Advanced History of the Punjab
BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Advanced History of the Panjab Vol. II
Advanced Study in the Constitutional History of India.
Advanced Study in the History of Modern India.
ADVANCED
HISTORY OF THE PUNJAB

VOL. I (1469—1799)
(GURU AND POST-GURU PERIOD UPTO RANJIT SINGH)

52772

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To
The Timeless
and the
Invisible Being
PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

I am glad that the third edition of this volume has been published. I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to those who went in for its copies and expressed their appreciation for the work. My thanks are due also to my publishers for their diligence and constant effort to improve the get-up. Any suggestion from the readers for its further improvement as usual will be sincerely appreciated.

Mohender Nagar
Jammu.

G. S. C.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Second edition of this volume is in the Reader's hands. As it has made its laborious journey through the press, every effort has been made to improve upon its get-up. The matter itself was completely revised before it was given away to the publishers. If the passing years have added anything to the author's wisdom and experience, it has been permitted to have its play as far as possible. The work, however, must still suffer from many defects even with the author's own imperfections and limitations, for which he craves the usual indulgence of the Reader, who, the author trusts, will not hesitate to point out where some improvement could be effected.

Naini Tal

Dated: June 8, 1968.

G. S. C.
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The first volume of the Advanced History of the Punjab is out. Advanced History of the Punjab dealing with Ranjit Singh and post-Ranjit Singh period was printed a few months back, when I hoped that this volume would be out in about five-month time. That hope has now been fulfilled. The present work deals with Guru and post-Guru period upto Ranjit Singh, and is full of those thrills of daring deeds and a record of self-sacrifices, the memories of which any nation would be proud to own. It shows how nations are born and develop from infancy to maturity. If the blood of heroes is the seed of a nation, during this period enough of blood was given, which turned the whole land of the five rivers red. Drums beat, bugles blew, heroes thundered and the guns roared. The lovers of human independence, self-respect and honour gave away their blood. A seed was sown. And lo! The seed actually sprouted. It soon grew and fructified. The growth of this plant, a nation of warriors, has been dealt with in this volume, while for its fructification and maturity the study of the second volume, above referred to, is recommended.

Much of the study of this period of the Punjab History involves the study of a literature based upon religious inspiration and false pride of race and belief. Not unnaturally, therefore, very often it is coloured with bias and prejudice. Facts have been mixed up with fables and a simple history has been converted into a complicated mystery. An effort has here been made to apply a discerning eye and an impartial mind. The success or failure is before the readers to judge. Only this much claim can be forwarded that no effort has been left unmade to make the account as exhaustive as possible.

My sincere thanks are due once again to the atmosphere of a serious study in the Punjab History that exists in the Ramgarhia Institutions under the able administration of Sardar Mohan Singh Hadabadi (who has since left for his heavenly abode and for whose soul I pray so that it may rest in peace) which inspired me to complete this work. I am thankful again to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta who initiated in
me the idea of writing out this work. I am thankful to Prof. J. L. Mehta, who revised the manuscript and gave me many valuable suggestions, to Mr. Yoginder Pal Singh, B.A., LL.B. (now P.C.S.) who devoted enough of his precious time and energy to make this work as presentable as possible, and to my wife Mrs. Sharanjit Kaur without whose help and willing co-operation this work may not have been possible at all. And above all, I am thankful to my respected father, and to the Almighty Lord who made me capable of writing out this work.

G. S. CHHABRA


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CHAPTER I

POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION IN THE FIFTEENTH AND THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

A—The Political Conditions

During the period of the Delhi Sultans, India saw the establishment of the worst type of theocracy in the country. All the political institutions were in theory derived from the Islamic Law and sanctioned by it. Politics seems to have been completely subordinated to religion, and the administrative fanaticism which ensued converted India into a veritable hell of persecutions and harassment.

When the Muslims conquered a non-Muslim country, they offered three alternatives to the vanquished people: conversion to Islam, the payment of jazia and death. A great many of the Hindus under the Islamic rule were converted to Islam, thousands of those who resisted were butchered and those who remained paid jazia and were known as zimmis, or the persons who lived under guarantees.

A few instances may here be quoted to show the manner in which these Sultans administered their Hindu subjects. The story of the Hindu butchery starts with the invasion of Sind by Mohamad-bin-Qasim who demolished the Hindu temples and put 6,000 Hindus to sword at Rewar alone. According to Taj-ul-Maasir, Qutbuddin Aibak demolished 700 temples and replaced them by mosques at Meerut when he conquered that territory. At Benaras he "destroyed nearly one thousand temples, and raised mosques on their foundations". At Kalinjar he put 1,52,000 Hindus to sword

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4. Ibid. p. 223.
and sent 50,000 as captives to Ghazni.

According to *Twarikh-i-Iلahi* of Amir Khusto, when Alauddin Khilji conquered Chitor, he ordered a massacre of thirty thousand Hindus. He destroyed all the idols and temples of Somnath, and there "the summons to prayers was pronounced so loud, that they heard it in Misr and Madain." At Brahmapur there was a beautiful temple, like "the paradise of Shaddad...and that it was the golden Lanka of Ram." It was "dug up from its foundations" and "the heads of the Brahmins and idolators danced from their necks and fell to the ground."

Mohamad Tughlak "took pleasure in the heads of the Hindus being brought in and hung upon the ramparts of the fort." Firoz Tuglaq proved worse yet. He was a bigot and delighted in persecuting infidels. He himself wrote in his autobiography, *Fatuhat-i-Firoz Shahi*, that he "killed the leaders of infidelity who seduced others into terror." Further he writes: "I encouraged my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that everyone who repeated the creed and became a Muselman should be exempt from the jazia, a poll-tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves and were admitted to the honour of Islam."

Amir Timur put 7,52,000 Hindus to sword and burnt 29,000 of them alive. In his autobiography Timur writes that on the eve of his occupation of Delhi, he ordered a general massacre of all the Hindu prisoners in his camp. About 1,00,000, thus, were killed in a day. The orders were carried rigorously and Timur writes: "Maulana

1. Ibid. p. 231.
3. Ibid. p. 74. Misr—Egypt; Madain—the two cities, Mecca and Medina.
7. Ibid. p. 286.
Nasiruddin 'Umar, a counsellor and a man of learning, who, in all his life, had never killed a sparrow, now in execution of my order, slew with his sword fifteen idolatrous Hindus, who were his captives."

The learned Muslim divines during this period were determined to reduce the Hindus to the position of "drawers of water and hewers of wood." Allaudin Khilji once consulted Qazi Mughis-ud-din of Bayana as to the legality of his measures against the Hindus. The latter replied: "If the officer throws dirt into their mouths, they must without reluctance open their mouths wide to receive it...... To keep the Hindus in abase ment is especially a religious duty, because they are the most inveterate enemies of the Prophet, and because the Prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them, and make them captive......"

It should, however, be wrong to say that Hindus alone were subjected to religious persecution in the times of the Delhi Sultans. For there are instances such as that of Firoz Tughluq who took pleasure in persecuting the Shias and his so-called Muslim heretics who did not strictly belong to his own beliefs. Those who swore in the name of Islam, were in fact as ignorant of the true Islamic precepts as a street urchin was. Religion was a tool in their hands which they used only to realize their political ambitions. Mutual warfare and factions were common among the Muslims. Wars of succession were fought, nobles and provincial governors

2. See Zia-ud-Din Barani, Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi, E. & D., op. cit., Vol. I II, pp. 184–86. Barani is, however, supposed to be deeply prejudiced against Hindus. "Probably his personal interests had suffered at the hands of some Hindu landlords...... Barani has so blurred our historical perspective that it has become impossible for us to separate his own fads and fancies from historical facts and realities", thus writes K.H. Nizami, Some Aspect of., p. 317.
revolted, setting up independent principalities. India had to be united and re-united and the ambitious kings had to take up the cudgels again and again to defend the law and order and to preserve the unity of the country.

**Under the Lodhis**

Such confused state of affairs in the political set-up of the country continued under the Lodhi monarchs. At the time of Guru Nanak’s birth in 1469, Behlol Lodhi was reigning in Delhi. Behlol succeeded to the throne in 1451 and at the time of his succession there was disintegration all around. According to Erskine, the Afghan nobles regarded the Sultan as only their chief and master. The Lodhi possessions at the time were extensive, but they were not cohesive. Provinces and jagirs were held by hereditary chiefs and jagirdars respectively, and as a result of the weakness of the Central Government the fissiparous tendencies developed among them. The state thus became a congeries of independent or nearly independent principalities.

Behlol used every tact to keep his nominal suzerainty over the nobles. “In his social meetings he never sat on a throne and would not allow his nobles to stand; and even during public audiences he did not occupy the throne, but seated himself upon carpet.” Still, however, the Central hold on the outlying provinces continued to weaken.

Bholod Lodhi was succeeded by Sikandar Lodhi in 1483. The latter was a strong man, but he could not control his nobles several of whom revolted. They wanted to replace him by his brother Fateh Khan.

*Tarikh-i-Daud* says Sikandar Lodhi “was famous for his liberty, honour and politeness.” He was a lover of justice and he never omitted to devote a certain time to hear complaints in public. But his justice had its limitations in a theocratic state. For Hindus he was only a narrow-minded bigot and they could get no justice at his hands. Guru Nanak wrote about it thus:

3. Ibid., p. 445.
Kings are butchers, cruelty their knife,
Justice has taken wings and fled.
Falsity prevails and the moon of truth,
Is visible nowhere.
I have tired myself in searching about,
But in the darkness no path is visible,
The world is suffering an endless pain in ego.
How shall it be saved? said Nanak.

Even before his succession, the temperament of Sikandar was known. *Tarikh-i-Daudi* relates a story: Once when a crowd of Hindus assembled at Kurkhetar he wanted to go there and put them all to death. He was dissuaded with difficulty by Mian Abdul, the Malik-i-Ulma, who told him that it was against the Prophet’s precept. But the Prince declared in wrath: “You side with the infidels. I will first put an end to you and then massacre the Hindus at Kurkhet.” He was appealed later on only with difficulty. Naturally thus if such a prince ascended the throne the Hindus could expect no relief.

Farishta relates heart-rending stories of his destruction of temples in Mandir in 1504 and in Hanumangarh in 1506. In Mathura he destroyed all the temples and replaced them by caravanserais and mosques. He even deprived the Hindus of the elementary rights of citizenship by forbidding them to take bath at the sacred river of the Jumna. Their stone images were given over to butchers for meat-weights and they were prohibited from shaving their heads and beards and barbers were ordered not to help them. The story of a Brahman named Laudhan is well-known. This unfortunate man had said that Hinduism was as good as Islam. Out of spite the Sultan ordered him either to embrace Islam or face death. The Brahman chose the latter.

Ibrahim Lodhi who succeeded in 1517 was worse yet. The Hindus remained dissatisfied and the Muslim nobles grew turbulent. Ibrahim wanted them to stand in front of his  

throne and bow before him. The nobles began to conspire to replace him by his brother Jalal Khan, but the conspiracy was crushed. It was out of distrust that Daulat Khan Lodhi, the Governor of Lahore, invited Babur to invade India. A triangular contest between the Mughals, the Sultan and the Pathans of Delhi thus ensued which made confusion worse confounded.

**The Punjab**

The Punjab being a frontier province and key to the Indian Empire, the religious bigotry of the Sultans was made to have its full play in this province. Now the Provincial Governors themselves were less enthusiastic where the religious persecution of the Hindus was concerned.

Besides religious persecutions, the administration in the province was of the loosest type. The rulers were buried in romance and pleasures and had lost all sense of duty towards the people.

Corruption was rife. Degradation and treachery freely stalked through the market. The practice of bribery obtained and there was none, as Guru Nanak says, who received not or who gave not the bribes. Even the king would dispense justice only when his palm was greased. Horrible type of murders and robberies were committed, and the rulers themselves instead of protecting the people only butchered them.

Guru Nanak wrote in the War Malar ki, Mahala I: "The kings have become man-eaters, their officials behave like dogs—they lick blood and eat flesh of the people." And Bhai Gurdas said:

1. See Bhai Gurdas, War. I.
3. Adi Granth, War, Malar kI, Mahala I.
4. Bhai Gurdas, War I.
was based on dollar and they met at pleasure and departed at will. The Qazis who occupied the seat of justice committed all types of crime and administered ‘justice’ only when bribed, as Guru Nanak writes in his War Ram Kali:

\[\text{Divided Punjab}\]

Punjab, at this time, was divided into several petty provinces or parts. Lahore and Multan were its two important provinces, the others being Sarhind, Depalpur, Sultanpur etc, which were sometimes placed under one authority and sometimes held separately. Besides them were the territories of the Gujjars and the Gakhars of the Chaj Doab between the rivers Chenab and Jhelum, over which the governors of the Punjab had no hold.

Considering the political importance of the Punjab as a bulwark of defence for India, Sikandar Lodhi had appointed Tartar Khan, a near relative of his, as a supervisor over all the Punjab Provinces and the parganas. After the death of Tartar Khan, his son Daulat Khan Lodhi succeeded to the office and remained loyal to Sikandar Lodhi so long as the latter lived. After the death of the Sultan, however, Daulat Khan developed personal ambitions and decided to establish in the Punjab a separate kingdom of his own. In the Centre, Alam Khan Lodhi, the uncle of Ibrahim Lodhi, was maturi

\[\text{Supervisor of Tartar Khan}\]

The intelligence of these intrigues reached Ibrahim and he wrote to Daulat Khan to come and see him in Delhi. Daulat Khan sensed the risk and instead of going himself sent his son Dilawar Khan to that place, Dilawar Khan was badly received, but he escaped imprisonment and related to

\[1. \text{Adi Granth, Ramkali War, I, p. 961.}\]
his father the story of what had happened to him. This precipitated the matter and to retaliate Daulat Khan invited Babur to invade India promising to give him every aid against the Delhi Sultan. Babur did accept the invitation and invaded India bringing in his train havoc and destruction. Peaceful citizens were butchered by the invading forces. Thousands of the Punjab women were captured and put to all sorts of ignominy. Those who enjoyed the richest of luxuries and lived the most comfortable life, were subjected to most heinous treatment and dust was thrown on their heads. Guru Nanak relates the painful story in his words as under:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{तिन तिन सिंहु दुर्गीने,} \\
\text{माजी फिल्म फिरिए।} \\
\text{मैं तिन भाजी भलीहट,} \\
\text{जान बिह भाजी पति।}
\end{align*}
\]

As a result of Babur's invasion the politics of the Punjab became yet more complicated and thus peace of the country was destroyed. A separate account may be given of Babur's invasions and the triangular contest which resulted therefrom.

**Babur's Invasions**

Before finally occupying the country, Babur had invaded the Punjab several times. He invaded the country for the first time in 1519. He writes in his memoirs, he found his hands free once again and invaded Bhera, the border land of India held by Ali Khan, the son of Daulat Khan. His intention at this time was to shed as little blood as possible, as he says in his memoirs: "I accordingly issued order that no one should molest or trouble their flocks and herds, or take from them to the value of a bit of thread or a broken needle". He even punished some who contravened his orders.

After conquering Bhera, Babur sent an envoy to Ibrahim Lodhi "intimating that the dominions of the Punjab had so
frequently been in the possession of his ancestors that it behoved the king of Delhi to give up his pretensions to that province, and thus avert the calamities of a war." The envoy, however, returned unsuccessful.

Having subdued the country as far as the Chenab and having chastised Gakhars, Babur withdrew to Kabul, appointing Hassan Beg Atka as governor of the conquered territories.

Towards the close of the same year he led another expedition towards India. Uzufzais, trying to check his advance, were beaten away. After settling the border affairs, Babur was about to march towards the Indus when he got the news that Sultan Sayyid, the king of Kashgar, had invaded Badakshan. He was, therefore, compelled to withdraw once again.

In 1520, Babur again marched into India. Sialkot capitulated and was saved from destruction and plunder. At Sayadpur, however, Babur faced some resistance with the result that his old intentions to shed as little blood as possible seem to have changed, and he entered into a barbarous retribution. Entire garrison at Sayadpur was massacred in cold blood and the inhabitants of the place were butchered and carried away into slavery. Wealth and beauty of the women proved to be their bane and they were forcibly taken away and dishonoured, as Guru Nanak wrote at the painful sight:

\[ \begin{align*}
| \text{Unsuccessful} | \text{Gakhars chastised} | \text{2nd 1519} | \text{Massacre} | \text{3rd 1520} | \text{Terrible scene} | \text{Behaviour of Priests} |
\end{align*} \]

At another place again, Guru Nanak tries to depict the terrible scene of the destruction brought about by Babur's forces. The sports, stables, horses, bugies and clarions, says he, all vanished in a moment's time. Horses, mansions, palaces and beautiful seraglios were destroyed. Beautiful women whose sight banished sleep met the most
horrible fate. Foolish indeed it was that thousands of priests, instead of going to the battlefield and fighting the invaders, cried before their idols and tried to restrain the enemy by their miraculous power, but their stone gods failed to protect them. If a tyrant slew a tyrant, there was nothing to be objected to. But here a ravening lion fell on a herd, and its masters, the Lodhi dogs, showed no manliness.¹

Babur had entered this time in the Punjab in all his fury and his object was to take Lahore. But in the midst of his activities he received the intelligence that Kabul had been invaded by an army from Kandhar and he, therefore, was compelled once again to retreat to his own country.

**Fourth Campaign**

The fourth campaign was led by Babur in 1524 at the joint invitation of Daulat Khan Lodhi and Alam Khan Lodhi. When Ibrahim learnt of it he sent his general Behar Khan Lodhi who defeated Daulat Khan in a battle and the latter, after this, took refuge among the Biluchis. Behar Khan, along with Mobarak Khan Lodhi and Bhikan Khan Lohani, marched then at the head of his army and tried to oppose in the country of Gakhars, the march of Babur towards Lahore, but failed. In a sanguinary battle in the plains of Lahore Babur defeated his enemy after a great slaughter and made his triumphant entry into the city where the houses were set on fire and whence a great plunder was carried away by his soldiers after the fashion common to Babur’s tribe. And all the high and low, the criminal and innocent suffered alike.

After his four day stay in Lahore, Babur marched against Depalpur where he put the entire garrison to the sword. Here he was joined by Daulat Khan along with his


Babar considered himself civilized as compared to the people of India. But the solemnity with which horrible execution of the innocent people was performed at this time, speaks very low of his fine tastes. On one occasion, it is thus incidentally recorded in his memoirs, such was the number of the prisoners butchered before the royal pavilion, that the sovereign’s tent “had three times to be removed to a different station; the ground before it being so drenched with blood, and encumbered with quivering carcasses.” See E. & D., *op cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 227.
three sons. After this Babur distributed the conquered territories among some of the chiefs like Daulat Khan and Alaunin Alam Khan. But against Daulat Khan's wishes, he was given only the Doaba of Jullundur and Sultanpur with the result that he revolted, but being defeated he fled to the hills. Babur handed over his territory to his son Dilawar Khan and asked him to pursue his father in the hills and arrest him. But after Babur's retreat Daulat Khan came down from the hills and defeated both Dilawar Khan and Alam Khan in a battle.

Alam Khan thus being defeated fled straight to Kabul and invited Babur to march on India once again. But the scene soon changed. By an agreement between Babur and Alam Khan, the latter got letters addressed to the Mughal Sardars in the Punjab to help him secure the crown of Delhi for himself. A compromise was also reached between Alam Khan and Daulat Khan, the latter agreeing to help the former in the venture in the secret hope that as a result of this war he would see both Ibrahim and Alam Khan weakened and would thus draw an advantage from the situation. In the clash that followed between Alaunin Alam Khan and Ibrahim Lodhi, the former was defeated and encouraged with this Daulat Khan beat the Mughal Sardars out of the Punjab.

The Fifth Expedition

This precipitated the 5th invasion of Babur who crossed the Indus once again on December 16, 1525. Daulat Khan fled to Malot in the Hoshiarpur District where Babur pursued him. Daulat Khan, according to Babur's memoirs, submitted and was pardoned. He was sent to Bhera where he died shortly after this.

Babur marched with his forces towards Delhi. The Imperial army met him at Panipat, but about sixteen thousands of the Afghan army which consisted of 1,00,000 horses and 100 elephants, were slain in the battlefield and the rest fled. Babur was able to perform this wonder with his only 13,000 horses.1 Babur "made his triumphant entry into Delhi on 22nd April, 1526 when the Khutba was read in his

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name by Sheikh Zia-ud-din of Delhi”.

This period of the Punjab history was terrible for destruction and bloodshed. Tears of blood ran down the eyes of Guru Nanak who saw the havoc brought about by Babur. Referring to Babur as bridegroom who had come from Kabul with a party of sins and demanded forcibly the gift of the bride—the Indian Empire, the Guru said: “Modesty and righteousness all vanished and falsehood held the chief authority. In the plunder both the Hindus and the Muslims were treated alike. The Muslim women read the Quran and in agony called upon God for help. And so did the Hindu women. There was a bloodshed all around.”

B.—Social Conditions

The society at this time was divided into two major sections, the Hindu and the Muslim. The Muslims were the favoured children of the State, while the Hindus, under the Muslim theocratic State, were treated as no better than pariahs.

The Hindus paid various taxes because of the faith they possessed. They had to pay jazia and pilgrimage tax for visiting their own religious places. The story of their persecution has already been told. But the worst thing was that among the Hindus themselves there were divisions of the most deplorable kind.

They were not only divided into four main castes of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Shudras, but these four castes were further divided into sections and sub-sections each of which was placed in a water-tight compartment. Daulat Rai explains the differences among these people in a very beautiful manner. He says that these people, the members of the different castes and sections, had neither one religion, nor one desire. Their standard of morality were not the same, their worlds were different, their languages were different. They differed in behaviour, they

2. Adi Granth, Rag Tilang, M. I. (I)
differed in their dresses, they differed in modes of living, they differed in their pleasures, differed in sorrows, differed in hopes, differed in temperaments, differed in customs, in habits, in their food and in their sympathies. Their heavens were different and their hells were different. They differed in everything and were one in none. 

The Brahmin quite submissive to his Muslim neighbour was tyrannical to his own Shudra brothers. The discriminatory treatment meted out by the higher castes to the so-called lower castes is best depicted by Nam Dev who being pushed out from a temple where only high castes could worship, cried out 'This Brahmin calls me a low-caste and calling me Shudra, he beat me out.'

कबीर भी उकसे उसे उसे वारित है,
बुरे बुरे वह अपने मासिदी

Kabir also mentioned it: 'How art thou a Brahman? How am I Shudra? How am I of blood and thou of milk?'

The people had their worthless beliefs and prejudices. From birth to death they were burdened with expensive ceremonies which must be performed whether one could make one's both ends meet or not. Alchemy, incantation and spells were believed in and practised.

There was corruption and degradation in their habits. The evils of gambling and the use of intoxicants were common. The life was deceitful and full of dishonesty. Jealousy, gossip and tittle-tattle were freely indulged into, as Bhai Gurdas writes:

परदा कपड़े उरवली, धिन्ते बजेले कबीर विखाने।
बस चंदव गुलामजी, मेरे साथ रहे गौड़ वे समझे।

बा दिल मे तरफ दिल, धीरे दहले रामन भेज करे।

Babur himself wrote who in his Tuzak-i-Babri: The people are not handsome, They have no idea of charms of...

