

capture the huge treasure, amounting to more than two crores, stored in that fort. He was, however, foiled in his attempt, and therefore crossing the Yamuna he went to Allahabad and established his court there. He brought a part of Bihar under his control and set himself up as an independent king. He appropriated thirty lakhs of rupees in the treasury of Bihar and appointed an officer to administer that part of the country under his control. When the news of this rebellion reached Akbar at Asirgarh, he sent Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, a playmate and friend of the prince, to Allahabad on a mission of peace. But Salim won over Sharif and appointed him his chief minister. In consequence of the above development, Akbar was obliged to conclude the siege of Asirgarh and hasten to Agra by the middle of 1601. Salim now proceeded towards Agra at the head of 30,000 troops, robbing and plundering the country on the way and declaring that his object was to pay his respect to his father. The emperor ordered the prince to dismiss his followers and return to Allahabad immediately. Fearing the use of force by the emperor and his own defeat, the prince sent assurance of his fidelity and allegiance, whereupon the emperor appointed him governor of Bengal and Orissa. Salim then returned to Allahabad; but he did not give up his evil intentions, nor sent his men to take charge of Bengal and Orissa. He assumed the title of king and held a regular court, issued farmans and granted titles and jagirs. He made an unsuccessful attempt to procure military assistance from the Portuguese of Goa, Tormented by the rebellion, Akbar summoned Abul Fazl from the Dakhin to take counsel with him. The prince had Abul Fazl murdered by Bir Singh Deva, a rebellious Bundela chief of Orchha, on 19th August, 1602, between Barki Sarai and Antri. Akbar burst into grief and rage as soon as the news was broken to him. He abstained for three days from appearing in public. He railed bitterly against Salim and ordered Bir Singh to be put to death. But the man escaped and lived to enjoy Jahangir's favours.

Although Salim deserved condign punishment, Akbar did not think it politic to take such a step. The emperor's second son, Murad, was already dead and his third son, Daniyal, was visibly dying. His grandsons were too young. The ladies of the harem urged the emperor to forgive and forget. Salima Begum, Jahangir's step-mother, begged the emperor's permission to go to Allahabad on a mission of peace. Her request was granted. She successfully persuaded the prince to return to his path of duty. The prince came to Agra and was conducted to the presence of his father by his grand-

mother Mariyam Makani who threw Salim on Akbar's feet. Akbar raised him up and embraced him. Salim presented 770 elephants and twelve thousand gold *mohars*. The emperor not only graciously forgave him but also rewarded him and appointed him heir-apparent.

In order to wean him from his evil associates, the emperor ordered him, on 14th October, 1603, to proceed on the Mewar expedition, which he had failed to accomplish in 1599. Salim proceeded as far as Fatehpur Sikri; but, feeling himself incompetent to reduce the Rana to submission, he begged permission to return to Allahabad. Akbar complied with the request. At Allahabad the prince again fell into evil ways and again assumed semi-independent status. The emperor was highly enraged and prepared to march to Allahabad to bring the prince round by force. But the illness and death of his mother prevented him from executing his designs. He thought of superseding Salim by the latter's son, prince Khusrav, who was in his seventeenth year and was connected by the closest ties of blood with two of the greatest nobles of the empire. He was son of the sister of Man Singh of Amber and son-in-law of Mirza Aziz Koka. Khusrav was handsome in appearance, agreeable in manners and blameless in his private life. But to designate him heir apparent without putting Salim to death would have been highly improper. So Akbar gave up the idea. Salim, on his part, felt that his own interest demanded that he should proceed to Agra and submit to his father unconditionally. So he repaired to the court to condole with his father on the death of his grandmother. Akbar received him well at the public audience hall; but, while in the inner apartment, he had him arrested, rebuked him for his unseemly conduct and slapped him in the face and imprisoned him in a bathroom under the charge of a physician. After ten days' confinement, the prince was released and restored to favour. As Akbar's youngest son, Daniyal, died on 10th April, 1604, Salim now remained the only surviving son and heir. Akbar, consequently, desisted from inflicting any more punishment upon him.

Meanwhile, Akbar's health began to fail. He had an attack of dysentery on October 3, 1605 and his condition became worse from day to day. Two parties were formed at court, one supporting Salim and the other his son, Khusrav. Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka favoured the suppression of Salim and the accession of Khusrav; but they found themselves in a minority. Ram Das Kachhwaha placed a guard of his Rajputs over the royal treasury in order to secure the interest of Salim, and many Muslim nobles,

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including the Sayyids of Barha, declared for him. On 21st October, the dying emperor had his imperial turban placed on the head of Salim and his sword hung from his girdle, thus recognizing him as his successor. On Akbar's death at mid-night on 25-26 October (15-16 old style), 1605, Salim's party found itself stronger than that of Khusrav. It had already exacted two promises from the prince, namely that he would protect Islam and forgive Khusrav and his supporters. There was no opposition to his accession which took place on the eighth day of Akbar's death.

Accession, November 8, 1605

Jahangir's coronation ceremony was performed on Thursday, the 3rd November (24th October old style), 1605, in the fort of Agra. He put the crown on his head with his own hands and assumed the title of Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padshah Ghazi. He released many prisoners and struck coins in his name. He issued a proclamation of policy in twelve celebrated regulations :

- (1) He prohibited the levy of many cesses, called *tamgha*, *mir bahri* and by other names.
- (2) He ordered the building of *sarais*, mosques and wells along the roads.
- (3) He prohibited the opening of merchants' bales without their knowledge and permission.
- (4) If someone died, his property should be given to his heirs. If the deceased person had no heir, the property should be placed in the custody of a State officer to be used for the erection and repair of public buildings.
- (5) He prohibited the manufacture and sale of wine and intoxicating drugs.
- (6) Government officers were ordered not to take possession of anyone's house.
- (7) He abolished the punishment of cutting of nose and ears.
- (8) He forbade the officials to take possession of cultivators' land by force.
- (9) No government collector or *jagirdar* was to inter-marry with the people of his *parganas* without royal permission.
- (10) Government hospitals were to be established in big cities for the treatment of poor people.
- (11) He prohibited the slaughter of animals on certain days in the year and two days in every week, that is, Thursday which was Jahangir's accession day, and Sunday, the day of Akbar's birth.

(12) He confirmed all officers and jagirdars in the posts which they had held in Akbar's time.

He caused a gold chain with bells to be hung between the Shah Burj in the Agra Fort and a post on the road near the bank of the Yamuna so as to enable suitors for justice to ring the bell and approach the emperor without the mediation of any officer or servant.

Jahangir confirmed most of the officials, high or low, in the rank and posts which they held during the last days of Akbar's reign and promoted even some of those with whom he was not on good terms. Abdur Razzaq Mamuri and Khwaja Abdullah, who had deserted him to join Akbar, were allowed to retain their offices and jagirs. Abul Fazl's son, Abdur Rahman, was promoted to the rank of two thousand. Both Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka were forgiven for backing up the claims of his son, Khusrav, to the throne; but though they were allowed to retain their posts, they no longer enjoyed the same influence at court which they had done under Akbar. A little later, the governorship of Bengal, which was held by Man Singh, who was now recalled to court, was conferred on the new emperor's favourite, Qutb-ud-din Khan Koka. Out of a feeling of gratitude, which was innate in his temperament, Jahangir raised several of his favourites, who were not possessed of special ability, to high posts. To this category belonged Sharif Khan (now appointed grand Wazir), Kutb-ud-din Koka and Bir Singh Deva Bundela of Orchha, all of whom were promoted to high offices. Among the new appointments two were particularly deserving. Ghiyas Beg, who later became famous as the father of Nur Jahan, was appointed diwan or revenue minister and given the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. Zaman Beg was given the title of Mahabat Khan and raised to the mansab of 1,500.

Rebellion of Khusrav, April-May, 1606

Within a few months of Jahangir's accession occurred the rebellion of his eldest son, Khusrav. The emperor had forgiven him for his past conduct on the intercession of his maternal uncle, Raja Man Singh of Ambr, but had confined the prince in one corner of the Agra fort soon after Man Singh's departure for Bengal. Khusrav, who had not forgotten the prospect of his succession to his grandfather's throne and the support of powerful nobles at the court, could not reconcile himself to the indignity to which he was now subjected as a State prisoner and planned to set himself free and make a bid for the throne which had once been almost within his grasp.

Accompanied by 350 horse, he slipped out of the fort in the evening of April 6, 1606, on the pretence of a visit to Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra, and proceeded rapidly towards Delhi. On the way, he was joined by Husain Beg Badakhshi at the head of 300 horse and soon his followers swelled to 12,000. Next, the prince intercepted an imperial convoy of one lakh of rupees. Passing by Delhi, he made his way to Lahore and was joined on the way by Abdur Rahman, the diwan of that province. The prince appointed Abdur Rahman his wazir. At Taran Taran the prince obtained the benediction of Guru Arjun, the fifth guru of the Sikhs. When he reached Lahore he found its doors closed and the fort put in a state of defence by the governor, Dilawar Khan. Khusrav besieged the fort but could not take it.

Within a few hours of Khusrav's flight, the news leaked to the emperor who made prompt arrangements for pursuing the fugitive, and sending a contingent of troops under the command of Shaikh Farid. In order to lose no time, the emperor himself proceeded to Lahore which was being besieged by the prince.

In order to avoid being caught between the two forces, Khusrav left a detachment of his army before Lahore and himself turned back at the head of ten thousand men to give battle to the imperialists. Jahangir's attempt at persuading his son to submit to him peacefully having failed, the parties engaged in a fight on the plain of Bharowal. In spite of his superior numbers, Khusrav was badly defeated and escaped with a few trusted friends, like Abdur Rahman and Husain Beg, leaving his box of jewels to be picked up by the imperialists.

Having decided to follow the advice of Husain Beg to capture Kabul and from there invade Delhi to seize the throne, Khusrav crossed the Chenab at the ferry of Shahpur; but he, along with his men, was captured by the imperialists who had been sent in pursuit of the fugitives. Jahangir, who was encamped at Lahore, was delighted to hear the news of the prince's arrest and ordered him to be brought to his camp. On May 1, 1607, Khusrav was brought handcuffed and enchained before the emperor in a *fu' darbar*. The prince, who had Husain Beg on his right and Abdur Rahman on his left, trembled and wept and attempted to prostrate before Jahangir; but he was ordered to stand in his place. The emperor bitterly reproached the rebel prince and ordered him to be imprisoned. Husain Beg and Abdur Rahman, his two principal followers, were sewn in the fresh skin of an ox and arrested respectively. They

were seated on asses with their faces turned to the tail and were paraded through the streets of Lahore. Husain Beg died within twelve hours. Abdur Rahman was, however, pardoned after twenty-four hours' suffering. The humbler followers of Khusrav were impaled on a mile-long row of gibbets and he was led on an elephant through the line of gibbets and asked ironically to receive the homage of his followers. His tender heart was shocked and he spent several days in weeping.

Jahangir now turned to Guru Arjun who had bestowed benediction on Khusrav while the latter was on his way from Agra to Lahore. The emperor considered him guilty of supporting a rebel. It is said that Jahangir imposed on Guru Arjun a fine of two lakhs of rupees, which the latter refused to pay. He was consequently put to death. This was an act of indiscretion on the part of the emperor who should not have treated a holy person like Guru Arjun as an ordinary criminal. The Sikh tradition attributes the punishment to Jahangir's religious bigotry and alleges that it was accompanied by barbarous torture. These allegations are without foundation. But the Guru's death estranged his followers from the Mughuls and led to their rebellion in the time of Aurangzeb.

Jahangir was able to suppress the revolt within a month of Khusrav's flight from Agra. He rewarded all those who had contributed to the success of the enterprise and returned to Agra. But the consequences of the rebellion of a near relative, specially a son, were not good, and led to few risings. The first among them was that of Rai Singh of Bikaner who enjoyed a mansab of five thousand and was one of the high ranking nobles of the Mughul court. He was entrusted with the duty of escorting the royal ladies to the Punjab. He deserted his charge at Mathura, left for Bikaner without permission and raised the standard of revolt. He captured Nagaur, and defied the imperial authority. Rai Jagannath Kachhwaha was sent against him. He defeated Rai Singh and brought him to court. Jahangir pardoned him and restored him to his mansab and dignity. A petty chief of Bihar, named Sangram, taking advantage of Khusrav's rebellion, created strife. He was defeated by Jahangir Quli Khan, governor of Bihar. But the most fateful consequence of Khusrav's rebellion and consequent internal disturbances in the country was the encouragement of the Shah of Persia to make a bid for the capture of the fortress of Kandhar.

Kandhar, 1606-07

Owing to its strategic situation and commercial importance

Kandhar was a bone of contention between Persia and India during the medieval age. It was a gateway to India and a natural base of operations for a Persian or Central Asian invader of our country. Anyone in possession of this fortress could easily surprise and capture Kabul. Hence it was considered an extremely important outpost of the government of India. Its commercial importance was no less great. Here gathered merchants from India, Persia, Turkey and Central Asia, and it connected the principal trade routes from India to Central Asia and the countries of Europe. Babur, who was aware of its dual importance, had captured it in 1522. It had, however, passed out of the hands of the Mughuls in 1556 after the death of Humayun, and the Persian monarch entrusted it to the care of Shah Husain Mirza : but Akbar recovered it in 1594. The death of Akbar and the revolt of Khusrav gave Shah Abbas the opportunity of instigating the chiefs of Khurasan to attack Kandhar : but Shah Beg Khan, the Indian-governor of the fortress, put up a stout defence. Early in 1607 Jahangir sent reinforcements under Mirza Ghazi to relieve the besieged Shah Beg Khan. On the approach of the relieving forces the Persians were struck with terror, raised the siege and retreated to Khurasan. Foiled in this business Shah Abbas disclaimed knowledges of the invasion, rebuked the Khurasani nobles and apologized to Jahangir. He wrote to explain that the restless border tribes had committed the mischief of their own accord and that he had punished them for their foolish audacity. Jahangir who did not desire to reopen the quarrel, remained silent and accepted the explanation. The affair, thus, came to an end.

The emperor, however, thought it desirable to pay a visit to those parts in order to see that no such invasion occurred again. Leaving Lahore on 27th March 1607, he entered Kabul on the 4th of June and after eleven weeks' stay there, during which he established contact with important elements in the population of the province and abolished customs dues which were charged at Kabul he set out for Lahore in August. On the way, a plot was hatched to assassinate him on the hunting ground and to place his son, Khusrav, on the throne. The chief conspirators, besides Khusrav were Nur-ud-din, Fateh Ullah, Sharif, son of Itimad-ud-daulah, and an eunuch named Itibar Khan. Khusrav's charming manners and attractive address, combined with his blameless private life, had won him about four hundred followers. The conspiracy could not remain secret when such a large number of persons were taken into confidence. The secret leaked out and Khurram, who got scent of it, informed

Jahangir. An enquiry was immediately held and a number of letters of Itibar Khan were seized. One of the conspirators, named Mirza Muhammad Uzbek, on being promised amnesty, revealed the entire plot. The emperor generously forgave the rank and file among the conspirators ; but put four of the ring-leaders, Nur-ud-din, Itibar, Sharif, and Bedagh Turkman to death. Khusrav was blinded, but his sight was not permanently injured. After a short stay at Lahore, Jahangir returned to Agra on March 22, 1608. Khusrav was kept a prisoner in the fort. Moved by compassion, the emperor ordered his physicians to heal the vision of Khusrav's eyes. One of the eyes regained its vision. The other, however, remained uncured.

Nur Jahan

In May 1611, Jahangir married a widow named Mehr-un-nisa who was given the title of Nur Mahal, subsequently changed into Nur Jahan, and who began exercising unbounded influence on the emperor and the administration of the empire. She was the daughter of Ghiyas Beg, a Persian adventurer in Akbar's service who was honoured with the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. A romantic legend had grown round the personality of Nur Jahan. Later writers in describing her early career have related that her parents, being forced by adversity, had to leave their home in Persia and seek their fortune in India. They started on a perilous journey without adequate means or support on the way. The couple were in great want and their distress was heightened by the fact that Ghiyas Beg's wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy. On the way, the weary half-starved lady gave birth to a daughter. Being too weak to carry the baby, they left her under a tree and resumed their journey. They had not gone far when the mother feeling her life unbearable without her baby, forced her husband to return to the place to pick up the child. To their surprise they found a cobra coiling round her body and sheltering her from the sun. Ghiyas shouted aloud to scare away the cobra and picked up the child. With great difficulty they reached Lahore, where they found an old friend who introduced Ghiyas to Akbar. The emperor employed him in an ordinary capacity ; but being a man of ability and intelligence, Mirza Ghiyas soon rose to be the master of the royal household. Mehr-un-nisa, the daughter, meanwhile, grew up to be a charming girl. Peerless in beauty and unrivalled in feminine accomplishments, she aspired to the conquest of the heir-apparent, prince Salim, who ardently desired to marry her, but Akbar would not agree to such an alliance. Mehr-un-nisa

was, therefore, married to Sher Afgan, a Persian adventurer, like her father, who had migrated to India and entered Akbar's service. When Jahangir became king, he contrived to kill Sher Afgan and obtain possession of Mehr-un-nisa. He succeeded and had her brought to court. He married her four years later and raised her to the status of his chief queen.

The romantic tale lacks confirmation in sober history which says that Mirza Ghiyas Beg's father, Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, was the wazir of Sultan Beghar Begi of Khurasan, a province of Persia, and a man of noble birth and liberal education. On his death, in 1587, his family lost its importance and suffered from adversity. His son Mirza Ghiyas Beg, resolved to seek his fortune in India and, accompanied by his two sons, one daughter and his pregnant wife, left for Lahore. On the way he lost most of his money and baggage. He was, however, supported by Malik Masud, the leader of the caravan. At Kandhar his wife gave birth to a daughter who was named Mehr-un-nisa. Ghiyas Beg was introduced to Akbar by the merchant, Malik Masud and was admitted into the imperial service. He was a man of learning and culture and soon made a mark in life. He was promoted to the rank of a mansabdar of three hundred and appointed diwan of Kabul in 1595. Mehr-un-nisa, who had grown up meanwhile, was given in marriage to Ali Quli Istajlu who was a Persian refugee in the service of Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, but was subsequently taken in the royal service. In 1599, when Prince Salim was deputed to lead an expedition against Mewar, Ali Quli was placed on the prince's staff. He killed a tiger single handed and was given the title of Sher Afgan by the prince. Sometimes after Salim's revolt, Sher Afgan deserted to Akbar. When Jahangir became king, he forgave Sher Afgan for his past conduct and appointed him faujdar of Burdwan in Bengal and granted him a jagir there (1605). Sher Afgan was suspected of treasonable designs and the emperor directed the new governor of Bengal, Qutb-ud-din Khan, who had succeeded Raja Man Singh in August 1606, to send Sher Afgan to court and, in case of disobedience, to punish him. In response to the governor's summons, Sher Afgan, accompanied by two servants, reached Qutb-ud-din's camp on April 9, 1607. He was immediately surrounded by the governor's troops. Realizing the danger he was in and the indignity to which he was subjected, he angrily enquired of Qutb-ud-din as to why he was being treated in that manner. As Qutb-ud-din proceeded to explain the matter, the infuriated Sher Afgan struck the governor with his sword. Qutb-ud-din's followers

fell upon Sher Afgan who was cut to pieces. But before this, Sher Afgan had given a mortal blow to Ambar Khan, one of the governor's retainers. Both he and the governor died within twelve hours.

The news of Qutb-ud-din's death filled the emperor with rage. He wrote in his diary that "Sher Afgan was sent to hell, and it is to be hoped that the place of this black-faced scoundrel will always be there." Jahangir had Sher Afgan's widow and daughter, Ladli Begam, brought to court. The widowed lady was appointed a lady-in-waiting to Salima Begam, Akbar's widow. Jahangir chanced to see her in one of the *Nauroz* festivals in March 1611, and fell in love with her. He married her in May 1611.

Jahangir's relations with Nur Jahan

The circumstances of the death of Sher Afgan and the emperor's marriage with this remarkable lady have been the subject of controversy, and historians have held divergent views about the incidents leading to them and Jahangir's personal share in them. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that as a prince he had never seen Mehr-un-nisa, that Akbar had not forbidden their marriage, that Jahangir had no hand in the murder of Sher Afgan and that he for the first time saw Mehr-un-nisa in March 1611. (*Jahangir*, p. 152.) The reasons given by the learned historian of Jahangir in support of his theory are :

(1) No contemporary Persian source supports the view that Jahangir as a prince had desired to marry Mehr-un-nisa and that Akbar had refused him permission. Nor does any contemporary Persian authority charge Jahangir with contriving the murder of Sher Afgan.

