful weapons. With all his faults Bajirao II would not have so easily succumbed in his war with the British, if he had at his command a well organized park of artillery. In short, a nation's liberty and independence can be preserved only by efficient armies, *i.e.*, armies composed of well-trained soldiers, equipped with up-to-date arms and led by competent officers. The Marathas as a nation lacked this vital basis of warfare before which all their other defects pale into insignificance. Writes Ranade, "If the innovation (of Sindia's trained brigades) had been accompanied by the acquisition of the requisite knowledge of military strategy and the scientific processes in the use and manufacture of superior arms, the helplessness which paralysed the native armies when their European officers left them, might have been avoided ; but no care seems to have been bestowed in this direction and they were more helpless than ever on the battlefield."[7]

It must be borne in mind in considering this subject of scientific advancement, that a few generals possessing the requisite knowledge, like De Boigne or Perron, alone are not sufficient to make an army efficient in war. The scientific spirit and equipment must pervade the ranks and the general mass of society,—all made capable of wielding suitable weapons and well trained in discipline and methodical organization for carrying out military tactics. In this respect the general advance of science which had taken place in Europe, had not in the least affected the Asiatic peoples. An average Indian was utterly helpless before a European. The general level of knowledge and education in Indian society, was woefully short of what was necessary for the defence of India against Euro-

7. Miscellaneous Writings p. 354. Prof. Limaye supports the view.

factors covered by the words "the contingent and the unforeseen." Maratha history affords not a few factors of this nature, in the untimely and unexpected deaths of many of its great men, Shivaji, Bajirao, Madhavrao I and that promising young lad the unfortunate Peshwa Madhavrao II. All these deaths coming at the time they did, certainly marred the fortunes of the State and materially changed the course of our future history. Let the reader recall to his mind the circumstances in which these men met with their deaths, which were all premature and entirely unexpected. The deah of Shivaji brought the Mughal Emperor down upon Maharashtra. Bajirao's death freed the Nizam from sure extinction, and made his dynasty permanent in the Deccan. The death of the Peshwa Madhavrao I let loose the latent dissolving forces, both domestic and foreign, upon the Maharashtrian land and hastened its ruin. The death of Madhavrao II in 1795 brought to the Maratha leadership the evil genius of Bajirao II, but for whom there was every chance of the Maratha State continuing its independent life at least much longer if not permanently. One cannot lose sight of these might-have-beens, if history has to teach any lesson to humanity. Writes Elphinstone, "It was the good fortune of the British that neither Bajirao nor Sindia possessed the strength and spirit to stand forth boldly at a critical moment. If there was any other more intrepid man occupying the Peshwa's position at the time, it is not difficult to conceive how the British would have fared. The Marathas had at their command ample means of waging a successful war, armies, money, arms, ammunition. Everything was ready. They only lacked a leader. Both Bajirao in the south and Daulatrao in the north became traitors to their nation and lost the game."[9]

6. **In memoriam.**—One hundred and thirty summers have gone by since Maratha rule gave place to British supremacy in 1818, an event of outstanding importance in the annals of India ; and now after this interval of nearly a century and a half, this country has once more attained to independence at the hands of its British rulers. It is obvious that this foreign

9. Life by Colebrooke, Vol. I p. 372.

dominion has wrought tremendous changes in Indian life by the very fact of bringing two strange races of the world in direct contact with each other ; it has almost dimmed the memories of the preceding Maratha regime, the history of which has been so far narrated. What does this history teach us ?

Life is a continuous struggle of man against man, of man against his surroundings, a struggle on the physical, intellectual and moral planes, out of which new things take shape, fresh ideas are born, and problems unknown before are created. Destruction and construction go side by side both in individual and national concerns.,Life moves on the principle of growth, we never stand still. Viewed in this light, one need neither regret the extinction of Maratha rule, nor get unduly elated by the present developments. Our salvation rests in our own hands.

How the Marathas grew from small village patils and agriculturists to be lords and rulers, is a question which this work attempts to explain.,Their rise under Shivaji and their expansion under the Peshwas cover the activities of two distinct houses, whose representatives have disappeared from the scene of history, so that they can now be rightly judged in a perspective of dispassionate review and sympathy. The two houses did what they could according to their light for the nation they belonged to.

The usual spiritual aspect of Hindu life, its soft and charitable character, stands in several contrast with the inhuman wicked practices of the Muslims, their plunder, greed, devastations and forced conversions. The Nizam Asaf Jah was allowed to escape honourably at Palkhed. The Peshwa Madhavrao I did not do short work of his uncle, a step which would have certainly saved the State many a subsequent ill. Tulaji Angria was not mercilessly put to death, but only securely confined for thirty years till his end. One must recognise that Maratha rule although too short, is not stained by such dark blots as have blackened the Mughal regime, as, for instance, the cruel death of Dara Shukoh at the hands of his own full brother, or the diabolical murders of 21 Maratha captains by Aliwardi Khan, or the degradation and blinding of the Emperor Shah Alam II by his own servant and coreligionist Ghulam Qadir. Maratha rule was on the whole mild and beneficial and free from wan-