1. Rai, Devnar, Castor Ceunam (1321); see also Adi Granth, Gauri Gauri, M. 4, Champa, pp. 163–64; G. S., i, p. 372.
3. See Bhai Gurdas, War, i.
4. Ibid.
friendly society, of frankly mixing together, or of familiar intercourse; they have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow feeling.\textsuperscript{1} The position occupied in the society by the women was degrading. If the standard of a society is determined by the position a woman occupies in it, the less said regarding this period of our History, the better.\textsuperscript{2} Some proverbs of the time are known:

\begin{verbatim}
श्रेष्ठ बैठी हव सी
धावत बैठी बख सी
\end{verbatim}

That is, a woman must be confined to her home and hearth and the less she moves out, the better.

Again:

\begin{verbatim}
उठे बेह मचछ,
भादु हु घनो,
मनो हु गापा
उ बख हु घन
\end{verbatim}

That is, three things are bad: grinding for a man, threshing for a he-buffalo and journey for a woman.\textsuperscript{3}

The woman was considered to be equal in status to a man's shoe. She was a domestic slave and simply an agreeable blunder of nature. Even the great poets of the time such as Pihu, would say: इन्द्र वैस खी जनवी कुंजी दरते ची भि (cursed be the friendship of the women whose senses lie in their heels.)\textsuperscript{4}

The birth of a girl was never looked upon with favour, and several high-castes, such as the Rajputs, committed

\begin{enumerate}
\item[Tutak-t-Babari, E. & D., op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 222.]
\item[2. See Distt. Gazetteer of Multan, 1901–02, p. 98.]
\item[3. See Ibid. also the Author's Social & Economic History of the Punjab, pp. 381–83.]
\item[4. The greatest merit of a woman lay only in her capability to please her husband and if she failed in this she was of no consequence whatever. In this connection we have several references from the Adi Granth. Thus:

(i) "The self-willed do works as a deserted woman decks herself, But she enjoyeth not the bed with her lord and is thus wasted away (in fruitless wait)". - G.S., op. cit., Vol. I, p. 33.

(ii) "The Spouse enjoyeth the bride, whom He likes, And she alone is His Bride, whom He honoureth by His Grace".

Ibid. p. 51.
\end{enumerate}

(Cont. on next page)
female infanticide.\(^1\) And for procuring a son, a woman would go even to the extent of killing another woman's son with a discreditable belief that if a woman needing a son killed another woman's son with a bronze knife in a particular manner causing as much pain as possible and bathed on the dead body, the spirit of the boy would pass on to the woman's womb and thereby fulfill her purpose. The belief seems to have prevailed from early times and an interesting story is told in this connection.

It is said that sometime in our history, a king ruled here, who had no son. Believing in this method of procuring a son he caused it to be announced that anybody who gave his son to be killed by the queen for the purpose, would be granted a rich reward. The parents of a dumb and lame boy were found ready for the transaction. But when their son was going to be killed by the queen, the boy suddenly got his voice and uttered the following words:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{धर्म धर्म पर्याय में हो, क्रम क्रम वस्तु हैं,} \\
\text{देह देह चल दे इन्हों, अति विस्म धम पूजन करी।}
\end{align*}
\]

\text{Father and mother are greedy of wealth,} \\
\text{King considers himself alone!} \\
\text{Gods and goddesses are greedy of offerings,} \\
\text{To whom shall I make my plaint?}\(^2\)

\((iii)\) ".....and decked she surrenders herself to the Lord, \\
.....And with joined palms she standeth in wait for Him and prays in all sincerity. \\
Bounteous is the woman who decks her forehead with the jewel of love. \\
And this is her glory that she cherishes in her mind the love of the True Lord. \\
.....Thou who slept the dark night through, O how didst thou pass thy night (without the Lord?) \\
Burn thou, O woman, thy body, each bit of it, and thy mind too. \\
Vain is thy beauty that wastes itself away without thy Master enjoying thee. \\
The bride is she who sleeps care-free, in her Lord's embrace."

\text{Ibid. p. 52.}

\((iv)\) "Without the spouse, why deck thyself, O woman, for all thy beauty is vain. \text{Ibid. p. 55.}\)

1. \text{Adi Granth, Shalok M. 3, p. 1413.} \\
2. \text{See Census Report of Punjab, 1901, pp. 213-14.}
The girls were generally married at a young age and polygamy was in vogue among the rich people. On the frontiers of the Punjab there was an open trade in women where they were measured and sold under different standards. Several terms were in vogue regarding the qualities of the women which fetched the sale-money, e.g. the kati aurat, the bhuri aurat etc. Prostitution was rampant and the profession of dancing girls who quenched the thirst of the greedy and lustful eyes was profitable and was patronised by those who should be the censors of the public morals.

Widow-marriage was tabooed and the Sati system under which the women committed themselves to fire along with the body of their dead husbands, was an essential part of the life of many. Purdah system which had been brought into India by the Mohammadans, was prevalent.

The real values of life had been forgotten. There was artificiality everywhere. Fanaticism, aberration and hooliganism were the order of the day.

Nor were the Muslims better in any way, in their social beliefs and practices. They might have brought into India a better society in certain respects when they came, but as they intermixed with the Hindus the evils of each other were copied while the merits were forgotten.

They were divided into three classes: the Upper, the Lower and the Slaves. The Upper class such as the Amirs and the Maulvis were organisers in times of war, while in times of peace they were pleasure-hunters. They kept many wives and led a life of luxury and depravity.

The Lower class consisted of the peasantry and the minor officials. Though not equal in status to the Upper

1. The rich people, besides, kept many mistresses and enjoyed themselves. See Singh, Dr. Gopal Srir Guru Granth Sahib (English Version), Vol. 1, p. 46; Sri Rag M. 5; Ibid III, p. 400.
2. See Adi Granth, Rag Gauri Gujari, M. 5, p. 239, Rag Sahib, M. 1, p. 790.
3. Adi Granth, Gauri Kabirji, p. 328. Kabirji says: How can a woman become a true bride by burning herself on the pyre of her spouse without Truth in her. G. S., 1, 318. See also ibid, III, pp. 687, 747.
5. See Adi Granth, Rag Gauri, Ashtapada, Gauri M. 1, p. 255.
class, they were the favoured sons of their God as compared to the Hindus. At the lowest rung of the Muslim society were the Slaves. But even to them, sometimes, a better treatment was given than to the Hindus.

Religious fanaticism prevailed amongst all the three, while character and discipline were of the loosest among the upper class.

The food of the people varied according to the status and position of a man in the society. The Hindus were generally vaishnavas or vegetarians, while the Muslims were meat-eaters. In the upper strata of the society as many as thirty six different kinds of dish could be prepared and taken, but the lowest section of the society were content with simple bread and some salt on it. Bread was an essential thing.

\[ \text{Bread is an essential thing.} \]

But the special dishes, sweet as well as the saltish, were the privilege of the few.

The staple food consisted of the grain grown in the locality. Well to do people ate wheat and rice, while ordinary peasant’s food consisted of wheat, barley and gram in summer and maize in winter. The poorer classes used inferior grains such as china (\textit{Panum: miliaceum}), mandua (\textit{Elecuisine coracana}), jowar (\textit{great miller}) etc.

There were great many evil beliefs attached to the food amongst the ignorant masses of the Hindus, the worst being that of pollution. If a person carrying food happened to touch an end of a log of wood the other end of which was held by a low-caste or a Muslim, the food got polluted and be-

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1. See ibid.
2. Guru Arjan refers to thirty-six kinds of delicacies which is of maximum one could want. See Majh. \textit{Adi Granth}, P. 100, also See ibid. p. 485.
4. See D. G. Kangra, pp 97, 32; D. G. Jhang, 1833—4, P. 49.
5. See G. S., ii, p. 474; G. S., iv, p. 1311; \textit{Adi Granth}, pp, 100 & 483.
came unfit for use.

Intoxicants, such as wine, were used. They were more common among the Muslims among whom the women also partook of them. Opium was freely used by Rajputs, while Sanyasis, yogis and religious mendicants, both Hindu and Mohammedan, used hemp (Bhang)². The common beverages were lassi (butter-milk), kachi lassi (water mixed with milk and sugar), country sherbets and sardai (a cooling drink made by bruising certain moistened ingredients in a mortar); but the use of the last two was almost entirely confined to the townsfolk².

C—The Economic Conditions

The fundamental influence of physical factors on the social and economic life of a country need not be laboured. It is obvious that they are the prime determinants of the produce of a country, the occupations of the people and the density and distribution of the population. The Punjab in a very special sense was the frontier province of India and guarded the gateway of that Empire. Stretching northwards up to and beyond the great peaks of the central Himalayas and embracing the Tibetan valleys of Lahul and Spiti, it included in its eastern districts a portion of the Hindustan, on its southern border it encroached upon the great prairies of Rajputana, while its trans-Indus territory belonged to Afghanistan and Baluchistan rather than to India in every respect other than political. The diversity which marked its physical and geographical aspects was no less characteristic of the races which inhabited it and of their economic life.

1. The devout Hindus suffered from this belief the most, so much so that they would draw a line to mark off their kitchen which no body but the one in a proper condition could enter. Guru Nanak had a dig on such people and said “Ignorance is the Drummer-woman, heartlessness the Butcheress; slander is the Sweepess in the heart; anger is the chundel. What use is it (O Pundit) to mark off (the kitchen) when all the four outcasts are within three” Singh Dr. Gopal op. cit. Vol. i. p. 82, and ibid. p. 243. Ibid vol. iii. p. 496

2. G. S. ii. po. 370, 545.

3. Adi Granth, Gauri Kabirji, p. 329 Kabirji here refers to five life-giving nectar which according to Dr. Gopal Singh, are: milk, curds, butter, sugar and honey. G. S. i. p. 319.
In its geographical position the Punjab was hardly lucky enough. It was in fact a very densely-populated tract thrust north-west-ward into a very sparsely-populated area. On the north lay Kashmir, Ladakh and Tibet and beyond these again the deserts of Turkistan. On the west were Afghanistan and Baluchistan and beyond these Persia. On the south lay Bikaner and Rajputana, comparatively sparsely-populated and undeveloped. None of these countries, therefore, provided a valuable market for the Punjab produce. On the eastern side lay the districts of the modern Uttar Pradesh. But they were so similar in soil, climate and people that they rather competed with the Punjab for customers.

Second only in importance to the geographical factors in their effect upon the economic potentialities of the Punjab was the fact that the major portion of the province contained a deep alluvial soil which possessed great fertility and required very little artificial drainage. And in this respect the province was lucky.

The Punjab enjoyed two well-marked seasons of rainfall. The monsoon season which brought it by far the greater portion of its annual supply, lasted from the middle of June to the middle or end of September, and upon it depended the autumn crops and spring sowings. The winter rains which fell early in January, though sometimes insignificant in amount, affected very materially the prospects of the spring harvest.

Besides, there were the five great rivers, the Sutlej the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab, and the Jhelum. These rivers had often changed their course, rising and receding and leaving wide expanses of fertile loam or less fertile sand moist for the hand of the cultivator. In addition to this, almost every dynasty which ruled this country had done something towards the construction of canals, but irrigation by wells was not very much common at this time.

1. See Adi Granth, Rag. Asa., M. 5, war. XVI, XIX; Rag Gauri, M. 5. Sakhoka 1, Asitapadi.
2. Ibid.
3. There are several references to canals and wells etc. in the Adi Granth from which one may draw inferences with regard to their use. See for instance Gauri Kabirji, p. 325; G. S., ii, p. 364; G. S., iv, p. 1344. M. i, pp. 21-22.
The principal crops in spring were wheat, gram and barley. Wheat was a staple crop and many samples of red and white wheat seemed to be known. Next to wheat was gram which was sown as a rule in poorer and unirrigated lands. Many samples of generally good quality of barley were sown. The staple cereals in autumn were maize, great-millet (*jowar*), spiked millet (*bajra*) and rice.

Of the fibres, cotton was by far the most important, but uncertainty of seasons which prevailed in the Punjab was a check to its becoming a cotton-growing country. Of other important fibres were hemp and flax. Saccharum munja, Dab or panj (*Eragrostis cyanocephalus*), Kaskas (*Andropogon muricatum*), Bagar (*Andropogon*), Parali (*Dryza sativa*), Mut (*Caren indica*), Dib, rivi (*Typha angustifolia*), some liliaceous plants and palams were also said to make ropes, snow-shoes and such other articles.

Sugar-cane was sown and was the source of sugar in the country. Of the spices, chillies were important. Ginger was grown in the hills. Several oil-seeds were also grown.

Fauna of the Punjab was richer and more varied than its flora. Mahomedans ate the flesh of sheep, goat, cow and fowls, and a low-caste Hindu did not scruple to eat flesh, except that of the cow, although he could not always afford a meat diet. High-caste Hindu ate no flesh, not even fish or eggs. Most of the hill tribes ate whatever game they could catch and food of the vagrant and criminal tribes was usually fox, jackal, lizard, tortoise and such other unclean animals. Milk, curds and ghee were commonly

1. See *Adi Granth*, Rag Asa, Kabir, Panchpade, I & XV.
2. Ibid; *Adi Granth*, Shaloka of Farid, Nos. 29 & 65; Shaloka of Kabir M.V. No. 32; Rag Asa M. I, Shabd, XXX—XXXIII.
4. Different sweets were also prepared. *Adi Granth*, Gauri Kabirji, p. 327; Gauri Bairagan, Kabirji, Tipadasa, p. 333.
5. See *Adi Granth* Gauri Kabirji, pp. 325, 226. There is a reference to oil, man’s press, see Asa M. I, war, with shlokas of M. I, p. 465; G. S. ii, p. 688.
consumed. Birds of the country were also numerous and of a great variety. But a good economic use was not made of all these resources. In the products of the animal kingdom, the profession of working in leather was considered to be unclean and the workers in it were of low caste. Religious prejudice, combined with lack of scientific imagination, was responsible for an enormous wastage of animal products. Animal bone and horn, hoofs of cattle and guts of bullocks etc. were generally thrown away. Cow-dung was used as fuel, and its use as manure was very little made.

The Punjab was not rich in minerals, and almost all its mineral wealth was found in the hills, the only products of the alluvium being kankar or nodular limestone, saltpetre, carbonate of soda and sal-ammoniac.

The ethnical type in the Punjab was distinctly Aryan, there being few traces of aboriginal or foreign blood if the Tibetan element in the extreme north-west be excluded. Flower of the population was Jat and he was generally an agriculturist. This was one of the causes of the agricultural richness of the country. He was not easily controllable and assumed a major role whenever there was disorder and disaffection in the country.

The Punjab was mainly an agricultural country, over half of its total population being employed in it. But the agricultural methods were primitive. The advantages of frequent ploughing were thoroughly recognized, as the proverb runs:

4. G.S.I, p.243; G.S.II, p.466,
Alli Grahth, pp. 472-473.
5. See another's Social & Economic History of Punjab, pp. 17-20.
7. Cunningham, J.D., op. cit, pp.4-8; See for details Quungo, K.R., History of the Jats, pp.1-21.
The more the ploughing, 
Or The better the crop.¹

Yet the plough used remained an implement of simple construction, made of wood with an iron share and drawn by a single yoke of oxen.² Importance of the selection of better seeds was also realised as:

Select your seed and you 
Or Will get a golden crop.³

And:

(Sowing) broadcast produces one pai 
(measure) (Sowing) by nali gives four.⁴

Principles of the rotation of crops were also understood. And the Punjab peasant would often say:

The manure is to the field, 
Or What the army is to a king.⁵

Manure does the work.
Or the God does.⁶

Yet the cultivators’ knowledge of the sources of manures was imperfect and the best manure like the cow-dung was used rather as a fuel. The Hindus plastered their kitchen square with it.⁷

Over half of the total population of the country, as referred to above, was employed in agriculture. Majority of the rest were occupied in petty industries or were petty Government Officials. Only a small number were rich and

1. Macconachie. R. Selected Agricultural proverbs of Punjab, pp. 80-84; See also G. S., iii, p. 912.
2. Adi Granth, shalokas of Bhagat Kabir, Nos. 63, 108; See also G.S.iii, p.912.
4. Macconachie, R op cit, 108-111; Also see G.S.ii, pp. 427, 577; iii,p.912
5. I. G. I. P., i, p. 62; see also G. S., ii, pp. 577; iii.p 912.
7. Adi Granth, Asa M. 1. 1, War-with shalokas of M.1, p. 472; also shalokas M. 1, p. 473.
they were fabulously so. Some occupied high offices in the State and they too rolled in wealth with all their regular and irregular income. The Middle class was almost unknown. Among the rich there was no difference between the Hindus and the Muslims. Both were exploiters and robbed the poor.¹

Absence of peace in the province, owing to its being a frontier province and subject therefore to repeated invasions, made it impossible for any industry to develop. The industry was mainly confined to villages where the local needs were satisfied by the local manufacturers, or it was found in the capital cities where it was owned, in a majority of cases, by the State and catered to the needs of the civil and military personages. Sculpture and craftsmanship were highly developed and Babur prised them.²

Trade also was not in any way highly developed. There was no outlet to the sea. The country was landlocked and surrounded, as we have seen, by sparsely-populated territories. Only on the east, in the western districts of modern Uttar Pradesh, was there some possibility of consumption of the Punjab produce, but the produce of these districts being the same they rather competed with the Punjab. The most important trade was the one in horses with the neighbouring Muslim countries.

There were no banks to finance trade or industry. Bankers, or money-lenders, who were generally Hindus and who realised high rates of interest did the job. But it was

¹ The rich enjoyed their lives lustily indeed and Guru Nanak addresses them as:

"Thy mansions are beauteous; thy thousand forts are solidly built, Thou hast tigers, elephants, horses and their saddles, and vast hosts of millions. But nothing goeth along with thee......." Singh, Gopal, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 59; See also ibid., p. 570.

only to a limited extent.  

Yet, however, the over-all picture was that the Punjab was a rich province and was supposed to be the granary of the Northern India. The Lodhi Government collected as much as three crores of rupees from here as the yearly revenue. What made the general mass of the people poor was the uneven distribution of its wealth. The rich were too rich and the poor too poor.

D—The Religious Conditions.

In the religious practices of the time, the national standard had fallen to the lowest depth of absurdity. Thus wrote Bhai Gurdas:

Four races and four creeds were in the world
mongst Musalmans and Hindus,
And all were uniformly selfish, jealous, proud.
Hindus by the Ganga at Benaras, and by the distant Ka'bah Musalmans.

Muslims Rahim, and Hindus Ram implore, and miss the way that leads to either god;
Forgetful of the Vedas and the Quran, the present age's snares entangle them.
Truth stood idly by, the while unwanted, as Brahman priests and Muslim Mulas clashed.
And there was no salvation for the world.

Three types of persons controlled the religions—the  

1. In the Adi Granth there are references at several places to trade and traders, but the impression one gathers from them is that the trade was mostly local and not very highly developed. See Singh, Dr. Gopal, op. cit. Vol. I. pp. 54-55, 74, 364; ibid, Vol. II. pp. 427, 459; Vol. IV. p. 1073. Also the Sukhmani of Guru Arjan where references to bankers and how they advanced loans which were spent by ignorant people in eating and drinking, are made.

2. A detailed account of the revenue drawn from different parts of the country is given by Babar in his Tuzak. See E. & D., op. cit., Vol. IV. p. 282. That rich were too rich and the poor too poor, is also revealed from Kabir’s verse: “some are blest with silks and others with the above bedsteads, while others do not have even a patched coat, nor even a thatched roof.” See G. S., II, p. 474. Also G.S., IV. p. 1311.

3. After Archer, The Sikhs, p. 147.
Qazis, the Brahmans and the Yogis. But all these persons had lost their character and misbehaved themselves. The Qazi occupied the seat of justice, he counted beads and repeated the Name of God, while he accepted bribes and passed unjust orders and when questioned he quoted the scripture.

The Brahmin, according to Kabir, wore a loin-cloth, three and a half yards long and a sacrificial thread of three strands. He carried a rosary on his neck and a glittering brass utensil in his hand. But in his character he was not a saint, but a cheat of Benaras. He deemed himself pure, but carried false tales to persecute his brother.

The Yogis kept wives and grew plaits of hair and rubbed ashes. Surrounded by the cries of their bastard children they called themselves moralists and cried Gorakh, Gorakh, as Guru Nanak wrote in his Var Ramkali:

besides there were among the Hindus the Byragis and the Sanyasis. They coloured their clothes to adopt the garb of their orders. They wore a surplice of worn-out cloth and a bag to receive the alms in. And they went from door to door begging without being humble. They assumed the role of teachers, but exploited and misled the people, as they themselves were misled.

All these so-called religious leaders performed their twilight devotions, argued, sat like cranes, and uttered false-

1. Adi Granth, Ramkali ki War, M. I. See also Gauri M. S. in the Adi Granth, p. 201. The Brahmin, says Guru Arjan, spreads his dhoti and squats on it, he gulps down like a donkey, every thing that comes his way.
Like cranes, the Kshatriyas were esteemed as excellent jewels.\(^1\)

Nor had the Kshatriyas a stable faith. Their faith changed with the change in circumstances, as Cunningham wrote: "The rude Kshatriya warrior became a political chief, with objects of his own, and ready to prefer one hierarchy or one divinity to another."\(^2\)

Below the leaders, the people themselves had the worst of beliefs. Among the Hindus, the one, according to Daulat Rai, was the worshipper of Ganesh, the other of the Sun. The third was the worshipper of Shiva, the fourth of Vishnu, fifth of Ram, sixth of Krishna, seventh of Hanuman, eighth of Brahma, ninth of Laxman, tenth of Shankaracharya, eleventh was a Vedanti and the twelfth a Karmkandi.\(^3\)

Millions of gods and goddesses were created, each one having his or her votaries and says Cunningham: "In a short time the gods were regarded as rivals and their worshippers as antagonists."\(^4\) It was supposed that one god did not like the worship of another and hence the votaries of one god, in order to appease their benefactor, had to show a hatred against the votaries of another.

The gods and the goddesses had been imprisoned into the temples. A person committing all sorts of sin outside, thought it essential to abstain from them in the temple lest the god within might be displeased. The principles of the omnipresence and the omnipotence of god had become points only of philosophical disputation, confined only to the learned. For a common man it was sufficient to go to a place of worship and bow before his god with which his religious and moral duty ended. Thus according to Nam

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3. Rai, Daulat, *Chahar Churan* (1820) *Vedanti*, the one who reads Vedas, as a means of salvation. A karmkandi believes in virtuous acts for this purpose. Guru Amar Das also regrets:

   *No one in this Kali-age is attracted by Dharma or (good) Actions: This age (as if) was born in the house of a chandal. G.S. op. cit., vol.1, p.134.*
Dev: "The Hindus are blind, Musalmans, purblind...the Hindus worship their temple, the Musalmans their mosque." The reality about God had been forgotten.

Idolatry of the most deplorable kind prevailed. The system of pilgrimages was gathering importance. After a life-time of crimes and corruption a simple dip in the Ganges was supposed to be sufficient to wash one of the consequences.