(2) None of the contemporary European travellers or missionaries has anything to say in support of the traditional story, although these foreigners were anxious to seize upon rumours of any and every scandal connected with the members of the royal family.

(3) One could not think of any motive why Akbar would have forbidden Salim to marry Mehr-un-nisa. Such marriages were common enough in those days.

(4) If Akbar had really done so, he would not have been unwise enough to place Sher Afgan on the staff of Prince Salim in 1599. If Salim had looked upon Sher Afgan as his rival in love, he would not have forgiven him (Sher Afgan) for his indiscretion and promoted him to a high post.

(5) The appointment of Qutb-ud-din as governor of Bengal was made in order to prevent Man Singh, with whom the new

emperor was not on good terms, from commanding the resources of an important province and from exercising influence in the empire. It was not done to procure Mehr-un-nisa for the emperor. A similar step had been taken against Aziz Koka, another disaffected nobleman, a short time before Raja Man Singh's transfer.

(6) A high-souled lady of Nur Jahan's strong character would never have consented to marry Jahangir had she been convinced of his complicity in the murder of her former husband.

(7) It was natural that Sher Afgan's widow should be removed to court where her father and brother held employments. Her appointment as a lady-in-waiting of Salima Begam was also perfectly unexceptionable.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad, on the other hand, holds that it is not improbable that Jahangir as a prince loved and wanted to marry Nur Jahan and that probably he had a hand in the murder of Sher Afgan too. He adduces the following arguments in support of the above view :

(1) The evidence furnished by Dr. Beni Prasad in support of his theory of the emperor's innocence is of a negative character and is, therefore, not strong enough to disprove the "positive assertions" of the later Indian historians who were "in a better position to state the truth in a matter like this than their predecessors."

(2) There was no definite charge against Sher Afghan who was only suspected of sedition and Qutb-ud-din was directed to punish him if he "showed any futile seditious ideas." Hence, writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "our suspicions are confirmed by the suddenness with which his arrest was attempted."

(3) It is suspicious that Jahangir, who was fond of relating trivial affairs about his life, omits altogether to record the circumstances of his marriage with Nur Jahan. He mentions Nur Jahan's name for the first time three years after his marriage with her.

(4) It was strange that Mehr-un-nisa was brought to court by the emperor's orders and placed in the charge of the dowager queen Salima Begam in the imperial harem, while her father and brother were living at the capital and could have easily taken charge of her. Such a thing was never done in the case of the families of other nobles and officers who were charged with sedition.

(5) Jahangir, while a prince, seems to have loved Nur Jahan as mentioned by a contemporary Dutch writer, De Laet, in his famous work, *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*. The reasons why Jahangir did not marry Nur Jahan immediately after

Sher Afgan's death were that Jahangir was anxious to lull the suspicion about the circumstances leading to Sher Afgan's death and also not to provoke Nur Jahan unnecessarily. Dr. Ishwari Prasad, therefore, concludes that "the circumstances of Sher Afgan's death are of a highly suspicious nature although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the emperor was guilty of the crime." (*A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 465-67.)

The main issues underlying this important episode are: firstly, whether Jahangir as a prince wanted to marry Mehr-un-nisa and was prevented from doing so by his father and, secondly, whether he had any hand in the murder of Sher Afgan. As regards the first, Dr. Beni Prasad's observation that "one can hardly think of any motive which would prompt Akbar to forbid a marriage between Mehr-un-nisa and Salim" does not stand the test of criticism. We know from Abul Fazl that Akbar did forbid the marriage between Salim and the daughter of the nobly-born Zain Khan Koka and allowed it only when he saw that the prince's "heart was immoderately affected". (*Akbar-nama*, Vol. III, p. 1058.) In the present case there was a definite reason why Akbar would not give consent. Mehr-un-nisa had already been betrothed, as De Laet says, to Sher Afgan. That there was love between the two is also clear from the testimony of the above contemporary Dutch writer. "He (Jahangir) had been in love with her," writes De Laet, "when she was still a maiden during the life-time of Achbar (Akbar); but she had already been betrothed to the Turk Cheer Affeghan (Sher Afgan), and hence his father would not allow him to marry her, although he never entirely lost his love for her." (*Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*, p. 181) This independent testimony of a writer who had no reason to be biased against the emperor, supports the later Muslim historians. This is confirmed by a contemporary Persian work, recently discovered by Prof. Askari of Patna, which says that Salim had made a criminal assault on Mehr-un-nisa who appealed to Akbar for justice. The emperor forbade her marriage with Salim. Our knowledge of Jahangir's personal character, such as his falling in love with Zain Khan Koka's daughter in spite of his having already married many ladies, lends weight to the theory of his early love for Nur Jahan.

With regard to the allegation that Jahangir had Sher Afgan murdered, there exists no definite and unimpeachable contemporary evidence. Nor can one agree that Man Singh was removed from the governorship of Bengal so that the emperor's design could be easily executed. But at the same time there was no formulation of definite

charge against Sher Afgan who was kept in the dark about his offence and was not given an opportunity to clear himself. Moreover, the suddenness with which his end was sought to be encompassed, the method employed to secure the object and the rancour which Jahangir displayed against the victim together with his omission of a mention of Nur Jahan in that connection make the episode highly suspicious. As Dr. Ishwari Prasad hints, if the love theory is correct, the motive for Sher Afgan's murder is clear.

There remains one more question to answer. If Jahangir was so anxious to obtain possession of Nur Jahan, why did he not marry her in 1607, when she was brought to court? Why did he wait for four long years and marry her in 1611? It will be remembered that Nur Jahan was brought to the court and placed in charge of Salima Sultana Begam, who was Jahangir's step-mother and very kind and friendly to him. It was she who had brought about a reconciliation between Akbar and Jahangir when the latter had, as a prince, rebelled against his father. We know that ladies in the Mughul harem were clever match-makers. Therefore, while living with Salima Sultana Begam, Mehr-un-nisa was already in the possession of the emperor. The emperor's marriage with her was postponed for four years in order to lull public suspicion. This explains why Jahangir took the precaution of not mentioning the name of Nur Jahan till three years after their marriage.

Character of Nur Jahan

At the time of this marriage Jahangir was about to complete his forty-second year, while Nur Jahan was thirty-four years of age. She still retained and continued to do so for years together, the beauty and freshness of her early youth. She kept excellent health and was possessed of considerable physical strength. Her loveliness was heightened and improved by artificial toileting and ornamentation. Nur Jahan was endowed with a strong intellect and quick understanding. She was highly educated and was fond of poetry, music and painting. She composed verses in Persian. She had an inventive brain and devised new dresses, ornaments and styles of fashion and decoration. The fashion that she introduced continued to govern society till the reign of Aurangzeb.

Nur Jahan was pre-eminently social and generous. She was a friend of the poor and the oppressed. She had made it a rule to defray the expenses of the marriage of orphan girls and to distribute considerable charity every day. She possessed a man's brain and

ambition. It was not difficult for her to master intricate political and administrative problems. She loved to dominate every situation and everybody she came in touch with. She was full of courage and bravery and never lost her balance or equanimity of temper. In fact, the greater the danger, the greater was her fortitude and resourcefulness.

Nur Jahan enjoyed greater influence and authority. In 1613, she was elevated to the rank of Padshah Begum or the first lady of the realm. In that capacity she became the head of the female society of the capital and the mistress of the imperial household. She was so fond of power that she not only participated in the administration but attempted to concentrate authority in her hands. Jahangir, who was gradually becoming accustomed to ease and sloth owing to age and indifferent health, was not averse to delegate his authority to the queen who was intelligent and hardworking and who loved him with all the intensity of her full-blooded nature. Sometimes she appeared in *Jharokha-i-darshan* and transacted business in the open; even her name was engraved on some of the coins. Within a few years of her marriage Nur Jahan organized a party of her own and took the reins of government in her hands. The party, known as Nur Jahan Junta, consisted of herself, her parents, her brothers and prince Khurram who was the husband of her niece. Nur Jahan's mother, Asmat Begam, an educated and intelligent lady of balanced views, acted as her counsellor. Herself a woman of cultured taste and responsible for the invention of the *itr* of roses, she exercised steady influence on her ambitious and restless daughter. Nur Jahan's father Itimad-ud-daulah, was an able administrator, and her brother, Asaf Khan, a financier and diplomat of note. They were hardworking and talented men, who became the pillars of Nur Jahan's party. Prince Khurram, entitled subsequently, Shah Jahan, was married to Asaf Khan's daughter Arjumand Banu Begam. He was patronized by Nur Jahan in the early days of her power (1612-22).

Effect of Nur Jahan's Influence

Nur Jahan exercised healthy influence upon her husband. She looked after the emperor with unparalleled care and devotion. It was owing to her influence that Jahangir reduced the number of his daily cups and restrained himself from excessive drinking to which his two younger brothers had succumbed. She relieved him of much of the drudgery of state administration and care and anxiety which must

always accompany all rulers and administrators. She successfully enhanced the splendour of the Mughul court and ably seconded the efforts of her husband in patronizing learning and arts. She distributed a great deal of charity and, in more than one respect, extended protection and patronage to women. Thus her influence over Jahangir was good and benefited especially the poor and the needy and the votaries of letters and arts.

On the other hand, her influence in political and administrative affairs and high matters of State policy was definitely injurious. Throughout her ascendancy she displayed an inordinate love for power and fondness for indulging in party politics. From 1611 to 1622, she was the leader of the famous Nur Jahan Janta which monopolized power and shut out all those who were opposed to this party from power and influence at court. She raised her father, brother and other relatives to high posts in the empire. During this period she supported Khurram whom she raised to a pinnacle of prestige and glory. Nothing was denied to the prince, and his succession to the throne was considered a certainty; but when the most masterful queen gave her daughter Ladli Begam, by Sher Afgan, in marriage to prince Shahryar, she began to back up her son-in-law who was popularly known as *Nashudni*, that is, good-for-nothing fellow. She reduced Khurram to dust and drove him into rebellion in self-defence. The result was that Nur Jahan's interference in the affairs of the State convulsed the empire in a civil war. Her love of power and disregard of loyal services rendered to the State by top-ranking officials, and her suspicion towards those who differed from her brought about an estrangement between the queen and some of the most capable and devoted servants of the Mughul throne. Mahabat Khan, who had reached the position of Amir-ul-umra by dint of meritorious services, was driven to raise the standard of revolt and arrest the emperor, as he felt that if the imperious queen were allowed to have her own way, he would perish along with the members of his family. Possessed as she was of womanly vanity and love of theatrical display of sovereignty, her influence in the court and in the empire produced an unhealthy result. It was the desire of all and sundry to please her by offering her rich presents which gave rise to bribery and corruption. She was after all, a woman and could not personally supervise high state transactions. This lack of personal touch bred inefficiency, intrigue and demoralization.

War and treaty of peace with Mewar

With all his efforts Akbar could not conquer the whole of

Mewar. Rana Pratap was able to recover a considerable portion of his lost territory before his peaceful death in 1597. His son and successor, Amar Singh, though not gifted with his father's indomitable spirit and undying love for freedom, was, nevertheless, a brave soldier and continued his ancestral policy of resistance to the Mughul aggression. Several expeditions sent by Akbar during the last days of his reign met with failure on account of the supineness of his commanders and the stiffness of the opposition offered by the Sisodias.

On his accession, Jahangir, in pursuance of his father's policy of imperialism which aimed at the conquest of the entire country, deputed, in 1605, his second son Parwez, at the head of 20,000 horse to reduce Rana Amar Singh to submission. Asaf Khan Jafar Beg, who was promoted to the rank of 5,000 and appointed wazir, was directed to assist the prince as his adviser, and other notable officers were ordered to cooperate with him. Sagar, an uncle of Rana Amar Singh, who had deserted his nephew and lived as a pensioner at the Mughul court, was also required to accompany the expedition. Amar Singh bravely defended his territory and fought a tough battle at the pass of Dewar which proved to be indecisive. Both sides claimed victory. The imperialists mercilessly ravaged the plain in the vicinity of Dewar, but they could proceed no further and were recalled on account of Khusrav's rebellion. Before withdrawing, they installed Sagar as Rana at Chittor, in order to create dissension among the Rajputs.

Two years later, in 1608, Jahangir sent another force consisting of 12,000 horse, 500 Ahadis, 2,000 musketeers, 60 elephants and 80 pieces of small artillery, under Mahabat Khan, to subdue the Rana. The Khan displayed great energy, ravaged the Rana's territory and compelled him to seek shelter in the hills; but he could make no headway against the forest-covered hills and valleys of Mewar. In 1609, he was recalled and Abdulla Khan was appointed to take charge of the expedition. Abdulla attacked the hills of Mewar, but failed to capture the Rana. He defeated prince Karan in an engagement, but was, in turn, badly beaten by the Rajputs at Ranpura, the northernmost key-point of Mewar. He was replaced by Raja Basu, who, too, failed to produce an impression upon the Rana and was, therefore, replaced by Mirza Aziz Koka. In 1613, Jahangir personally moved to Ajmer in order to be near the scene of action and to exert pressure on the enemy. The supreme command of the Mewar army was now entrusted to Prince Khurram. The campaign began early in 1614 with vigour. But soon there were differences of

opinion between the Prince and Aziz Koka. Consequently, the latter was recalled. Khurram, who had now the sole charge of the invading army, "conducted his campaign with consummate ability, ruthless severity and extraordinary good fortune." He ravaged the Rana's territory, destroyed and burnt villages, towns and gardens and demolished temples. He cut off all supplies in order to starve out the Sisodias in their mountainous retreats. Though reduced to great straits, the Rajputs displayed undaunted heroism and made repeated attacks on the enemy. In the constant struggle both sides suffered heavily, but the Rajputs suffered greater losses than the Mughuls on account of a famine and pestilence. The Rana's followers now began gradually to desert him. His nobles counselled peace. Prince Karan also advised the same course. The resources of the tiny Mewar were exhausted and it was not possible to prolong any further the struggle with the great empire whose resources in men and money were infinitely superior. Accordingly, Amar Singh opened negotiations with Khurram, who offered a cordial reception to the Rana's agents. Shubh Karan and Hari Das, and sent them with his own secretary to the imperial camp at Ajmer. Jahangir was happy to accept the terms proposed by the Rana and issued a 'farman' impressing upon it the mark of his own palm and authorized prince Khurram to conclude a treaty.

Rana Amar Singh met prince Khurram and presented him a valuable ruby and some other articles, including seven elephants and nine horses. Khurram received him cordially, embraced him and seating him by his side, honoured him with rich presents. After the Rana's departure, prince Karan paid a visit to Khurram and was similarly received and honoured. Thus, a treaty of peace was concluded between the Rana and the emperor in 1615. Its terms were :

- (1) The Rana recognized Jahangir as his suzerain.
 - (2) The emperor restored to the Rana all the territory, including Chittor, that had been seized by the Mughuls since the time of Akbar.
 - (3) The fort of Chittor was not to be fortified and even to be repaired.
 - (4) The Rana was not obliged to attend the imperial darbar ; but his son was to represent him and to assist the emperor with a contingent of troops.
 - (5) Unlike other Rajput chiefs, the Rana was not required to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Mughul ruling family.
- The treaty is a landmark in the history of the relations between

Mewar and Delhi. No ruler of the Sisodia dynasty ever before openly professed allegiance to any Mughul emperor. The treaty of 1615 for the first time brought the end of a long-drawn struggle between the two States. Jahangir and his son, Khurram, deserve credit for dictating extremely lenient terms to their foe who had fought against them and their great ancestors, Akbar and Babur for over three quarters of a century. The emperor also deserves credit for adopting a most conciliatory policy and abstaining from all interference in the internal affairs of Mewar which proved useful to both parties. The Rana of Mewar hereafter remained loyal to the Mughul throne, till Aurangzeb, by his thoughtless policy, drove Raj Singh into an open rebellion. Some writers have found fault with Rana Amar Singh for not continuing the struggle and submitting to his hereditary enemy. The charge, however, is baseless. It was impossible for tiny state like Mewar to continue the unequal struggle for an indefinite period. Mewar had to submit sooner or later, as the resources of the Mughul empire were infinitely superior. Mewar's interests required peace, and by the treaty of 1615 she got peace with honour. She retained her internal sovereignty, and all the scruples of her ruling family were respected by the victor. The Rana only nominally recognized the Mughul suzerainty. It would have been unwise for Amar Singh to have thrown away this golden opportunity of bringing the much needed peace to the distracted land.

War in the Dakhin

Jahangir adopted his father's policy of conquering the whole of India and bringing it under the rule of his dynasty. His Dakhin policy was, therefore, a continuation of that of Akbar, who, following the ideas of the ancient Hindu kings treated the north and south as indivisible parts of one country with a common culture and interest, and to attempt to acquire the Dakhin by peaceful means, and failing that, by war. On his death, in 1605, the Mughuls possessed the whole of Khandesh and a part of Ahmadnagar. It was Jahangir's task to attempt the conquest and annexation of the rest of Ahmadnagar and, if possible, of the two remaining independent states of Bijapur and Golkunda. In 1608, he directed the Khan Khana to conquer the Dakhin and despatched him at the head of 12,000 picked cavalry. In spite of great exertion, Khan Khana could make little progress in the campaign. He was opposed by a great military genius of the calibre of Malik Ambar, an Abyssinian by birth, who had risen to be the prime minister of Ahmadnagar. This able man

had consolidated the truncated state of Ahmadnagar by a wise system of administration and liberal revenue policy and had, thus, won the goodwill of the people. He had the wisdom to employ a considerable number of Marathas in the Nizamshahi army and to encourage them to develop the guerilla system of warfare in which they were adepts and which suited the nature of the country and the genius of the people, inhabiting it. Thus strengthened, the Nizamshahi government put up a brave defence against the invaders. Khan Khana was unable to maintain the morale of the Mughul troops. In order, therefore, to secure harmony and strengthen the army, Jahangir entrusted the nominal command to prince Parwez and appointed Asaf Khan as his guardian. The prince was appointed governor of Khandesh and Berar and was sent early in 1610; but he did fare better than Khan Khana and achieved nothing during his several years' leadership in the Dakhin. One after another, some of the important Mughul commanders, such as, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi and Abdulla Khan, were tried, but to no purpose. Malik Ambar's Maratha guerillas evaded open pitched battles. They hung on the skirts of the Mughul army, lured it away to a place of ambush, cut off its supplies and fell on it at a convenient opportunity. These tactics, to which the Mughuls were not used, wore them out and undermined their morale. The commanders indulged in mutual accusations and thwarted the plans of their general.

In 1611, the Mughuls made a grand attempt to encircle Ahmadnagar. Abdulla Khan was to march on it from the side of Gujarat, while Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, Man Singh and Amir-ul-umra to move from the side of Berar and Khandesh and attack simultaneously; but the scheme failed as Abdulla Khan marched quickly towards his objective without waiting for his colleagues to proceed from Berar and Khandesh. Malik Ambar's guerillas fell on him and drove him back to Gujarat with severe losses. Jahangir was indignant. He reprimanded Abdulla Khan and reappointed Khan Khana to the Dakhin command. The Khan Khana resumed operations in 1612 and defeated the Dakhinis, but the Mughul victory was not decisive and dissension continued to hamper them as before.

Anxious to wash off the stain of a continued Mughul failure against Malik Ambar, Jahangir decided, on the advice of the Nur Jahan Junta, to transfer Prince Parwez to Allahabad and place Prince Khurram in charge of the Dakhin. Early in 1616 he was granted the title of Shah Sultan and given leave to set out for Ahmadnagar. The Emperor himself moved to Mandu with all his court in order to

be near the scene of warfare and, thus exert pressure by his presence. Prince Khurram reached Burhanpur in March 1617, and at once opened negotiations with Malik Ambar. Overawed by the superior force, Malik Ambar accepted the terms and ceded all the territory of Balaghat, which he had recently seized from the Mughuls. He also surrendered to the Mughuls the fort of Ahmadnagar. King Adil Shah waited in person on prince Khurram with presents worth sixteen lakhs of rupces. Jahangir confirmed the terms and the treaty of 1617 was signed. The Mughul court hailed the peace as a great achievement and exaggerated the measure of Khurram's success. The Nur Jahan Junta celebrated the occasion with pomp and magnificence, as if the prince had won a great victory. Jahangir was overjoyed and conferred on Khurram the high sounding title of Shah Jahan. The fact, however, was that Khurram had taken advantage of Abdulla Khan's partial success and exerted pressure on the enemy by his superior force and patched up a temporary truce. Malik Ambar was not beaten; within two years he was to raise his head again.