ton atrocities, and solicitous of the public weal. Except the murder of the Peshwa Narayanrao, which too was purely a domestic affair, there is no crime that one can quote as disfiguring the pages of Maratha history. Sir Richard Temple gives the following testimony to the exploits of the Peshwas. "The Peshwa family, Brahmans of the highest and most cultured caste, founded and preserved for more than one hundred years a dynasty which presided over the fitful fortunes of India and of one among the most populous empires in the globe. This Brahman dynasty was perhaps unique in the diversified history of India. Inasmuch as the Brahmans have preserved purity of descent more than any race on earth, if might be expected that Brahmans attaining to sovereignty would evince a marked capacity in their imperial position. Accordingly the first four Peshwas fully realized this expectation. None of the many lines of Hindu sovereigns in India has ever shown a series of rulers equal to the Peshwas. The historical student will immediately inquire where four sovereigns equal to them can be found in any Muhammadan dynasties of India. The parallel can be seen in one only, viz., the dynasty of the great Mughal. The four Mughal emperors Akbar to Aurangzeb were as great as the four Peshwas."[10]

Short-lived though the Peshwas' rule was, they will always present a most inspiring example of national rule in this diversi fied continent of India. Maratha history is thus full of lessons even for our present day politics. The Marathas paid the penalty of their disunion, and if in the future the Indian nation is to hold its own honour aloft, it can only be by a hearty union of all its discordante elements. Compared with their Muslim predecessors, the Marathas in general proved more efficient and clever in the art of administration. But the Britishers were decidedly far superior to the Marathas and easily supplanted them, although their rise was much slower. The Mughal Emperors, at least the first six of them, were indeed capable men, but even they cannot escape the charge of having criminally neglected the problem of the naval defence of this vast continent. When Babar planted his standard at Delhi, the Portuguese had just a few years before occupied Goa

10. *Oriental Experience*, pp. 388 and 402.

and made there a permanent footing. It should have occurred to the Emperors to find out how this small foreign band attained the success they did. More than a century later the British established their colony at Madras and in 1639 built the two forts, named after St. George and St. David. That was in the time of the vigorous ruler Shah JahTan. At the time when Shah Jahan's successor Aurangzeb humbled Shivaji before him at Agra, the British acquired Bombay. They constructed their Fort William of Calcutta about 1699, when this capable Emperor ruled Bengal.

Bear these dates in mind and notice how the obscure chieftain Shivaji moved in his own way in contemporary politics. During the early sixties of the 17th century when Aurangzeb was in his fresh vigour at Delhi, Shivaji toured the west coast (1660-1664) several times from Kalyan to Vingorla, and realizing the necessity of naval defence erected strong water-forts with shipping yards and arsenals at Vijaydurg. Malwan (Sindhudurg), Suvarnadurg and lastly Kolaba. Aurangzeb took severe measures on land against Shivaji, but did not notice the rebel's coastal activities, as the Emperor's only care was for the safe journey of Muslim pilgrims from Surat to Mecca and back. Once certainly Aurangzeb had a brush with the English, but he did nothing to crush their agressive activities in the coastal regions.

If this was the outlook of the wise Aurangzeb, one need not wonder at the decadent rule of the later Mughals. Khan Dauran, Qamruddin Khan, Saadat Khan, all neglected to notice the Maratha activities on the west coast, where the Angrias had grown a terror for long. The Peshwas were equally culpable for failing to follow up their conquest of the Portuguese possession of Bassein. The Maratha politicians only safeguarded the religious freedom of the surrounding regions, but did not care to develop the naval arsenal and the docks for the construction of fighting ships, which were already there for the new Maratha masters to take up. The Marathas often procured guns and muskets from the British, who on their part disposed of useless worn-out articles and got good prices in the bargain. The question of the naval defence of India is still on the anvil, as upon it depends India's foreign trade as well, so that the past story of this problem has most valuable lessons to teach

us. Whoever can wield the arm, rules the State, is an old adage of permanent importance for the preservation of liberty.

'Man is as he has made himself; man will be as he will make himself.' This plain truth is the essence of all history. The great Maharashtrian seer, Justice Ranade, an ardent lover of his country and a brilliant product of the new order introduced into India by the British conquerors, enthusiastically welcomed the change from the decadent Maratha rule as almost a divine dispensation. "It cannot well be a mere accident," wrote he, "that the destinies of this country have been entrusted to the guidance of a nation whose characteristic strength is opposed to all our weaknesses, whose view of life is full of hope and whose powers of organization have never been surpassed. It cannot be easily assumed that in God's Providence such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India, were placed for centuries together under influences and restraints of alien domination, unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient." The history of the century and a quarter of British domination over Maharashtra fully justifies Ranade's optimism, however one may regret that the edifice reared by the genius of Shivaji should have so quickly collapsed.

Another great scholar of the present day, Sir Jadunath Sarkar has recently stated the same view in a different form. The last volume of this new History of the Marathas has been termed "Sunset over Maharashtra." Sir Jadunath objects to this term and calls it "The advent of a fresh dawn." He argues, "The so-called Sunset overtook a State and a society that were rotten to the core. Surely nature could not have let it continue if the British had not intervened in December 1802. Repine not over your past, the dead and the never-to-return past. Look forward and seize the opportunity of the present, plunging into the full rushing stream of modern world-progress and world-thought. This is the lesson of Maratha history, when viewed dispassionately in the long perspective."

Let us, by thus pondering on our past, brace ourselves for the new tasks that are awaiting the free India of today. On this note I close my lifelong study of my people's history.

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