According to Dr. G. C. Narang, "The condition of the Hindus in the Punjab was indeed, most deplorable. The popular religion...was confined to peculiar forms of eating and drinking, peculiar ways of bathing and painting the foreheads and other such mechanical observances...The centuries of invasion, foreign misrule and persecution had produced the greatest depression and the spiritual subjection and stagnation had aggravated the demoralisation to an enormous degree."

They committed countless thefts, countless adulteries and uttered countless words of abuse, yet they wore the cotton thread (janeu) as a symbol of good character and killed a goat at the wearing ceremony.

People earned money using all sorts of means, dishonest as well as immoral, and without any compunction. They purchased gifts with foul means and offered them to their dead ancestors. Guru Nanak at one place humorously remarked that supposing it were true that the gifts did reach the ancestors, now would such ancestors fare if the gifts reaching them were recognized by some other deceased person also living in the same higher or lower region to whom they legitimately belonged? The giver's ancestors would then be seized as swindlers:

2. Guru Nanak condemned this belief thus saying: "what use is bathing in holy waters, when the mind is gilt by ego's Doji?" Singh, Dr. Gopal, op. cit., p. 57, Sri Rag I. See also *ibid*, p. 78.
4. *Adi Granth*, Ava ki war, Shaloka XV.
The original Hindu religion was available only in the Sanskrit literature and was therefore not approachable by the common man. The evil of the caste system had declared majority of the Indian people as untouchable. The complicated rituals and rites had made the Hindu religion too expensive.

Against all this was the simplicity of Islam which instead of believing in many gods of dubious nature preached the simple faith in one God. It believed in the brotherhood of Muslims and no caste system, thus making itself attractive to the low-caste Hindus. John Gunther writes in his *Inside Asia* that Islam was able to get a very easy success in Africa, because it was quite within the capability of the common man to understand. In India, too, it was bound, thanks to its proselytizing spirit, to have its effect, which is obvious from the fact that the Hindus began to be converted to this faith even as early as the close of the 9th century A.D. When Masudi came to India in 916 A. D., he found many Mohammedans inhabiting the western coast of India from which side the Arabs had come. Just about this time king of a southern state was also converted to Islam, which, coupled with the corruption in the Buddhist practices, led Shankar Acharya to revive the Bhakti Movement in that part of this country.

Originally, the Islam, as it came to India, may have been purer in form, but as time passed and as the Muslims came into contact with the Hindus, there was action and reaction. Islam followed the principle of Brahmanism and among them the holy classes of Sheikhs and the Sayyids were created. Islam created customs against customs and opinions against opinions.

1. *Adi Granth*, Ass Ki War, Shaloka XVII, see also *Adi Granth* Rag Gauri Bairaayan, Kabitri p. 332. Kabitri says, in their life-time the parents are not cared for but after their death offerings are made which actually are led to cows and dogs and never reach the dead souls.

2. Gunther, John, *Inside Asia*

The ambition of Mohamad had been to establish the worship of one God. But his followers had so many pirs and faqirs to worship. The idol worship had been condemned in the Islam, yet the Muslims did worse than this by adoring the graves. And Qaran also began to be worshipped as Hindus worshipped the Vedas. 1

There was thus a complete break-down of the moral standards in the 15th century and religion instead of being a force against it, had become a simple farce. True religion had been forgotten, yet the Hindus and the Muslims fought claiming superiority of one religion over the other. Such was the degradation.

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1. Kabir was forthright in his condemnation of the evil practices both among Hindus and Muslims thus:

"O Qazi, which is the book that thou hast read
For they who read and reflected like they were wasted away without knowing the essence ye.
Circumcision is made for love of the woman.........
If circumcision alone makes one a Muslim, what is to be done to a woman? G.S., ii. p.472. Also ibid, p. 474."
CHAPTER II
THE BHAKTI MOVEMENT

A—The Origin

When the world is in distress, it heartily prayeth.
The true One attentively listeneth and with his kind disposition graneth consolation.

He giveth orders to the Cloud and the rain falleth in torrents.

Thus wrote Guru Amar Das. "That is, the Guru comes by God's order and gives abundant instruction to all who may be prepared to receive it."

The Political, Social, Economic and Religious conditions in the Punjab in the 15th and the early part of the 16th centuries have been discussed in the first chapter. All these were the factors which prepared the ground for the Bhakti Movement and ultimately for Sikhism in the Punjab. This degeneration in the entire structure was in fact not a malady confined only to the Punjab; it was at this time a part of the general life in India and Europe as well. The malady had been growing for centuries together and as the climax reached and as the entire social structure was on the verge of a general break-down, thinking minds in the society were aroused from their slumber.

Both in India and in Europe the state of affairs as it was, it made the fifteenth century a period of singular mental activity. Men "shook off the torpor of ages, and their minds awoke to the consciousness of intellectual responsibility. For this result, it is true, important preparations had been made in the fourteenth century, when the Christian reformers, Walter Lollard and John Huss, preached and suffered death for their opinions; when the poetical literature of England assumed a tangible form from the

The Bhakti Movement

genius of Chaucer and Gower; when the Musalmans in Europe penetrated into Thrace and Hungary; and when, after the overthrow and expulsion of Buddhism from India by the austere and powerful Brahmins, there flourished the exponents of Indian monotheism, the saint Kabir and the enlightened Ramanand."

In India the activities of these thinkers and reformers resulted in the spread of the Bhakti Movement which starting from the south, travelled towards north and on to the Punjab changing its character into Sikhism. A brief account of the origin, spread and character of the movement may here be given.

The essentials of the Bhakti Movement are Monotheism, Meditation on Him, Service to Guru, no distinction of caste, immortality of soul and responsibility of man. The movement is said to have been started by Shankarcharya in the south as a reaction against the decay in the original pure philosophy of Buddha and against the poselitizing influence of Islam. But this view is not supported by some writers according to whom Shankarcharya did not originate the movement; he only revived the philosophy which had existed and had been believed in, in the much earlier period of the Indian History.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad writes thus: "The Bhakti movement first made its appearance in the shape of religious reform, like Buddhism and Jainism, as a reaction against the ritualistic religion of the Vedas......and it was based upon the teachings of Bhagwat Gita, Vasudeva Krishna, like Buddha and Mahavira in the Buddhist and Jain systems, was the originator of this reform." The early name of this movement, however, says Bhandarkar, was Ekantika Dharma or religion of single-mindedness.

1. M., i. p. xxi.
2. Prasad, Dr. Ishwari. History of Mediaeval India, pp. 57—78.
3. Bhandarkar, Vaisnavism and Saivism. Dr. Yusuf Hasain, however writes: "Epigraphy shows that the word Bhakti, as a technical term of religion existed at the commencement of the second century before Christ and M. Garbe noted its existence in Pali literature. According to Buhler its mention is found in the eighth century B.C. Yusuf Hasain, Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture p. 3.
But although the Bhakti Movement might have been started in the Epic age, some of the fundamental principles of the Movement had existed much before the Bhagwat Gita itself was written.

Thus for instance, we may study the origin of the doctrine of Monotheism. It was fear which made gods in the world, as Staturus the Latin poet would like us to have it. The primitive men prayed to different natural agencies to avert their furies. Besides some malignant ones, there were some benignant natural agencies as well—such as the Sun for its light and heat, which were worshipped. But ages before the Aryan migration to India and Europe, people realised that over and above all these agencies there existed one Supreme Being.

Thus, Prajapati who is represented as the Father of gods and Lord of all living creatures existed during the Indus Valley age. When the Aryans came they personified energies and attributes. Yet, according to Professor Wilson, the Aryans did not believe in the image or any visible types of the objects of worship. Reference to the creating Brahma, destroying Siva, the business-manager Vishnu and other minor powers in the Aryan literature did not affect their belief in Monotheism. Max Muller, the great German scholar, terms the Rigvedic religion as "Henotheism," in which while worshipping different petty gods, the one Supreme God is not forgotten. One of the Rigvedic hymns makes it clear:

"They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna and Agni. To what is one, the poets give many a name."

Thus clearly, the idea of Monotheism existed much before the Epic age. Similarly the idea of immortality of Soul also existed before the Bhagwat Gita was written. There is no reference to caste system in the Rigveda, rather one of its hymns reads: "I am a poet, my father is a doctor and my mother is a grinder of corn," which means no distinction was made be-

1. Thib, iii, p-861.
2. See Prof. Wilson, Asiatic Researches, XVI.
3. Rig Veda, I, 164.
4. See Rig Veda, I, 112.
tween the followers of one profession and those of the others. The principle of 'the Responsibility of man' was, however, added by Vyasa, and in this, writes Cunningham, Vyasa had "perhaps surpassed Plato in keeping the people trembling alive to the punishment which awaited evil deeds!" Similarly, the passionate Bhakti of the later age was the necessary outcome of the devotion in the Bhagavad Gita. To feel reverence for one's teacher is also an ancient Indian idea. Grihya Sutras and Dharma Sutras lay down rules governing relation between the Guru and Brahmacari (student).

It is clear, thus, that all the essentials of the Bhakti Movement were created in the early ages of the Indian history. Later on, however, there was a decline in the force of this philosophy. As the Brahmans developed their materialistic ambitions, the caste system hardened and the place of One God was taken over by millions of petty gods and goddesses. This state of things, however, could not continue for long. Soon there was a reaction and further decline of the philosophy was stemmed by the rise of the reform movements, such as Buddhism and Jainism.

Buddhism, in spite of its silence about God, believed in the immortality of Soul, Karma and Transmigration which indirectly meant the acceptance of a power which controlled all that. Rest of the principles of the Bhakti philosophy were also kept in tact. The importance of Guru in the realization of the Reality rather developed yet further during the Buddhist period.

The original and pure Buddhist philosophy, however, could not continue its hold in India for long. Soon there was once again a general decay in the religious beliefs of the people and it was arrested only when the Bhakti Movement was fully revived. The start towards its revival was made about the eighth century A.D. by the astute and powerful Brahmans who expelled Buddhism from India by the 14th century. The movement, however, was not stopped after the expulsion of Buddhism. Another challenge had to be faced, which came from Islam. The movement was, therefore, continued, and started in the south from where the final blow was given.

1. Cunningham, J. D., *History of the Sikhs*, p. 21
Buddhism and where the early Arabs had made their settlements. As the Muslim influence developed in the north the movement shifted its emphasis from south to north, and reached the Punjab where it established itself in the shape of Sikhism.¹

But as the movement developed as a reaction against Islam, it could not help borrowing some of the features of Islam itself, to make itself more popular among the people. The word *Islam* means surrender, and submission to the will of God is an essential part of Muslim religious consciousness. Ramanuja, one of the propagators of the Bhakti Movement, adopted this principle. The word *Prapati* of the Bhakti Movement "is closely connected with adoration of the teacher (*acharyabhimanayoga*) which consists in surrendering oneself completely to a teacher and being guided by him in everything."²

"Absorption in God through devotion to a teacher is again an important Muslim conception. It was started by the *Shias* and from them taken by the *Sufis*. But it may be urged that the reverence to a teacher is an ancient Indian idea. Without going further back one may find it in the *Grhya Sutras* and the *Dharam Sastras*. They lay down rules governing the relation of *Guru* and *Brahmachari* (student). The student is asked to regard his Guru as more than his father. The teacher is even compared to God. But ancient homage that the disciple paid to the preceptor is not the same thing as devotion to a spiritual director who is human yet divine, who is a link in the hierarchial chain of preceptors (*pir, sheikh, murshid* or *qutb*), each successor receiving inspiration from his predecessor and being the keeper of the traditions of the sect to which the novice once admitted belongs for ever."³

**B—The Essential Principles of the Bhakti Movement.**

A reference has already been made to the essential principles of the Bhakti Movement which may be mentioned here briefly once again. Among the Bhakti reformers the

names of Shankaracharya, Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya and Guru Nanak are well known. All the Bhakti reformers though they might have differed in details, agreed on the basic principles of the Movement.

God who is Omnipresent, can be best attained through devotion to, and meditation on, Him. His name should be repeated, he should be praised and kept constantly in mind.

For the attainment of God, the help of a Guru or a spiritual teacher is essential. As Dhanna Bhagat wrote:

"I did not know the way of recognizing Him who dwelleth in the heart; I burned in the fire of worldly love and fell into death's noose.

"I collected so many fruits and sin and filled my heart with them, that I forgot God the Supreme Being."

"When the Guru caused the wealth of divine knowledge to enter me, I meditated on God, and accepted in my heart that He was One."

Soul of a man is immortal. It does not die with the death of his body. The man himself is responsible for the entanglements of his soul which takes birth again and again and suffers from the worldly troubles. Thus according to Nam Dev:

The soul's entanglements depend on its acts;
It is itself responsible for what it hath done.

Human ego must be destroyed, and everything sacrificed at the feet of the Guru before God can be attained. Kabir thus writes: "When I was proud, thou wert not in me; now that thou art in me, I am not proud."

As a corollary, ritualism and the system of pilgrimages etc. were condemned. If God was Omnipresent, he was within the body of a man as well and there was no necessity of going from place to place in search of Him. As Guru Nanak wrote: "In the body is God, the body is the temple of God, in the body are pilgrims and travellers." Or, as

2. Ibid. p. 76.
Kabir wrote: "Only they attain God who never entertain love for pilgrimages, fasting, or for religious ceremonies, purification, and austerities or supreme position."

Similarly there was no need of worshipping the One in idols, because He was present everywhere. And if God was the island, for all and He made no distinction between the high and the low, there was no need of castes and the like. Kabir wrote: "The courageous man who effarces taste and pride shall prove a saint." Nor was there a need of giving any undue importance to a language, as it had been done in the case of Sanskrit. He was the same for all and everybody could worship Him in his own language.

C-Revival and The Reformers.

The Movement, which was revived in the South, spread over the whole of India and became an all India Movement. Shankaracharya set the ball rolling in the South. Besides him, Ramanuj and Nam Deva spread the philosophy. Jan Dev and Chaitanya brought it into Bengal and the Movement came into Uttar Pradesh through Ramanand and Kabir. Guru Nanak spread it in the Punjab. A brief sketch may here be given of the life and teachings of some of the more important Bhakti reformers.

Shankaracharya-I

Shankaracharya, according to Dr. Wilson, was born in the Southern India. Views differ regarding the year in which he was born. The most accepted view, however, is that he took birth in 788 A.D.

At the time Shankaracharya was born, the original philosophy of Buddhism, which had so successfully challenged the popular beliefs and practices in the Brahmanic period of our Indian History, was on the decay. Some evils of ritualism, differences of castes and social degeneration, as a reaction against which the Buddhist movement had been started, had crept into the Buddhist society itself. Gautama Buddha had become one of the gods to be worshipped.

1. See Aid Granti, Raghabir, Mahabir, No., VI, also, Ragh Asa, Raghbir, No. XVII.
2. M., VI, p. 140.
rather than to be followed. The entire Buddhist society itself had gone back into Hinduism as one of the separate Hindu
tastes. And Buddha became one of the millions of gods and
goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Once again there was the
need of a reformer who could show the right path to the
staggering humanity. Shankaracharya took up the
challenge.

Shankaracharya was indeed a highly evolved soul,
showing all the qualities of a born reformer. In his early
youth he became a disciple of Govinda Bhagurpada from
whom he learnt the ancient Vedas. At a very young age
he started his attack against the practices of the Buddhist
Viharas. He toured through the different parts of the country
and challenged the Buddhist authorities in discussions on
the Reality. He died in 820, at the young age of only 32
years, but by that time he had made his mark in the
religious field. He left many converts to his philosophy in
the south, who were later on more properly organised by
Ramanuj.

His Teachings

The philosophy of Shankaracharya was the philosophy
of 'Absolute Monism'. There was only one God, he declared,
and he was Shiva who was Omnipresent. There was
no difference between God and the Universe and between
Atma and Paramatma. Both were one. God was contained
in the Universe, and the Universe was contained in Him. He
laid stress on Gita or Knowledge of the Reality and declared
that the things visible were no reality. They were only
Maya or an Illusion. Reality must be searched beyond the
 unreal things.

By preaching about this philosophy, he tried to exterminate
Buddhism from India. Yet, in order to be more
effective, he had to borrow some of the principles of the
vanquished itself. Thus, the old Brahman worship was
solitary, but Shankaracharya copied the Buddhist public or
congregational system and established a monastery for
Brahmans on the lines of the Buddhist monasteries. Secondlv

1. Aiyar, Krishnaswami, Sambhu and His Times. This book may be con-

sulted for details. Also see Drona, P., Philosophy of Upadrstra
the old Brahman ascetic used to separate himself from his fellows, but to copy the Buddhist hermit who became a member of the community of devotees, Shankaracharya created an order of the Brahman monks. Thirdly, the old Brahman reared family, while the Buddhist lived a celibate life. To copy this Shankaracharya also preached the renunciation of secular life. The most important development, however, introduced into Brahmanism by Shankaracharya was the establishment of Ascetic Orders and Brahmanic Math. This gave importance to the leader of the order for whose respect particular rules were to be observed and thus he was converted later on into the Guru of the Bhakti Movement.

To start with, Shankaracharya's philosophy created a revolution in Deccan. But after his death it soon became stagnant and for its further development further changes had to be introduced into it, as commanded by the circumstances.

There were reasons as to why Shankaracharya's philosophy became stagnant, the most important being that Shankaracharya's philosophy of Maya was beyond common man's understanding. Moreover, the ignorant masses of India could understand better a God with human attributes, than the one who was abstract and contained in the Universe as the Universe was contained in Him.

"Pantheism", thus writes Mcauiliffe, "is too cold and too abstract to satisfy the reasonable aspirations of the human soul." Ram and Krishan, with their feelings and congenial arts, writes Elphinstone, attracted more votaries than the gloomy Shiva of Shankaracharya. In fact Cunningham, people can understand a black stone better, when they are told that it represents typically the reproductive energy of Shiva, through which the Universe was created. The abstract philosophy that Universe is created from out of God, is incomprehensible to them.

It was due to these reasons that Shankaracharya's philosophy was later on attacked by his own disciple Ramanuj who introduced the required change in it to make

1. M, i, LXII.
2. Elphinstone, History of India, i, P 189.
it more popular among people.

Ramanuj—I

Ramanuj was born in 1017 A. D., and according to the tradition, says Aiyangar, he lived for 120 years, dying in 1137. He was educated in the Vedas at Kanchi or Conjeevaram. Subsequently he came under the guidance of Yadava Prakasa, head of the philosophical academy at Kanchi and under him his ideas matured.

After completing his education, he took charge of a temple at Yamanchari. He developed his influence. But his position and influence aroused jealousy in some minds who also made an abortive attempt at murdering him. In his later years, persecuted by Kulottunga, the Chola king, for his religious views, Ramanuj migrated to the Hoysala Yadava dominions where he converted Vitala Deva the ruler of the state, to his faith.

The ruling Prince, in honour of Ramanuj, changed his name from Vitala Deva to Vishnu Vardhan.

During his life-time Ramanuj wrote several works "the principal of which are the Sri Ramanuj Bhashya, the Gita Bhashya, the Vedaratha Samgraha, the Vadanta dipa, the Vedanta Sar, and the Dharma Samhita." "He is said to have had ten thousand followers, seventy-four of whom were specially devoted to their teacher. These seventy-four, however, each put a different interpretation on his doctrines, and accordingly established as many sects of their own. Ramanuj died at Sriranganath at the age of one hundred and twenty years," in the year A. D. 1137.

His Teachings

Ramanuj attacked doctrines of Maya preached by Shankaracharyya. He believed in Vishnu as the supreme Being. Vishnu existed before the creation of the Universe and created everything that exists. "Creation originated in his desire to multiply himself and was formed from his

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2. According to Ishwari Prasad, it was not the ruler of the state, but his brother, who was thus converted. See his, *History of Medieval India*, pp. 57-78.

material essence. This essence, however, manifested, is perverted by a portion of his vitality which again is distinct from his spiritual essence. That is, the individual souls are not one with the Supreme Being, though they emanate from him as sparks from fire. In consequence, Vishnu and the Universe are one, yet Vishnu is not omnipotent. He has forms, can be worshipped in idols and in temples, and can be adored by the presentation of fragrances and flowers etc. He is also pleased when one repeats the name of his consort, Lakshmi.

The way to obtain Him is Bhakti, i.e., repetition of his name and adoration of his idols etc. And, further, in this connection Krishna may be quoted: “To those who are ever devoted and worship me with love, I give that knowledge by which they attain me.” One should develop in oneself the quality of desirelessness and the renunciation of the fruits of his action.

The philosophy of Ramannj, obviously, was a step forward towards meeting the understanding of a common man. The original philosophy of pantheism was retained, yet the Supreme Being was not to be formless and attributeless. God was contained in everything, yet He could be adored in special idol forms.

Ramananda—III

A bridge

Ramananda, thus writes Dr. Tara Chand, “was the bridge between the Bhakti movement of the south and the north.” Not much is known regarding his life and career. Nabhaji writes in his Bhogat Mat that Ramanand was the fourth in spiritual descent from Ramruti. According to Grierson and Bhandarkar, he was born in 1299 A.D., but Macauliffe’s view that he was born in 1308 A.D. seems to be more reliable. His main career lay in the first half of the 15th century, but his exact date of death is not available.

Born at Allahabad in the family of Ramakrishna Brahman, Ramananda was educated partly at the place of his

1. Ibid, p. 99.
2. Bhogat Mat.
3. Tara Chand, Dr. Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, p. 142.
5. See his Vaishnavism and Saivism.
6. For further details see M. VI. P. 101.
birth and partly at Benares. Early in his career he came under the influence of a Vedantist, but later he changed and became a disciple of Raghavananda who belonged to the sect of Ramana. Subsequently, however, he developed independent ideas and founded a sect of his own.

His Teachings

Ramanda's theological concept did not differ from that of Ramanuja except in a few things. He substituted Sita and Rama in place of Lakshmi and Narayan as special objects of worship. And contrary to the practice of Ramanuja, Ramananda threw his spiritual door wide open, admitted disciples of all castes, and boldly announced that gyan, or knowledge, of God, emancipated man, from all social bondage. His abolition of the caste restrictions is more important, as he forcefully condemned the existing social distinctions and preached brotherhood of mankind.

The Supreme Being could be attained through Bhakti, but the importance of a spiritual teacher, for guidance on the path was specially emphasised, as is obvious when he says that he was going to search for Him outside but the Guru told Him to be living within one's own self.

Sita and Rama

How obtained

Guru

His disciples

Two schools

Ramananda's twelve famous disciples were Kabir, Pipa, Sukha, Anantamanda, Bhavananda, Suresa, Padmakati, Nrityam, Raidasa, Dhanna, Saina and the wife of Suresa. His teaching resulted in the rise of two schools of religious thought. The first was conservative and remained faithful to the ancient Hindu beliefs, while the second was radical, and tried to create a religion acceptable both to the Hindus and the Muslims. To the first school belonged Tuisidas, who, according to Dr. Tara Chand, is like a natural perennial mountain spring which bubbles with the waters of pure sweet joy and slakes the thirst of those who are weary and heavy laden with the sorrow of the world. To the second school

1. M., VI, p. 103.
3. Tara Chand, Dr., op. cit., P e 45.
belonged Kabir regarding whom we will have much to say.

Kabir—IV

A Brahmin widow to hide her shame left her new-born child on a lake called Lahar Tahan, a short distance from Benaras. The child was picked up by a Muslim weaver Nira and his wife Nima who having no son of their own adopted him. In due time a Qazi was called in who opened the Quran and cast the lot. The word Kabir was found to be the first in the passage and the child was named Kabir which in the Arabic language means great.