The treaty of 1617 was brushed aside by Malik Ambar in 1620 when he formed a league with Bijapur and Golkunda and launched an attack on Khan Khana, and besieged him in the fortress of Ahmadnagar. The imperialists though successful in pitched battles, were powerless before the guerilla fighting of the Dakhinis and were driven back to take shelter in Burhanpur. The Dakhinis carried on raids as far as Mandu. In response to the repeated appeals of Khan Khana, the emperor directed Shah Jahan to proceed to the south and punish the audacious Malik Ambar; but as the siege of Kangra was proceeding in the Punjab, the prince could not start for the Dakhin for some time. He insisted that his elder brother, Khusrav, should be placed in his custody. When this request was granted, Shah Jahan took leave of his father at Lahore for the Dakhin. From Ujjain he despatched five thousand cavalry under Abdul Hasan and another contingent under Bairam Beg to drive away the Marathas from the vicinity of Mandu. This was done without difficulty. The Marathas were pursued as far as Khirki near Ahmadnagar, the new capital of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Shah Jahan's men now pushed on to Ahmadnagar itself in which the Mughul garrison was still holding out. When the Mughuls reached Patan, Malik Ambar offered his submission. At about the same time the Dakhinis had raised the siege of Ahmadnagar. Shah Jahan was anxious to bring the Dakhin campaign to a speedy conclusion. Owing to Nur Jahan's changed attitude towards him, he hurriedly concluded peace in 1621. The

Dakhinis ceded all the imperial territory which they had seized after the peace of 1617, besides yielding some adjoining territory having a revenue of fourteen lakhs of rupees. The kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda paid to the emperor a tribute of twelve lakhs, eighteen lakhs, and twenty lakhs respectively.

The peace proved to be another feather in Shah Jahan's cap. His reputation was greatly enhanced. In August 1621, he received the news of his father's illness. A little later he contrived to bring about the death of his elder brother prince Khusrav, by commissioning a man, named Raza, to strangle him to death, while he himself went out on a hunting excursion to avoid suspicion. A few days after the incident he reported to his father that Khusrav had died of an attack of colic. Jahangir was grieved and the whole country mourned the passing away of the prince who was possessed of great qualities of head and heart and was deservedly popular among all classes of people. The emperor, however, took no steps to punish the guilty.

Loss of Kandhar, 1622

As we have seen, the impregnable fortress of Kandhar was a bone of contention between the two mighty empires of India and Persia which were jealous rivals. Though at peace, each endeavoured to lull the suspicion of the other so as to achieve its object. The policy of the Shah of Persia was to cajole and flatter Jahangir and to attack and capture Kandhar as soon as the Indian emperor was found off his guard. The Persians made such an attempt in 1606, but failed to capture Kandhar. Realizing that naked force would not help him, Shah Abbas sent an ambassador, early in 1611, to Agra with many a rich present and a flattering letter of condolence on the death of Akbar and congratulations on the accession of Jahangir. This mission was followed by a series of others, all having the same object, namely, putting Jahangir off his guard and attacking at a convenient opportunity. The second mission came in 1615, the third in 1616 and the fourth in 1620. Towards the end of 1621, the Shah who must have been duly informed of the break-up of the Nur Jahan Junta and the growing estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan, sent a large force for the capture of Kandhar. The siege actually began early in 1622 and there spread a rumour that another Persian army was coming to attack Thatta. Jahangir was then recuperating in Kashmir. He directed Shah Jahan, who was then in the Dakhin to proceed to the relief of Kandhar; but the prince who was already meditating rebellion against father, was not in a

mood to comply with the imperial orders. The fortress fell after forty-five days' siege and was occupied by the Persians. Shah Abbas sent an ambassador to Jahangir with a letter justifying the siege and capture of Kandhar on the ground that it was part of the Persian territory. The letter expressed the hope that the two empires would remain friendly. Jahangir accused the Shah of treachery and meanness and ordered prince Parwez to recover the fortress. This could not be done successfully owing to Shah Jahan's rebellion.

Shah Jahan's rebellion

Nur Jahan's party which had been governing the empire since 1612, began to show signs of disruption towards the end of 1621. Jahangir had wrecked his strong constitution by dissipation and indulgence in wine and opium and his health began to fail. Nur Jahan grew alarmed. Ambitious and dominating, she felt that in the event of the emperor's death and Shah Jahan's succession, she would be deprived not only of the controlling authority, but even influence in the management of affairs. She was too well acquainted with Shah Jahan's ability, energy, ambition and pride to be deceived into the thought that he would suffer her to retain any kind of authority in matters of State. Realizing that there was no room in the empire for two masterful personalities like herself and Shah Jahan, she decided to back up Shahryar, who was the youngest surviving son of Jahangir and likely to be a pliable tool in her hands. The political differences between these two powerful personages were heightened by their attitudes towards religion. Nur Jahan was a liberal Shia and disposed to be tolerant to other faiths. Shah Jahan, on the other hand, was becoming more and more staunch in his belief in the Sunni dogma. He began to dislike the Persian supremacy and predominance of Shiaism at the court. In pursuance of her scheme of putting up Shahryar as a candidate for the throne, Nur Jahan betrothed her daughter, Ladli Begam, by Sher Afgan, to that prince in December 1620. The marriage was performed at Agra in April 1621. Shahryar was raised to the rank of 8,000 zat and 4,000 sawar.

Unfortunately, Nur Jahan's mother, who had exerted a steady influence on her, died in 1621 and her husband Itimad-ud-daula followed her in January 1622. These two deaths led to the break-up of the Nur Jahan Junta and to the estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan.

It was at this time that the Persians had laid siege to the fortress of Kandhar and Shah Jahan was directed to proceed to the relief

of the besieged garrison ; but the prince was so suspicious of Nur Jahan that he did not like to lose his hold on the Dakhin. He feared that in the event of the emperor's death, whose health was rapidly failing, the queen might proclaim Shahryar as emperor and deprive him (Shah Jahan) of what he considered to be his birthright. He requested the emperor that he should be given the absolute command of the army and the governorship of the Punjab, and that the fort of Ranthambhor should be assigned for the residence of his family. If these demands were conceded, he would proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. Nur Jahan, who had held Jahangir in a sort of intellectual bondage, convinced him that Shah Jahan entertained seditious ideas. The enraged emperor wrote to Shah Jahan to despatch to the court the royal officers and troops under his command immediately if he wanted to proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. At this time occurred an unhappy incident which drove a wedge between the two parties. Shah Jahan had a little before, applied for the grant of the pargana of Dholpur as a jagir to him. In anticipation of the imperial sanction he sent his agent Darya Khan to take charge of it. Nur Jahan had already obtained the grant of the pargana for Shahryar and appointed a faujdar there. Darya Khan in his attempt to take possession of Dholpur came into clash with Shahryar's faujdar Sharif-ul-Malik. The latter was wounded in the eye and many of his men lost their lives in the battle. The queen exploited the incident. Jahangir reprimanded Shah Jahan, forbade him from attending the court and directed him to send the Dakhin army to the capital without delay. Alienated from Shah Jahan, he promoted Shahryar to the rank of 12,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and appointed him chief-in-command of the Kandhar expedition. Soon after, some of the former's jagirs in the Punjab were transferred to the latter. Finally, in spite of Shah Jahan's explanation and apology, his remaining jagirs in the north including Hisar, which was supposed to be the heir apparent's appanage, were made over to Shahryar. Suspicious of her brother Asaf Khan for his secret sympathy with his son-in-law (Shah Jahan), the queen summoned from Kabul Mahabat Khan, the greatest Mughul soldier of the day, who had so far been neglected by the court, and raised him to the high rank of 6,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. Mahabat's rival Asaf Khan was sent away to Agra to bring in the royal treasure from there.

Hardly had these steps been taken when the news came of the capture of Kandhar by the enemy. Jahangir charged the Persian Shah with treachery and ordered arrangements to be made for the

recovery of that important fortress. At this time reports were received of the open rebellion of Shah Jahan who seemed to have become despaired of justice at the hands of his feeble father, then under the complete domination of the imperious Nur Jahan, and of his impending project of surprise attack on and capture of Agra before the imperialists could recover from the shock. But Nur Jahan was well served by her spies. She took prompt and effective measures to checkmate the rebel's designs. Prince Parwez was recalled from Bihar with all his men, and the loyal Rajput chiefs of Amber, Marwar, Kota, Bundi and Orchha and other states were summoned to the support of the imperial throne. Mirza Aziz Koka was conciliated and Mahabat Khan was appointed to command the royal forces. The emperor and the queen proceeded to Delhi (Feb. 1623) en route to Mandu in order to supervise the defence operations on the spot. At the same time a clever envoy was sent to sound the rebel prince so as to gain time. The emperor reached Ajmer in May 1623.

From Mandu, then his headquarter, Shah Jahan with the principal officers of the Dakhin army, most of whom were convinced of the righteousness of his cause, made a dash for Fatehpur Sikri. Having failed to capture the city as its gates were prudently closed by the commandant, the prince raided Agra, but was badly defeated in an engagement with the imperialists at Billochpura early in April 1623. In this battle he suffered a great loss in the fall of his staunchest supporter Sunder, entitled Rai Rayan Bikramajit, one of the greatest generals in the country. The imperialists, after over one month's halt set out under the nominal command of Parwez who had arrived from Bihar and had been raised to the unprecedented rank of 40,000 zat and 30,000 sawar in order to exalt him above Shah Jahan, and pursue the rebels who had by this time fled to Mandu and taken shelter in that strong fortress. On the approach of Mahabat Khan who was the real head of the imperial troops there were many desertions in Shah Jahan's ranks and he was obliged to flee to Asirgarh, leaving Bairam Beg at the head of a contingent of men to hold the ferries on the Narmada and prevent Mahabat Khan from crossing over to the Dakhin. His retreat caused defection among the imperial officers and troops in Gujarat of which too he was governor and led to the loss of that province. Shah Jahan lodged his family in Asirgarh, and himself proceeded to Burhanpur, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin. His piteous appeal to his erstwhile enemy Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar, who would

not like to invite on his head the wrath of the mighty Mughul emperor for the sake of a forlorn prince, did not evoke any response and a similar request to the Bijapur ruler met with an insulting rebuff. He was forced to open negotiations with Mahabat Khan, but in this too nothing but disappointment stared him in the face. His envoy Abdur Rahim Khan Khana whom the prince had besought to bind to his cause by personal entreaty and an oath on the Quran, went over to the side of Mahabat Khan who crossed the Narmada to overtake the fugitive Shah Jahan. The emperor issued instructions to Mahabat Khan to pursue the prince and bring him a prisoner to the court or drive him out of the country. Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to flee across the Tapti into the territory of his former enemy, the Sultan of Golkunda (October), and the imperialists returned to Burhanpur to pass the remaining of the rainy season there. Jahangir broke up his camp at Ajmer and set out for Kashmir early in November 1623.

Passing through Telangana Shah Jahan reached Masulipatam which he quitted (November) after a few days' halt and turning to the north-east entered Orissa, then a province of the Mughul empire. Ahmad Beg Khan, the ignorant and cowardly governor of the province failed to make arrangement for its defence and fled to Cuttack, thence to Burdwan and finally to Dacca. Salih, the spirited faujdar of Burdwan, however, decided to put up resistance; but he was defeated and compelled to surrender. After occupying Burdwan Shah Jahan pushed on to Rajmahal (then known as Akbarnagar) which was besieged and occupied only after a stubborn battle in which Ibrahim Khan, governor of Bengal, lost his life, fighting valiantly till the end. Ahmad Beg Khan, the governor of Orissa, surrendered at Dacca. The provinces of Orissa and Bengal thus passed into the hands of Shah Jahan.

With these two eastern provinces as his base, Shah Jahan planned to seize Bihar, Awadh, Allahabad, and even Agra, so as to be in a position to extort favourable terms from his enraged father. His valiant commander, prince Bhim of Mewar, made a dash for Patna and captured it without striking a blow, its pusillanimous governor Mikhlis Khan having abandoned his charge and fled to save his skin on the earliest news of the Rajput invasion. The whole of Bihar, including the formidable fortress of Rohtas, passed into Shah Jahan's hands. Jaunpur too fell in the like manner and Shah Jahan crossed the Ganga near Banaras and encamped at Kantit. He ordered the siege of Allahabad. Both Allahabad

and Awadh would have been lost had not Parwez and Mahabat Khan hastened from Burhanpur in March 1624 to the timely relief of the beleaguered garrison. Their near approach obliged Abdullah Khan to raise the siege of Allahabad, and retire to Jhusi. Mahabat Khan managed to collect some boats and cross the Ganga forty *kos* above Allahabad. He cut off the supplies to the rebel prince who was torn between an open battle and a retreat to the Dakhin, and compelled Shah Jahan to fight unprepared. The Mewar prince Bhim's reckless charge failed against the superior numbers of the imperial army, and he fell fighting to his last breath. A severe defeat befell Shah Jahan who was fortunate to escape with his life. He fled to Rohtas and leaving Mumtaz Mahal, who was too weak to travel after child-birth, in the fort there, retreated to Bengal.

From Bengal Shah Jahan fled back to the Dakhin, and passing through Orissa, Telengana and Golkunda, set foot on the Ahmadnagar territory. During his absence bitter hostility had broken out between Malik Ambar, the all powerful minister of Ahmadnagar, and the Sultan of Bijapur. In October 1623 each of the two had sought the assistance of the Mughul general Mahabat Khan, who had wisely refused taking sides in their quarrel as long as Shah Jahan was in rebellion, and chose to help Bijapur only after the rebel prince had quitted the Dakhin for Orissa (end of 1623). As soon as Mahabat Khan set out for the north to hound Shah Jahan out of the country, Malik Ambar, feeling relieved, concluded an alliance with Golkunda and defeated a Bijapur army at Bidar. After plundering Bidar, he besieged the Adil Shah in Bijapur. The beleaguered Sultan recalled his contingent in the Mughul service and also appealed to the imperialists in charge of the Mughul Dakhin for immediate help. Afraid of being caught between the two armies, Ambar, leaving a part of his force before the walls of Bijapur, made a sudden dash and surprised the advancing reinforcements under Mulla Muhammad and Lashkar Khan in their camp at Bhatwi, slaying the one and putting the other to flight. He then besieged Ahmadnagar, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin, and at the same time pushed on with the siege of Bijapur. At this juncture Shah Jahan, who had suffered a very crushing defeat in the north, returned to the Dakhin, and was cordially welcomed by Malik Ambar, a life-long enemy of the Mughuls and was persuaded to enter into an alliance with him against his father Jahangir. At Ambar's request Shah Jahan besieged the fort of Burhanpur, but failed to capture it. Meanwhile, Parwez and Mahabat Khan re-entered the Dakhin

in pursuit of Shah Jahan who was obliged to raise the siege of Burhanpur and retire to Rohangarh in Balaghat. Here the prince fell ill and Abdulla Khan, his only notable and faithful follower at this time, turned a hermit. Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to submit to his father.

Deprived of most of his followers by death and desertion, prostrated by physical and mental exhaustion, and threatened by the invincible army and never failing generalship of Mahabat Khan, nothing but destruction stared the despondent Shah Jahan in the face, and compelled him to take an immediate decision about his future conduct. He decided in favour of an unconditional surrender and wrote to the emperor begging his forgiveness. Nur Jahan, who was becoming suspicious of Mahabat Khan's conduct and his fast rising power and prestige was in a mood to treat and in March 1626 demanded an immediate surrender of Rohtasgarh and Asirgarh and the despatch to the court of the prince's sons Dara and Aurangzeb, then aged ten and eight years respectively. Shah Jahan complied without hesitation. He was forgiven and was appointed governor of Balaghat.

The three-year-old rebellion, which had convulsed the empire with a civil war and caused a considerable loss of men and money, came to an end in April 1626.

Mahabat Khan's coup d'etat, March 1626

Immediately on the conclusion of peace with Shah Jahan, the imperious queen decided to reduce Mahabat Khan, the greatest soldier and diplomat in the empire to submission. During Shah Jahan's rebellion Mahabat Khan's prestige had risen considerably and he had to be employed for putting down the rebel, the queen did not then think it advisable to settle her scores with him. Nur Jahan would not tolerate the existence of an indomitable personality like Mahabat Khan, who in view of his ability and achievements, was not prepared to play a second fiddle to anyone. He had his own ambition and would not like to take orders from anyone except his patron and sovereign, Jahangir. He resented the usurpation of power by Nur Jahan, especially because she had been an ordinary woman before her marriage with the emperor and since that time was successfully planning to dominate the court without caring for the loyal services of the trusted nobles of the empire. Her candidate for the throne, Shahryar, was a good-for-nothing fellow and was chosen only to serve as a mere tool in the hands of his

ambitious mother-in-law. On the other hand, Mahabat Khan supported the claims of Parwez who was in every way more capable a prince than Shahryar and was not prepared to accept Nur Jahan's supremacy. The queen feared Mahabat Khan's ability and his devotion to the interests of the royal family and his dislike of herself. On account of these reasons the two powerful personages felt unable to live in peace and Nur Jahan took early steps to encompass the ruin of the great general. As soon as Shah Jahan had agreed to unconditional surrender, she had Mahabat Khan transferred to Bengal and Khan Jahan Lodi appointed in his place as adviser to prince Parwez. After some hesitation, the prince agreed to accept Khan Jahan as his Vakil and to remain at Burhanpur according to imperial instructions. Mahabat Khan also prepared to leave for Bengal.

In alliance with her brother Asal Khan who was equally jealous of Mahabat, the queen now framed charges of disloyalty and disobedience against the latter. An imperial *farman* was issued asking him to send to court the elephants he was said to have obtained in Bihar and Bengal during Shah Jahan's revolt, and to furnish an account of the large sums of money said to have been collected by him from dispossessed jagirdars in the two provinces. If Mahabat failed to comply, he was to be recalled to court without delay. The Khan saw through the game and felt that Nur Jahan's plan was to disgrace him and to reduce him to dust. So he decided to proceed to the Punjab where the emperor happened to be at the time and represent his case personally to his master. If he failed to obtain justice, he would bring the emperor under control by a *coup de main* and thus deprive Nur Jahan of power in the state. With his 4 to 5 thousand loyal Rajput soldiers, he reached the vicinity of the imperial camp near the river Jhelum in March 1626. Jahangir had returned from Kashmir and was on his way to Kabul. He was to cross the river Jhelum the next morning. The news of Mahabat Khan's approach at the head of a powerful Rajput army caused consternation in the royal camp. Instead of making arrangements for the disbandment of Mahabat's troops the emperor only ordered him to remain where he was and the queen chose to hurl further insult at him, by asking him to explain as to why he had affianced his daughter to a noble man's son named Barkhurdar without the previous permission of the court. Barkhurdar was summoned to court, was publicly disgraced and with his hands tied to his neck sent to prison. The dowry given to him by Mahabat was

forfeited. Such an act drove Mahabat Khan to decide to secure the person of the emperor and strike a sudden blow at the power of the queen.

Early in the morning of the next day Mahabat at the head of his Rajputs appeared suddenly before the imperial tents, having already detached about 2,000 of his horsemen to hold the bridge on the Jhelum and not to allow anyone to pass. Most of the imperial army had gone to the other side of the river, while the emperor and the queen with a handful of men were still in camp on the left bank, waiting to cross the river. When Mahabat appeared at the gate of the imperial encampment, the royal troops were filled with alarm, and made little or no attempt to obstruct his passage. Mahabat rode to the door of the imperial tent and there alighted from his horse. When informed of this daring act, Jahangir came out and took his seat in a palki. Mahabat stepping forward saluted the emperor and said that he had come to throw himself on his Majesty's protection and to suffer any punishment that might be awarded to him in the royal presence. He did not like to die at the hands of his enemy, Asaf Khan, who was planning his destruction. As he was talking to the emperor his Rajputs surrounded the royal apartments. Jahangir in rage more than once placed his hand on the hilt of his sword to give a blow to Mahabat. But he was dissuaded from doing so. He agreed to mount a horse and accompany Mahabat after the latter had refused to permit him to go in and change his dress. The emperor was next mounted on an elephant and taken to Mahabat's camp and placed under the guard of the latter's sons.

Mahabat Khan had undertaken this *coup d'etat* under an impulse, and had forgotten to take under his custody the queen who was the real power behind the throne. When he realized this mistake, he returned to the imperial camp, but found that the Begam had crossed the river to the other side and was beyond his reach. He decided to bring Nur Jahan and Asaf Khan under his control the next day.

The queen seems to have been unaware of Mahabat's coup, and was apprised of it only after she had crossed the Jhelum. She held a council of war, scolded her brother Asaf Khan for his negligence, and made arrangements for rescuing the emperor. Jahangir heard of the queen's preparations and sent message to warn her against any such attempt which was bound to injure the imperial cause beyond recovery. He sent his own ring to assure

the queen that the warning given was not under Mahabat's influence and was entirely his own. But the indomitable queen would not believe and stuck to her determination. Accompanied by a large number of troops she attempted to cross the river so as to launch an attack on Mahabat's force, but for lack of proper leadership the party got divided into several groups, and only a small number reached the other bank. Mahabat's Rajputs were ready to give the Begam's force fitting reception. Quite a number of them were slain, some wounded and most fled back and were drowned in their attempt to reach the other side of the river. Nur Jahan, seated on an elephant and leading the attack, was compelled to retire. Her elephant received several wounds and Shahryar's baby daughter in the queen's arm was also hit by an arrow. Asaf Khan behaved throughout with pusillanimity and fled to the fort at Attock for safety. A small group of loyal followers headed by Fidai Khan displayed vigour and enthusiasm and launched a vigorous attack on Mahabat's men, but these were forced back with great slaughter.

After this failure Nur Jahan voluntarily surrendered to Mahabat Khan and was permitted to join Jahangir. Mahabat Khan's supremacy was now complete. He took charge of administration, appointed his men to key positions and took steps to put down the partisans of the queen. An army was sent against Asaf Khan at Attock which secured his surrender. After about two months' stay in the Punjab the emperor proceeded to Kabul, reconciling himself outwardly to Mahabat's domination. But the general's power rested on force and bred discontent among the members of the court. Moreover, Mahabat was primarily a soldier and diplomat, but no statesman or even an administrator. His favourites mismanaged the affairs entrusted to them and caused resentment among the people. At Kabul there was a quarrel between his Rajput troops and a section of the royal force called the Ahadis. Some Rajputs had turned out their horses to graze on the imperial hunting grounds, which was objected to by the Ahadis and the guards. In the scuffle, an Ahadi was slain. The Ahadis were not satisfied with Mahabat's promise to hold an enquiry and punish the offender, and attacked the Rajputs, 8 to 9 hundreds of whom were killed. Mahabat became unpopular. The Muslim public, which disliked the Rajput influence, staged a rising. Although it was easily put down by Mahabat, his power and prestige suffered a great setback. The hostility of the court increased in proportion to the reduction in his armed

strength. This gave the astute Nur Jahan an opportunity to conspire against the general. Jahangir's consummate duplicity convinced Mahabat that he was quite happy under the latter's domination and thus kept him off his guard. During the return journey from Kabul Nur Jahan hatched a plot to secure the emperor's release. It was arranged when the camp was near Rohtas that Jahangir would hold a review of the imperial troops. He sent word to Mahabat that he should order his own troops to remain at a little distance so as to prevent any possibility of a clash between the two armies. The general, who felt the ground slipping from under his feet, complied. On the pretence of reviewing the troops Jahangir placed himself at the head of the imperial army, and Mahabat, feeling that his domination was at an end, left the place for Lahore. Thus his "reign of hundered days" was over.

While retreating to Lahore Mahabat Khan took with him Asaf Khan, one or two other important nobles and Prince Daniyal's sons, as hostages. He was compelled to send them back. Nur Jahan who had now regained her former supremacy took immediate steps to undermine Mahabat's crumbling power and to reorganize the administration that had fallen into decay on account of the general's incompetence as an administrator. Immediately after the emperor's release, a regular *darbar* was held at Rohtas and a redistribution of high offices took place. Peremptory orders were sent to Mahabat to release Daniyal's sons and also Asaf Khan and other nobles, which he did, for he felt that he had no power to oppose the imperious queen. He further complied with the emperor's commands of proceeding towards Thatta in order to face Shah Jahan who had moved from the Dakhin on the receipt of news of Mahabat's successful coup.

The end of the Dakhin War

When early in 1626 Nur Jahan had recalled Mahabat Khan from the Dakhin, Khan Jahan Lodi was appointed to take charge of that province. Although brave and intrepid, the latter lacked foresight and political wisdom and was no match to Malik Ambar, the king-maker of Ahmadnagar. He could make no headway against the Abyssinian minister, and allowed the imperial prestige in southern India to suffer. But Malik Ambar died in May 1626, after which war again broke out. Malik Ambar was succeeded by Hamid Khan who too was an able commander and politician. Khan Jahan accepted a huge bribe from Hamid and made peace with him.

leaving Balaghat as far as Ahmadnagar under his possession. While the imperial fortune was receiving a setback in the Dakhin, Jahangir died. His Dakhin policy had failed owing to mismanagement, corruption and dissensions among the Mughul officers.

Jahangir, his personality and character

After regaining his freedom from the clutches of Mahabat Khan, Jahangir, whose health had completely broken down, set out for Kashmir in March 1627. But even Kashmir failed to help the restoration of his health. So he returned to Lahore. While he was yet on the way, he was taken ill and died early in the morning of 7th November N. S. (28th October, O. S.) 1627 near Bhimbar. He was then 58 years of age. He was buried in a beautiful garden at Shahdara near Lahore. His widowed queen Nur Jahan subsequently erected a handsome mausoleum over his grave.

There are two contradictory views about the personality and character of Jahangir. Some modern European writers consider him to have been a fickle-minded tyrant, fond of wine and women and unsuccessful both as a man and ruler. On the other hand, some of the Indian writers look upon him as a just and noble monarch who tried to rule with justice and impartiality. The truth lies between these two extremes. As a man Jahangir was on the whole an amiable personality. He was respectful to his mother and other elderly members of his family and although he rebelled against his great father and remained in rebellion for years, he had done that under a wrong impulse and on the advice of his selfish companions and eventually realized his folly and made amends after he was in possession of the throne. He cherished the loving memory of Akbar, and in thought and expression, held him in great reverence. He would walk to his mausoleum at Sikandra and rub his forehead at its threshold. He was a devoted husband, and though polygamous, he knew what it was to love a wife. He lamented the loss of his first queen, the Jaipur princess, and on her death refused to touch food and drink for four days. His devotion to Nur Jahan was thorough and bordered on subservience. For him it was unthinkable to undertake any important measure without consulting her. He was a good friend and remembered and promoted all those who had rendered him any service in his princeness, after he became king. He wished sincerely the welfare of his subjects and endeavoured to promote their material and moral interests.

Jahangir was a highly educated and cultured prince. He had

mastered Persian and Turki and was acquainted with Hindi and Arabic and a few other languages. His knowledge of the Persian language was remarkable and his style at once plain and graceful. His memoirs entitled *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* are an excellent example of his composition. A man of great literary taste with love of poetry, architecture, music, painting and other fine arts, it was remarkable that he, at the same time, had genuine interest in serious subjects like Botany, Zoology and Medicine. His autobiography is a testimony to his extraordinary knowledge of the above subjects, and above all to his great curiosity and thirst for knowledge. He was fond of the beauties of nature, of flowers and foliage, brooks and rivers, valleys and mountains. He took care to describe flowers and fruits which he came across in his tours in the country and particularly in Kashmir. His vivid accounts of birds and animals is nearly as accurate as that of a specialist in Zoology. Mughul painting and music reached high standards of development under his patronage. Jahangir prided himself on being a connoisseur of the art of painting and used to say that he was sure to find out as to who were the authors of various paintings, and if a picture was painted by the joint labours of a number of artists, he could tell as to who had painted the various parts of it. "As regards myself," writes Jahangir in his autobiography, "my liking for painting and practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discern which face is the work of each. If any other person has put in the eye and eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is and who has painted the eye and eyebrow." (*Jahangir's Memoirs*, Vol. II, p 20.) His court artists acquired high proficiency in portrait painting and in producing exact likenesses of the originals. Sir Thomas Roe presented to the emperor an English miniature whose exact copy was produced by a court painter at Jahangir's orders, and when the two were placed before Roe, it was difficult for him to distinguish the original. On the contrary, Jahangir was at little pains to distinguish one from the other.

Jahangir was much interested in architecture, though it must be admitted that his contribution to the development of that art was much less than to painting. Among the notable buildings erected

by him, Akbar's tomb at Sikandra is the most remarkable. He altered its design and partly rebuilt it. Itimad-ud-daulah's tomb near Agra, constructed under the direction of Nur Jahan, is one of the finest buildings of its kind in the country and is adorned with mosaic work outside and paintings inside. Under Jahangir's patronage a great mosque was built in Lahore; it rivals that at Delhi built by his son Shah Jahan.

Next to painting Jahangir took delight in laying out fine gardens. Some of the gardens in Kashmir and Lahore were laid out at his orders. He tried to adorn the currency with fine calligraphic designs. He struck beautiful medals and coins with his portraits stamped on them.

Jahangir was possessed of a fine critical taste in matters of dress and pleasures of the table. He designed new fashions and stuffs for himself and forbade other people to make use of them. He particularly relished fine fruits. He praised the mangoes as one of the best fruits and was very fond of delicious cherries of Kabul.

Jahangir's main defects were his addiction to ease, drink and sensual pleasures and his natural habit of falling under someone's control. His early activity gave place to indolence with the advance of age, and he left much of his work in the hands of others. As a prince he was under the influence of his boon companions and as ruler he was controlled first by the Nur Jahan Junta and subsequently by the ambitious queen herself. As he relates frankly in his memoirs, he began drinking wine from the age of 18 and gradually in nine years increased the number of the cups of doubly distilled liquor to twenty, fourteen of which he took during the day and the remaining during the night. He became so much habituated to drinking that wine ceased to intoxicate him and he changed to spirit. But he abstained from drinking on Thursday evening and from meats on Thursday and Sunday, the first being the day of his accession and the latter the birthday of his father.

It is difficult to define clearly Jahangir's religious belief. Sir Thomas Roe denounced him as an atheist. Some other contemporary writers called him an eclectic or a devout Muslim or even a Christian. The fact, however, was that he was not a believer in orthodox dogmas of any religion. He was a liberal Musalman whose religious belief and practices were generally based on tolerant understanding of the principles of other faiths. A study of contemporary works including his own autobiography makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jahangir believed in God and revered

saints, Hindu and Muslim, and took delight in their company. Being unorthodox in his views, he had little sympathy with Muslim fanatics. Nor did he appreciate modern Hinduism which believes in idolatry and incarnation. He did not seem to be convinced about Christ's parentage and crucifixion. He was not particular about five daily prayers and fast of Ramzan enjoined by Islam. Although, unlike his father, he was not deeply interested in the absorbing problems of relation between man and God and life after death, he was without doubt a believer in the unity of God.

Trained in soldierly pursuits and art of warfare under the supervision of his father, Jahangir in his early youth had developed into a capable soldier. He was devoted to sport and was a skilful shot with rifle and with bow and arrow. He was given practical training in war and diplomacy and acquired a considerable experience of both, but never displayed that energy and devotion which are necessary in a general. In fact, except personal courage and skill in the use of arms, he lacked the genius and ambition of a commander and general. Neither as prince nor as king did he achieve a signal success in battle. He used to pride himself on the subjugation of Mewar and conquest of Kangra which had baffled his great father. But these achievements were not so much due to Jahangir's generalship as to the circumstances of the time, the weakness of his enemies and the ability of Shah Jahan and other generals. We do not notice in the pages of contemporary writers any hint of an attempt on the part of the emperor to improve training, organization, equipment or discipline of the Mughul army. Nor did it ever occur to Jahangir to raise the morale of his men and inspire them with lofty feelings of devotion or patriotism. In fact, the military system under him suffered a little deterioration as compared with that of his great father.

Jahangir was a fairly successful ruler and administrator. He had the capacity of appreciating the need and circumstances of the age and the good sense to continue the administrative system and policy devised by Akbar. But he was not a great constructive statesman who could initiate great administrative reforms and legislate for the good of the generation yet to be born. He did not possess high idealism and genius of Akbar. The administrative machinery of his father was allowed to remain practically untouched. The Vakil or Vakil-i-Mutlaq remained the highest dignitary next only to the emperor and so also other ministers. The essential difference between his administration and that of his father was the fact that

the latter having been an unfailing judge of human character and capability almost invariably appointed right men to right offices, while Jahangir was sometimes swayed by other considerations than the efficiency, justice and well-being of the people.

Religious Policy

Jahangir's accession had raised the hopes of orthodox Muslim theologians of the restoration of Islam to the position which it had occupied before Akbar had disestablished it as the religion of the state. They tried to convert the new emperor to their views so as to persuade him to reverse the work of secularizing the state that his great father had almost completed. In the beginning this policy achieved some success, but within a few years of his accession, Jahangir, who was nurtured in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of his father's court, realized the folly of playing into the hands of the *Ulema*. It was impossible for a liberal minded monarch like Jahangir to go back on the path of toleration which Akbar had opened. Nevertheless, he took greater interest in the fortunes of Islam than his father had done and sometimes he tried to uphold its prestige. In the 15th year of his reign, he ordered the punishment of the Hindus of Rajauri who used to marry Muslim girls of the locality and convert them to Hinduism. Sometimes during war with Hindus, he ordered temples to be demolished, as in Mewar and Kangra. While at war with the Portuguese, he ordered churches in the empire to be closed. Sometimes, though very rarely indeed, he became guilty of acts of sacrilege. At Ajmer he ordered the temple of Varaha, the Boar incarnation, to be destroyed and the idols to be thrown into a tank. These seem to have been the result of temporary fits or impulses. On the whole, Jahangir followed the policy of toleration towards all faiths. He permitted non-Muslims to build public places of worship and allowed Hindus to visit their holy places without hindrance or charging the pilgrim's tax. He maintained Christian service at the expense of the court and paid allowances to Christian Fathers. He imposed no restriction on the public celebration of religious festivals by Hindus and himself participated in some of them, such as Vasant, Rakshabandhan and Dashahra. He used to see renowned Yogis during the night of Shivratri. Christians too were allowed to hold public celebrations during Easter, Christmas and other festivals.

Though usually liberal and tolerant towards all religions, Jahangir at times sanctioned repressive measures against Muslim

heretics. Shaikh Rahim of Lahore, who was the religious leader of a sect, was imprisoned in the fortress of Chunar. Qazi Nurullah was put to death on account of his being a notable Shia writer. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi was imprisoned in the fortress of Gwalior, but he was released sometime after and sent back to Sarhind with gifts.

Jahangir's relations with Sikhs were not happy. The Sikh Guru Arjun had incurred his displeasure on account of his proselytizing activities and principally because he blessed the rebel prince Khusrav. Jahangir, therefore, summoned the Guru and sentenced him to capital punishment. On the intercession of some influential Hindus the capital punishment was commuted into a fine of one lakh of rupees; but Guru Arjun refused to pay the fine and was, therefore, imprisoned. He died in prison as the result of torture. Diwan Chandu Lal of Lahore who had stood surety for payment was also put to death. Thereafter, the emperor refrained from interfering with the Sikhs. His action against Guru Arjun was prompted both by religious feelings and by political considerations. Jahangir wrote in his diary that Arjun was converting Muslims to his religion and therefore, he was anxious 'to close the shop' of the Sikh Guru. After the Guru's death, he wisely refrained from interfering with his followers.

Similarly, the emperor's relations with the Jains proved to be far from satisfactory. Man Singh, a leader of the Jains, had made a prophecy during the time of Khusrav's rebellion, that Jahangir's reign would terminate within two years. The emperor was naturally angry, but as Man Singh lived under the protection of the ruler of Bikaner, he could not take action against him. When he visited Gujarat in the twelfth year of his reign, he accused the Jains of having built temples and made them centres of disturbance. So he issued orders for their expulsion from the imperial territories. Most of the Jains had, therefore, to leave Gujarat. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that the order was later on withdrawn. There is, however, no contemporary evidence to support such a statement. The persecution of the Jains was due partly to political and partly to religious considerations.

Like his father, Jahangir was interested in religious discussion with the followers of different faiths. He invited learned Hindu pandits and Christian missionaries, and sometimes even Muslim ulema and listened to their discourses. He was fond of the company of the Vaishnava leader Jadurup and held many discussions with him at Ujjain and Mathura, as a result of which he came to the conclusion

that the Hindu Vedanta and Muslim Sufism were almost identical. He had discourse with Mian Mir, the famous Muslim Saint of Lahore. Sometimes he made *chelas* after the fashion of his father. But his interest in religious discussion was not as absorbing as that of Akbar the Great.

Jahangir made no departure from his father's policy of admitting Hindus to the higher public service. In fact, he made no discrimination against any class of his subjects on the ground of religion or race as far as state services were concerned. There were three Hindu governors during his reign, namely, Man Singh, Kalyan Singh, son of Todar Mal, and Vikramadit. There were many Hindus on other high posts. They were citizens of the empire in the same sense as Muslims.

On the whole, Jahangir was a successful ruler and the material condition of the people under him was good. Agriculture, industries and commerce flourished and people did not suffer from starvation. Although he did not plan great reforms for the material and moral well-being of his subjects as Akbar had done, he tried to abolish some of the social evils and took delight in doing humanitarian work. During the early years of his reign he forbade the sale and use of *bhang* and other hemp drugs and rice spirit. He also prohibited gambling. He tried to safeguard the interests of the agriculturists and made payments of compensation for the damage done to crops by his troops on the march. He also issued orders that Hindu widows should not be compelled to become *sati* without his government's permission and he tried to put a stop to female infanticide. He took delight in doing kindly acts of charity, established free kitchens for the poor and distributed money to *fakirs*. His policy was one of improving the social condition of the people without interfering with important social usages of the various communities. He sincerely desired the well-being of the public and quoted with disapproval the story of a king who had imposed a tax on gardens in his kingdom, as a result of which the quality and quantity of fruit had deteriorated, himself taking pride on the fact that he had no such greed as far as fruit gardens in his dominion were concerned. This shows how well-intentioned he was in the matter of material welfare of his subjects.

Barring a few incidents, when in a fit of rage he inflicted barbarous punishments, Jahangir was normally a justice-loving monarch. He rightly took credit for dispensing even-handed justice to all.

irrespective of birth, rank or official position. He used to say that God forbid he should care for nobles or even princes in matters of dispensation of justice. This was not a mere boast. His autobiography as well as writings of contemporary historians established the fact that the emperor tried to decide cases impartially. As a rule, capital punishment was awarded only by the emperor and that too sparingly. Strict instructions were issued to those responsible for carrying out royal orders that when capital punishment was awarded they should not execute his orders till sunset. His justice was tempered with mercy.

Jahangir cannot be called a great king, nor can he be described as a statesman and administrator of outstanding calibre. He was by no means a first rate general or diplomat. But it must be admitted that he was a successful and benevolent ruler who cherished the well-being of his subjects and was deservedly popular with them. Like most rulers, he had his virtues and faults. The late Sir Richard Burn's characterization of him is balanced and just, and deserves to be quoted: "He stands in the roll of Indian monarchs," writes he, "as a man with generous instincts, fond of sport, arts and good living, aiming to do well to all, and failing by the lack of the finer intellectual qualities to attain the ranks of great administrators."

Shah Jahan (1628-58)

Early career, 1592-1627

Shah Jahan was born on January 5 (15 N.S.), 1592 at Lahore. His mother was the famous Rajput princess, Jagat Gusain, daughter of Mota Raja Udai Singh. The child was named Khurram. In his childhood he was the favourite of his grandfather Akbar who loved him more than any other of his grandchildren. Khurram was extraordinarily intelligent and smart and gave evidence of his future greatness. His early education was planned and supervised by Akbar who spared no pains to bring Khurram up as worthy member of the great Mughul ruling family. The prince displayed eagerness to learn the Persian language and literature, but did not make progress in Turki. He must have acquainted himself with spoken Hindi. Although he did not write his autobiography like his father, he acquired mastery over Persian language and literature. Besides, he learnt history, politics, geography, theology and medicine. Military training formed an important part of the prince's education, and he became in due course a good soldier, adept in the use of weapons of offence and defence, and equipped with a knowledge of theory and practice of military science. While yet on the verge of manhood, he established his reputation for being one of the greatest commanders in the empire.

Early during his father's reign, Khurram was marked out for the throne. His eldest brother Khusrav lost favour with Jahangir on account of his unfilial conduct, which gave a chance to Khurram of gaining the royal patronage. In 1607 he was appointed a mansabdar of 8,000 zat and 5,000 sawar with flags and drums. In 1608 the jagir of Hisar Firoza, which was usually meant for the heir-apparent, was bestowed on him. In 1610 he was married to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Safawi, and next year he was promoted to the rank of 10,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. In 1612, when he had completed his 20th year, he was married to Arjumand Banu Begum daughter of Asaf Khan. The prince's matrimonial connection with the family of Asaf Khan who was the elder brother of Nur Jahan,

led to the formation of an alliance between him, Nur Jahan, Itimad-ud-daulah and Asaf Khan. This clique known as Nur Jahan Junta ruled the empire for 10 years, during which period Khurram was looked upon as the future ruler of the country, and was promoted to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 zat and 20,000 sawar.