It is difficult to ascertain the year in which the event of Kabir's birth occurred, as different writers have given different dates of Kabir's birth. According to Farquhar, Burns and Westcott, Kabir was born in 1446, while according to the editor of Santa Bani Sangrah, Bhandarekar and Macauliffe, he was born in 1398. Donald Chand forwards some more valid arguments to prove that he was born in 1425 and died either in 1492 or in 1510, dying in the first case at the age of sixty-seven and in the latter case at ninety-three.

Be that as it may, Kabir was brought up by Muslim parents and learnt the profession of his father at a young age. Later on, however, he came under the influence of Ramananda, as Kabir himself wrote: "I was revealed in Kasi and was awakened by Ramananda." But here he remained only for a short time. A considerable period of Kabir's life was spent in the company of Muslim Sufis with whom he matured his ideas. Sufi influence upon Kabir is clear from Ahmad Shah's translation of Kabir's Bijak which shows that Kabir used over two hundred Arabic and Persian words in this work after the Sufi methods. Further, according to Dr. Donald Chand, Kabir's words such as: "When you came into the world the people laughed but you wept, do not conduct your self in a manner that after your (death) people...

5. Bijak, Ramaini, p. 77.
should laugh at you", is a paraphrase of the well-known lines of Sa'di:

Yet, however, neither the influence of Hindu religious thought, nor that of the Muslim could make him a partisan of either. He developed his independent ideas, condemning the wrong practices of the both: "Hindus call upon Rama, the Musalmans on Rahman, yet both fight and kill each other, and none knows the truth." The natural consequence of all this was that when after his apprenticeship Kabir settled down at Benaras as a teacher, both the Hindus and Muslims out of their jealousy and short-sightedness tried to harm him using all the means which priestcraft and vested interests of the age allowed.

Several stories are told regarding the persecution to which Kabir was subjected inclusive of the poisoning of the ears of Sikandar Lodh against him, into the details of which we do not propose to enter here.

**His Teachings**

Although Kabir never received any high worldly education and "he did not touch ink or paper and never held a pen", yet he left behind him a vast mass of poetry which was very rich in the variety of metres he used and which was communicated by him orally, thereby creating the possibility of an adulteration in the purity of its form.

A great poet and mystic, the central theme of Kabir was the Almighty, the Omnispresent and Omnipotent who could variously be addressed as Allah, Khuda, Hari, Brahma, Govinda, Samarth, Sain, Sahib etc. Kabir's God is transcendent and immanent. He is contained in everything, yet His nature cannot be explained, as he writes.

"Oh, how may I ever express that secret word?  
Oh, how can I say He is not like this, and He is like that?  
There are no words to tell that which He is."

1. See Dr. Tara Chand, pp. 148-153.  
2. See Kabir's verses, All Granth, pp. 475-83.  
3. See the verses of Kabir in the All Granth.  
5. See Tagore, Rabindra Nath, Kabir's Poems, IV.
Kabir's God cannot be obtained even by offering one's weight in gold. God can be obtained only through devotion and self-surrender, as he say:

"O man, embrace the service of God; Whether he be angry with thee or love thee!"

Kabir condemns ritualistic practices of the Hindu, and his characteristic humour. God, he says, cannot be obtained by going about naked, or by dwelling in the forest. For if it were possible, the deer of the forest would be saved. God cannot be obtained by shaving the head, for the sheep do not obtain salvation thereby. Nor can God be obtained by bathing in the evening and the morning; and in the Ganges, for if it were possible the frogs living constantly in water should have obtained Him. God cannot be obtained by idol-worship, by superstitions, by penance and fasting. God can be obtained only by realising Him within one's heart. He says:

"What availleth devotion, what penance, what fasting and worship

To him in whose heart there is worldly love?
O man, apply the heart to God;
Thou shalt not obtain Him by artifice."

He condemns the Hindus and the Muslims alike for their ignorance and therefore gives up the both and says, "What the Pandit and the Musalms prescribed for me, I have received no advantage from and have abandoned."

In Kabir's philosophy Guru occupies a supreme position as, in the case of the Sufi order. God cannot be obtained without a spiritual guide or a Guru, and the Guru's position, therefore, is so much exalted that:

"If Hari becomes angry still there is some chance; but if the Guru is angry then there is no chance whatever."

2. See Kabirji's verses. All Granthi, also see Kabirji's Rag Gauri and Assa, M., VI, pp. 143-149.
Although at certain places Kabir's words might be construed to mean retirement from the world, yet his actual philosophy was the philosophy of a householder. He condemned going to the forests and mountains for the purpose of obtaining God. Himself, he stayed at home and preached living pure amidst impurities. He recommends staying at home and waging a constant war to overcome the senses as:

"Lay hold on your sword, and join in the fight,
Fight, O my brother, as long as life lasts...
In the field of this body a great war goes,
Forward against passion, anger, pride and greed,
As in the kingdom of truth, contentment, and purity
That this battle is raging, and the sword that rings forth most loudly, is the sword of His name.
The character of Kabir's poetry is superb. He seems to have experienced the flight inward beyond the mental world and direct into the mystic union itself. The journey is long and there are weeks to cross before one reaches the goal, but when once has reached the goal, he has attained the highest bliss and has gone beyond the approach of pains and sorrows. Thus he says:
Abandoning the action pertaining to humanity, (matar) one sees the sphere of the angels (malavat), then leaving even the sphere of majesty (jahan), one gets the vision of divinity (jahan), but when these four attributes are left then comes jahan, where there is no death or separation and where Yama finds no entrance.

Describing the exalted goal of Kabir, writes Rabindra Nath Tagore:

"There falls the rhythmic beat of life and death,
Rapture wells forth, and all space is radiant with light,
There the unstruck music is sounded; it is the music of the love of three worlds.
There millions of lamps, of sun, and moon are burning,
There drum beats, and the lover swings in play.
There love-songs resound, and light rains in showers;
And the worshipper is entranced in the taste of the heavenly nectar.

1. Tagore, Rabindra Nath, Kabir's Poems, XXXVII
2. Kabir; Rebhita, No 22; Siddhanta Dipika, p. 15. Quoted by Dr. Tara Chand, op. cit., pp. 181–82
Look upon life and death; there is no separation between them.

The right hand and the left hand are one and the same. 
*Kabir says, there the wise man is speechless; for
This truth may never be found in Vedas or in books*  

Kabir sees no difference between man and man. For him, there is no high and low and no good and bad. All originated from the same primordial substance.

He preaches love for all. He condemns the distinctions of caste and creed, condemns cheap beliefs and prejudices and preaches a simple life. There is no need of going on pilgrimages. He seems to be supporting widow-remarriage and condemns the *Sati* system. His condemnation of the practices followed by the priesthood is more violent, and the religious leaders both of the Hindus and the Muslims are considered by him to be cheats and men of low character.

And those who do not adopt honest means, who indulge into the gratification of the worldly desires, do not repeat the name of God and do not try to understand the mystic reality, are all threatened by Kabir with births and re-births and unlimited amount of pain attached to them. He believes in the theosophical concept of the evolution of the human soul, in the theory of transmigration, and in the ultimate aim of freeing one's soul from adopting bodies and taking births. He gives his own experience:

"I was in immobile and mobile creatures, in worms and in moths;"

"I passed through many births of various kinds. In this way I occupied many bodies,
But when, O God, I assumed human birth,
I was a Jogi, a Jati, a penitent, a brahmachari,
Sometimes a king, an emperor, and sometimes a beggar.
The apostates shall die, but the saints shall all live,
And drink the elixir of God with their tongues.

Saith Kabir, O God, have mercy on us;"
The Bhakti Movement

We have grown weary; make us now whole”

Chaitanya—V

The most important reformer in Bengal was Chaitanya, who is supposed to be the father of Bengal Vaishnavism. D. C. Sen describes the religious life in Bengal before Chaitanya’s birth in the following words: “The power of the Brahmins had become oppressive. The rules of caste became more and more stringent as Kulinism was stereotyped. The lower strata of society groaned under the autocracy of the higher, who shut the portals of learning against the inferior classes.” The ideals of Islam had produced an effect upon the society, which made confusion worse confounded.

Under these circumstances was Chaitanya born of Brahman parents at Nabadwip in 1486. He lost his father while still being trained at eighteen but lost interest in the world and renounced it at twenty-one. For six years he wandered all over the country after which he returned to Puri where he spent the rest of his sixteen years. After his return from the tour, writes Sarkar, he developed his religious ecstasy to such an extent that he “for sometime behaved like a madman; he laughed, wept, incessantly shouted Krishna’s name, climbed up trees, or raved in abstraction imagining himself to be Krishna.”

Highest God in Chaitanya’s teachings is Sri Krishna. He says: “Direct all your efforts to Krishna, witness His mercies, celebrate His Nativity and other days in the company of bhaktas.”

Krishna can be obtained through Bhakti, and according to Sarkar, Chaitanya says, “There are sixty-four modes of cultivating Bhakti. The five chief of them are (1) the society of holy men, (2) Kirtan of Krishna’s name, (3) listening to

1. Macauliffe, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 149. In these verses Kabir seems to confirm the theosophical belief that soul evolves from minerals into plants, then animals and finally into human beings. Once, however, the human birth is obtained the soul does not go back to animals, though it may be born as low or high as earned.
2. Sarkar, Jadunath, Chaitanya, p. 226
4. Ibid, p. 298.
the reading of the Bhagwat, (4) dwelling at Mathura and (5) reverential service of His image. Even a little of these five creates love for Kirshna.

Chaitanya condemned the existence of caste distinctions in the Hindu society and preached brotherhood of man. He also condemned the Hindu rites and ritualism and preached only a simple and honest life.

In the beginning the teachings of Chaitanya had a good moral effect upon the Hindu society. But his approach to Krishna being emotional, it brought in some cases moral degradation where people indulged in emotion in the name of Radha and Kirshna.

**Namdev VI**

In Maharashtra, Jnanesvar, Sena Narhari, Namdev, Ek Nath and Tukaram were the famous reformers. Jnanesvar started the Movement and completed a Marathi commentary on Bhagavad Gita in 1290. The most important reformer of Maharashtra, however, was Namdev who according to tradition was born at Narasi Thamani in 1270 and was a disciple of Kriechar.

Namdev worshipped one God Vithal "Who is contained in everything and fills all creation."

"There is one God of various manifestations contained in and filling everything; whosoever I look there is His"

Maya's variegated picture hath so bewitched the world that few know God.

Everything is God, everything is God. There is nothing but God.

My guru instilled into me right ideas, and when I awoke to reason my mind accepted them.

"Saiith Namdev, behold the creation of God, and reflect on it in thy mind."

Namdev exposed the inefficiency of the external forms of religion thus: "Vows, fasts, austerities are not at all necessary; nor is it necessary for you to go on a pilgrimage.

1. Ibid.
2. All Granth, Asa word of Namdev p. 485; M., VI, p. 41.
Be you watchful in your hearts and always sing the name of Hari. It is not necessary to give up eating food or drinking water; fix your mind on the feet of Hari. Yoga or sacrificial ceremonies or giving up objects of desire is not wanted. Realise a fondness for the feet of Hari."

Namdev condemned idol worship and stood for the elevation of the status of women. He condemned caste exclusiveness and stood for religious toleration and the development of the vernacular literature.²

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CHAPTER III
GURU NANAK

Father of the Bhakti Movement in the Punjab was Guru Nanak, true historical account of whose life, as according to William Archer, the author of *The Sikhs*, is desideratum still. "It is almost a universal experience," writes Indu Bhushan Banerjee, "that the life stories of religious teachers gradually become so inextricably mixed up with legends and myths that the real facts become obscured almost beyond recovery." And this is true of Guru Nanak as much as of any other religious leader.

A—The Sources.

Several manuscripts are available regarding the life story of Guru Nanak. An attempt was made by Professor Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College, Lahore, at the classification of the Gurmukhi manuscripts regarding the subject. According to his classification ten biographies of Guru Nanak were thus known. They may here be mentioned with facts regarding them available elsewhere.

The oldest of the records regarding the life of Guru Nanak is Janamsakhi or Biography of Sewa Das, which according to Macauliffe was compiled in 1588. The biography which fell into the hands of Colebrooke and which was handed over by him to the India Office in London, appears to be a copy of the biography of Sewa Das itself.

The second is the scrappy account given in the first *War* of Bhai Gurdas. Adi Granth was dictated by Guru Arjan to Bhai Gurdas. It was completed in 1604, when the Guru is said to have offered to insert some of the Bhai's hymns in it. The Bhai, too humble, however, refused saying that they were not of a standard high enough. This shows

2. M. l, p. LXXXVII.
that the Bhai should have written a portion at least of his 'War' before 1604, though much of it, as we know, was written later in the time of Guru Hargobind.

These are the two most important documents regarding the life of Guru Nanak. But neither of them is contemporary, the one having been written about 50 years after Guru's death, while the second about 100 years after. At the time of the writing of the account of Sewa Das, some of Guru Nanak's contemporaries were still living, yet neither Sewa Das nor Bhai Gurdas, according to Macauliffe, tried to give full account of his life. And again, although Bhai Budha, one of the most revered disciples of Guru Nanak was still living, myth by this time seems to have already progressed enough. Not few of the incidents related by Bhai Gurdas contain it. For instance, the account is given as to how to the astonishment of Pir Dastgir of Baghdad the Guru caught the hand of the Pir's son and caused him to travel through thousands of nether worlds in the twinkling of an eye. And the same is true of the account given by Sewa Das.

The Third is the Gyan Ratnawali written by Bhai Mani Singh. But this is primarily an expansion of the first 'War' of Bhai Gurdas itself. The fourth is the biography attributed to Paira of Mokha caste or to Bhai Bala.

Bhai Bala Sandhu was a direct disciple of Guru Nanak, and he is said to have once visited Guru Angad, the successor of Guru Nanak. Guru Angad pleased, requested Bhai Bala to narrate some incidents of Guru Nanak's childhood, as the two were said to have played together as children. Bhai Bala did that and thus the biography was prepared. Macauliffe, however, disbelieves that this biography should have been compiled in the time of Guru Angad. He forwards the argument that all the popular biographies are written in current Punjabi dialect, whereas that of Bala, if ever written so early, should have been in archaic language. Moreover, had Bhai Bala been that important, Guru Angad should have known him earlier, whereas we learn that he made his acquaintance only at his visit mentioned above. Remarkably also, Bhai Bala's name does not appear in the lists of
the important Sikhs since the time of Guru Nanak drawn by Bhai Gurdas and by Bhai Mani Singh. This biography, conclude some writers, is neither very old, nor original. It is based upon the Nanak Prakash of Bhai Santokh Singh.

The fifth is the Nanak Prakash by Bhai Santokh Singh which was written in 1823, or about three centuries after Guru Nanak's death. But this account too is not very reliable. Taking care to prove that Guru Nanak did visit Ceylon, Santokh Singh writes that the Guru met Hanuman and Bibbikhan and also had a discourse with Prahlad and Dhurba as if all of them were contemporaries of the Guru.

The sixth biography is the one prepared for the followers of Baba Hindal; the seventh is Nanak Chandrodya (Sanskrit) by Pandit Ganda Ram; the eighth is the one published by Diwan Buta Singh the ninth, the biography by Anand Ghan, a S. dhu of the Udasi sect; and the tenth is the biography written at Lahore, completed in 1733.

Besides, there is the important Punjabi biography of Vir Singh. Dr. Mohan Singh in an article published in the Spokesman of 9th December, 1957 writes thus: "During the last 30 years six very valuable Gurmukhi manuscript biographies of Guru Nanak fell into my hands. Two slipped out for ever; one was presented to me by Bawa Budh Singh, who said he had received it from the Poonch State, it was left at Lahore with my other belongings; the other most precious indeed for its numerous paintings of Guru Nanak Dev and his contemporaries, was the personal property of the late Khan Sher Mohd. Khan of Mardan. He had it in the family as an heirloom, received from the head of a Sikh shrine in N. W. F. P."

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1. See Karam Singh Historian, Katik ke Walsakh. In this book he proves that there existed no person as Bala who should have accompanied Guru Nanak in his travels. This biography was written by somebody long after Guru Angad's death.
"Of the remaining four", continues he, "one dated 1701 was caligraphed by a Brahmin and is in the Punjab University Library, Lahore. This is a collection of 'Adi Sakhis'; the second is dated 1651 A.D. and is known as Mehrban's version, being really a collection of three groups of episodes, Pothi Sach Khand, Pothi Hari Ji and Baba Ji Ki Bani with Ghoshts and Arths. This is in the Khalsa College Library, Amritsar. The third is a collection of Goshts; and the fourth is an undated copy which I recently purchased for the Punjab University Library. The manuscript is beautifully written and, so far as its literary beauty and significance, this is the finest example of the Paira Mokha Sakhi class".

There are also two English biographies, one prepared by Raja Sir Daljit Singh and the other by S.R.S. Thapur. Both of them were written in the present century and are based on traditional Gurmukhi accounts. But here too the facts are not separated from fiction.

Dr. Mohan Singh has classified these biographies into four categories "1. The War class, exemplified by Gurdas and in the 'War' Paikamabani, etc. These are in verse, the three following being in prose. 2. The Janam Patri class, consisting of those episodes in which the various ages of the Guru are mentioned at the very outset. 3. The Sakhi class. 4. The Ghosht class. All the three kinds of prose biographies have mostly an inset utterances of the Guru."

Exaggeration of importance and glorification of the hero is a part of almost all the medieval biographies. The later biographers such as Bhai Santokh Singh have yet another motive, which is to sanctify the places, persons and the families etc. related to their hero. The biographies in the shape of Ghoshts, or dialogues between the Guru and his contemporaries reveal, according to Dr. Mohan Singh, 'the Sikh scholarship and dialectic ability at their best. It may, however, be pointed out that "for lack of available historical information the 'Ghosht'-writers have badly tripped and sadly bungled, of course with the

best of intentions."

"Nanak’s biographers were duly impressed by the greatness of four of his Indian predecessors—Gorakhnath, Farid Shakar Ganj, Nam Dev and Kabir, and they have made attempts to bring first, second and fourth into living contact with Nanak. They, however, forgot that Guru Nanak never refers to Farid Shakar Ganj, Nam Dev or Kabir; he does refer to Machhander, Gorakh, Bharathari, Charpat, Gopichand, Luharipa, but that reference is manifestly a reference to them as founders of various Jogi sects, and the implication is patently there that all of them had long passed out of their bodies, though as "Siddhas" they were generally believed to be existing on this earth, in this country, in the Meru region. Lastly, there are a number of Nanak’s audiences with God which reflect both the Upanishadic and the Quranic tradition. The biographies are thus extremely intriguing literature."

Besides these biographies, we also find some account on the subject in the Dabistan of Mohsin Fani who was a contemporary of the fifth, the sixth and the seventh Gurus. He was a personal friend of the sixth Guru and his account is more balanced. But he too sometimes believes in myth and thus colours his account with it.

The hymns of Guru Nanak in the Adi Granth are the most authentic and the most reliable account of his activities. But here too a connected chronological account of his life cannot be prepared for obvious reasons.

**B—The Early Life**

A short account, as extracted from different biographies and other sources, may here be given of the life of Guru Nanak. Historians have differed regarding the date of Guru Nanak’s birth. But the most acceptable date seems to be the 3rd of Baisakh, Sambat 1526, corresponding to the middle of April 1469. He was born at

2. For arguments see Karam Singh Historian, Katik ke Watsakh, pp. 254–270; the other date forwarded by many writers is the month of Kartik, Sambat 1526, which corresponds to November, 1469. For further details see Appendix II.
Talwandi, about 35 miles south-west of Lahore. His father's name was Kalu and his mother was Tripta.

According to popular Sikh legends the birth took place at about 1 O'clock at night, when the moon was at its zenith. There were heavenly music and some other supernatural signs. Thirty-three crore gods paid their homage and the nurse was struck with the beaming face of the Baby which was surrounded by a resplendent halo. As students of History, however, we may not attach much credence to such traditions. The Baby was named Nanak by the family pr̄hit Pandit Hardyal who also made a prophecy that his name would resound both on earth and in heaven and that he would be worshipped alike by the Hindus and Muslims.

"During his infancy," writes Sewaram Singh, "he used to melt on seeing misery, and when he was able to walk, the author of Nanak Parkash records instances of his carrying away from home articles of diet and clothing and bestow them on the needy. Instead of taking part in childish, he invented new games involving a realisation of the Presence of God and instructed his companions to practise in them. His parents often got alarmed at his thus getting engaged in the Games of Silence, and called in the village physician, but nothing abnormal was found in his constitution. These playgrounds are the site of a shrine, called the Bal Leelu (the Child's frolics), even as his birth place is the site of a big and beautiful shrine, visited annually by millions of Sikhs."

An important incident occurred in the life of Guru Nanak when he was seven. In the prevailing Hindu manner the the village astrologer told Kalu that the proper time for the commencement of his son's education had arrived. The boy Nanak was sent to a village school. The Pandha, as the school teacher was called, tried to teach him the alphabet, but Nanak asked him if the Pandha knew the significance of the letters he was going to teach him. And to the astonish-

1. Here again the scholars differ. According to some his father Kalu lived at Talwandi but Guru Nanak was born at Kane Kachhe, 15 miles south of Lahore, while some others assert that he was born at Dera Sahib in Amritsar district, in his mother's father's house.
2. Sewaram Singh, The Divine Master, pp. 20-21
moment of his teacher he composed an acrostic on each of the letters of the alphabet there and then. After some days, as the Janamsakhis continue, Nanak challenged his teacher if the education he was imparting was useful at all. And on the occasion he composed the following hymns:

"Burn worldly love, grind its ashes and make it into ink; turn superior intellect into paper.

Make divine love thy pen, and thy heart the writer; ask the Guru and write his instructions.

Write God's name, write His praises, write that He hath neither end nor limit.

O master, learn to write this account.

So that, whenever it is called for, a true mark may be found thereon....." 1

A similar story is told when he is sent to a Persian teacher and where he composes another acrostic now on the Persian alphabet.

The object of such stories is clear, which was to attribute acquirement of the Guru's education to divine inspiration rather than to ordinary mortals. Moreover it is difficult to believe, as the Janamsakhis would like us to have it that Nanak being withdrawn from the schools shortly after these incidents, did not learn any language from any body and yet could write such inspiring poetry breathing of the ancient Hindu lore. The Janamsakhis are unanimous that Nanak courted the retirement of the forest and the society of the religious men who frequented it. Moreover, he travelled far and wide during the course of which he must have come in contact with some of the best religious reformers of his time. And thus he developed his knowledge and perfected his education.

At the age of nine another incidence occurred in the life of Guru Nanak when his father invited the members and relations of his family together and asked the family priest, Hardyal, to perform the ceremony of investing the boy with janeu, or the sacred thread without which a Hindu was considered

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to be an outcaste. Guru Nanak considered this a futile practice and composed the following hymns on the occasion.