Khurram was employed in a series of important expeditions and his father's reign was mainly a record of brilliant victories won by this prince. One of his early exploits was his success over Mewar. In 1614 he was sent with a powerful contingent of troops against the Rana. The campaign terminated successfully and Rana Amar Singh submitted and was granted honourable terms. The victory enhanced Khurram's prestige and he was regarded as a rising star in the empire. Next he was appointed governor of the Dakhin and was given the title of Shah. The prince was able to persuade Malik Ambar to return Balaghat and surrender Ahmadnagar and other forts with the result that Khurram's successful diplomacy became an acknowledged fact in the eye of the Mughul court. Jahangir was highly pleased and showered gifts on Shah Khurram. In recognition of his success the province of Gujarat was added to his charge.

There was sudden fall in Khurram's fortune, after he had, in alliance with Nur Jahan, ruled the empire for about 10 years. The queen who now supported the claims of her son-in-law Shahryar to succession began to entertain a dislike for Khurram and drove him into rebellion. The prince was hunted from place to place and was reduced to great misery. Eventually, he submitted to his father in 1626 and was restored to favour.

Accession, 1628

On Jahangir's death Nur Jahan made a final bid to retain power. She tried to imprison her brother, Asaf Khan, who was the father-in-law of Khurram and his staunch supporter, and wrote to her own son-in-law, Shahryar, to strengthen her party, increase her armed forces, and to be ready for the struggle. But Asaf Khan was an astute politician and getting wind of his sister's intention refused to see the queen. On the contrary, he won over important nobles to the side of Khurram and proclaimed Dawar Bakhsh, son of Khusrav, as king so as not to leave the throne vacant. At the same time, he sent a messenger to Shah Jahan in the Dakhin to hurry up to Delhi, as soon as possible. During the interval Khurram's rival, Shahryar, proclaimed himself emperor, seized the royal treasure at Lahore and confiscated the property of the nobles there. He recruited a large

army by a lavish distribution of money. Asaf Khan who was making counter-preparations on behalf of Shah Jahan, gave Shahryar battle near Lahore. The latter was defeated and taken a prisoner and blinded. Meanwhile, Shah Jahan was proceeding to the north with great speed. He was welcomed on the way by important chiefs, particularly by Rana Karan of Mewar. While yet on the way he sent secret instructions to Asaf Khan to put all the royal princes including Dawar Bakhsh, the sacrificial lamb, to death, which were literally complied with by his heartless father-in-law. He arrived near Agra early in February 1628, and entered the city at an auspicious moment on 14th February. His coronation took place amidst great pomp and rejoicings, and the Khutba was read in his name. Asaf Khan was promoted to the rank of 8,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and was appointed wazir. Mahabat Khan was given the mansab of 7,000 zat and 7,000 sawar and the title of Khan Khana. Nur Jahan was given an adequate pension and allowed to spend the rest of her life peacefully in or near Lahore where she built her husband's mausoleum, carried on the works of charity and died in 1645.

Rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi, 1628-31

Shah Jahan's reign was disturbed by several rebellions. The first of these was that of Khan Jahan Lodi, a capable but turbulent officer who was given charge of the Dakhin as adviser to prince Parwez. He was an impulsive and dashing soldier and a hater of Hindus. While in the Dakhin he accepted bribe from the Nizam Shah and surrendered Balaghat to him. On Jahangir's death he supported and allied himself with Nur Jahan. He left a small garrison at Burhanpur, his headquarters, and proceeded to the north to seize the fortress of Mandu, but he failed to do so. As Shah Jahan had already reached Ajmer in a triumphal procession and was thought likely to be the next emperor, most of the troops of Khan Jahan Lodi, particularly his Hindu supporters, melted away and he was compelled to send his humble submission. This was accepted. He was forgiven, allowed to retain his governorship of the Dakhin and ordered to return to his headquarters at Burhanpur. While in the Dakhin, he was directed to recover Balaghat which task he failed to accomplish and was therefore recalled to court and in his place Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of the Dakhin. At Agra, Khan Jahan remained discontented and after some time abstained from attending the daily court. Although he was again forgiven, he continued feeling dissatisfied and made preparations to flee to the

Dakhin. He was followed and overtaken near the river Chambal. There was a regular battle between the imperial army and Khan Jahan's troops, and the latter with his sons and some followers managed to cross the river, but without his women and treasure. Passing through Bundelkhand and Gondwana, he reached Ahmadnagar. He was welcomed by the Nizam Shahi Sultan and given charge of Bir and some other tracts of lands, then in possession of the Mughuls, with instructions to recover them. Khan Jahan Lodi attacked the imperialists and inflicted a defeat upon them. The situation became so menacing that Shah Jahan had to march personally to the Dakhin in December 1629. The emperor organized a comprehensive plan of action against the rebels. As he possessed an intimate knowledge of the Dakhin politics, he realized that the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda being jealous of each other, would not unite among themselves to repel the Mughuls. He was also aware that the Marathas were quite troublesome and it was desirable to attract them to the Mughul service by liberal offers. Keeping these facts in view he planned to send three armies against the rebellious Khan Jahan to overwhelm him from three sides. One of these under Abdul Hasan was despatched to Dhulia to command the route for supplies from the side of Gujarat and also to threaten Ahmadnagar from the north-west; the second army was posted at Dewalgaon in the south of Berar to attack the enemy from the north-east; and the third army was despatched towards Telengana to attack Khan Jahan from that side. A good number of the Marathas were employed to help the consummation of the scheme. In spite of great scarcity in the Dakhin and the neighbouring province of Gujarat due to failure of rains, a fierce war was waged. Khan Jahan was defeated and compelled to flee to Bijapur in order to take shelter in Daulatabad, but failed to get any. The imperialists pursued him and were reinforced by Shahji Bhonsle, father of the famous Shivaji, who had abandoned the Ahmadnagar service and entered that of Shah Jahan. The followers of Khan Jahan Lodi raided the imperial territory and a series of running engagements were fought. The king of Ahmadnagar who had given support to Khan Jahan Lodi now repented and turned out the rebels from his territory. Khan Jahan, therefore, fled to the north and passing through Malwa attempted to reach the Punjab in the hope that he would be joined by disaffected Afghans in north-western Hindustan. Shah Jahan was, therefore, obliged to detach a force to catch the rebel, Bikramjit, son of Jujhar Singh of Bundelkhand, who had helped the rebels to escape through Bundelkhand.

early during his rebellion, this time attacked the rebel and killed Darya Khan with many of his followers early in January 1631. Khan Jahan Lodi escaped, but was overtaken and killed in a skirmish at Sihonda in the modern Banda district of Uttar Pradesh.

Rebellion in Bundelkhand, 1628-29 and 1635-36

The next rebellion was that of Jujhar Singh, son of Bir Singh Deva Bundela, who had slain Abul Fazl at the instigation of the late emperor Jahangir, then in rebellion against his father Akbar. Jujhar Singh enjoyed a high position among the chiefs in the empire on account of favours shown to his father by the late emperor and owing to the geographical situation of his territory (Bundelkhand) and the bravery of his clansmen. On the accession of Shah Jahan, he went to Agra for royal service, leaving his son Bikramajit Singh to conduct the administration of his state. Bikramajit managed to alienate the people by his oppressive treatment and rapacious collections of revenues. The new emperor ordered an enquiry into the past collections which alarmed Jujhar Singh. He returned to Orchha and began to make preparations for asserting his independence. Shah Jahan could take no action against the raja for some time, as his attention was diverted by the raids on the frontier suba of Kabul by Jamid, chief of Trans-Oxiana. But as soon as the frontier trouble was over, Mahabat Khan was ordered to put down the rebellion in Bundelkhand. Two more armies, one under Abdulla Khan from the east and the other under Khan Jahan from the Dakhin, were sent to co-operate with Mahabat Khan in the campaign. Raja Bharat Singh, a kinsman of Jujhar Singh, coveted Bundelkhand and was persuaded to join the imperialists with his troops. Aware of the strength of the Bundelas, Shah Jahan himself hastened to Gwalior in the beginning of January 1629 in order to exert pressure on the enemy by his presence in the vicinity of Bundelkhand. Abdulla Khan attacked and captured Erachh, now in the Jhansi district, while Khan Jahan commenced ravaging Bundelkhand from the south. Jujhar Singh was thus hemmed in from all sides, and, harassed by the opposition of many of his own people, he found it impossible to oppose successfully the powerful invading forces backed by the resources of a mighty empire, and he submitted. He was pardoned (February 1629) on condition of surrendering a part of his jagirs and proceeding on service to the Dakhin.

During 1635-36, Bundelkhand was once again convulsed by

Jujhar Singh's rebellion. He had served faithfully in the Dakhin for about 5 years and was one of those responsible for the capture of Daulatabad. On his return to Orchha in 1634 he formed the ambitious project of conquering Gondwana, which lay south of Bundelkhand and had not yet been brought under the direct rule of the Mughuls. His main object was to make good the loss in territory he had suffered in 1629. He besieged Chauragarh in 1635 and in spite of Shah Jahan's warning, treacherously put its Raja, Prem Narain, to death. The deceased's son appealed to Shah Jahan who instead of taking steps to restore the territory in question to its legitimate heir, directed Jujhar Singh to surrender Gondwana to him, or to give up his own lands in lieu of it and also to pay a fine of 5 lakhs of rupees. Jujhar Singh refused to comply and recalled his troops under his son Jagraj from the royal service in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan was enraged and deputed Aurangzeb to suppress the rebellion. In spite of numerous difficulties, Aurangzeb stormed Orchha and proceeded to Dhamoni where Jujhar Singh had taken shelter. On this Bundela chief retreated to Chauragarh. After capturing Dhamoni, Aurangzeb began his march to Chauragarh which obliged Jujhar Singh to abandon that place and retreat to the Dakhin with 6,000 men and 60 elephants and his family and valuables. The Mughuls made pursuit and Jujhar after slaying some of his women turned on the Mughuls, but was defeated. The Bundelas were scattered in various directions and Jujhar and his son, Bikramajit, were murdered by the Gonds. Their heads were cut off and sent to Shah Jahan (December 1635) who was further gratified when it was later announced that fifty lakhs of rupees had been credited to imperial treasury on account of spoils of the campaign. The Bundela ladies had no time to perform *jauhar* and although some of them including the venerable Rani Parbati, the widow of Bir Singh Deva, were stabbed by their males, majority of them were taken prisoners. They were introduced into the Mughul harem to pass their days in 'gilded misery'. Two of Jujhar's sons were converted to Islam and the third was put to a brutal death because he had refused to turn a Muslim. The splendid royal temple in Orchha was destroyed and converted into a mosque, and other temples and shrines in Bundelkhand were wantonly desecrated and demolished. Orchha was made over to Devi Singh, Jujhar's relative, who had proved traitor to his country and joined the Mughuls; but the Bundelas refused to acknowledge him as their ruler. Champat Rai of Mahoba did not submit to Devi Singh on account of his

disgraceful conduct. The former's famous son, Chhatrasal, carried on for years a war of independence against the Mughuls, as a protest against Shah Jahan's policy of religious fanaticism and his unbecoming conduct towards the members of the Bundela ruling family.

Affairs in the Dakhin

On Khan Jahan's rebellion Azam Khan was appointed to take charge of the Dakhin. He opened the campaign against Ahmadnagar and captured the fort of Dharur and besieged Parenda. But in view of peculiar difficulties in southern India, he could not make any further progress in the war. The hostility between the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur continued as before. There were conflicting views among the Bijapur officers regarding the policy to be followed towards the Mughuls, one party favouring an alliance with them while the other distrusting them as enemies. Moreover, owing to a drought supplies were not available and even grass for horses could not be procured within a range of 50 miles. But when Shah Jahan himself arrived on the scene the Mughuls succeeded in capturing the fortress of Kandhar on the eastern edge of Balaghat, clearing Berar and reducing Nasik and Sangamner. At this time Shah Jahan sustained a blow in the death of his favourite queen, Mumtaz Mahal, on June 17, 1631. She was buried in a garden near Burhanpur, but later on her remains were removed to Agra and deposited in a garden, and a handsome mausoleum, known as Taj Mahal, was built over her grave.

Career of Mumtaz Mahal

Mumtaz Mahal whose original name was Arjumand Banu Begam was the daughter of Asaf Khan, son of Itimad-ud-daulah and brother of Nur Jahan. She was thus Nur Jahan's niece. She was born in 1594 and was betrothed to Khurram, then in the 16th year of his age. Their marriage took place in April 1612. Hardly did any marriage in a polygamous family prove so successful as this marriage. Arjumand Banu Begam captivated Shah Jahan's heart ever more than Nur Jahan had done that of Jahangir. Mumtaz Mahal shared Shah Jahan's joys and sorrows in full measure and behaved like a devoted wife during her husband's flight from the Dakhin to Orissa, Bengal and Bihar in the course of his rebellion against his father. She bore 14 out of her husband's 18 children and remained his friend and inseparable companion till her death. Promoted to be Shah Jhan's chief queen, she was given the title of

Malika-i-Zamani and the royal seal was entrusted to her custody. She died in a childbirth at Burhanpur in 1631, while Shah Jahan was conducting a campaign in the Dakhin.

Mumtaz Mahal was a highly educated and accomplished woman. She possessed natural beauty of a high order which was enhanced by artificial make-up. She possessed great natural intelligence and a tender heart. Like most well-to-do ladies in the country she took delight in doing acts of kindly charity and was particularly considerate and helpful to poor widows and orphans and the distressed. Her lady-in-waiting, Sati-un-Nisa Khanum, who was her friend and adviser, encouraged and assisted the queen in her philanthropic and humanitarian endeavours. Mumtaz Mahal was a pious and religious lady, devoted to prayers, fasts and other observances enjoined by Islam. But her religious views seem to have been tinged with orthodoxy. Shah Jahan's harsh religious policy towards the Christians and Hindus is partly ascribed to Mumtaz Mahal's influence. There was hardly any Mughul queen in Indian history who was so dearly loved by her husband. The famous Taj at Agra which covers her earthly remains is the noblest monument of conjugal love and fidelity.

Affairs in the Dakhin (*continued*)

Meanwhile, the affairs in the Dakhin went on badly. Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, acted like a king-maker. He imprisoned the Sultan of Ahmadnagar and at the instigation of the imperial Wazir, Asaf Khan, put him to death, replacing him by a member of the royal family, named Husain, then a boy of ten. On a second thought, however, Fateh Khan hesitated to submit to the Mughuls, but as Shah Jahan had sent a powerful army under Rustam Khan to reduce Daulatabad, he was alarmed and sent in his submission. Bijapur for some time resisted the imperial offer and Shah Jahan was obliged to depute Asaf Khan to invade that state. The Mughuls captured Gulbarga and besieged Bijapur, but owing to great scarcity caused by a famine, Asaf Khan was obliged to abandon the siege and retreat to Miraj. Shah Jahan was disgusted. He called Asaf Khan to court and appointed Mahabat Khan to the command of the Dakhin army with instructions to conquer Bijapur.

Famine of 1630-31

During 1630-31 the Dakhin and Gujarat experienced a terrible famine. It spread over Khandesh also. Thousands of people died of starvation. The sufferings of the people were described by the contemporary historian, Mirza Amin Qazwini, who wrote that

hunger compelled parents to consume their own children and that powder of bones was mixed with flour and dog's flesh was eaten by the people. The famine was followed by a pestilence and led to the desolation of villages and towns; streets in the towns were littered with dead bodies, and many people fled to northern India. Shah Jahan made arrangements to alleviate human suffering and opened public kitchens in Burhanpur, Ahmadnagar, Surat and other places for feeding the hungry. Money too was distributed. The emperor ordered a remission of government revenue to the extent of Rs. 70 lakhs. The nobles too remitted revenues in their jagirs and must also have taken steps to relieve the suffering humanity.

War with the Portuguese

The Portuguese had settled at Hooghly in Bengal, where they had obtained a strong footing nearly a hundred years before the accession of Shah Jahan to the throne of Delhi. With Hooghly as their base they traded with many places in India, China, Moluccas and Manila. At their settlement they had a large number of converts and enjoyed practical autonomy. Some of the Portuguese indulged in piracy and also ravaged the rich districts of eastern Bengal. In spite of their interferences with the normal life of the people in the Mughul territory, the Portuguese remained unpunished during the reign of Jahangir. On Shah Jahan's accession, Qasim Khan, the new governor of Bengal, reported that the Portuguese had fortified their settlement, levied tolls on ships and had practically destroyed Satgaon. They were also guilty of piracy and slave trade. Shah Jahan was already ill-disposed towards them for their having played false to him during his rebellion against his father. They had failed to send usual presents to the new emperor on the occasion of his accession. Their greatest fault, however, was their audacity in carrying off boats which contained two slave girls belonging to queen Mumtaz Mahal. For these reasons Shah Jahan ordered Qasim Khan to take steps to punish the haughty foreigners. The immediate occasion for the outbreak of hostilities was an appeal made by a Portuguese merchant named Afonso, to the governor of Bengal to help him in recovering a piece of land in Hooghly. Qasim Khan assembled a large force, collected boats and made an attack on Hooghly, both from the side of land and water. The attack was repulsed and negotiations were opened for peace. The Portuguese agreed to give up the slaves, but created some difficulties during the transaction.

The Mughuls, therefore, made another attack and secured a footing in part of the settlement. The siege continued for five weeks and heavy artillery was brought up for bombardment. The Portuguese, therefore, felt obliged to open fresh negotiations and to pay two lakhs of rupees to the Mughuls. But no treaty could be concluded and the besieged found their position untenable and decided to evacuate the town in their boats. Before they could embark they were attacked by the Mughuls and a running fight took place. About 3,000 of the Portuguese escaped and 400 of them were taken prisoners and brought to Agra. They were asked to embrace Islam, but refused to do so and were, therefore, imprisoned. Shah Jahan's harsh policy towards the Portuguese can be justified on political grounds, for these had surely given an adequate cause for imperial resentment. But his desire to convert the prisoners to Islam was inspired by religious intolerance and, therefore, deserved condemnation.

Affairs in the Dakhin (*continued*)

Meanwhile warfare in the Dakhin went on in a leisurely fashion. Shahji, father of Shivaji, had submitted to the Mughuls and had been rewarded with grants of lands, then held by Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar. After Fateh Khan had, in compliance with Asaf Khan's instructions, murdered his master the Nizam Shahi king, he was restored to these lands. This enraged Shahji who offered his service to the king of Bijapur promising to take Daulatabad from Fateh Khan. Fateh Khan was alarmed and promised to make over the fortress to the Mughul general Mahabat Khan and to enter the Mughul service in person. Mahabat Khan welcomed the offer and defeated a Bijapur army, but the Bijapur general Ran Daula Khan, though defeated in the battle, persuaded Fateh Khan by a huge bribe to break away from Mughuls. Thereupon, Mahabat Khan decided to besiege the fortress of Daulatabad, which he captured in 1633 after a siege of three months and a half. Fateh Khan yielded up the fortress with all the guns and ammunitions of war and Mahabat Khan allowed Nizam Shahi ladies to evacuate the fort. Fateh Khan and the boy-king, Husain Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, were sent to court. The king was imprisoned for life in the fortress of Gwalior, and Fateh Khan was given a pension and permitted to live at Lahore. But the capture of Daulatabad did not bring about a complete extinction of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Some of its territories, such as parts of the Balaghat region, continued to remain

in the hands of Ahmadnagar officers who were loyal to a sultan, who was enthroned in place of Husain Nizam Shah by the Maratha chief, Shahji. The northern half of the present Poona district and the whole of Konkan were in possession of the Marathas who under Shahji harassed the Mughuls. Mahabat Khan made arrangements for the capture of Parenda and for sending another army to force Shahji back to Junnar. In spite of his best efforts, he failed to capture Parenda and retired to Burhanpur with prince Shuja who was nominal head of the Mughul forces in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan upbraided Mahabat Khan for this failure and the latter died in October 1634.

The recall of the Mughul troops from the Dakhin again caused confusion in the affairs of that province. Besides the Maratha depredations, there was no cessation of the intrigues at the court of Bijapur. Shah Jahan, therefore, set out early in 1636 to recommence operations and, if possible, to reduce Bijapur and Golkunda. On his arrival at Daulatabad, he sent letters to the king of Bijapur asking him to make a regular payment of tribute and to turn out from Bijapur the Marathas and other supporters of the Ahmadnagar dynasty. As these demands were not fully complied with, Shah Jahan decided to invade Bijapur and detached a force to commence operations. The Sultan was frightened, reopened negotiations and agreed to conclude a fresh treaty, the terms of which were dictated by Shah Jahan. Bijapur acknowledged the Mughul supremacy and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20 lakhs of rupees. It further agreed to remain friendly with Golkunda and to submit its disputes with that state to the arbitration of the emperor. As a result of this treaty, the boundary of the old kingdom of Ahmadnagar was defined and Bijapur was confirmed in the possession of Parenda and the Konkan. Bijapur bound itself to assist the Mughuls against Shahji if the latter did not surrender the territory near Junnar and Trimbak. This treaty was signed in May 1636 and remained in force till November, 1656.