Make mercy thy cotton, contentment thy thread, continence its knot, truth its twist.

That would make a janaeu for the soul; if thou have it, O Brahman, then put it on me.

It will not break, or become soiled, or be burned, or lost.

Blest is the man, O Nanak, who goeth with such a thread on his neck.

Here again, scholars suppose these hymns to have been written later on when the Guru was of more matured age. But the Janamsakhis have manufactured an event to superimpose the hymns into.

Nanak was married, according to Janamsakhis, at the age of fourteen to Sulakhni, the daughter of Mula a resident of Batala in the present district Gurdaspur. He had two sons—Srichand who later founded the order of Udasis, and Lakhmi Das. He probably had one daughter as well.

All this, however, could not change Nanak from his other-worldly character. He was a moody meditative boy, "more given to reverie and day-dreams than energetic practical pursuits. He was unmindful of his personal needs and careless of his appointed tasks." 1 Rai Bular, a noble man of Talwandi, the direct descendant of Rai Bhoe the founder of the village who was a Bhatti Rajput and Muslim in faith and was virtually the ruler of the Toppa or district, understood the character of the boy better than his father Kalu could. The Janamsakhis relate several stories regarding it. While one day herding his buffaloes, Nanak fell asleep under a tree in the mid day heat. Rai Bular who happened to pass by was astonished to observe that the shadow of the tree remained stationary to protect Nanak, while the shadows of the other trees had veered round with the progress of the sun. On another occasion Rai Bular observed that while the boy had similarly fallen asleep, a large cobra shadowed

1. M., i, p. 16.
2. Tara Chand, Dr., op. cit., p. 167.
him with its hood from the scorching rays of the sun.

All this developed a respect for the boy in the mind of Rai Bular. But despite this nobleman's recommendations Kalu completely failed in understanding his son. The father tried the son in several professions. Nanak was tried as a herdsman and as a trader, but he failed. Nanak was asked by his father to join him in agriculture. But the boy replied:

"Make thy heart the field, good works the seed, irrigate with God's name;

Make thy heart the cultivator; God will germinate in the heart, and thou shalt thus obtain the dignity of nirvan."

The father was completely disgusted. But incidently, just this time he received a proposal from Jai Ram, his son-in-law who was an officer under Dault Khan at Sultanpore that Nanak should be sent thither where he would secure him a service under Daulat Khan. The proposal was readily accepted and Nanak left for Sultanpore at the age of eighteen.

At Sultanpore Nanak was appointed as a store-keeper. Nanak, according to some writers, remained in this service for a period of more than ten years and here he gave a very good account of himself. According to Janamsakhis here he lived a very regular life. He used to get up early in the morning, bathed in the Bein, a rivulet near by, and sat down for prayer. After the prayer, he ate something and busied himself with his account books. He used only a small portion of his salary upon himself and upon his family, giving away the rest to poor. At modikhana, or the store where he worked, he was often found engaged in spiritual discussions with the Sadhus who approached him.

Here one day an incident occurred as according to the Janamsakhis. Nanak went early one morning to take bath in the Bein. He plunged into it leaving his clothes with a servant and disappeared. Vigorous search was made, but his

1. M., l., p. 21 (Sri Rag); Adi Granth, Sotath M.J., P. 595; War of Ram Kali, p.955.
body could not be recovered. Rumours were set afloat and people gossiped wildly that Nanak had gone bankrupt, had spoiled the Nawab's stock and disappeared from fear of him. When the news reached the Nawab he got the accounts checked and to his surprise discovered that he owed Nanak a considerable amount and that there was a large surplus stock.

In the meantime according to his biographies, Nanak disappearing at Bein, journeyed to the court of the Almighty Father who gave him a "goblet, full of the Elixir of God's Name, which the Master drank, and the voice of the Lord commanded him thus:

"Thou art welcome, O Nanak, that hast absorbed thyself in the Name. Do go hence now and do the work for which thou wast born.

People of the Kaliyuga have adopted horrible practices and are extremely degraded in mind;

They worship a variety of gods, have forsaken the Name, and are immersed in sin.

Go thou, spread Love and Devotion to the Name, and thus lighten the burdens of the Earth,

Go thou, and glorify the Name of God and destroy hypocrisy."

After three days Nanak re-appeared miraculously, distributed all his belongings to the poor and needy and went out of the town to sit down and absorbed himself in deep contemplation. After recovering from the trance he uttered the significant words of his Mission: "There is no Hindu, there is no Mussalman." All this caused quite a consternation and the people said Nanak had gone mad. A physician was sent for, who tried to feel his pulse to see what was wrong with him. Guru Nanak wrote regarding it:

1. Sewaram Singh, The Divine Master, p. 53
2. "Some called me wild (goblin) while others that I am out of step (with the world.)

Some call me a mere man, forsaken and woe-begone.
But I'm mad after my King, my God,
And I know not of any but my Lord."

G. S., IV. p. 947. Maru M. I.
The physician is sent for to prescribe a remedy; he taketh my hand and seeleth my pulse.

The ignorant physician knoweth not that it is in my mind the pain is.

Physician, go home; take not my curse with thee.

I am imbued with my Lord; to whom givest thou medicine?"'

The incident of Bein is rejected by some writers as a whole. According to Mohsin Fani, a darvesh came just this time to Guru Nanak. He subdued his mind and it was under his influence that the Guru gave away everything to the poor and declared that the Hindus and the Mussalmans were one. Indu Bhushan Banerjee considers this account to be more reliable, which raises the question whether Nanak had a Guru from whom he got the inspiration for his mission.

In 1918, during the war, a Sikh Commander visited Baghdad and he writes, as Dr. Banerjee quotes, that he visited outside the city a grave-yard with a room in the enclosure. In one corner of the room there was a platform where Nanak was said to have sat and conversed with Shekh Behlol. Behind the platform on the wall was an inscription which Banerjee interprets to mean that that building was constructed by Baba Nanak as a follower of Guru Murad who had died. This leads Banerjee to conclude that this Guru Murad might possibly be the darvesh mentioned by Mohsin Fani.

According to Maulvi Ghulam Muhammad, the author of the Siyar-ul-Mutakarin, however the Guru was a pupil of one Seid Hussain and he passed his early life in the company of this Muslim devotee from whom he imbibed the essential principles of Islam, and as the Maulvi writes, he "made it a practice in his leisure hours to translate literally and make notes and extracts of the moral maxims of Islam".

Yet another note is struck by some writers, especially the Europeans, that Guru Nanak was a pupil of Bhagat

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1. War of Malhar, Shaloka M. i, M., i, p. 27; G. S., iv, p. 1220.
3. Banerjee, op. cit., pp. 71-73,
Kabir of Benaras. All this causes a confusion.

A close scrutiny of all the three assertions, however, leads us to quite a different conclusion. So far as the Baghdad inscription is concerned, different scholars have interpreted it differently. The inscription which is in the Turkish language, reads thus:

Sevaram Singh interprets it as follows: "Murad saw the demolished building of Hazrat Rab-i-Majid, Baba Nanak, Fakir Aulia, and rebuilt it with his own hands, so that historic memorial may continue from generation to generation, and His murid-S'eed (the blessed disciple) may obtain heavenly bliss—year 917 H".

The inscription to which Banerjee refers seems to have thus been put later on by some descendant in faith of Bahlool, and if the above quoted interpretation is correct, it is obvious that Nanak was not a disciple of Guru Murad. Some other writers have given a still different interpretation according to which the first line means: ‘In the memory of the Guru of Murad, who himself is God, Baba Nanak Fakir Aulia’. According to this interpretation again, Murad considers rather Nanak as Guru, and not the other way round.

The present writer had a lot of discussion with some of his friends on a true photograph of the inscription given above. To us it seems that the whole line from ‘Guru’ to the word ‘Aulia’ contains nothing but different adjectives and appellations for the name Nanak. The word ‘Murad’ itself signifies no proper noun, it stands for the appellation ‘Blessed’. Moreover the word ‘Guru’ is an Indian word, and if at all there was some person named ‘Murad’ for whom the Guru should have meant some respect, there was less possibility of using the word ‘Guru’ for him and more of using the words such as ‘Pir’, ‘Fakir’ or some other word of this type.

1. Sevaram Singh, Divine Master, pp. 156-157
It is clear, therefore, that there existed no person such as 'Murad'. An adjective seems to have been misinterpreted by Dr. Banerjee to mean a proper noun, and making this as a foundation, he has raised an edifice to prove that Nanak had a Guru—a darvesh. All this obviously falls.

We may take still another line of arguments. Even if there was some Guru Murad whom the Guru respected, it is difficult to believe that the Guru should have constructed some such memorial. Because this action was against the very temperament of the Guru who never took a serious interest in matters material and who always considered the physical body of a man as insignificant and unreal sort of dress which a man changes birth after birth. Moreover the construction of a memorial in the foreign lands must have caused some considerable trouble to the Guru, and the Janamsakhis which sometimes go into insignificant details regarding his travels, must have made a mention of if it were true. It is also strange that the Sikh records which praise Guru Nanak too much do not make the mention of even the name of a person who should have guided the Guru in his spiritual experience.

Nor does the name of Seid Hussain bear a close scrutiny. His name also is not mentioned in any Sikh record, not even for the purpose of a simple meeting between the two. The only Seid Hussain worthy of a mention was the one who was the contemporary of the fifth Guru and whose hymns were rejected as being unworthy of being included in the Adi Granth. Moreover, it seems difficult to believe that the orthodox Hindu parents of the Guru should have entrusted him in his early life to a Muslim "devotee," so as to be "early introduced to the knowledge of the most esteemed writings of Islam, and initiated into the principles of our most approved doctrines", as the Maulavi writes.

The case of Kabir as a teacher of the Guru also seems difficult to understand. The Guru might have met Kabir, if he was his contemporary at all, at Benaras during his travels when he himself was considerably advanced in his mission. But no contemporary authority makes a mention that he fell under Kabir's influence and became his pupil. Before
starting for his travels the Guru spent the first eighteen years of his life at Talwandi, never moving out to any distant land. At eighteen he moved to Sultanpore where he lived for over ten years and here too he never seems to have left for any long trip to visit a distant place like Benaras. Nor is there a document available to prove that Kabir himself ever visited the Punjab and remained there for some considerable time.

And lastly, the study of the Guru’s hymns itself proves that he could have no teacher in the mortal body worth the name. According to Malcolm, the author of *Sketch of the Sikhs*, Nanak’s Guru was God Himself and this is confirmed from the following hymns of the Guru wherein he says that his Guru was *Parbrahm Prameshar*.

\begin{verse}
अच्छे अच्छे नाध्येण नागेश्वर
हरभ जुग भिखिण सदै सोड़िे।
\end{verse}

Be that as it may, when the Guru declared that Hindus and the Muslim were one, the Nawab called him to his presence and asked him if what he said was true, then he should accompany him in the mosque and say prayer to the One God in company with the Muslims. The Guru agreed, but when the prayer started the Guru kept standing and did not bow, sit and stand after the Muslim fashion. The prayer over, the Nawab enquired as to why he did not do as they did in prayer to the Lord. The Guru replied that the Nawab’s prayer was false, as during it when he struck his forehead on the earth his mind was wandering in the sky and that the Nawab Daulat Khan was purchasing horses at Kandhar rather than praying here to God, as Bhai Bala’s *Janamsakhi* says:

\begin{verse}
भव सर्व तीनो धर, भव तु तु आमिर।
पृथनि वेंग सोहे वने, संकल धर गठन।
\end{verse}

On further enquiry, the Guru replied that none of those present there was actually praying to God. Even the Chief Qazi among them was at the time following his new-born colt, lest it should fall into a well in his yard. This, according

1. *Adi Granth*, Rag Assa, M.I.
2. *Janamsakhi* of Bhai Bala, p. 55.
to some Sikh accounts, converted the Nawab into the Guru's follower.

After this the Guru decided to renounce the domestic life and undertake long travels to preach his mission. It hardly needs be said that this news could never please his parents, much less his wife and wife's parents. The Guru had to bear the indignation of his father-in-law, Mul Chand who in fury enquired from the Guru as to why had he married at all and begotten a family if he had such notions in his mind. Nothing could, however, stop Nanak from his contemplated renunciation.

Just this time Mardana reached Sultanpur. He, like many others, is said to have been sent to reclaim the Guru for the world, but instead of converting the Guru Mardana himself was converted and becoming the Guru's disciple he decided to spend the rest of his life with the Guru and accompany him wherever he went. Some of the later chronicles have associated the name of Bala with that of Mardana as being the Guru's companion during his travels. But this seems to be incorrect.

Several argument may be forwarded to support this assertion. A person named Bala is said to have been engaged by the Guru's father to accompany him when he was tried as a merchant. Next, when the Guru was sent to Sultanpore Bala accompanied to assist him in the modikhana. Bala remained with the Guru at Sultanpore till the end and the news of his renunciation, according to some biographies, was brought to Talwandi by him. After this, however, his association with the Guru was broken. The Janamsakhi of Bala and several others based on it, were almost all of them written a long time after the Guru's death and, therefore, are not at all reliable. The oldest Janamsakhi does not mention Bala as one of Guru's companions.¹ Nor is the name of Bala mentioned anywhere in the Wars of Bhai Gurdas. Bhai Gurdas distinctly lays down that Mardana alone accompanied the Guru in his travel to Mecca. Moreover, many stories are told as to how during the course of their travels sometimes Mardana felt tired, while sometimes he was hungry, thirsty, or wanted to go back

¹. See above.
home. But we hear no such story regarding Bala. All this
and several other available facts prove that there was no-
body like Bala who should have accompanied Guru Nanak
in his travels.

C—The Udasis

The preparation of a connected and chronologically

correct account of the Udasis or travels of Guru Nanak has

been a very serious problem before the students of the
Punjab History. The Janamsakhis give such a mixed and
disconnected account of his visits at different places that
they always make a mess of History and leave one only to
conjectures and surmises. Although some writers have tried
to draw a connected account from the ballads or the Wars of
Bhai Gurdas, which seem to be the oldest authentic record
available to us in the original from, the account thus drawn
cannot be conclusive. For the Wars were prepared by Bhai
Gurdas about fifty years after the death of Guru Nanak, the
historical account given in them is very scrappy and they
lack in chronological exactness. Yet, however, leaving aside
the chronology the incidents recorded in the earlier records
can not all be rejected as incorrect. Some of them can be
ascertained by contemporary historical events and can also
be supported by the words of Guru Nanak himself which are
available to us in the form of his hymns in the holy
Granth.

Based on surmises, as it is, some writers assert that the
Guru undertook as many as five travels. His first Udasi was
towards the east, the second towards the south, the third
towards Kashmir, the fourth towards west and the Middle
East, and the fifth within the Punjab. Dr. Banerjee supports
this view. According to Dr. Mohan Singh, the number of
his Udasis was four, and he says that he travelled towards
east and towards the south in one single trip. Still another
view is that besides combining his travel towards east and
the south in one trip, he also combined his travel towards
the west and that within the Punjab in one trip, thus making
the total number of his travels, three. We will accept the
first view to be more plausible.

The First Udasi

The discussion of the date of departure on his first travel need not detain us much. If we agree that he took up his service at Sultanpur at the age of eighteen and remained there for about ten years, he must have left for his first Udasi at the most at the age of about thirty or thirty-one which means he should have left his home about the year 1500.

All agree that in his first travel he started towards the east. He was accompanied in this travel by Mardana, and eating little, avoiding human habitation and leading a very hard life, as according to Bhai Gurdas and Mohsin Fani, the Guru moved steadily forward. Starting from Talwandi the Guru reached Syedpur (Emnabad).

At Syedpur the Guru stayed with a poor carpenter, Lalo. Here an incident took place. An unscrupulous and oppressive person named Malik Bhago who ruled this district, just this time held a Brahmbhoj, or a feast in which he invited people of all castes. The Guru was also invited to attend. But he excused himself saying he was a Faqir and took little interest in such activities. After the Brahmbhoj was over the Malik on enquiry learnt that a person named Nanak, the Faqir, had not cared to accept his invitation. For the Second time a person was sent to fetch him, but the Guru refused. Thereafter five persons came and carried the Guru forcibly to the Malik. When the Malik insisted for explanation, the Guru sent for a piece of Lalo’s coarse food and taking it in one hand and the dainties prepared by the Malik in the other, squeezed them both. Milk trickled down the coarse food of Lalo, while from the dainties of the Malik blood began to flow. On enquiry the Guru explained that Lalo’s food was earned by honest labour and therefore milk flowed down from it, while the food of the Malik was earned by cruel exactions from the helpless poor and therefore it was nothing but the blood of the innocent. It was a slap on the face of the Malik, administered in a strange manner. The Malik was put to shame, and the Guru left.

From Syedpur the Guru proceeded towards a place in a forest which has been identified by Bhai Santokh Singh, the
author of *Nanak Parkash*, as Talamba in the district of Multan. Here he met a person known in the *Janamsakhis* as Sajjan *Thug* to whom according to some writers, the first *Manji* was entrusted. Sajjan *Thug* was a robber who kept a mosque for the Muslims and a temple for the Hindus, where travellers were offered a refuge, but while they slept at night they were robbed and murdered. Guru went there and was served with an utmost devotion. When at night the *Thug* asked the Guru to retire, the Guru felt that the moment for reclaiming him had arrived. He asked Mardana to accompany him on his rebeck and himself began to sing, thus:

"Brilliant is the white bronze, but extremely black is its touch.

Counterfeit it remains, wash it a hundred times, if you will.

Sajjan (meaning friend) is he that may accompany one on his departure heretofrom.

Where accounts are demanded, he may be found present to help.

Houses and mansions, well painted on the outside,

Are of no use, when demolished, if devoid of substance within.

Of what avail shall be the services, hospitalities, and other wily acts (chicaneries).

Do thou contemplate on the Name, saith Nanak whereby thou mayst escape thy bonds."

The song was sung in such a manner as deeply affected Sajjan. He fell at the feet of the Guru and promised to change his manners.

From here the real *Udasi* of the Guru began towards the east. The next important place he visited was Kuruksetra. Just at this time a great fair of the Solar Eclipse was being held at this place. Thousands of Hindus had collected there to purify themselves and all sorts of superstitious activities were being carried on. Here to attract their attention the Guru began to cook a deer presented to him by a disciple. The news of the sacrilege spread all around and a mob of Brahmins and other visitors collected and demanded an

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explanation as to why the Guru had defiled the atmosphere. Thereupon the Guru sang two songs, a few couplets from one of them as drawn from Macauliffe follow.

"Fools wrangle about flesh, but know not divine knowledge or meditation on God.

"They know not what is flesh, or what is vegetable, or in what sin consisteth.

"It was the custom of the gods to kill rhinoceros, roast them and feast."

"Flesh is allowed in the Puranas, flesh is allowed in the books of the Mussalmans, flesh hath been used in the four ages. "Flesh adorneth sacrifice and marriage functions: flesh hath always been associated with them.

"Women, men, kings and emperors spring from flesh."

"Thou understandest not thyself; yet thou instructest others: O Pandit, thou art very wise!"

Dr. Banerjee reading, perhaps, only the first song given by Macauliffe, which has not been quoted here, jumps to the conclusion that the whole story is an invention and a superimposition on the basis of the song composed at some other time. He quotes Macauliffe to support his view and forwards several other arguments. But conclusions drawn by him seem to be hasty and Macauliffe himself is quoted out of context. A few couplets given above prove it clearly that the songs must have been sung in connection with a serious incident and we have no reason to disbelieve the Janamsakhis that the above mentioned incident did occur.

From here the Guru proceeded to Hardwar where in the Ganges the Hindus were washing away their sins and throwing water towards east so that it might reach their dead ancestors. In order to exhibit the futility of this action the Guru entered the water and began to throw waters towards the west. On enquiry he said that he was trying to irrigate his field about three hundred miles west from there. When they laughed at him, he said if his water could not reach his fields only three hundred miles in the west, how could their water reach their ancestors thousands of miles in the east. After this there was a usual discussion and the Guru made many disciples amongst them.

1. M., i, pp. 47-49.
After this the Guru visited Panipat, where he made a successor of Pir Sheikh Sharaf his disciple. Onwards, the Guru proceeded to Delhi where at the place of Gurdwara Nanak Piyao the Guru is said to have revived a dead elephant of the reigning Lodhi monarch. According to some writers he visited Delhi only on his way back. But this does not seem to be correct. While proceeding towards Delhi from Panipat, one comes across the Gurdwara about four miles from the city. Obviously if the Guru visited the place of the Gurdwara after visiting the city on his way back, we should have heard something about his dealings at the latter place. Moreover it seems to have been a custom with the Guru to remain only at the outskirts of a vastly inhabited area and go inside only when necessary. If he visited Delhi on his way back, he should have halted somewhere on the other side of the city and not at a place on the way from the Punjab to Delhi.

The next important place of his visit was Benaras where he converted Chatur Das to his faith. Several mythical stories are told regarding his dealings here into the merits and demerits of which we need not enter. Those who believe Kabir to be the Guru’s contemporary say that the Guru met Kabir on this occasion. But the Guru makes no reference to it anywhere.

At Gorakhmata the Guru is said to have sat under an old pipal-tree which because of this became green. Several yogis astonished at this came, conversed with the Guru and were converted. The place thenceforth began to be called Nanakmata. Next the Guru proceeded to Kamrup (Assam) and here again many mythical stories regarding what happened to him and to Mardana are told.

In one of the stories the Janamsakhis tell us that Kalyug, the present age of deceitfulness and treachery itself came and met the Guru in a terrible and fearful human form. It threaten him, but the Guru was not terrified. It then offered him the kingdom of the whole world, but the

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1. According to some writers it was Ibrahim Lodhi. But this monarch succeeded to the throne in 1517, whereas we have mentioned above that the Guru started on the trip about 1500. Even if he had started late, it could not be as late as 1516 or 1517. Majority of the writers have failed to take a note of it, a close study of which might solve an interesting enigma.
Guru remained unmoved. Finally it fell at his feet. Much of
the account in the Janamsakhis in this connection is steeped
in ignorance and superstition. The word ‘Kamrup’ (Assam, as
it was then known) which literally means the mythical
Indian god of passion, seems in ignorance to have been taken
as a person rather than as the province (as in fact it was).
And around it all the stories of the common superstitious
beliefs have been interwoven. Similarly the story that from
here he went into the country of ants and had his adventures
there, and other such stories need not be taken seriously.

Mardana being tired of hunger and travels, the Guru
decided to march back from this place. On his return to
the Punjab the Guru met Sheikh Brahm, the incumbent of
the shrine of Sheikh Farid at Pakpatan, in the present
Montgomery district of Pakistan and had a lengthy spiritual
discussion with him. And with this the first Udasi of
the Guru was concluded.

The Second Udasi.

The Guru started on his second Udasi in about 1506 and
during this he is said to have visited Sirsa, Bikaner, Ajmere,
Pushkar, Abu, Ujjain, Bider, Pangal, Anainapur, Godapa,
Madras, Nagapatam and Ceylon. During this Udasi, or
retired life of journey, the Guru was accompanied by two
Jats named Saido and Ghebo, on his feet he had sandals of
wood, on his head rolls of rope, in his one hand a staff and
in the other a begging bowl. The main purpose of this
Udasi was to visit Ceylon.

According to Dr. Trumpp, it is very doubtful that the
Guru actually visited Ceylon. For, he says that the Janam-
sakhis represent the king and the inhabitants of that
country as common Hindus, whereas actually they
were Buddhists. On this basis he concludes that the whole
story of the Guru’s visit to Ceylon is fabricated.

This argument of Dr. Trumpp, however, does not seem
correct. The recent discovery of a manuscript at Dacca
by Gurbux Singh, which according to I. B. Banerjee

2. Trumpp, Adi Granth, p. XXXIV.
3. Ibid. pp. V.VI.
"purports to be the itinerary of a pilgrim to the Sikh temples in Southern India and Ceylon," proves beyond doubt that the Guru did visit Ceylon.

According to the old accounts a Sikh named Mansukh who belonged to Lahore and who was a disciple of the Guru, carried on trade of a considerable importance in Ceylon. It was a daily practice with him to sing the Guru's hymns early in the morning. The words and the meanings of the hymns cast a spell on his neighbours and the king of Ceylon, Shiv Nabha, himself fell under his influence. It was the king's desire to meet the Guru for which the Guru undertook this long journey. The king became the Guru's disciple.

On his return the Guru made a proselyte of Duni Chand, a wealthy Khatri of Lahore. Another wealthy Khatri, Karori seems to have been converted just this time. With the financial aid of Karori the Guru founded the city of Kartarpur on the right bank of the river Ravi, brought his family there and lived there for some time before undertaking his third Udasi. Kartarpur thus became the first holy place of the Sikhs.

The Third Udasi

The third travel of the Guru started in 1514, and this time he was accompanied by Hassu, a smith and Siha, a calico-printer. He took fruits and dry blossoms of Akk tree during this tour. This time the Guru proceeded to Kashmir where he met a Pandit, Brahm Das whose library was two camel-loads. The Guru explained the futility of reading too much, for it developed one's ego and failed in giving one contentment. For one's peace of mind it was essential that One World should be contemplated upon.

2. Dr. Banerjee names him Shiv Nath, but Shiv Nabha, seems correct, See Glossary of Punjab Tribes and Castes - Vol. 1, p. 687, fn 4, quoted by Banerjee
From here the Guru proceeded on and ascending the Kailash Parbat went up to the lake Mansarowar. Here he met some yogis who being afraid of the political chaos in India, had taken a refuge in these mountains. The Guru condemned them because when they were needed to guide the oppressed humanity, they were hiding themselves there. Thus wrote Bhai Gurdas:

other Himalayan countries, who have substituted or added the Mantra, *Om, Akum Bhadra Guru Parm Sidhi Ham*, for, or to the usual Buddhist Mantra, *Om, Mani Padmi Ham*, and it is these men in whose temples the image of Guru Nanak is given a prominent place. When questioned, these people explain that *Bhadra Guru* or the Great Master whom they worship, had appeared in the Punjab, had turned the Mecca, had sweetened the *reetha* (soap-nut) fruit, had defeated the Yogis, had appeared in Ten Forms, and had founded the great *Tirath* at Amritsar."

"These people," he continues, "have been often seen making pilgrimage at Rowal Sar, in Mandi State, and at Amritsar, by the process of *Dandvat*. Sardar Tirath Singh Gharjakhia, a Tahsildar in the Kashmir State Service, who has for many years been in Ladakh and Leh, supports this information and states that he also met several Chinese pilgrims, bound for Amritsar, who told him that Guru Nanak visited their country and established a temple at Nanking and that since then numerous Chinese have worshipped him. The matter, however, requires further investigation.""
was left in the minds of those who conversed with the Guru, and who were told that the house of God who was All Pervading, lay wherever one looked. But the Islamic traditions do support that Ka'aba moved with the Guru's feet. Maybe, those present were hypnotised in such a manner as in their mind the Guru's feet were associated with Ka'aba and they felt as if Ka'aba actually revolved.

After visiting Mecca and Medina the Guru moved onward to north and travelling through Jerusalem, Demascus and Aleppo, turned north-eastwards and stayed for about four months at Baghdad. Basing perhaps his views on a composition named Nasihatnama, supposed to have been written by the Guru, Syed Muhammad Latif writes in his History of the Punjab, that the Guru also visited 'Stamboul', where he conversed with the Sultan of Turkey and converted him to his faith. Bhai Mani Singh also writes in his Janamshakhi that Karoon, to whom the Nasihatnama is addressed, was the Sultan of Turkey, while Bhai Gian Singh who wrote his History of the Sikh Gurus towards the end of the nineteenth century, describes Karoon to be the Sultan of Egypt. But a close study of the history of all these countries, as well as that of Soudan and other adjoining States shows that no king of the name of Karoon ruled anywhere during the lifetime of the Guru. Moreover, the Nasihatnama is not included in the Adi Granth, and its language and style bear the least of any of the characteristics of the Guru's poetry. Obviously, it is a spurious document.

At Baghdad the Guru met and converted one Shah Behlol. Swami Anandacharyya mentions that during his visit at Baghdad he found there an inscription dated 912 Hejri, written in the Arabic language, which when translated means:

"Here spake the Hindu Guru Nanak to Fakir Behlol, and, for these sixty winters since the Guru left Iran, the soul of Behlol has rested on the Master's word—like a bee poised on a dawnlit honey-rose."

1. Latif, History of the Punjab, p. 246.
Guru Nanak

A reference has already been made to an inscription on a platform, in which the words ‘Guru Murad’ are mentioned. Obviously these two are different inscriptions. While it is not certain where did Swami Anandacharya find his inscription, it is possible that his inscription might be the same as the one some Sikh soldiers saw outside the outer door of the same building during the first World War, but which was not decipherable.

On his return journey the Guru visited Hassan Abdal, about 30 miles to the north-west of Rawalpindi. Here he converted one Bawa Wali living at the top of a hill overlooking the town. Before his conversion, out of his jealousy of the Guru’s attainments, Wali is said to have tried to kill the Guru by hurling down a huge rock which was stopped by the Guru by his hand and on which his hand-print still exists. At the site of this incident the Gurdwara Punja Sahib was later constructed.

The Fifth Udasi

The fifth travel was undertaken within the Punjab itself. Several mythical stories are told. The Guru visited Pakpatan once again and had a long conversation with Sheikh Brahm. Then the Guru proceeded through Dipalpur, Kanganpur, Sultanpur, Verowal, Jalalabad and Kiria etc. and converted many Pathans and others to his faith. Then through Batala, the Guru moved to Sayedpur where he reached on the eve of its capture by Babur in 1524. Here according to the Janamsa:his, the Guru and Mardana were imprisoned along with hundreds of the other inhabitants of the place. The Guru was condemned to manual labour and was asked to carry a load on his head. But the load was noticed to be moving with the Guru one cubit above his head without any support.

The incident was immediately reported to Babur who

1. The existence of a deep hand-print on a huge rock is a mystery. If the story is believed to be true, the question arises was the rock converted into a molten mass before it touched the Guru’s hand? The tradition with regard to the story is too strong to be easily brushed aside.
according to old Sikh records, himself came to see and was impressed as a result of a conversation with the Guru. He ordered the Guru’s release, but the Guru refused unless others were released along with him. Thereupon Babur ordered all to be set at liberty.

There is no mention of the Guru’s meeting with Babur in the contemporary Mughal records. But there is a possibility that the Guru whose heart ached at the sight of the horrors and destruction brought about by the invader, should have personally interviewed him, though the incident might have been passed over by the Mughals as insignificant.

After this the Guru moved through Pasrur, Sialkot, to Mithankot in Dera Ghazikhan district and there he converted one Mian Mitha. Thereafter the Guru moved to Kartarpur on the Bank of the Ravi where he settled down and spent the rest of his years.

**The Last Years**

At Kartarpur the Guru lived with his children the life of a householder. Here he consolidated his work. Bhai Gurdas tells us how the Guru lived here a very regular life, getting up early in the morning, taking bath and then holding the morning prayers. After this the langar or the community kitchen was held. There was prayer in the day and then again in the evening after which the langar was held once again, where everybody partook of the food. At the time of going to bed again there was prayer and everybody went to sleep.

Here firm foundations of the system of the Sikh congregations and the langar, both of which played a significant part in the development of the Sikh church, were laid. During this time the Guru’s visits outside the town became very rare. He once visited Achal Batala on the Shivratri festival, where he had a lengthy conversation with a Yogi. Bhangarnath who questioned him as to why he had renounced a hermit’s life. The Guru justified his action saying that the life of a householder was the best to obtain God through. He had completed his mission outside and
therefore he now wanted to play his part as a householder.
This remark of the Guru distinguishes the Sikhs from those
who believe that God can be obtained only by renouncing
the world and by going over to the forests and the moun-
tains, as we shall study later on once again.

As the end of the Guru's life in this mortal world drew
anigh the Guru asked Bhai Buddha ji to instal Bhai Lehna
as the Guru to succeed him. Buddha ji put the anointing of
safron on Bhai Lehna's forehead and seated him on the
Manji. Guru Nanak placing the offering of five coppers and
a coconut and going round him for five times, bowed before
the disciple Lehna and Lehna thus became Guru the second
Nanak to bear the torch of the Sikh faith and free the suffer-
ing humanity from ignorant fanaticism and religious persecu-
tions.

"The master then prepared to depart. He sang the
Divine Wedding Song:
"Sing ye, my comrades, sing now my wedding song.
Sing the song of His praise.
Sing the song of my Creator.
Sing the song of Him, who knoweth no fear.
I would be a sacrifice to this wedding song.
For in this song lieth the everlasting bliss.
My Lord careth for the smallest life.
The Bounteous Giver meeteth needs of each.
Invaluable are His Gifts;
Who can praise Him?
The Auspicious Day has dawned.
The Hour of wedding is come.
Come, comrade, and anoint the Bride.
Pour your blessings, O Comrades.
For the Bride meeteth her Lord.
Take this message to all.
For this call cometh for all,
Ever and always remember Him, Who sendeth down the
call;
When the time for the call arrives."
Thus the Guru departed, blending his soul with the

1. Sohila Rag Gauri Dipki, M. 1, From Sewaram Singh. *The Divine
Eternal and Almighty. The Bride became one with her Bridegroom. The dead body that remained is said to have been claimed by the Hindus to be cremated, while the Muslims claimed him to be a Pir and wanted to bury his body. The Guru had covered himself with a clean white sheet when he slept for departure and the Hindu and the Muslim followers had placed their flowers on either side. After the quarrel when the sheet was removed the body was nowhere to be seen, though the flowers remained which each of the parties took away.

The Guru had preached Hindu Muslim unity, but the people were yet too ignorant to understand. The torch was left alight in the hands of Bhai Lehna, now Guru Angad who was to show them the path.
CHAPTER IV

THE CREED OF GURU NANAK

As Preached by Him and Expounded by his Successors

The religion founded by Guru Nanak, and further expounded and carried from place to place by his successors, cannot boast of many doctrines. Its basic philosophy can conveniently be summed up in two words: 'Unity and Fraternity.'

A—Unity

The scripture of the Sikhs starts with the numeral 1 which precedes the word Om and is pronounced as Oangkar. Oangkar means God and the numeral qualifying it leads to the meaning: there is but One God. According to the some I signifies unit. Even if this be so it would lead to meaning that God is Unit, and from out of It everything emanates.

After having established the principle of the unity of God the scripture proceeds to give His attributes. The next word thus is Satnam which means that if you want to name Him you may call him Sat, or 'Truth'. The next word is Kartapurak, meaning He is the Creator. This word seems to have raised a lot of confusion in some minds. At the first sight the word Kartapurak leads one to conclude as if Guru Nanak believed in God who has no connection with the Universe except that sitting somewhere in the heaven He creates it as an artisan manufactures an article, and then destroys it when He so desires. But this is wrong. Those who have not studied these first words of the scripture and have come across some such words in its body as:

एक वो सिद्ध सिद्धान्त, जो मे मैक खत सिद्ध,
हैं ते जनहर सिद्धांत, जो मे सब जत नुसार सिद्धि

which mean, 'Why worship the second who takes birth and

1. See M. i, p. 102.
dies; worship the One, O Nanak, who pervades the waters and the lands, would come to the conclusion that God has been identified with the creation and means that he is nothing but the creation itself. But this is wrong. Guru Nanak's conception of God is in fact neither purely of theism nor of pantheism. Actually what the Sikh philosophy regarding God means is that God is one, the Creator, and He creates everything out of His Ownself. Says Griffin: "In the same way as Darwin has taught the evolution of species so did the doctrine of Nanak proclaim, not the creation of Nature by the All-Powerful out of nothing, but the infinite division of His own essence into a plurality of forms." Thus though the creation is God Himself, yet it is different from God, and as Bhai Jodh Singh writes: "When this is destroyed, the phenomenon as a separate existence ceases, but God still is there."

Guru Arjan brings out the thing clearly in this Jaisri:

O give me, give me some intelligence of my Beloved.
I am bewildered at the different accounts I am given of Him.

Some say He is altogether outside the world;
Others assert that He is altogether contained in it.
His colour cannot be seen; nor can His features be distinguished;
O happy wvies, tell me truly—
He dwelleth in everything; He liveth in every heart;
Yet He is not blended with anything; He is distinct.

And again as Guru Teg Bahadur writes in the Dhanasri:
Why dost thou go to the forest in search of Him.
He dwelleth in everything, yet he is ever distinct; He abideth in thee as well.
As fragrance is in a flower, or reflection in a mirror,
So doest God dwell inside everything; seek Him therefore in thy heart.

3. Adi Granth, Rag Jaisri, M. V.
4. Ibid, Rag Dhanasari, M. IX, 1.
In brief, Teja Singh writes: "the Gurus have combined the Aryan idea of immanence with the Semitic idea of transcendence, without taking away anything from the unity and the personal character of God."

To come back to the first passage of the Granth, the next word in it, as we are discussing, is nirbhow and then nirwair, which mean He is fearless and is enemy of none; or that He is just. He is akalmurat and ajunj, or that He never dies, nor does He undergo transmigration. The next word saibhang, is again potent of its significance. It means He is self-made. At another place in the Japji the first passage of which we are discussing, we come across the following verse:

\[\text{No idols,}\]
\[\text{Formless}\]

It means: 'He cannot be set up, nor can he be created. He is self-existent and pure.' Or in other words, it means, He cannot be set up as some people hew his images out of rocks and set Him up in the temples or other places of worship with due ceremonies. The words saibhang thus condemns the practice of idol-worship among the Hindus.

Besides the attributes given above, the Sikh scripture has at several places many other attributes to give to Him. The God of Guru Nanak thus is Formless, yet He can be seen clearly:

\[\text{Nanak's view}\]

\[\text{Cunningham's view}\]

Thus writes Cunningham: "Instead of circumscribed divinity, the anthropomorphous God of Ramanand and Kabir, he loftily invokes the Lord as the one, the sole, the timeless being; the creator, the self-existent, the incomprehensible.

1. Teja Singh, 
4. See G. S., iii, pp. 58, 817, 818.
and the everlasting". And writes Frederic Pincot: "For Nanak there was no such thing as a God for the Hindus, a God for the Mohammedans, and a god or gods for the other heathen; for him there was but one God, not in the likeness of man, like Rama, not a creature of attributes and passions, like the Allah of Muhammad; but one sole, indivisible, self-existent, incomprehensible, timeless, all-prevading,—to be named, but otherwise indescribable and altogether lovely. Such was Nanak's idea of the Creator and Sustainer of the phenomenal world, and it was a conception which at once abrogated all petty distinctions of creed, and sect, and dogma, and ceremony. The realisation of such a God shatters the sophistries of the theologian and the quibblings of the dialecticians, it clears the brow from the gloom of abstruse pondering over triffles, and leaves the heart free for the exercise of human sympathies".

Dr. Trumpp views that Guru Nanak did not forbid "the Worship of other Gods on the ground of the unity of the Supreme". But Guru Nanak writes at one place: "A hundred thousands of Mohamads, a million of Brahmas, Vishnus, and a hundred thousand Ramas stand at the gate of the Most High. These all perish. God alone is immortal." This means that the worship of all, Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, Rama and the like has been condemned by Guru Nanak and Dr. Trumpp stands contradicted. But the problem is not solved. Because if Guru Nanak had condemned the worship of these different gods, as persons like Teja Singh in their anxiousness to prove Guru Nanak a revolutionary, assert, how could the hymns of Jaidev the worshipper of Krishna or Ramanand the worshipper of Vishnu, and the hymns of other such Bhaktas be included in the Granth by the later Gurus? Macauliffe forwards his views in this connection. In his opinion it was to enable the readers to have the idea of historical development of Sikh reformation, that the hymns of these Bhaktas were included. But this seems to

3. Trumpp, Adi Granth.
5. See Macauliffe, op. cit., vol I, Preface.
be an effort of putting a modern idea into Guru Arjan’s mind. Moreover the Granth being the embodiment of the Sikh Gurus and occupying rather such high place as to make the Gurus themselves give it a seat higher than theirs, it is difficult to believe that even a sentence should have been included which was opposed to the teachings of Guru Nanak. At another place Macauliffe gives a further explanation of his views: “The Hindu Bhagats for the most part began life as worshippers of idols, but by study and contemplation arrived at a system of monotheism which was appreciated by Guru Arjan.” Namdev, thus according to Macauliffe, was an idolatorous in his boyhood, condemned Hindu superstitions at manhood and began to conform to the Sikh ideas in his old age. But this also does not seem to explain the position. The correct position seems to be that Guru Arjan while compiling the Granth, was concerned with the spirit of devotion and self-surrender in the philosophy of the Bhaktas. If the idea behind the object of worship was not narrow-minded, it mattered little whether one worshipped one divinity or another. In this connection Namdev’s verses in Rag Mali Gaura are revealing. In these verses while in the beginning one may call Namdev an idolatorous, as one proceeds onward, one is bound to correct one’s view and reach the inevitable conclusion that Namdev worshipped only the omnipresent Lord and he suffered from no narrow idolatory at all.

God of the Sikh Gurus is All-prevading and Omnipresent. He is the one who Himself is the creator and Himself the created. And if this is so it matters little whether one worships Him in one form or another, for in

4. Guru Arjan writes at one place thus:

   “Himself the Lord created the creation: Himself, He is imbedded with it.

Himself He becometh the One: Himself He becometh many coloured.
Himself He pervades all: Himself is He above and beyond all.
Himself He maketh us see; His Presence; Himself He removeth Himself far.
Himself He becometh manifest: Himself is He unmanifest.”

See G. S., IV, p. 923-Var Ramkali M.S.
such a situation, as Guru Arjan writes: "He Himself is the Gopi, Himself the Krishna, Himself He Grazeth the Cows in the forest." Whatever form one worships, one can worship none but Him provided one's attitude behind all this is correct.

How to Obtain Him?

Bhai Kahn Singh quotes in his book "Ham Hindu Nahin", a verse from Guru Nanak's Hymns to prove that the Guru rejected the Hindu sacred books as useless to help in attaining God. There are indeed many more verses written by other Gurus and Bhaktos which could be construed to mean what Bhai Kahn Singh has brought Guru Nanak's verse to imply. Kabir thus writes:

"What availleth thee to read the Vedas and Puranas?
It is like loading a donkey with sandal whose perfume he valueth not."

But to give to such verses the interpretation that Bhai Kahn Singh has given, seems difficult to understand. Because Guru Nanak himself writes at one place:

"The four books and the four Vedas, which were promulgated in the world, came down from high under the orders of the Lord God."

And Kabir at another place clearly writes:

"The words of the sacred texts are as seas of milk:
For that ocean let the Guru be the churning staff:
Be thou the churner of that milk:
Why shouldst thou be despooled of thy butter."

1. See G.S., IV, p. 1034—Maru Solhas: M.S.
Why praisest thou the Lord before the worshippers of maya?
Utter thou the Name of Rama, and merge in Him."

The Creed of Guru Nanak

The fact seems to be that Guru Nanak condemned scripturalism, not scriptures. There is no doubt that the real significance of these sacred books had been forgotten when the Bhakti reformers organised their movement. A mere reading of the sacred books was supposed to be a merit high enough to get one salvation. But this was all condemned by Guru Nanak according to whom God could not be obtained without meditating and actually working on what these sacred books said.

Just as God can not be obtained by mete reading of the Vedas, similarly there is no need of going about on pilgrimages to obtain Him. Thus Guru Nanak writes:

"The Ganges, the Jamna, the meeting of these rivers at Tribeni, Prayag, the seven oceans, Alms, charity, and worship are all contained in God’s name. I recognize Him as the One God in every age. Nanak, in the month of Magh, if I repeat God’s name with great delight, I bathe at the sixty eight places of pilgrimage”

Here Dr. Banerjee seems to have taken considerable pains by forwarding several arguments to prove that the Guru in fact ‘had nothing to say against charity, penance or pilgrimage as such but denounced them as he found them in actual practice. He attacked the perversion, not the customs themselves” While we might have nothing to say against him up to this point, it looks difficult for us to understand the necessity which compelled him—after conceding that Guru Amar Das’s visit at Kurukshtra, the Jamna and the Ganges might have been undertaken to preach his

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1. Mere scripturalism is in fact condemned in the Hindu scriptures themselves. Svetatvaram Upanishad thus writes (s. n. Part 4) “of what use is the Rig Veda to one who does not know the spirit from whom the Rig Vedas come, and in whom all things abide?” Again the Katha Upanishad, Part 2, says “Not through much learning is Arunam reached, not through the intellect and sacred teaching” See further, Juan Mascaro, The Upanishads, pp. 60, 91.


teachings rather than as a pilgrim—to assert on the authority of Guru Gobind Singh that Guru Teg Bahadur did believe in going on pilgrimages because as according to Guru Gobind Singh, when he came to Prayag, "he passed his days in charity and other meritorious acts." If Guru Amar Das's visit to these places was not a pilgrimage, the mere fact that Guru Teg Bahadur passed his days in charity at Prayag could not be construed to mean that he had gone there for the sake of a pilgrimage. His purpose also might have been to preach at Prayag the gospel of Guru Nanak. But as it was his habit that wherever he went he performed meditations and did charitable acts, he might have done so at Prayag as well, especially so because the place was generally visited by a great number of beggars and other poor persons.

Any way, there seems to be no doubt in the fact, as Dr. Banerjee ages, that in the teachings of Guru Nanak pilgrimage as a means of obtaining God occupies very insignificant place, if it does occupy some, at all.

The idol-worship was also condemned as a means of obtaining God. Idols might be an aid in developing one's power of concentration, after which one might expand one's vision to realise God as formless and Omnipresent, but if their worship is taken as an end in itself and not as a means, the purpose is defeated. In this manner God was imprisoned in the temples outside of which one could commit any crime, but inside where God in the shape of idol lives, one must have an attitude of reverence and morality. There is no doubt thus that the idols had in this manner failed to serve their purpose, so far as the general mass of the people were concerned, and therefore their worship was condemned by Guru Nanak, to which we have already referred above. Kabir also condemned idol worship in his characteristic humorous manner saying that if God could be obtained by worshipping stones, he would worship mountains. Guru Arjan says in the Suhi Rog:

"The stone which man calls God,
Takes him and drowns him along with it."