Shah Jahan now turned to Golkunda. It was not difficult to settle terms with this state, as its king was more complaisant than the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Moreover, Golkunda had shown friendship to Shah Jahan while he was in rebellion against his father. Abdulla Qutb Khan, the new ruler of Golkunda, had sent presents to Shah Jahan when he had appeared in the Dakhin early in 1631 to suppress the rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi. The sultan had also refrained from assisting Bijapur while the latter was

attacked by Mahabat Khan. There was, however, one obstacle to the friendship between the two. Shah Jahan was a strict Sunni, while the Sultan of Golkunda was a Shia and recognized the Shah of Persia as his suzerain. Shah Jahan, therefore, demanded the abolition of Shia practices in Golkunda and the exclusion of the name of the Shah of Persia from the *Khutba*. The Sultan complied after some hesitation and slight show of resistance. Shah Jahan's name was inserted in the *Khutba*. The Mughul troops were now withdrawn from the frontier and a fresh treaty was concluded. The terms of the treaty were that the Shia formula in the *Khutba* was to be abolished, Shah Jahan's name was to be inscribed on coins, and the *Khutba* was to be read in his name. The sultan agreed to pay an annual tribute of two lakhs of *hun* equivalent to six lakhs of rupees. He also promised to discharge all arrears of tribute and assist the Mughuls against Bijapur, if the latter declared war against the former. This treaty was concluded in May 1636.

The third problem in the Dakhin was the subjugation of the hardy Marathas who under their leader Shahji had acquired great political and military importance. On entering the Dakhin Shah Jahan despatched an army under Khan Zaman to occupy the homeland of Shahji, which was situated south and south-east of Ahmadnagar, and then to clear the Konkan of the Marathas. At the same time, a division under Shayista Khan was sent to invade the district to the north and west of Ahmadnagar. While Shayista Khan accomplished his task, Khan Zaman, who was pitted against Shahji failed in the enterprise. Shahji had prepared to join the Bijapur army and to cross the river Bhima to be in readiness to give battle to Khan Zaman, but the latter was ordered not to pursue Shahji. Meanwhile, peace was made between the Mughuls and Bijapur and Khan Zaman proceeded to take Junnar from Shahji. Bijapur tried to persuade Shahji to surrender Junnar to the Mughuls, but the Maratha chief refused to comply. The Mughuls, therefore, had to invest Junnar and Shahji surrendered the fortress, but not without fighting. He delivered to the Mughuls the boy whom he had enthroned as king of Ahmadnagar. This ex-ruler was sent to Gwalior to be imprisoned there. Shahji entered the service of Bijapur. For a time, the Mughuls were thus able to settle the affairs of the Dakhin to their satisfaction.

Kandhar surrendered to Shah Jahan, 1638

For more than one hundred years the strong fortress of Kandhar

had been a bone of contention between the Mughul rulers of India and the Shahs of Persia. The fortress was lost to the Mughuls during the last years of Jahangir's reign. Shah Jahan naturally was anxious to recover it at the earliest opportunity. He tried to impress the Persian monarch with his own ability and strength by receiving Persian envoys with great pomp and costly gifts, and sending exaggerated accounts of his own success against the rebels and the sultans of the Dakhin. Shah Abbas, the great Persian ruler who died about a year after Shah Jahan's accession, was succeeded by a minor, whose attention was diverted by a war with the Turks. Ali Mardan Khan, the governor of Kandhar, was not on good terms with the Persian court, as Saru Taqi, the Persian minister, had demanded from him a statement of account of the income and expenditure for his governorship and sent troops to ensure compliance. To evade this Ali Mardan Khan intrigued with the Mughul officers in Kabul and offered to surrender Kandhar to Shah Jahan. Early in 1638, he transferred his services to the Mughul emperor and admitted Indian troops into the fortress. Shah Jahan's name now appeared in the *Khutba* and on the coins in Kandhar. The district of Kandhar was occupied by the Mughul troops without much difficulty. Ali Mardan was richly rewarded and sometime after, appointed governor of Kashmir.

Some minor conquests

The Mughuls had coveted the inhospitable region known as Tibet for about a hundred years and made unsuccessful attempt to capture it. Jahangir's expedition had been repulsed with great losses. Shah Jahan, following in the footsteps of his father, renewed the project. In 1634 he sent an expedition against Abdal, ruler of Baltistan, or little Tibet. The immediate cause of the outbreak of hostility was the offence given by Abdal, who had given shelter to the Chakks from Kashmir. Abdal submitted. But sometime after, he repudiated allegiance to the emperor and therefore another expedition was sent against him, which made Abdal pay a war indemnity and surrender the leader of the Chakks. One year after, news was received that Tibet proper was hostile and so another army had to be despatched. The Tibetans were defeated and peace was restored on the northern frontier.

Some other minor conquests were made. At the end of 1637 the region known as Baglan, now in the Nasik district, was conquered. The Portuguese were besieged in Daman and Diu and

were compelled to submit. There was a rebellion in Kangra in the Punjab. Jagat Singh, who was its governor, had repudiated the Mughul authority, but was obliged to submit early in 1642. Champat Rai, the new Bundela chief, revolted in Bundelkhand. Abdullah Khan was directed to reduce him to submission. The Mughul army surprised the Bundela chief between Orchha and Jhansi, and although Champat Rai escaped, his adopted son Prithvi Raj was taken prisoner and sent to be lodged in the fort of Gwalior. In May 1642, Champat Rai was persuaded to submit and enter the Mughul service.

The country lying south of the Ganga and east of Bundelkhand was brought under control. The chief of Bundelkhand, named Lachhman Singh, also submitted. The Cheros, an aboriginal tribe of Palamau in Bihar, also acknowledged the Mughul suzerainty. In April 1643, the Gonds and Bhils of Malwa, who were in rebellion, were suppressed.

Central Asian policy of Shah Jahan

The Mughul emperors always cherished a desire to conquer and occupy Trans-Oxiana, their ancestral homeland in Central Asia. Babur's successive attempts had failed to recover Samarqand, the capital of his great ancestor Timur. Humayun's efforts in that direction had proved futile. Akbar and Jahangir also entertained the same ambition, but had not been in a position to make an attempt to establish the Mughul rule in that inhospitable region. It was left to Shah Jahan to make an endeavour for the conquest of Samarqand, which was then under the Janids of Astrakhan. Shah Jahan's contemporary on the throne of Samarqand was Imam Quli, an ambitious ruler who cast covetous eyes on Kabul. Taking advantage of the confusion in India in the months following the accession of Shah Jahan, the Uzbegs under Nazr Muhammad, brother of Imam Quli, led an expedition against Kabul. He acquired partial success in the campaign; but with the advance of summer he had to withdraw, as his troops were reluctant to follow him in the inclement weather. Next year (May 1629) Nazr Muhammad repeated his raid on the Kabul territory and captured Bamian, but failed to make any further progress and had to retire. These raids on the Mughul territory naturally caused resentment in India. But Nazr Muhammad apologized and relations were re-established between the two neighbours.

In 1639, Shah Jahan decided to retaliate and planned an

expedition against the Uzbegs of Samarqand. At the back of his mind there was the ancestral ambition of re-establishing the Mughul rule over Trans-oxiana. The occasion was furnished by confusion in the affairs of that country. Nazr Muhammad had deposed his brother Imam Quli who had lost his sight. But he was not popular and had picked a quarrel with religious leaders. The situation was further complicated when a rebellion occurred in Khwarizm or Khiva and Nazr Muhammad sent his son Abdul Aziz to quell it (1645). Abdul Aziz rebelled against his father and proclaimed himself Khan of Bukhara and Nazr Muhammad was obliged to take refuge in Balkh. These internal dissensions in Trans-Oxiana gave Shah Jahan an opportunity to interfere and thereby endeavour to realize the age-long Mughul ambition. The governor of Kabul was directed to take advantage of the difficulties of the Uzbegs. He sent an army and captured the fort of Kahmard which was however lost soon after and the operation came to an end with the advent of winter. The Mughul interference obliged Nazr Muhammad to make up his quarrel with his son, and it was agreed that he should retain Balkh, while Bukhara should go to Abdul Aziz. Nazr Muhammad even appealed to Shah Jahan for help which was promised in dubious terms. Shah Jahan welcomed the opportunity to bring Samarqand, Balkh and Bukhara under his possession. He visited Kabul and collected a large army and planned a comprehensive campaign against the Uzbegs. Murad was given charge of the expedition. The army, however, did not start until the middle of June when the prince entered Narin and Qunduz, which were taken. The emperor's policy was to help Nazr Muhammad to recover Bukhara and Samarqand and then to wrest them from his hands. It was not difficult for Nazr Muhammad to see through Shah Jahan's designs and consequently the former tried to obstruct the advance of the Mughul army. He even pretended to agree to resign his territory to the Mughuls and declare that he was making preparations for going to Mecca. Murad guessed the meanings of these professions and began his campaign against Balkh in July 1646. On his approach, Nazr Muhammad fled and the Mughul army captured Balkh, secured a large treasure and plundered the city. The next acquisition was Tirmiz on the Oxus. After this the imperial army defeated Nazr Muhammad at Shivarghan. Nazr Muhammad fled to Marv and then to Persia. Shah Jahan was highly pleased at the success and celebrated the occasion by issuing coins at Balkh. But his joy proved to be premature, for Murad who

was accustomed to a life of luxurious pleasures in India, did not like the barren country and the rigorous climate of Central Asia and begged to be recalled. The emperor was a little disappointed and resorted to diplomacy. He wrote to Nazr Muhammad that his only object in undertaking the expedition was to clear Balkh of dangerous people, and then to hand it over to him. Prince Murad had exceeded his orders, he added, on account of youth and inexperience. To Shah Abbas II of Persia he wrote congratulating him on his accession and requesting his neutrality during the Mughul expedition to Central Asia. The imperial diplomacy failed in its object. The Persian Shah did not remain neutral, and Nazr Muhammad was not deceived by sweet words. Although Murad was replaced by Aurangzeb, the Mughul army found its progress obstructed by tribesmen. Abdul Aziz had strengthened his position and collected a large army on the Oxus. As Aurangzeb arrived at Balkh, Abdul Aziz prepared to fight. Another Uzbek army proceeded to invade Balkh from another direction. Aurangzeb was obliged to fight a pitched battle with Abdul Aziz, in which the latter was defeated. Aurangzeb's cool courage and bravery impressed the Uzbeks. The prince had dismounted from his horse and offered his sunset prayers on the field of battle. Consequently, Abdul Aziz was in a mood to treat and offered to place Bukhara in the hands of his brother. Nazr Muhammad wrote from Persia offering to abdicate. But the Mughul success was more illusory than real. Aurangzeb had not been able to advance beyond the Oxus. His officers were reluctant to stay ~~and~~ fight in the rigorous climate of Trans-Oxiana. They found the country desolate. Even Aurangzeb wanted to return to India, for he was fired with the ambition of succeeding his father as emperor. The Uzbeks, who seem to have been aware of the difficulties and sentiments of the Mughul commander and other officers, persevered on in their hostility to the invaders. Nazr Muhammad returned from Persia and attacked the Mughul outposts in Afghanistan. He received help and encouragement from the Shah of Persia who was desirous of recovering Kandhar from the Mughuls. Aurangzeb felt obliged to cut short his progress into Trans-Oxiana and turn back to repel the Uzbek attack on Afghanistan. Shah Jahan advised the prince to accept an apology, if Nazr Muhammad offered one. Such an apology was made by Nazr Muhammad not personally, but through his grandson. The Mughul garrison in the outposts slackened its vigilance under the mistaken notion that Nazr Muhammad was to be restored

to his country. Aurangzeb had to return to Kabul and was harassed on the way by bands of Uzbegs.

Shah Abbas II of Persia had now openly taken up the cause of the Uzbegs. In 1648, he demanded the restoration of Kandhar from Shah Jahan. He also urged the emperor to restore Balkh to Nazr Muhammad. The Shah prepared to back his diplomacy with force and proceeded to Khurasan and besieged it. The Mughuls had already abandoned Balkh.

Loss of Kandhar, 1649

Shah Abbas II was gratified at the failure of Shah Jahan's campaign in Central Asia, as it weakened the Mughul authority in the North-Western Frontier of the Indian empire and gave him an opportunity to recover Kandhar. In 1648 the Shah, who had now attained majority took the reins of government in his hands and made preparations for an expedition to Kandhar. Proceeding from Khurasan, he arrived in the vicinity of Kandhar and invested the fortress of Bist. The news impelled Shah Jahan to gather a strong force which was placed under the command of Aurangzeb and was instructed to proceed immediately to save the city and the fortress. Meanwhile the Persian army captured the fortress of Bist after a short siege and then invested Kandhar itself. The garrison under Daulat Khan, its governor, lost heart thinking that no relief from Delhi was likely to arrive in time. Some of the troops in the fortress, anxious to save themselves and their families, opened correspondence with the besiegers and Daulat Khan was not powerful enough to put down the sedition with a strong hand. In fact, he himself eventually joined the dispirited garrison and surrendered the fort to the Persians in February 1649, a month before Aurangzeb was able to reach Kabul en route to Kandhar. Shah Jahan was indignant and urged Aurangzeb to hurry up and recover the valuable frontier outpost. The emperor himself advanced to Kabul to hearten the troops by his presence in the near vicinity of the scene of action.

Accompanied by wazir Sadullah Khan the prince at the head of 50,000 troops proceeded by way of Ghazni and arrived near Kandhar in May 1649 and besieged the fortress. Fighting continued throughout the summer, but the Mughuls failed to make an impression on the besieged who were reinforced by fresh troops from Persia. The Mughul army suffered greatly for lack of proper organisation and supplies and ammunition. They were further handicapped for want

of big battering cannons. Winter was fast approaching and it was considered not to continue the struggle. The emperor, therefore, recalled the expedition. Aurangzeb abandoned the siege and in September 1649 left for Lahore.

In 1652 Shah Jahan decided to renew his attempt for the recovery of Kandhar, and once again entrusted the task to Aurangzeb who was anxious to wipe off the disgrace of his defeat and failure of 1649. A powerful army with many big pieces of artillery, war elephants and camels and two crores of rupees for expenditure was placed at the disposal of the prince. The second siege of Kandhar commenced on 22nd May, 1652 and lasted for two months and ten days. The Mughul bravery proved to be of no avail before the better-served Persian artillery. Moreover, the Uzbegs threatened Ghazni which lay on the route between Kandhar and Kabul. Shah Jahan fearing a combination between the Persians and the Uzbegs ordered Aurangzeb to raise the siege and return to court. The prince's request to prolong the operations was refused and he was recalled and appointed governor of the Dakhin.

The emperor now entrusted the recovery of Kandhar to Dara who rejoiced over Aurangzeb's double failure and boasted that he would conquer the fortress within a week. The crown prince with a grand army, a huge park of artillery and one crore of rupees for his expenses set out in February 1653 and tried to occupy the surrounding country, so as to prevent the supplies and reinforcements from reaching the Persian garrison. He succeeded in recovering Bist and Girishk which lay to the west of Kandhar. He laid waste the country around, closely invested Kandhar and ordered a fierce bombardment. The concentration of attack on selected points of the rampart caused some part of the wall to be shattered ; but the Mughul army found it impossible to force an entry on account of murderous fire from the more efficient and better-served Persian guns. Nevertheless, Dara's success was much greater than that of Aurangzeb during the two previous sieges and it frightened the Persians. Unfortunately, however, winter came on which put the besieged in a favourable condition. Moreover, the Mughul ammunitions and supplies ran short. It was, therefore, decided to withdraw the army early in October 1653.

The three sieges of Kandhar (1649, 1652 and 1653) sapped the resources of the empire. They cost about 12 crores of rupees without any compensating advantage. Not an inch of territory was added to the imperial dominions. In fact, the empire lost not

only the impregnable fortress of Kandhar, but also a large extent of territory around it. Quite a large number of men and beasts of burden perished in the enterprise. The political and military prestige of the empire suffered greatly and revealed the inefficiency of Shah Jahan's military organization. The Shah of Persia naturally felt elated on account of his success against the mighty ruler of Delhi and during succeeding years, Persia entertained the ambition of invading the fertile plains of Hindustan which kept the Mughuls in a state of anxiety. During the remaining days of Shah Jahan's life, the relations between the two countries were very much strained.

War with Golkunda and Bijapur : Aurangzeb's Second Viceroyalty, 1652-57

In November 1652, Aurangzeb was for the second time appointed governor of the Mughul Dakhin. He had been in charge of that region from 1641 to 1644, and it was, therefore, his second viceroyalty of the Dakhin. Earnest in his devotion to duty, the prince first of all tried to improve the finances of the suba and with the help of Murshid Quli Khan, his diwan, who was a man of great administrative ability and financial genius, carried out a fresh and equitable revenue settlement. Murshid Quli Khan introduced the principle of Todar Mal's revenue system, measured the land and fixed the state demand on the basis of the soil. He realized that a uniform system for the entire country was impossible and therefore made due allowance for local tradition and usage. Side by side with *zabti*, *batai* and *nasq* were allowed to continue. The state share ranged from one-half in the *batai* areas to one-fourth in those where the system of measurement could not be introduced. These measures improved the condition of the peasants and increased the resources of the province. The prince had already brought about a redistribution of assignments of land among his officers with the permission of the emperor. He was now in a position to attend to political affairs.

Following in the footsteps of his ancestors Aurangzeb planned the destruction of the kingdoms of Golkunda and Bijapur. In view of the clear Mughul policy of extending the empire so as to embrace the entire peninsula, it was not difficult to find a pretext for an attack on these two Shia kingdoms. Golkunda was a rich state, and besides professing Shia faith, which Aurangzeb and his father considered it their religious duty to put down, the sultan had recently conquered the province of Karnatak. This conquest was not recognized by the emperor who demanded a large sum of money for

the alleged crime. Moreover, Golkunda had failed to discharge its obligation of paying the annual tribute in accordance with the treaty of 1636. But the immediate cause of the war was the arrest by the sultan of Mir Jumla's son, Muhammad Amin, who appealed to Aurangzeb for assistance. Mir Jumla, whose original name was Mir Muhammad Sayeed, was a native of Ardistan and had come to Golkunda as the servant of a jewel merchant. After his master's death, he inherited his vast fortune. His wealth and ability attracted the attention of Abdulla Qutb Shah of Golkunda who appointed him as his prime minister and conferred upon him the title of Mir Jumla. Mir Jumla was an extremely ambitious politician. He increased his wealth by plundering Hindu temples and working diamond mines and recruited a personal army consisting of 5,000 well-armed cavalry and 20,000 infantry, besides a powerful park of artillery and some war elephants. He conquered Karnatak for himself and defeated the Raja of Chandragiri. Thus he ruled over a dominion of his own which he converted into an *imperium in imperio*. His ambition, wealth and overbearing conduct alarmed the sultan of Golkunda who wanted to put him under arrest and blind him. Mir Jumla got wind of his designs, refused to attend the court and opened negotiations with Bijapur, Persia and prince Aurangzeb, viceroy of the Dakhin. Meanwhile, his son Muhammad Amin gave offence to the sultan by his overbearing conduct in the open darbar and was, therefore, put under arrest along with his family. His property was confiscated. This happened on 1st December, 1655. Aurangzeb took advantage of the incident and after obtaining his father's permission to invade Golkunda demanded from the Qutb Shah the release of Muhammad Amin and his family and in the event of refusal threatened the sultan with an invasion of his country. Without waiting for reply the prince declared war and deputed his son Prince Muhammad at the head of a large army in January 1656 to invade Golkunda. As this army advanced within his territory, the sultan made profession of obedience and released Mir Jumla's son and mother and marched on Hyderabad. The sultan was alarmed; he removed his treasures to the strong fort of Golkunda a few miles from Hyderabad, made an attempt to bribe Prince Muhammad and got together his troops to defend his territory. The prince, however, defeated the Golkunda army and besieged Hyderabad. He put the sultan's agents, who had brought him the bribe in the shape of jewels and other valuables, to death and captured Hyderabad after a short siege. The helpless sultan made fresh

protestations of allegiance, sent to the prince more jewels and other valuable articles and released the property of Mir Jumla and at the same time sought assistance from Bijapur in order to defend his strong fortress of Golkunda from the invaders.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had besieged the fortress of Golkunda (February 1656). The siege lasted for sometime and the sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah was frightened and begged permission to send his own mother to beg pardon for his offence. The aged lady pleaded forgiveness, whereupon Aurangzeb promised to restore the kingdom of Golkunda to her son on condition that he should clear all arrears of tribute, pay an indemnity of one crore of rupees and give his daughter in marriage to Prince Muhammad. While negotiations were going on in the Dakhin, the sultan's agents were waiting on Shah Jahan at Agra through Dara and Jahanara. Consequently, when Aurangzeb was about to press the siege, he received orders from his father to withdraw from Golkunda and pardon the sultan. Aurangzeb kept the emperor's orders secret and continued the siege and raised it only after the sultan had restored Mir Jumla's property and promised to clear off the arrears of tribute and perform the marriage of his daughter with Muhammad. Mir Jumla interviewed the prince and was received with honours. The marriage of the sultan's daughter with Muhammad was also celebrated and a dowry of ten lakhs of rupees given. A fresh treaty was entered into with Golkunda. The sultan swore on the Quran never to disobey the Mughul emperor in future and was thereupon pardoned. He was to pay an indemnity of 15 lakhs of rupees. By this treaty the sultan became a vassal of the Mughul emperor. Mir Jumla who was the primary cause of the humiliation of his master was given an honourable post in the Mughul service and after the death of wazir Sadullah Khan was promoted to be the prime minister of the empire.