1. Bachitra Natak. The actual words of Guru Gobind Singh are "abh jai Tribeni bhae Punndan din karat hitae.
2. See G. S., i. p. 314, ibid, ii. p. 473.
Nor can God be obtained by ritualism and rites, as Guru Nanak said:

"To give a feast, make a burnt offering, offer alms, perform penance and worship, and endure bodily pain for ever are all of no avail. Without God's name salvation is not obtained; the holy man obtains it by the Name."  

God can be obtained through Bhakti, which involves constant absorption in the Name, in the Lord of Love, Nam japna or simrna which has so scoffingly been translated by Trumpp as "muttering of God's name," involves in fact an eight-fold exercise, as explained at several places in the Granth. This is (1) purity of mind and body. (2) Meditation on the meaning of a hymn. (3) Keeping silent. (4) Conforming one's life and deeds to the sense of the hymns, or good action. (5) Concentration of mind. (6) Contentment and patience. (7) Faith and reverence in intellect. And finally, (8) Satsang or company of holy men. Mere mechanical or exhibitional repetition of Nam or Simran will bring no good results. The Simran may be vocal or silent, but it must involve mind internally like the back-ground music in a theatre, so that there is a sense of oneness with God. This in turn leads one to Samadhi, or the ecstatic state which in a Janamsakhi, has been described as follows:

"In the blessed State of Nam
When the self is lost to us,
We cease to think, we do not think,
No thought of pleasure, pain or grief,
Hopes and fears cease to be;
Silence deep, no sense of self,
The self is merged in the greater Self,
The little self is lost to view,
And is merged in boundless Bliss.
We rise above self-consciousness,
No feeling then of 'I amness,'
Nor of heaven, nor of earth,
Nor of any thinking thought."
Oneness only with the One.

Wedlock of the Soul and God\(^1\).

Some of the points of the eight-fold exercise may here be explained. *Satsang*, or the company of holy men as a point of exercise for obtaining God has played a very significant role in the history of the Sikhs. The *Satsang* has manifold advantage, as the Guru remarked: "The advantages of assembling together I cannot enumerate".\(^2\) The company of holy men besides being an aid in the ripening of one's spiritual thoughts, helps one in the social and organisational field as well. And this will be discussed in the next chapter.

Another point of exercise, i.e. conforming one's life and deeds to the sense of hymns, or good action, has also been laid considerable stress upon. Guru Nanak thus says: "God places salvation in good works and uprightness of conduct."\(^3\) This importance of good action in one's life has led Payne to remark: "In the doctrines of Nanak morality holds a higher place than in those of many other Hindu reformers......... Loyalty, chastity, honesty, justice, mercy, charity, and temperance are among the virtues on which vital stress is laid; while evil speaking, covetousness, anger, selfishness, extravagance, and cruelty are denounced with equal vigour. The daily practice of cleanliness, of almsgiving, and of abstinence from animal food is strictly enjoined."\(^4\) But this stress on good action must not in any way be interpreted to mean that good action without the knowledge of God will suffice. "Good actions were nothing in themselves," writes Latif, "but the knowledge of the true God was the only way to salvation."\(^5\) One's actions must be inspired by an intense desire to please God and to serve fellow-men, as Guru Arjan writes in *Gauri Mala*:

*Without pleasing God all actions are worthless.*

*Repetition of mantras, austerities, set ways of living, or deeds of merit leave us destitute even before our journey ends.*

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You won't get even half a copper, for your fasts and special programmes of life.

These things, O brother, won't do there, for the requirements of that way are different."

But despite doing all this, one can obtain God only if God Himself is pleased to grant His darshan. After making all his efforts, as Guru Nanak writes, "If it pleases God man crosses the terrible ocean." The will of God in fact is given so much importance that even a meditation on Him and repetition of his name can be done only if it pleases Him. This means as if man is quite helpless, and right or wrong whatever he does, he does it only under the will of God. Archer also has been led to write; "there is a touch of fatalism every now and then in Nanak's gospel."

But further he says that Guru Nanak's God is benevolent, and He is ever ready to grant one an opportunity for good action, only if one is sincere enough to have it. Here one gets an echo of Gita's philosophy where Krishna says: "To those who are ever devoted and worship me with love, I give that knowledge by which they may attain me"

Guru Nanak teaches one a complete self-surrender, as he says: "Surrender thyself, so mayst thou meet the Lord." Dr. Trumpp has concluded from this that in a religion where highest object of life is the extinction of individual existence, there can be no room for a system of moral duties."

There could however be nothing more absurd than this. To deny that one of the greatest objects of the Sikh Guru's teaching was the high principles of morality is to act as a blind man. In fact numerous quotations could be given from the Granth where nothing but high principles of morality have been taught. Moreover self-surrender too has here been simply misinterpreted. The relation between man and God as described at different places, should be as it is between bride and her bridegroom. Guru Nanak writes:

"She is decorated with the Guru's word; her body and

As a bride

2. See M., i, pp. 78, 87, 145.
3. Archer, The Sikhs.
5. Trumpp, op. cit., p. LXXVII
soul are with her Beloved.
With hands clasped she standeth waiting on Him, and offereth Him true supplication.
She is imbued with love of her Darling: she dwelleth in fear of True One; and, when dyed with His love, her colour is the true one.
She is called the handmaiden of the Beloved, and answereth to the name of Lali.¹
Her true affection is not sundered; the True One blendeth her with Himself²
And just as a faithful bride gets supreme pleasure in her complete surrender to her virtuous husband, a man gets supreme bliss by surrendering himself to God. Self-surrender to God here in fact means nothing more than a suppression of the earthly cravings.

The Guru teaches the killing of ego for those who desire to obtain Him. He writes: "Throw down thy heap of terrible egoism in the company of the saints; so that thou might find rest, abide in peace and blest with the sight of God."

Renunciation of the world has no place in the teachings of Guru Nanak. One is to live as a householder and live pure amidst impurities of the world. He says: "He alone will know the path who earns what he eats and gives a portion of it to others."³ And one has to kill in himself the sexual attraction, anger, covetousness, affection with attachment and arrogance to introduce purity into his life.

Guru

In the philosophy of Sikhism Guru occupies a supreme position, and without him the attainment of God is considered impossible.⁴ The necessity of Guru has been felt in all ages. Rama was sent in the Traita Yuga, Krishna in the Dwapar and Nanak in the Kaliyuga. And "Sikhism, which literally means the path of discipleship," writes Bhai Jodh

¹. The jewel of precious one.
². Macauliffe, op. cit., i, p. 268
³. See G.S., ii, pp.460,500.
⁴. Guru Nanak says: "If a hundred moons were to rise and a thousand suns to blaze, Even with this brilliance galore, without the Guru, ye all will be dismal and dark. G.S., ii, p. 456.
Singh, "lays therefore great stress upon the necessity of having a Guru."³

The qualifications that a true Guru must possess are that he should have realised God, he should believe in charity and love, he should be unselfish, he should be unattached and he should be very humble not claiming any superiority over his fellow men. Guru takes his disciple, when he has obtained Him, as his equal, nay superior to himself. Guru Nanak thus writes: "He who calls himself a Sikh, let him get up early and meditate on the Name of God." And when he does like that, "the servant Nanak prays for the dust of the feet of such disciple, who himself remembers the Lord and makes others remember Him."²

The position that Guru occupies in the Sikh scheme of religion, has been a subject of controversy. Guru Ram Das says:

"I have churned the ocean of the body, I have seen a rare thing come to view.

The Guru is God and God the Guru; Nanak there is no difference between them my brethren."³

And again, Guru Arjan says in Gauri Bavanakhi that the revered Guru is the Creator, or that he is the Supreme Brahma, the Supreme God.⁴ This raises a doubt in some minds as if the Sikh Gurus taught their Sikhs a sort of manworship. A closer study, however, dispels all such misgivings.

The Sikh idea of Guru in fact was something abstract, impersonal and continuous. We learn that everytime a Guru appointed his successor, he put five paisa and a coconut before him and fell down at his feet. This signifies that the 'Guruship' was not something concerned with the body of the person who held it. The importance was rather attached to the 'spirit' which 'descended' from one holder to the other. Guru Gobind Singh himself writes

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2. See G.S., iv, pp.1021, 1031.
in his *Bachitra Natak*:

"Nanak assumed the body of Angad
And made his religion current in the world.
Afterwards Nanak was called Amar Das.
And one lamp is lit from another.
The holy Nanak was revered as Angad.
Angad was recognised as Amar Das.
And Amar Das became Ram Das.
The pious saw this, but not the fools,
Who thought them all distinct;
But some rare person recognised that they were all one.""'}

Mohsin Fani writes" at one place that in a letter to him
Guru Harzbobind actually signed as ‘Nanak,’ and it appears,
says Dr. Banerjee that in their private correspondence all
the Gurus followed this practice*. In the *Adi Granth* too
the individual Gurus have not given their names in their
hymns, they have all used the appellation ‘Nanak’ and are
distinguished only from the number of the *Mehla* given at
the beginning of their hymns.

The doubts are completely removed when we learn that
the Sikh Gurus took special pains to see that they themselves
should not be worshipped as Krishna and Rama had been.
Guru Gobind Singh thus clearly writes in his *Bachitra Natak* : "Those who call me Supreme Lord, will go to hell."' And Guru Ram Das completely clears the position when he says:

"*The Word is the Guru and the Guru is the Word*; *in the
Word is the essence of ambrosia.*

*The Worshipper who obeyeth what the Guru’s Word
teacheth shall be saved by the Guru in person.*"'

1. M., V. pp 294-95
4. See M., V. pp. 299-300

The following verses of Guru Arjan are significant. Here the
Guru says that the Guru and God are one, so much so that
it makes no difference whether you utter Guru’s name or God’s.
Thus:

(Continued next page)
This means that it is the Guru's word, or his message regarding God which is to be taken as Guru and identified with Him, the body which utters the word, howsoever respectable personally, cannot be identified with God. The Sikh conception of Guru, thus, is something impersonal, abstract and continuous. The Sikh Guru, or the 'Word' does not die with the death of the body who utters the 'Word'. It continued after the death of Guru Nanak's body, in the body of Guru Angad and so on till the last Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. But before Guru Gobind Singh died the 'Word' was embodied in Guru Granth which still continues living. The Gurus themselves during their life-times occupied a seat only lower in the congregation than that given to the Granth.

Karma and Transmigration

So far as Karma and Transmigration are concerned, thus writes Archer: "No strictly Indian thinker or reformer during the last two thousand years has been able to ignore them or has ignored them, and Nanak was to that extent an Indian". Ravi Das thus writes in Asa in the Granth that human beings and other creatures wherever they might be, are controlled by Karma and are subject to the noose of K'ul (Death):

\[
\text{Karma}
\]

\[
\text{Eighty-four lakh type of creatures}
\]

There are supposed to be eighty-four lakh type (yonis) of creatures in the world, and of all of them a birth in the human body is supposed to be the best, as Bhai Gurdas, the St. Paul of Sikhs' a writes.

चवणिं सध नैसं निः सुित्वम स्थानं म प्रथम देवें ॥

"O my mind, utter thou the Guru's Name.
For, without the Guru, thou canst lean upon no one.
So have ever the Guru as thy only support
Whose beneficence no one can hold back. (I)
Look upon the Guru and God as one.
And accept thou whatever be His Will. G. S., iii, p. 82q—

Gond M, 5

Then again: "My Guru is all-powerful, the creature and the cause...."

G. S., iv, p. 1098—Bairo, M. 5.

1. Archer, The Sikhs, 102
2. See M., i, 124—28, 1333, 244.
The soul’s birth in the human body is his only chance of working for salvation. The *Adi Granth* gives a warning in this connection: ‘O man, you have for many births been a worm, a moth, elephant, fish, deer, bird, snake, horse, ox, tree and plant, now that you have obtained the human body which is a rare thing, you must make a good use of it. Work for your salvation.

The writings of Mrs. Annie Besant and Bishop Lead Beater reveal that one’s birth in the human body is in the process of evolution, and once a birth in the human body is taken one can not go back into the body of any other creature. But Kabir writes as if it were possible that owing to one’s bad *Karma* one might be born as a creature of four feet, two horns and dumb in speech, to get stroke upon a stroke as beatings.

The possibility perhaps is that after human birth one might go back into the body of some other creature as a result of his bad actions, as a temporary measure, but he will not have to undergo the process of evolution anew which would involve perhaps his birth in the minerals, then in plants, animals and then in the human body, as the Theosophists believe.

So far as the salvation and the union with God is concerned, Payne writes: “Whereas the Hindu regards this goal as infinitely distant, Nanak proclaimed it to be within the reach, not indeed of his followers, but of such of them as should attain to the highest merit; and he claimed the power to exempt, from transmigration, those among his disciples whom he counted as “the elect.” The possibility of exemption, however remote, was one of the most attractive features of Sikhism in the days of the Gurus and brought in

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2. *Adi Granth*, Raj Gujri chaupadas of Kabirji, p. 524,
many adherents.1"

Payne here seems to have erred on one point. The Gurus nowhere seem to have claimed the power of exemption. A man seeking salvation has to perform such acts as lead to salvation and the claim of the Gurus and for that matter of every spiritual leader is that if his followers adhere to the principles enunciated by him and tread the path laid down, they would automatically get the salvation as a fruit of their actions. Not that one may go on performing any evil action and once the Guru is pleased with him, without correcting his behaviour towards life he would exempt him from the bitter fruits of the evil actions he has already performed.

B—Fraternity

We started with the assumption that the basic Sikh philosophy could conveniently be summed up in two words: "Unity and Fraternity." We have already discussed the first word 'Unity' in detail, wherein after discussing Unity of God we explained the methods to obtain Him and the Guru's help in it. We have also discussed the fate of transmigration which awaits those who do not seek salvation and Union with God. Now we may discuss the next point, i.e. 'Fraternity,' or the 'Universal Brotherhood.'

This point in fact does not require much of discussion, as Bhai Jodh Singh writes: "Brotherhood of man is the necessary outcome of the Unity of Godhood." "There is one Father," says Guru Nanak, "and we are children of One." There should therefore be no difference between one child of a father and another. Even if one of them is rich and the other a poor, one of them is of white complexion and the other of black, they are all the children of one Father, and hence brothers to one another. As the Guru again writes: "under the Guru's instruction regard all men as equal, since God's light is contained in the heart of each."2

The principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' had not been enunciated for the first time by Guru Nanak. It had been preached by other spiritual leaders, but in Sikhism it came

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3. d., i., p. 332.
to acquire a very special significance. Dr. Banerjee has taken considerable pains to explain that the principle of brotherhood enunciated by Guru Nanak came to acquire special meanings in the hands of his successors, and became more and more communal in its import and limited in its application. He forwards several arguments in this connection. Thus he quotes Guru Ram Das's utterances, such as "God himself is the protector of the true Guru and will save all who follow him," and:

"To those who obey the will of the Guru, I am ever a sacrifice;
I am ever a sacrifice to those who have served the Guru."

and implies that such utterances established position of the Sikhs distinct from that of the common mass of people because according to the above quoted verses, God will protect those alone who follow the Sikh Guru. Thus he says, the "love of mankind was narrowed down to love of the followers of Nanak." Further he adds: "Guru Ram Das says, the Guru is Sikh and the Sikh who practises the Guru's word is at one with the Guru and Bhai Gurdas asserts again and again that the Guru is the Sikh the Sikh is the Guru, there is no difference between them." And he concludes from such writings that the individual Sikh was further exalted to a position almost equal to that of the Guru himself. A special status was given to the Sikhs and they became communal in its application and thus in their belief of 'Universal Brotherhood.'

With due deference to Dr. Banerjee's intellectual eminence, we are, however, astonished at the way he has dabbled with the material available with his unavailing effort to prove that the successors of Guru Nanak limited his principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' to a communal brotherhood among the Sikhs alone. There are in fact numerous verses composed by Guru Nanak's successors which can be very easily compared to the one of Guru Nanak wherein he says: "under the Guru's instructions regard all men as equal since God's light is contained in the heart of each," 2 to

2. M., I. p. 332
prove that they did not deviate from the original principle of 'Universal Brotherhood' laid down by Guru Nanak. Guru Ram Das himself thus says at one place that 'Everyone belongeth to The; Thou art every one's ;Thou art the capital stock of all.'

What Dr. Banerjee has failed here to understand is that when the Guru says that Guru is the Sikh and the Sikh is the Guru, he does not mean to imply that every person who became the Guru's follower was the Sikh between whom and the Guru there was no difference. The Sikh here, in fact is taken to mean a perfect disciple, a true Sikh who has left off the earthly cravings and surrendered himself to the Guru. And when a person becomes a true Sikh, he becomes a saint of God even with the Guru, and is equal to any saint of this status of whatsoever sect or creed he might be. Guru Ram Das for instance writes at one place:

"I meditate on God's excellence and name,
And in company with the saints I cause His name to dwell
In my heart."

"Blessings on those men of God who know Him.
I shall go and ask them to tell me of God."

And again he writes:

"They who never forget God are perfect and distinguished.
They obtain the true Guru from the merciful one and fix
their thought on him night and day."

In all the above quoted verses no mention of the word Sikh is made, and the Guru says that those "who never forget God," or "those men of God who know Him" are the persons whose society he would seek. Here no mention is made that these persons must be the followers of the Sikh Guru and it would be foolish to try to construe these meanings from such verses. That when the Guru says that there is no difference between Guru and a Sikh, he means by Sikh here only a true saint of God and not a common follower of the Guru who might profess to "bow him and bow before him", is further proved from the following hymn:

3. Ibid, p.309
"The apostates go and bow to the Guru, but their hearts are base and filled with falsehood.

When the Guru saith to them 'Rise and work, my brethren,' they go and squeeze themselves in somewhere like cranes.

The true Guru abideth among his disciples; he picketh out and expelleth the monkeys.'"

Moreover when Guru Ramdas said; "To those who obey the will of the Guru, I am ever a sacrifice," he did not mean here to magnify his own self and respect only those who respected him, thus distinguishing such persons into a separate brotherhood. Guru of the Sikhs is something impersonal and abstract, as Dr. Banerjee himself agrees. Guru of the Sikh is the message concerning God, or the 'Word' and not the one who utters the 'Word', and whosoever obeys this 'Word' has the Guru as his sacrifice. The Guru is a sacrifice, again, not only to those who follow the 'Word' uttered by him alone, he is a sacrifice to all those who do not forget God, as is obvious from the verses above. It is thus clear that the 'Universal Brotherhood' preached by Guru Nanak was in no way limited by his successors to a communal brotherhood among the Sikhs themselves, as Dr. Banerjee tries to prove.

Still, however, with the passage of time brotherhood among the Sikhs did come to acquire a special meaning, and this happened not as a result of some changed approach of the Sikh Gurus to the subject, it happened rather as a result of the peculiar circumstances to which they were subjected. When their Gurus were persecuted and subjected to harassment, they developed some sort of special social affinity among themselves, as any community in such circumstances would do. And this resulted into the development of the Sikh commonwealth principle. But here again, at least in the time of the Sikh Gurus, they fought more for others than for themselves and they fought more to bring home in the minds of the authorities the idea of 'Universal Brotherhood'.

1. Ibid., p. 307
and oneness between the Hindus and the Muslims than for their own communal brotherhood. It is only later on after the death of Banda Bahadur that the Sikhs became self-seekers and the original principles of the Universal Brotherhood were forgotten. But here again, and even in the time of Ranjit Singh, the policy of toleration towards the others was kept as the highest principle of the Sikh scheme of life.

We here, however, are concerned with what Guru Nanak himself preached and what his followers propounded, and we may quote Sir Charles Gough in this connection. Guru Nanak, he says, "penetrated beneath the crust of observances and conventions and found the root of the matter in the Unity of God and equality of men before him." And as Mr. Gregor writes: "The precepts of Nanak were those of peace with all mankind." According to Griffin: "There is much in the character and teaching of Nanak which reminds the student of the life and teaching of the greatest Buddhist reformer, whose devotion to the cause of humanity and the general enlightenment of whose doctrine have had so vast an influence on a quarter of the human race."

C—The Moral Duties.

In the end we might here give a few references regarding the moral duties enjoined upon man in the Sikh religion, to prove the absurdity of Dr. Trumpp's observation that "in a religion where highest object of life is the extinction of individual existence, there can be no room for a system of moral duties." Regarding the virtuous it is said:

"Day and night should I remain happy,
If I could get the dust of the feet of the virtuous."

Regarding Truth:

Truth is higher than everything,
But higher than truth is true living."

1. Gough, Sir Charles and Innes, The Sikhs and Sikh Wars, VIII—IX.
4. Trumpp, op. cit., LXXVII.
Silence:

"Where speech fails,
It is better to be silent."

Passions:

"Call him a perfect fool,
Who has enslaved himself to passions, greed, lust and pride."

Gambling:

"Gambling is all in vain."

Stealing:

"Nanak, what rightly belongs to others,
Is forbidden as pork to a Muslim and beef to a Hindu."

Intoxication:

"By drinking liquor,
One puts oneself to much misery."

Regarding the falling status of women in society:

"Why call her an evil,
Who gives birth to kings and great men?"

And regarding Prostitutes:

"The prostitute sins without compunction
She commits adultery without shame."

Encouragement of widow-marriage, condemnation of Sati were all done by the Sikh Gurus. They preached simplicity of life, early rising, meditation on Name and honest living:

"Rise early before the day breaks,
And meditate on the glory of the true Name."

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1. Adi Granth, Asa M. 1, p 473; Gauri Sukhasati, M. S., Ashtapadi, pp. 268-69; G. S., op. cit., Vol. 1, p 300 etc. etc.
CHAPTER V

GURU NANAK
A CHARACTER ESTIMATE

Revolutionary or a Reformer?

Much has been said and written regarding whether Guru Nanak was a revolutionary or a mere reformer. Dr. Banerjee, the author of *Evolution of the Khalsa* has laboured very hard to prove that whatever Guru Nanak said and did against the established institutions of the Hindu or the Mohammedan society “has to be taken more as a criticism than as a constructive pronouncement, as an assertion more negative than positive in its import.” We admit that it has made in our mind a complete mess of ‘means’ and ‘end’ when Dr. Banerjee tries to distinguish between them in this connection by saying that the “Guru was never tired of exposing the futility of mere forms and names without the ‘essentials implied therein.’” What Dr. Banerjee means to say is that Guru Nanak agreed with the Hindus that their Vedas were venerable and beneficial, but he disagreed with them as to how to draw benefit from them. Guru Nanak agreed with the Hindus that their divinities such as Rama and Krishna were to be praised, but he disagreed on their methods in the fact that the Hindus regarded them as creators and not as created. That is, in their “end” the Guru agreed with them, but on the “means” they adopted to achieve that end, he disagreed. Up to this point we have no dispute with Dr. Banerjee. But our utter astonishment arises when he tries to conclude from the above that, “there is no satisfactory evidence to show that he (Guru Nanak) intended to overturn the social order.” The serious mistake that Dr. Banerjee seems to have committed is, that he has based the Hindu social order
on the above mentioned "end" rather than basing on "means". He has completely failed to perceive that the Hindu society in its peculiar set up, has always been distinguished by its religious practices, or means and not by its religious aim or end. Aim of the most noble of the Hindu scriptures has been common with the aim of the Christian Bible, and to that extent with that of the Quran, because they all believe in the essence i.e. the Unity of God. Where the Hindus differ from them is on the "means" or the practices through which that religious aim or "end" can be obtained, and this in its peculiar set up determines the Hindu social order. Clearly thus, if Guru Nanak wanted to attack the Hindu social order, he had to attack the "means", and not the "end" in which he had no difference. And Dr. Banerjee is completely wrong in assuming that since he did not attack the "end", there was nothing to "show that he intended to overturn the social order".