After his success against Golkunda, Aurangzeb turned his attention towards the kingdom of Bijapur which had enjoyed peace for 20 years and was treated virtually as an independent state. Its ruler Muhammad Adil Shah was an able monarch and had the foresight to maintain friendly relations with the ruler of Delhi. He had extended his territory from sea to sea, consolidated his administration and increased his revenue. His success excited the jealousy of Shah Jahan who rebuked him for his presumptuousness. The sultan who was not prepared to go to war with the emperor tendered an apology and gave up the display of court ceremonials of the Mughul type responsible for Shah Jahan's reproofs. Adil Shah died in

November 1656 and was succeeded by his son Ali Adil Shah II, then a boy of 18.

The change of government in Bijapur caused confusion in its affairs. Factions arose at the court and a rebellion broke out in the eastern province of the kingdom. Aurangzeb took advantage of these developments and successfully intrigued to win the allegiance of some of the disaffected Bijapuri nobles. He obtained Shah Jahan's permission to invade Bijapur on the plea that Ali Adil Shah II was not the son of the late ruler, but was a boy of spurious origin. Being an independent kingdom, the Mughul emperor had no right to interfere with the internal affairs of Bijapur, much less to question the succession of its ruler. Aurangzeb's interference with that kingdom was, therefore, wanton aggression, pure and simple. His object was the complete subjugation of that independent kingdom.

Assisted by Mir Jumla who possessed local knowledge, Aurangzeb invaded Bijapur and besieged the fortress of Bidar, situated on a rocky eminence and well-supplied with arms and ammunition. Sidi Marjan, the commandant of the fort, put up a brave resistance, but the besiegers succeeded in filling the moat round the fortress and damaging its walls by a fierce bombardment. Fortunately for Aurangzeb a rocket caused an explosion in the fort as a result of which Sidi Marjan was mortally wounded. The Mughuls now made a dash into the fortress and put up their flags on its ramparts. The dying commander sent the keys of the fort to the prince. The fortress thus passed into the possession of the Mughuls after a siege of 27 days.

After this success Aurangzeb sent forward Mahabat Khan at the head of 15,000 well-equipped cavalry to meet the Bijapur army which had assembled at Gulburga. The Bijapuris were defeated and dispersed, and Aurangzeb was able to advance to Kalyani, the ancient capital of the Chalukyas, situated forty miles west of Bidar. The town was besieged, but the Mughuls were stoutly opposed and their lines of communication threatened. Eventually, Aurangzeb's superior generalship and perseverance succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Bijapur force, and capturing Kalyani by assault in August 1657. The prince was preparing to undertake further operations with a view to bringing about the extinction of the Bijapur kingdom when the emperor's orders to call off the campaign arrived. The importunity of the Bijapur agents at the Delhi court, Dara's jealousy of Aurangzeb and the emperor's failing health were responsible for Shah Jahan's decision to recall the army to the

headquarters. In compliance with the imperial orders negotiations were commenced and terms were quickly settled. The sultan agreed to pay an indemnity of one and a half crores of rupees and to surrender to the empire the forts of Bidar, Kalyani and Parendia and also those in the Konkan and Vangi. Shah Jahan approved of the settlement and was generous enough to remit half a crore of the indemnity. Aurangzeb withdrew to Bidar and began preparations for the war of succession which was about to ensue on account of Shah Jahan's failing health. The Sultan of Bijapur took advantage of the change in the political situation and declined to fulfil the terms of the treaty of 1657.

While Aurangzeb was conducting his campaign against Golkunda and Bijapur, the Marathas who had so far not proved dangerous to the Mughuls, were emerging in importance. Their young leader Shivaji, son of Shahji Bhonsle, was at this very time entering upon a career of conquest and independence. Shahji was obliged to enter the service of Bijapur and Shivaji also promised to help the Mughuls in their war against Bijapur in return for a part of the territory which had to be conquered from that kingdom. But as the Mughuls did not assist him in conquering it, Shivaji avoided joining them, and while Aurangzeb was occupied with the two Dakhin kingdoms, he captured Junnar and raided the Mughul territory west of Ahmadnagar. Aurangzeb was obliged to make arrangements for putting down Shivaji's raids on the western flank. A detachment of the Mughul army defeated Shivaji. Nevertheless, the latter continued raiding the Mughul territory. When Aurangzeb made peace with Bijapur and withdrew his army from that state, Shivaji also abandoned his raids and made peace with the Mughuls and submitted to them.

The War of Succession, 1657-59

Shah Jahan fell ill in September 1657 and rumour spread that he was dead. Believing that his death was approaching, he executed his will bequeathing the empire to his eldest son Dara, who was called upon to conduct the administration in the name of the emperor during the latter's illness. The emperor's other sons, however, being apprised of their father's illness, decided to contest for the throne. Shah Jahan had four sons, Dara Shukoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad Bakhsh. All these were grown up men and governors of provinces with considerable resources and following. Dara, at the time of his father's illness, was governor of the Punjab

and Delhi, but he usually resided with his father who had repaired to Agra in October 1657 for a change of climate. Shuja was governor of Bengal; Aurangzeb, that of the Dakhin, and Murad of Gujarat. Though born of the same mother the brothers were not on good terms and each of them coveted the throne. The three younger princes were jealous of Dara who was designated heir-apparent by the emperor and marked out for succession to the throne. He held liberal religious views, was friendly to Hindus and popular with the Rajput aristocracy. Shuja had leanings towards Shiaism, while Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni and bitterly hostile to non-Muslims. Murad, though a Sunni like Aurangzeb, was more or less indifferent to religious dogma.

When the rumours of the emperor's fatal illness reached the princes, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad began making preparations for a war against Dara who was at Agra by the side of his ailing father. Murad in Gujarat was the first to murder his minister Ali Naqi, to assume the title of the emperor and strike coins in his own name. Shuja who for many years had ruled Bengal with success, proceeded towards Agra at the head of a big army to fight Dara and occupy the throne. Both these entered into correspondence with Aurangzeb who was clever enough to conceal his intentions and projects which were to overpower all his brothers and seize the throne for himself. With consummate cunning, he tried to make use of Shuja and Murad to further his own interests. While keeping in touch with the developments at the imperial court at Agra, through his trusted agents and specially his sister Raushanara, he posted his troops at the ferries on the Narmada so as to prevent news of his own preparations and movement reaching northern India. With the help of Mir Jumla, whom he did not allow to proceed to Agra, Aurangzeb began making preparations, winning over officers and troops and gathering other materials of war. Unlike Murad he was not prepared to break openly with his father or elder brother. He announced that he was preparing to proceed to Agra to see his ailing father and tried to conciliate Golkunda and Bijapur and even to win them over to his interest.

Aurangzeb entered into correspondence with Murad, advised him to act cautiously and not to break out into an open revolt. He found fault with Murad for besieging Surat and assuming the title of king. The two brothers entered into an agreement that they would unite to put down Dara who had become an apostate from Islam and after their victory would divide the empire between them; the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sind would go to Murad, while

the remaining country would pass into the hands of Aurangzeb. It was further agreed that one-third of the booty would belong to Murad and two-thirds to Aurangzeb. The brothers were to march out of their provinces, effect a junction with their troops, and proceed to Agra to fight Dara.

While Aurangzeb and Murad were concerting measures for a war against Dara, Shuja in Bengal was carrying out his coronation at Raj Mahal. This done, he started for Agra at the head of a large army and reached Banaras early in February 1658. Dara, whose plan was to crush Murad and Shuja and then to march against Aurangzeb, despatched his eldest son, Sulaiman Shukoh, with Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shuja. The two armies met on 24th February, 1658 at Bahadurpur, five miles north-east of Banaras, and fought a hotly contested battle in which Shuja was defeated with great slaughter. He left the field and fled towards Bengal. Jai Singh pursued Shuja to the border of Bengal.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had matured his plans. He secured his object by converting Golkunda and Bijapur into his friends and offering Shivaji grants of lands in the Dakhin. He sought to distract Dara's attention by inciting the Persian Shah to invade Afghanistan, then a province of the Indian empire. By February 1658, his preparations which included employment of European gunners in his service were completed. He left Aurangabad and after a month's stay at Burhanpur, crossed the Narmada and reached Dipalpur where he was joined by Murad. The two princes then proceeded to Dharmat, 14 miles south-west of Ujjain.

On the news of the advance of his brothers from the Dakhin and Gujarat, Dara sent an army under Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan to meet them and, if possible, to persuade them to return to their respective provinces. The imperial army suffered from the divided command and lack of intelligence, and failed to produce the desired impression on the rebellious princes. Aurangzeb sent a message to Jaswant Singh asking him to withdraw, as his proposed visit was only to see his father. The latter replied by advancing towards Aurangzeb's army. It was then that he learnt that Murad had joined Aurangzeb. It was too late to talk of peace and a battle was fought at Dharmat on 25th April, 1658. The Rajputs under Jaswant Singh attacked the rebel forces with bravery, but failed to win the battle, as the imperial troops were badly organized and led. Many of Jaswant Singh's officers lost their lives and he himself was wounded and was forcibly removed from the field.

by his trusted followers. In the army commanded by Qasim Khan, only one high Muslim officer lost his life and four of them went over to the side of Aurangzeb on the next day. It is said that when Jaswant Singh reached Jodhpur, his spirited queen refused to admit him into the castle for it was un-Rajput-like for the head of the Rathors to have fled from the field for the sake of saving his life.

After his victory at Dharmat, which enhanced Aurangzeb's prestige, he laid the foundation of a new town near the site of the battle and named it Fatehabad. He then proceeded towards Gwalior en route to Agra, crossed the Chambal and arrived at the head of a powerful force at Samugarh, a village eight miles east of Agra Fort, where Dara had to come to give the battle to his victorious brothers. The crown prince was badly upset by the news of the disaster of Dharmat and the quick advance of Aurangzeb to the vicinity of Agra. Dara, therefore, made a vigorous attempt to collect as many troops as he could and with Shah Jahan's permission proceeded in person to decide the contest for the throne one way or the other. His advance guard was under his trusted Rajput nobles, while his right and left wings were commanded by Khalilullah Khan and Siphir Shukoh, Dara's younger son, respectively. Dara himself, seated on a lofty elephant, took up his position in the centre which he commanded in person. As usual, the prince's army was handicapped for want of harmony among its various parts and on account of Aurangzeb's intrigue to seduce its Muslim commanders.

Dara committed the mistake of launching an immediate attack on Aurangzeb whose troops were exhausted on account of continuous marching and postponing battle for the next day which gave the enemy troops time to recoup themselves by rest during the night. When the battle began the next day (June 8, 1658), he ordered his guns to waste their fire, for Aurangzeb's troops had not arrived within range. The imperial left wing launched an attack on Aurangzeb's right when the latter, who had reserved their fire, succeeded in repelling. The next charge was made on the enemy centre, which was taken on by Aurangzeb's reserve, which in turn defeated the imperial left wing killing its commander, Rustam Khan. The right wing of Dara commanded by Khalilullah, who seemed to have been in collusion with the enemy, made a half-hearted attack on Murad. His attempt was seconded by the Rajputs from the centre. They pushed on to Murad's division and attacked him with vigour. Murad received three arrow wounds in the face and his mahaut fell dead before him. Murad was ultimately forced back

and the Rajputs advanced further and made an attack on a group of troops commanded by Aurangzeb in person. The Rajputs were defeated, but Aurangzeb was so much impressed by their bravery and devotion, that he refrained from making a short work of his brave though beaten opponents. While the right wing was thus being pushed out of the field, Dara was proceeding to reinforce his left wing, whose commander Rustam Khan had fallen on the field. From the centre he moved to the front of his right wing, with the result that he came in front of his own artillery, which had consequently to be silenced. As he was drawn to the one corner of the field, he lost touch with the operations in other parts. Aurangzeb who had reserved his fire now ordered his artillery to play on Dara. While the enemy guns were moving forward to encircle him, Dara found his heavily armed troops exhausted by the heat of the summer and himself on a huge elephant a target of Aurangzeb's guns. On the advice of his officers he dismounted from his elephant and took his seat on a horse. From the empty *howda*, his troops thought that he was dead. They were exhausted by fighting as well as extreme heat and they now broke and fled for safety. Dara was dismayed and escaped on horse-back, losing 10,000 of his troops in the battle. Besides these, quite a good number perished from heat or exhaustion. On arrival at Agra he was so much struck by shame that he declined to meet his father, and taking his family and a handful of followers, he left for Delhi in order to gather an army there and make a fresh attempt to oppose his victorious brothers.

The astute Aurangzeb ascribed the victory to Murad, had his wounds dressed and declared that the latter was now the emperor whose reign should begin immediately. The brothers now marched towards Agra and encamped outside its wall. Most of the imperial nobles and officers abandoned the losing side and went over to join the victorious prince. Shah Jahan invited Aurangzeb to a meeting. At first he agreed to see his father, but being suspicious by nature, he feared an ambush and so declined to meet Shah Jahan. He occupied the city and posted his troops round the fort. Afraid of his life Shah Jahan closed the gates of the fort and prepared to defend it. Aurangzeb laid siege and ordered his guns to batter the fort walls, but the fire proved ineffective as the fort was almost impregnable by assault. Not being in a position to lose time Aurangzeb cut off the fort's water supply from the Yamuna so as to compel his father to surrender. The wells inside the fort contained brackish water and caused distress to the imperial family and garrison. Shah Jahan

was compelled once again to appeal to the filial sentiments of Aurangzeb and to impress upon him the desirability of making up the quarrel. Aurangzeb replied that he was loyal to him. Shah Jahan, therefore, opened the gates of the fort and allowed Prince Muhammad, eldest son of Aurangzeb, to take charge of it and clear it of old emperor's adherents. A meeting between Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb was arranged through Jahanara and Shah Jahan proposed that the empire should be divided between the four brothers. Aurangzeb started to enter the fort to meet his father, but he returned from the way as his officers intercepted a letter from Shah Jahan to Dara which convinced him that his father was at heart on the side of Dara and against him. The father and the son never met, and Aurangzeb after holding a pompous darbar started in pursuit of Dara, leaving Agra in charge of Muhammad.

While on the march towards Delhi, a coolness sprang up between Aurangzeb and Murad, as the latter, feeling that he was being ignored by the former, who to all intents and purposes was acting as the sole ruler, began enlisting fresh troops to strengthen his position. Aurangzeb who was a past master in the art of intrigue and ruthlessness, craftily advanced some money to Murad in order to assist him in pursuing Dara and invited him to a feast. After some days' hesitation Murad accepted the invitation on the advice of one of his officers who had been seduced by Aurangzeb's gold. When the dinner at which he was served with wine was over, Aurangzeb requested Murad to take rest as he was tired after the hunt. A maid-servant was sent to shampoo Murad's legs in the tent where he was taking rest. This lulled him to sleep and the woman servant removed Murad's weapons from his side. Aurangzeb easily made him prisoner and sent him to be lodged in the fort at Delhi. Murad's troops were won over by bribe and persuaded to join Aurangzeb's army. This took place near Mathura.

During this interval Dara who had failed to recruit a sufficiently large army at Delhi to fight the victorious Aurangzeb, abandoned the imperial city and retreated to Lahore, thinking that he would strengthen his position there and oppose Aurangzeb's advance. He left some of his men to guard the ferries on the Satluj and to furnish him news of the enemy's movements. He thought that Aurangzeb's army was fatigued and would not be in a position to proceed to Lahore in time to overtake him. He was mistaken. Aurangzeb, relieved of the anxiety about Murad, proceeded to Delhi and occupied it. From there he sent two forces, one to Lahore to pur-

sue Dara and the other towards Allahabad to fight Sulaiman Shukoh, Dara's eldest son, and his own brother Shuja. At Delhi he assumed the title of emperor and carried out his coronation. Shah Jahan's reign thus came to an end. The ex-emperor passed the remaining days of his life as a prisoner in the fort at Agra. He was imprisoned in the gilded marble palace which he had built and from where he could have a view of the Taj Mahal which was then receiving its final touches.

Aurangzeb had now practically won the war of succession, Dara was in flight from Lahore where he could not rally opposition to his victorious brother. From Lahore he proceeded to Gujarat and was well received at Ahmadabad by the governor of that province. With ten lakhs of rupees placed at his disposal by the friendly governor, he raised a fresh army and made other preparations for a final struggle with Aurangzeb. He was invited by Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and accordingly hastened to Ajmer, but was extremely disappointed to find that the Rajput chief had already been won over by Aurangzeb through the intercession of Jai Singh of Amber. The new emperor had sent an army to overtake the fleeing Dara, who was compelled to fight at the pass of Deorai near Ajmer and was once again defeated and had to take refuge by flight. He returned to Ahmadabad, but this time the governor refused to admit him into the town. Dara had no alternative but to turn to Afghanistan. He took shelter at Dadar with a Baluchi chief, Malik Jiwan, whom he had once saved from Shah Jahan's wrath. Dara's wife Nadira Begam, who had faithfully shared her husband's misfortune, accompanied him in his dangerous flight and was then ill, died at Dadar and the prince, himself, who had passionate attachment for her was almost on the verge of death on account of his sad bereavement. Malik Jiwan treacherously betrayed the prince into the hands of Aurangzeb's men. He was taken captive along with his second son Siphir Shukoh and taken to Delhi and delivered into the hands of Aurangzeb on September 1, 1659. Aurangzeb was highly pleased and disgraced his elder brother by seating him in dirty attire on a filthy elephant and parading him in the streets of Delhi and then throwing him into a dungeon. Aurangzeb's court was divided on the punishment to be imposed on the exalted captive. Danishmand Khan wanted his life to be spared, whereas Shayista Khan and his own sister Raushanara urged that being a *Kafir*, he should be put to death. Aurangzeb instituted a special tribunal presided over by the high ulema to try Dara for apostasy. He was found guilty and beheaded. His eldest son Sulaiman Shukoh who had taken shelter

in Garhwal was captured, brought to Delhi and sent as a prisoner to the fort at Gwalior. He died there as a result of slow poisoning. The victor's next brother Shuja, who had fled to Monghyr after the battle of Bahadurpur, was defeated by Aurangzeb at the battle of Khajua, in the Fatehpur district in Uttar Pradesh. Shuja once again fled to Bengal and then to Arakan. He was murdered by the Meghs. Murad, the youngest brother, who was lodged as a prisoner in the fort of Delhi, was put to death. Aurangzeb thus became the undisputed ruler of the country.

Last days of Shah Jahan, 1666

Shah Jahan lived a prisoner in the Shah Burj of the Agra Fort for eight years. Though he was allowed all comforts in the prison and was attended by his favourite daughter Jahanara, he was very closely watched and not allowed any access to the people outside. Nor was he permitted to correspond with anybody or allowed to see anyone except in the presence of Aurangzeb's agents. Aurangzeb coveted the royal jewellery in the possession of his father which the latter refused to part with. A bitter correspondence ensued between the father and the son and Aurangzeb blamed him for a partiality towards Dara and asked him to submit with resignation to the Divine will. The captive ex-emperor was deeply offended by the reproaches hurled on him by his undutiful son and in anger called Aurangzeb a robber and a usurper. He even described him as a hypocrite. A keen edge was added to Shah Jahan's suffering on account of the brutal murder of Dara and Murad and equally unfortunate fate of Shuja. He began to spend his time in meditation and prayer. He fell ill in January 1666 and after having made his will he died on January 31 (N. S.), 1666 at the age of 74. It is said that he kept on gazing at the Taj Mahal till his last moment. Aurangzeb did not allow his father's funeral to be performed like the funeral of a king and Shah Jahan's bier was carried by eunuchs and menials. He was buried by the side of Mumtaz Mahal in the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Personality and character : Was his reign a Golden Age ?

Historians hold diametrically opposite views about the character and achievements of Shah Jahan. The late V. A. Smith was of the opinion that Shah Jahan failed both as a man and as a ruler and that the dazzling splendour of his court and the remarkable beauty of his buildings, specially of the Taj Mahal misled the world into thinking that his reign was a golden period in the medieval history

of India. Contemporary Indian historians and a few European travellers, on the other hand, looked upon Shah Jahan as a great and successful monarch, who ruled over the subjects as a father over his sons, and that the condition of the country under him was prosperous and people were happy. Neither of these views is absolutely correct.

Shah Jahan's personality and character had two facets. He was partly liberal and progressive and therefore in that sense a real successor of his father and grandfather. On the contrary, in certain other respects he resembled his son Aurangzeb and anticipated some of his measures. In that respect he was without doubt a reactionary. Smith is right when he says that Shah Jahan was not a dutiful son. He revolted against his father and for years remained in rebellion. But it must not be forgotten that he was forced into that course of action on account of the jealousy of his stepmother Nur Jahan who, as we have seen, was bent upon making the throne safe for her own son-in-law Shahryar. Moreover, the rebellion by the Mughul princes against their fathers had become more or less traditional. It is, therefore, unjust to single out Shah Jahan for blame on that account. He was an ambitious and energetic prince and was determined to succeed his father and prepared to resort to any kind of means to attain his end. Similarly, Smith's contention that he could not be praised as a husband for he disgraced himself after the death of his favourite queen Mumtaz Mahal disregards the character of the generality of the Mughul princes who were polygamous and therefore not very faithful to conjugal love. Moreover, it can be rightly said in his favour that he remained true to Mumtaz Mahal for twenty long years. As a father he showed undue preference for his eldest son and failed to keep control over his family. Although as a private gentleman he was generally kind and merciful to the poor and the suppliant, he did not display those qualities of friendship and kindness which characterized his ancestors, like Babur, Akbar and Jahangir who would weep and would not touch food for days on the loss of a friend or a relative. Whereas his ancestor Humayun was so reluctant to punish his ungrateful brothers, Shah Jahan ordered all his innocent male relatives to be put to death so that he might have no danger to face from any one of them. Barring these acts of selfishness, Shah Jahan possessed all the qualities of a cultured gentleman. He was learned and accomplished, polite and attentive in conversation, and was gifted with a sweet disposition and kingly looks. He was fond of literature and fine arts, such as, music and

painting and above all, architecture. Like his grandfather Akbar, Shah Jahan encouraged men of letters and arts and was surrounded by them at court and camp. He extended patronage not merely to Persian, but also to Sanskrit and Hindi. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, the court historian, tells us that Jagannath Pandit, the famous author of *Ras Gangadhur* and *Gangalahri*, was the poet laureate of Shah Jahan and the emperor used to listen to his composition and bestow upon him royal gifts and favours. Kavindra Acharya Saraswati of Banaras who was equally proficient in Hindi and Sanskrit and other Sanskrit scholars adorned his court, and under imperial patronage produced several works of merit. Hindi poetry was not neglected. Besides Sundar Das, entitled Mahakavi Rai, the famous Hindi poet and author of *Sundar Sringar*, *Singhasan Battisi* and *Barahmasa* and a personal friend and confidant of the emperor, Chintamani, the greatest Hindi poet of the time enjoyed the royal patronage. Shah Jahan had faith in astrology and many Hindu astrologers were employed for casting horoscopes of the members of the royal family and for fixing auspicious hours for marriages, military expeditions and other important undertakings. Shah Jahan continued the Mughul practice of celebrating at the court the Hindu festivals of Vasant and Dasehra, and weighing his person (tuladan) against gold, silver and other precious articles and distributing these among Brahmans, dervishes and religious people. He also maintained the tradition of employing Hindus on high posts. In this respect, therefore, Shah Jahan followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

Shah Jahan was a better soldier and general than his father. Active in body and mind he personally planned and undertook military expeditions until his old age. He organized the army and made it a better fighting force. In spite of this, he failed to recover Kandhar from the Shah of Persia and his three costly sieges of this frontier stronghold produced no result save disappointment and considerable loss of men, money and prestige. His central Asian expedition met with no better fate. With all his martial activity and ambition, the military condition of the Mughul empire under him was definitely weaker than under Akbar.

Shah Jahan's reign has been described as a golden period in the medieval history of India. This is true in one respect only and that is in the domain of art, particularly architecture. Shah Jahan's buildings represent the climax in the evolution of the Mughul architecture in this country. The Red Fort with its white marble

palaces and Jama Masjid at Delhi, the Moti Masjid, Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas and some other fine buildings in the Agra Fort and the famous Taj Mahal, besides many other buildings at several other places, are the best examples of Indo-Muslim architecture. The exquisite peacock throne with a canopy supported on twelve pillars adorned with precious jewels built in seven years and the celebrated Koh-i-Nur added to the pomp and magnificence of his court. Music, vocal and instrumental, made great strides under Shah Jahan's patronage. Lavish attention was bestowed on painting but, according to critics, it deteriorated in taste and originality. There was great progress in literature, both Persian and Hindi, but there were no master writers of the calibre of Abul Fazl in Persian or Sur Das and Tulsi Das in Hindi. Sanskrit too flourished and was patronized. Thus, Shah Jahan's reign made an extraordinary contribution to the development of literature and art. But it must be noted that while it surpassed the previous reign in architecture, it failed to compete with Jahangir's contribution to painting and Akbar's to literature, Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit, and to music and sculpture.

Shah Jahan was a capable administrator and statesman. His genius was orderly rather than inventive. He attempted to systematize the administration, particularly, the military organization known as the mansabdari system. He tried to reduce the high salaries of the mansabdars and compelled them to maintain in their services the exact number of troops prescribed for their several ranks. In this he succeeded to a great extent. The main regulation issued by Shah Jahan in the twentieth year of his reign was that a mansabdar who held a jagir in India, must maintain one-third of the troops indicated by his rank; one who held jagir outside India was required to maintain one-fourth the number of his rank. In the case of the latter, the number was a little further reduced to one-fifth. Under Shah Jahan the highest mansab open to an officer was 9,000 zat and 9,000 sawar, which was held by his father-in-law, Asaf Khan, but the princes held higher ranks. Dara's mansab, for example, was 40,000 zat and 20,000 sawar. He increased the state demand from one-third to one-half of the gross produce of the soil. He abandoned Akbar's *zabti* system and farmed out the revenue of seven-tenths of the empire, reducing thereby the *Khalisa* land, that is, the land under the direct management of the government. The burden of the cultivators increased considerably not only because they were now to pay one-half of their gross produce but also because they were required to pay for all the land in their possession and not

as before for the land under actual cultivation. The condition of the tillers of the soil who formed 75% of the country's population became definitely worse than it was under Akbar or Jahangir.

Shah Jahan maintained his ancestral tradition of personally administering justice. He was stern in punishing the oppressors and dispensing even-handed justice. In spite of his religious orthodoxy and policy of rack-renting the peasantry, the emperor retained his popularity among the masses. Hard-working and meticulously careful in the discharge of his administrative duties, Shah Jahan used to get up early in the morning and appear at the Jharokha-i-Darshan at sunrise and spend like his grandfather most of his time in attending to the business of the state. His daily routine has been described by the great historian, Jadunath Sarkar, in his *Studies in Mughal India* which shows that despite his fondness for magnificence and pleasures of life, Shah Jahan was a hard-worked ruler. Yet during his reign were sown the seeds of reaction which became eventually the main cause of the downfall of his dynasty and the destruction of his empire. His religious bigotry and intolerance anticipated the reactionary reign of Aurangzeb. He forbade repairing of the old Hindu temples as also the building of the new temples. He destroyed Hindu temples and desecrated the images in the territories of rebellious Hindu rajahs. He prohibited Hindus to marry Muslim women and directed that those Hindus who had Muslim wives should either become Muslims or divorce their Muslim wives. He took personal interest in maintaining the supremacy of Islam and in the disputes between Hindus and Muslims, the latter approached him without hesitation.* His persecution of heretics in Islam made the Shias feel that they were unwelcome at the imperial court. His fondness for money impelled him to increase the burden of the people and caused suffering among them. His love of presents accorded sanction to a pernicious custom of gilded bribery. The offering of *nazars* and presents became common not only at the royal court and camp, but also in the households of imperial nobles and officers and became responsible for a great deal of corruption in administration. His display of pomp and magnificence caused extortion of money from the unwilling masses and classes and his sensual tastes set a bad standard of public and private morality.

* Shah Jahan's farmans (acc. Nos. 278 and 1546) of the years 1627 and 1635—in the U. P. Govt. Archives, Allahabad.

hand, Moreland thinks, "Speaking generally, the masses lived on the same economic plane as now." The truth seems to be that although the income of the common man during the Mughul period was not high, he did not suffer from starvation. Nor did he feel the pinch for want of corn and other necessities of life which were plentiful and cheap. Moreover, the common man had fewer needs and more of contentment than his successors of our time. He was more honest and led a more contented and purer life than his representative of the twentieth century.

Famines

As crops in country depend upon rainfall, the failure of seasonal rains is invariably followed by a famine. The North-western India suffered from a severe famine in 1555-56, *i. e.*, the first year of Akbar's reign. It was accompanied by a pestilence which took a heavy toll of human life. Another famine occurred in Gujarat in 1573-74, and still another in Kashmir in 1595-96. Bengal was visited by famine in 1575. Horrible famines occurred in the Dakhin and Gujarat in 1630-32. The outbreak of a number of famines was recorded during the reign of Aurangzeb, but these did not seem to have been severe. The Mughul emperors from Akbar downwards followed the policy of trying to relieve the distress of the people as much as they could. They sanctioned relief-work, disbursed large sums on it and remitted revenue in the affected areas. But in view of the magnitude of the problem and inefficiency of the administration, the famine problem could not be tackled successfully by the Mughuls.

Education

The Mughul government did not consider it to be its duty to educate the people. It had no department of education and did not allocate a portion of the public revenue for the spread of literacy. Akbar, however, made an attempt to encourage education and opened a number of primary and secondary schools and even colleges. He reformed the curriculum and included certain important subjects in the course of study, such as science of morals, social behaviour, arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, foretelling, household economy, public administration, medicine, logic, history, etc. Except in Sanskrit and Hindi schools, the medium of instruction was made Persian. His policy was continued by his successors. Although there is no evidence to show that all the Mughul emperors took the same degree of interest in

the state schools established by Akbar, yet it seems that until the decline of the empire many of these were subsidized by the state and allowed to function. But the number of state schools was small and they were not meant for the education of the public; nor did it provide any aid to the schools established by private agency. Education was thus in Mughul India a private affair, a hand-maid of religion, and if the Mughuls took interest in it, it was to earn religious merit and not to advance the welfare of the people.

The public made their own arrangements for the education of their children and considering the age and circumstances of the time, the arrangements were fairly satisfactory. "There is no country," writes F. W. Thomas, "where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosopher (Tagore) of the present day, there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars." Private schools existed in almost every village and a school was almost invariably attached to every temple or mosque. The Hindus introduced their children to regular education at the age of about five. The Muslims usually performed the *maktab* ceremony of their children at the age of four years, four months and four days. Barring the poorer people engaged in agriculture or menial service, all Hindu children were sent to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic. Since the days of Akbar, Hindus began reading Persian and many of them attended *maktabs* which were generally meant for Muslims. Unlike the Hindus, the Muslims in general did not display the same enthusiasm for the education of their children. European travellers noted that the average Muslim was indifferent towards the education of his sons. *Maktabs* were primary schools meant for the beginners. They were kept by maulvis. Such schools, says Della Valla, existed in the time of Jahangir in every town and village. There were no printed primers and the children were made to write letters of the alphabet and figures on the wooden boards. In Muslim schools the Quran was invariably taught to every child who had to learn it by heart. In the Hindu schools lessons from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas were compulsory. Much attention was paid to elementary arithmetic and there was in vogue an interesting way of committing to memory the multiples of numerals, called *Paharas* which were practised in a class or by all the pupils of the school who formed one group for this purpose. Good handwriting was emphasized upon and calligraphy was practised. Classes were held twice a

day, in the morning and in the evening with an interval for meals. Students were not required to pay fees, as imparting free education was enjoined by religion. The teacher was supported by the rich. Sometimes he received presents from the parents of his pupils. The teacher was held in great respect by his pupils and by the public alike. Corporal punishment, especially boxing of the ear, was administered to those pupils who were either lazy and did not learn their lessons or to those who committed mischief. Sometimes negligence in doing the day's work, wilful mischief, and ill manners were punished by detention after school hours, or by ordering the delinquent students to write a lesson ten or fifteen times over again.

There were higher seats of learning at many places where religious and secular education of a high order was imparted. Sometimes in a single town many higher schools or colleges existed and together they formed something like a university. Banaras and Nadia were such high seats of Hindu learning during the Mughul period. Bernier writes, "Banaras is a kind of university, but it has no colleges or regular classes as in our universities; but resembles rather the schools of the ancients, the masters being spread over different parts of the town in private houses." (*Bernier's Travels*, 1891, p. 341). Classes were held in these private houses which generally had gardens attached to them for this purpose. At Banaras were taught Sanskrit, grammar, literature, the six systems of Hindu philosophy and Hindu religious scriptures. Nadia in Bengal was another great centre of Hindu learning which, like Banaras, was frequented by scholars from all parts of the country. Other higher seats of Hindu learning were Mithila, Tirhut, Mathura, Prayag, Hardwar, Ujjain, Ayodhya, Sarhind and Multan.

The Muslim seats of learning too were many. The Mughul emperor established schools at Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, and Lahore. Muslim scholars and theologians opened schools in big cities. Thus Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Jaunpur, Sialkot, etc. developed into main centres of Muslim learning. Agra enjoyed a pre-eminent position as a centre of Muslim learning during the Mughul period. It had many colleges most of which were established by the emperors or their nobles. Next in order of importance came Delhi which too had several colleges, the earliest of them having been established by Humayun and Maham Anaga (*Madrassa-i-Begum*). Although Lahore was not so famous a centre of learning as Delhi and Agra in the early years of the Mughul period, its reputation began to

spread abroad since the time of Aurangzeb. Jaunpur earned the name of the 'Shiraz of India' in the 15th century and retained its importance throughout the Mughul period. Lucknow, Allahabad, Gwalior, Sialkot, Ambala, Thanesar and Kashmir had many schools and scholars.

There is evidence to show that some Muslim students attended Hindu schools for instruction in astronomy, astrology, mathematics and medicine. From the time of Akbar onward Hindus attended Muslim institutions to learn Persian. In the primary and secondary schools it was not necessary for a student to study for a fixed number of years. Intelligent and clever boys could attain proficiency within a short period at the end of which they were allowed to leave school. At the higher seats of learning the courses of study usually varied from 10 to 12 years for graduation. But no regular annual examinations were held. The teacher was the sole judge of the proficiency of his pupils in a particular subject. Sometimes, a literary disputation in which the pupils took part marked the termination of their graduation course. No degrees or diplomas were usually awarded, and a student's ability and scholarship were usually judged by the reputation of one's teachers or of the institution where he was educated.

Female education during the Mughul period was confined to princesses and upper class women. There were no schools for girls but well-to-do people employed tutors for the education of their daughters. They were taught literature, elementary arithmetic, and religious scriptures. Educated women were given high position in society and exercised great influence at home. Some educated ladies like Gulbadan Begum, Salima Sultana, Rupmati, Zeb-un-nisa and Zinat-un-nisa distinguished themselves in the literary sphere. Rani Durgawati and Chand Bibi, Nur Jahan, Jahanara and Sahibji played an important part in the politics of their time.

Literature

Persian Literature. The advent of the Mughuls gave an impetus to the Persian literature. The Timuride rulers were themselves scholars and patrons of learning. Babur was a gifted poet of Turki and Persian as well as an accomplished writer in both these languages. Humayun was equally interested in literature. Many scholars flourished at their courts and wrote valuable works under their patronage. The reign of Akbar was a cultural renaissance in medieval Indian history. His tolerant and benevolent policy, his patronage of learning and internal peace and prosperity which he

established, made possible the condition in which letters and arts flourish. It is therefore no surprise that many scholars of outstanding ability produced original literature of a high order during his reign. Persian literature may be classified under two heads, namely, original compositions and translations. Under the first category, letters and poetry occupied a prominent place. It was a fashion in that age to leave behind a collection of one's letters considered to be models of literary style. The letters of Abul Fazl and some other writers have come down to us and are considered models of Persian style of Akbar's age. Poetry was in the medieval age the most popular vehicle of literary expression, and Muslims—both Indian and foreign—were particularly fond of it. There was a large number of poets at Akbar's court. Abul Fazl tells us that many of these had a diwan (collection of miscellaneous poems) to their credit. *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the names of 59 topmost Persian poets at Akbar's court. Besides these, 15 others who were supposed to belong to the first category, had sent their compositions from Persia. Abul Faizi, poet laureate of Akbar, was the greatest poet of Persian since the days of Amir Khusrav. Critics hold divergent views about the value of the Persian poems of Faizi and other poets. The historian V. A. Smith is of the opinion that these poets were no better than mere versifiers. Indian scholars, however, hold high opinion about the literary production of the age. Although one may not entirely agree with Smith, there is no doubt that the poets of the period, writing in Persian, paid more attention to the language than to thought, and their favourite theme in most cases was love.

Many writers wrote commentaries on the Quran. Among the notable works of history were Abul Fazl's *Akbar-nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari*, Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqayat* and Gulbadan Begum's *Humayun-Nama*. Abbas Sarwani produced *Tohfa-i-Akbar Shahi* alias *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*. Akbar ordered the compilation of the history of 1000 years of Islam, and Naqib Khan, Mullah Muhammad of Thatta and Jaffar Beg were commissioned to write on the work. The book, with an introduction by Abul Fazl, was brought out in time and became known as the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*. Some of the other histories written during the period were Abdul Qadir Badauni's *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh*, Ahmad Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-Afaghana*, Bayazid Sultan's *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, Nurul-Haq's *Zubd-ul-Tawarikh*, Asad Beg's *Waqayat* and the *Akbar Nama* of Sheikh Illahdad Faizi Sarhindi, and Arif Qandhari's *Tarikh Akbar Shahi*.

Akbar had many first rate works of Sanskrit, Arabic, Turki and Greek translated into Persian in order to provide a common literature to the intelligentsia of the land. The *Tajak*, a well-known work of astronomy, and *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* or the *Memoirs of Babur*, were translated into Persian. A part of *Zich-i-Jadide-Mirzal* and *Majmul-i-Buldan* were rendered into Persian. Many outstanding works of Sanskrit, such as, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Atharva Veda*, the *Raj Tarangini*, the *Harvansh Puran*, *Panch Tantra* and several others were translated into Persian.

Persian literature continued to flourish under Akbar's successors. Jahangir, himself a scholar and critic, wrote his own autobiography in imitation of his great grandfather Babur and named it *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*. It comes down to the 17th year of his reign. The work was continued under his orders by Mutamid Khan who brought it to the beginning of the 19th year. It reveals the daily life of Jahangir with candour and frankness except for a few incidents, such as, his revolt against his father, the circumstances leading to his marriage with Nur Jahan and those of prince Khusrav's death, which were glossed over. The emperor extended liberal patronage to learned men who produced works of merit. Nasiri of Nishapur was the ablest poet of Persian at his court. Mutamid Khan, a courtier, wrote *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri* which is a primary authority for the history of Jahangir's reign. Some of the other historical works written during Jahangir's reign were *Maasir-i-Jahangiri* and *Zubd-ut-Tawarikh*. Among the learned men who adorned his court, Ghiyas Beg entitled *Itimad-ud-daula*, Naqib Khan, Mutamid Khan, Niyamat Ullah and Abdul Haq Dehlwi were the most prominent. Commentaries on the Quran continued to be written and poetry was produced in profusion. But the department of translation seemed to have gone into disuse. Shah Jahan, like his father and grandfather, continued the policy of patronizing learned men and poets, the prominent among whom were Abul Zalih whose pen name was Kalim, Haji Muhammad Jan and Chandra Bhan Brahman. A good deal of historical literature was produced during his time. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, the court historian, wrote *Padshah Nama*. Another scholar of repute named Aminial Qazwini produced another *Padshah Nama*. Inayat Khan wrote *Shah Jahan-Nama* and Muhammad Shah produced *Alam-i-Salih*. The emperor's eldest son, Dara Shukoh was a scholar of outstanding merit. He was well versed in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit and was the author of several works on Sufi philosophy and biographies