Dr. Banerjee has discussed Guru Nanak's attitude towards the existing Hindu caste system at length and has very confidently concluded that "there is no solid ground to contend that Guru Nanak had attempted the abolition of the caste-system." He quotes Guru Nanak's observations on the sacred Hindu thread (janeu) and some verses regarding kitchen from Asa di War as follows:

"Out of the cotton of mercy make threads of temperance, and twisting them with Righteous seal tie in them the knot of continence.

And:

"There is only one kitchen of the Lord and none other. No other kitchen can work, nor can it remain long in the world."

And argues that if in the second case the Guru was not condemning the setting up of kitchens and was simply praising the Lord in his characteristic manner, it could never be said that he condemned the wearing of the sacred

1. See Banerjee, op. cit, VoI I, Chapter IV. The whole chapter makes an interesting reading.
2. Ibid, p. 123
thread in the first case and thereby tried to destroy the caste institution. Dr. Banerjee, however, does not fail in quoting some more verses where the Guru's attitude towards this institution is more manifest. Thus:

"Castes are folly, names are folly;
All creatures have one shelter, that of God".

And again:

"Caste hath no power in the next world, there is a new order of beings:
They whose accounts are honoured are the good."

But here, quoting some more verses which hardly justify their being quoted in the manner he has done he concludes that "it seems essential that we should recognise a distinction between caste and caste-pride. The Guru had no mercy for the latter." And again he says: The Guru "used his lash vigorously on the pride of caste and the pride of name but his remarks hardly entitle us to conclude that he wanted a total destruction of the entire social system." Here again it seems utterly difficult to follow Dr. Banerjee's argument. We do not understand how one can distinguish between caste and caste-pride and say that if the caste-pride is removed the caste still continues. It hardly needs be said that it is caste-pride which forbids a man of higher caste to marry in the family of a lower caste however high economic status that family might possess. Again it is the caste-pride which forbids them from eating together and living together. If the caste-pride is removed and the high and the low castes intermarry between them, eat together and live together, where shall the caste itself remain? It is absurd thus to assert that when Guru Nanak censured caste-pride, it amounted to no censure of the institution of caste itself.

He forwards more arguments and quotes Suraj Prakash in one of them saying that on one occasion Guru Gobind Singh asked for some thread to tie up his sword-belt. Daya

1. Ibid., p. 120, Quoting M., i, p. 278.
2. Ibid., p. 120, Quoting M., i, p. 223, Sloke IV.
3. Ibid., p. 121.
4. Ibid., p. 122.
Singh, the first of the Guru's disciples under the new system of initiation by Pahul, was present there and he at once tore off his janeu and offered it to the Guru. And Dr Banerjee finds in it a support for his assertions that "there is no solid ground to contend that Guru Nanak had attempted the abolition of the caste-system," because had he done that the Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh should definitely not have continued wearing the janeu even under his new system.¹ We do not know whether Suraj Prakash is correct in this respect or not, and even if it is correct, we do not know as to what was the exact significance of Daya Singh continuing to wear the janeu. But the one point over which we may express an extreme surprise is the fact that Dr. Bannerjee has been completely callous in refusing to remember here the fact that in Guru Gobind Singh's new system at least, the caste distinctions had been completely abolished and the persons from the lowest castes of nail-cutters, sweepers and weavers were amongst his first initiates at whose hands every Sikh of the Guru to howsoever high caste he might have belonged, craved to have something to eat or drink. A more violent censure or an attack of the caste institution one could never think of, and if even under these circumstances the persons like Daya Singh continued wearing a janeo, we refuse to agree that the janeo here should have been a representative of the cursed institution. What Dr. Banerjee seems to have done is that he has adopted one line of discussion and without sifting the facts against his position he has woven a fabric of arguments which is so beautiful and attractive from outside, yet from inside it is fallacious and simply obtrusive.

We have no intention to prove that Guru Nanak was a revolutionary who wanted to destroy with one stroke of pen all the cherished institutions of the old Hindu society. Yet we have no hesitation in saying that Guru Nanak's methods and practices were much different from those of the other exponents of the Bhakti Movement. And if the Guru was actually not a revolutionary, he did sow the seeds of a revolution.

1. Ibid, p. 123
While we may not agree with Dr. Narang that the religious movements that preceded Nanak, "were more or less, all sectarian, ritualistic, narrow-minded and bigoted" because Kabir and Ramanand had preceded the Guru and their verses were included in the Adi Granth, yet there is no doubt that the Guru was more violent against the existing social evils than even Kabir and Ramanand had been, and he was more constructive than them, in this respect, as we shall presently see.

Further, we may not agree with Dr. G.C. Narang that with the exception of Vallabhadhacharya all the preceding Bhakti reformers were of other-worldly character, were convinced of the nothingness of this world and were in favour of renouncing it instead of living as householder’s life, because Nityananda, for instance, who was one of the principal propagators of Chaitanya’s teachings, did marry late in life and settle down as a householder. Yet we must agree with Cunningham regarding the other Bhakti reformers that they “perfected form of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations, and their sects remain to this day as they left them.” “It was,” as he adds, “reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform”, and to lay the foundations on which Guru Gobind Singh erected a nation. Guru Nanak was more practical than others because he refused to appoint as his successor his eldest son Sri Chand who was of other worldly character and required a successor who could carry on his mission as a householder.

It may not be believed that Guru Nanak alone was non-sectarian who sought to strip religion of mythology, because persons like Kabir also did it before him; yet in his preachings and practices Guru Nanak was more emphatic than any one else had been.

Guru Nanak did not utter only a few words in a mild form against the existing institution of caste, as Dr. Banerjee would like us to have it. He rather condemned it most

2. Ibid. p. 22.
3. Cunningham, op. cit, p. 34.
emphatically:

हैव कँग्रे हैव कही।
पहँचे सीमा हिया हारे।

"Castes are folly, names are folly:
All creatures have one shelter, that of God." ⁶²

Not only that, he took certain solid steps also to see that the caste institution was really uprooted, and of these the other Bhakti reformers could never think. His foundation of the institution of langar or community kitchen at Kartarpur of which we will have more opportunities to speak in the following chapters, was a step towards this direction. Whereas on the one hand the langar was proposed to be a refuge for the poor and the destitute, on the other hand it was to work as an effective machinery to level up the society. Here all the Sikhs of the Guru and his court had to sit squatting together, and eat together whether they belonged to one caste or the other or to one community, to one religion or the other. Partaking of food in the kitchen was declared compulsory during the time of Guru Nanak's successors for those who wanted to see the Guru. And Kings and paupers sat alike to receive the ambrosia. Even Akbar, a mighty Emperor and a Muslim, had to do the same before he could meet Guru Amar Das in 1565, to prove effectively the futility of Dr. Banerjee's point that Guru Nanak did nothing solid against the caste system.

And again, by founding the city of Kartarpur on the banks of the Ravi, Guru Nanak founded a colony where everybody, rich and high and poor and lowly, had to do one or the other of the manual jobs. The Guru himself ploughed his lands and reaped his crops and everybody worked in the kitchen cleaning utensils, cooking food and fetching water. One could think of no step more solid and more emphatic to bring the people of different castes together. The langar gave an opening to the Sikh charities and together with this colony of the God-fearing men, gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to develop closer social contacts and thus intentionally or unintentionally, worked as a seed.

1. Adi Granth, Sri, Rag ki War, M. L.
2. M. L., I, p. 278
for the future Sikh nation and thus for a revolution.

**Sangat System**

Another step of the Guru which worked as a seed of revolution was his organisation of the *Sangat System*, *Satsang* or an assembly of holy men. It had, as we have already discussed, manifold advantage. As the Guru remarked "The advantages of assembling together I cannot enumerate." The company of holy men, besides being an aid in the ripening of one's spiritual thoughts, helps one in the social and organisational field as well. As Dr. Ganda Singh writes, Guru Nanak "felt that the real cause of the misery of the people was their disunity born of diversity of belief." Therefore, wherever Guru Nanak went, he left behind him a *Sangat* or an association of his followers with the instruction that they should build a *gurdwara*, or a Sikh temple (literally, house of the Guru) of their own where they should meet regularly and sing the hymns. As a result of his travels to different parts of the country and as a result of the activites of his successors there sprang up all over the country a network of temples and centres of Sikh missionary activities. Such centres were thus established in Kamrup (Assam), Bihar, Cuttack, Surat, Johar (Sabthu), Nanakmata in the Kumaon Hills, Kathmandu, Junagarh, Jalalabad, also in Kabul, Persian Gulf area and at many other places. Although all of the incumbents of these centres are not very much conversant with the Sikh thought and scripture, yet many of the centres abroad still exist intact despite a long isolation. Some *Sангатs* seem to have been founded in the time of Guru Teg Bahadur, in Colombo, Rameswaram, Madras, Satur, Kanjililab, Adilabad in Hyderabad (Deccan), Mirzapur, Chittagong and Dhubri in Assam etc., where some autograph letters of Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh also exist. Bhai Gurdas in his 11th *War*, gives a list of some prominent Sikhs in places such as *Kabul*, *Kashmir*, Sirhind, Thanesar, Delhi, Fatehpur Sikri, *Angra*, Ujjain, Burhanpur, Gujrat, Lucknow, *Jaunpur*, Pryagraj, Patna, Rajmahal

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1. See G.S. iii, p. 886; Guru Arjan also says: The assembly of the saints is a garden, in which are shady trees of immense girth. And they yield the fruit of the Nectar Name: *Asa M.* 5. G. S. ii, p. 379.
and Dacca. We also get some information regarding the Sikh Sangats and temples in the Southern India and Ceylon, from a story regarding a Sikh's travel in the Deccan, called 
Hakikat rah Mugam, in an old manuscript copy of the Holy 
Granth written in 1675. The city of Benaras was known in 
the time of Guru Gobind Singh as the "garrison of the 
Guru," as it is referred to in an autograph letter of his wife, 
Mata Sahib Deva, still preserved in a Sikh gurdwara at 
Benaras.

Each of these Sangats was placed in the charge of a 
leader whose duty it was to preach the religion of Guru 
Nanak and to remain in contact with the Guru in the centre. 
Thus different Sikhs were appointed to preach the Sikh phi-
losophy in the different parts of the country. Bhai Laloo pre-
ached in the north, while Sheikh Sajjan in the south-west of 
the Punjab. At Benaras the preacher-in-charge was Gopal 
Das in Kirti pur, Budhan Shah; in Bushahir, Jhanda 
Badi; in Mahisar Mahi; in Jagannath Puri, Kaljug; Salis 
Rai in Patna and Behar; Raja Shiv Nabhi in Ceylon and 
Devlut in Lushai (Tibet).

As the Guru's presence in the Punjab became a con-
stant necessity, the missionary activities in the far lying 
places slackened. Guru Amar Das re-organised them under 
the name of Manji system, and in the time of Guru Arjan 
they were organised into a Masand system, as it will be dis-
cussed in the subsequent chapters relating to these Gurus.

As the time passed, these Sikh Sangats, or congregations 
gathered greater and greater sanctity till the Guru and the 
Sangat were merged into each other. Bhai Gurdas wrote for 
instance: "Where there is a single Sikh he is one; the two 
form a holy association; while three or five collect 
together is God himself." Guru Ram Das declared: "The Guru 
himself is a Sikh, and the Sikh who repeats the Word given 
by the Guru, is at one with the Guru." It was to respect 
the wishes of the Sikhs of Delhi that Guru Arjan refused the 
hand of Chandu's daughter for his son Hargobind thus 
entailing upon himself a lot of trouble and sacrifice. When

1. Gurdas, War, XIII, 19
Guru Gobind Singh baptised the first five Sikhs he stood in suppliant attitude to be himself baptised at their hands, and later on promised that wherever five of the true Sikhs came together there he himself would be. The proverbial 'five' were vested with a high authority so much so that the Guru himself was considered to be inferior in status to them. Thus once when to test the discernment of the Sikhs Guru Gobind Singh lowered his arrow in salute before the tomb of a saint, he had to pay a fine of Rs. 125 - imposed on him by the 'five'. And at Machhiwara, being threatened by an attack of a surging mass of Mughal army, it was under the order of the 'Five' Sikhs, the Panjpyaras, that the Guru had to escape under the cover of a night.

After the death of Banda Bahadur the Sikhs organised into a body known as Gurmata which was dissolved in 1805 in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The part the Gurmata and the misi-organisation played in giving a death blow to the tottering Mughal empire, in damming the flood of Durani's invasions across the Indus and in clearing the way for the establishment of the Sikh rule, will be a subject of our subsequent discussions.

It is clear thus that the step taken by Guru Nanak in establishing Sangats at different places was very potent of significance. In its spiritual sense it helped the Sikhs in maturing their beliefs on the lines laid down by the Guru; in its social sense it gave opportunity to the people of all castes and creeds to meet together and sit together as equals; and in its political sense it developed among the Sikhs strong democratic traditions and gave to the Sikhs the basic units of their political organisation. If we consider the part that the system founded by Guru Nanak played in the history of the Sikhs and in that of the Punjab, we will have to agree that the Guru's action was nothing short of a seed of a great revolution which changed the very face of this country's history. Nobody can say what the Abdalis should have done if the flood of their invasions had not been rolled back by the Sikhs into their own country. But for this the subsequent history of India should have been different from

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1. This will be discussed in detail in the Constitution of Gurmata in the following pages.
what actually it has been.

Guru Nanak left his teachings in the shape of verses and thus under the cloak of poetic metres making it well nigh impossible for anyone to adulterate them with spurious insertions. This also laid down the foundation of a separate Sikh scripture which was later on compiled by Guru Arjan and which helped the Sikhs in establishing their separate entity. Moreover by preaching in easy language he made it possible for his message to reach far and wide, and his language later on became the language of the Sikhs.

The hour of Guru Nanak’s birth “was an hour of crisis for the calmly flowing stream of the Indian culture which had never been subjected to such a severe stress and storm.”

The political system at the time, as we have already seen, was a challenge even to the basic selfrespect of man. Guru Nanak did not prove himself in such circumstances to be a mere hermit. He openly declared against the tyranny of the degenerate Lodhi rulers:

“Kings are butchers, cruelty their Knife.
Dharma or the sense of duty has taken wings and vanished.”

And when Babur invaded India, shed a lot of innocent blood and established his rule, the Guru declared in his poignant verses:

“When Babur’s rule was proclaimed no one could eat his food.

If a powerful person were to attack another powerful person, there shall be no anger in my mind.

But if a ferocious lion falls upon a herd of cattle, the master of the herd should show his manliness.”

It was this open condemnation of the prevailing political debauchery which distinguished Guru Nanak from the other Bhakti reformers and prepared the way for the future clash between the Mughals and the Sikhs. It was a lesson to the Sikhs that they would not sit down like a rec-
luse and saints closing their eyes towards what was happening in the country. They would rather challenge the evil and sacrifice their lives as Guru Teg Bahadur and Bhai Mati Das had done to eradicate it. Such utterances of the Guru added political element to the Sikh character which developed slowly but surely into a separate raj of their own, however unconscious of it the Sikh Gurus themselves might have been.

In fact, says Dr. G. C. Narang: “After centuries of subjection, Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise his voice against tyranny and oppression.” This voice later on developed into a clash between the Mughals and Guru Hargobind and yet later on between Mughals and Guru Gobind Singh which changed the Sikhs into Singhis, a nation of lions, the Khalsa.

And again, Guru Nanak preached his message on a soil and among the people who were bound to have their effect upon the flow and the character of the Guru’s philosophy itself. Just as Buddhism changed from its original character when it reached China and Japan, the Bhakti Movement was changed in its character when it travelled from the south to the north into the Punjab through Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak’s conversion to his faith of a great mass of the Punjabi Jats, the flower of the country’s population, was bound to have a far-reaching effect on the subsequent development of the Sikh character. The Jats being a warrior race, they helped in converting the Sikhs into a martial race.

And then by appointing a successor in Guru Angad, he at once established the possibility of his preachings bearing a better fruit than those of the other Bhakti reformers. The Sikhs were to get the privilege of having a mature spiritual guidance for quite a few generations to come. And they had better possibilities of maturing their character as a distinct nation. Moreover the Guru’s appointment of Bhai Lehna as his successor and rejection of his eldest son Sri Chand, a man of other worldly character, was itself a step potent of a significance it established once for all that the Sikhs

were not going to prove hermits, renouncing the world and going over to the forests and the mountains to obtain God. The Sikhs were rather going to be a sect of house-holders, accepting the challenges of life and trying to live pure amidst impurities.

Thus it is obvious that even if we agree that Guru Nanak was not a revolutionary, he was definitely a more violent reformer than other Bhakti leaders and he did lay the foundations of a revolution which was completed by the time of Guru Gobind Singh.

Guru Nanak was born great. Although we do get references in the Janamsakhis to the effect that he was sent to a Persian and to a Hindi school for education when he was a child, we do not get any evidence from anywhere that he remained in any school for some considerable time. Yet his poetry breathes in high knowledge of the most learned and versed in mythology phiology, science and arts. Dr. G.C. Narang thus writes: "He did not teach anything new, but whatever he said bore the impress of originality, and displayed the genius of a master mind...... he did not quote Manu and Vyasa or the Koran and Hadis, but whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong commonsense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents."  

He was great as a poet. As Khushwant Singh writes: "He was the first to give the rustic language of the Punjab a literary form and finish." He developed this language and introduced new elements into it. His main themes were ethics and supernatural philosophy, yet his methods were so simple, easy and attractive that no person with a sense of beauty could help appreciating them. He compares separation of man from God to separation of a bride from her spouse. The nights of such a bride are sleepless and painful. She wears thin and neither her ornaments, nor dainty food appeal her. She is intoxicated with the wine of youth, yet her breasts yield milk no more. She has no peace.

1. Narang, G.C., Transformation of Sikhism p.23
2. Spokesman, No. 1957 (Guru Nanak Number), New Delhi.
"Ask thou thy mates, O Bride," says the Guru, "is there a home without the groom? Without the Name, there is no love that bringeth thee peace."

His high sense of beauty and his power of observation can be perceived when he compares sun and moon to lamps of God; and firmament, stars and wind are all pressed into His service. He says:

"The sun and moon, O Lord, are Thy lamps; the firmament Thy salver; the orbs of the stars the pearls encased in it.

The perfume of the sandal is Thine incense, the wind is Thy fan, all the forests are Thy flowers, O Lord of light."

The method of Guru Nanak's composition was ingenious. Whenever he discussed with great theologians he took notes of dialogues and later converted them into poetry. His manner of writing is effective and whenever he wants to say something serious he prepares the mind of his reader for it. He questions, and when one is in the receptive mood he himself answers, as:

"What is the fear by fearing which the fear of death may take fright?"

In the later verse comes the answer:

"The soul dieth not: neither is it drowned, it is saved through fear of God."

The types of verse he used varied, and his similes and metaphors which will be a part of our discussion in the chapter on the Adi Granth, were superb.

Guru Nanak was a strong opponent of imperialism: political, religious, social and economic. He openly challenged the Lodhi rulers and condemned the invasions of Babur. We have discussed all this. While condemning the destruction brought about by Babur he did not hesitate in censuring even the Almighty who considered Khurasan as his own but sent Mughals, the messengers of death, to India.

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3. M. i, p. 78.
So much destruction was wrought, but He did not feel pity.

2. Religious

He condemned most nakedly and violently the exploitation of the poor, Hindu as well as the Muslim, at the hands of the Brahmans and the Mulas in the name of God and religion. Thus, he says:

"Look at the mockery of religion: That the man-eaters are differing prayers to God after the Muslim fashion; And the butchers are putting on the sacred thread of Hinduism."

3. Social

The social imperialism of castes and creeds was condemned by the Guru as emphatically as anything else, and he said:

"We declare it openly that We neither belong to the so-called high class; Nor to the middle or low class We are but people of God; And have taken refuge with Him and Him alone."

4. Economic

The economic imperialism of capitalists and the moneyed classes was not spared either:

"Many people have become misled because of worship of money; And many have become lost and dead through it."

And again:

"My stand is with the lowly, What have I to do with the rich and vainly great."

The story of Malik Bhago and Lalo in this connection may not be repeated.

2. Ibid. Asa Ki War, Shaloka XVI.
Guru Nanak was a great statesman indeed. He saw the world suffering under imperialism of different types, and full of evils. Instead of renouncing it and going over to jungles, he challenged the imperialists, political, religious, social and economic and condemned them most nakedly.

Guru Nanak was a great Humanist and a great Prophet of Peace and Sympathy. T. L. Vaswani writes in his own characteristic manner:

"Lo! like a mighty host
Moves the Guru's Brotherhood in God!
Brothers! We are treading
Where the saints have trod:
We are not divided:
All one body we,
One in hope and vision,
One in faith and charity!"

The Guru was a great Prophet of Sweetness and Humility. Bhagat Singh writes: "Cardinal Newmann, in describing the traits of gentleman, gave the most prominent place to two virtues—of sweetness and humility. Precisely these were two the twin virtues, which Guru Nanak, not only preached in his great utterances, but also practised in personal life, and that, to such an extent that one can most befittingly call him a Prophet of Sweetness and Humility."

Thus did the Guru say:

"Unsweet and sour words,
Impair one's body and mind,
A sour-tongued person suffereth in calling and repute
He loseth worldly esteem.
Nay a fool is he; fit for chastisement."

And regarding humility the Guru says:

"I am thelowest amongst the lowly, as low as one can be
My associates are the lowly;
And with the great I have nothing to do.
For where the lowly are looked after,
There! There verily is the gift of thy grace."

Guru Nanak had a very remarkable and kindly sense of humour with which he got the people to see the ridiculous without being ridiculed. He understood the psychology of the people and touched it at its tenderest spot. At Hardwar thus, instead of condemning the people 'straightway, when they were throwing water towards the east so as to reach their ancestors, he began to throw the water towards the west so as to reach his fields at Kartarpur. And when ridiculed, he asked that if his water could not reach a distance about 300 miles from Hardwar, how could their water reach their ancestors who existed on earth no more? And thereafter he began to give his sermon. At Mecca he lay with his feet towards K'aba to draw home his point that God was omnipresent. All this we have already discussed. His sense of humour is displayed in the following of his verses:

"When I am quiet, they say I have no knowledge;
When I speak, I talk too much they assert;
When I sit, they say an unwelcome guest hast come to stay.
When I depart, they cry he deserted his family and ran away.
When I bow, they say of fear does he pray.
Nothing can I do that in peace may I live.
Preserve thy servant's honour.
O Lord sublime, here and hereafter."}

Guru Nanak was a master-musician who is supposed to have invented the Rahab. He sang his compositions in Ragas or melodies and is said to be the first man who preached his message in musical measures. We have instances such as that of Sajjan Thug, when men were converted merely under the influence of his touching melody. In the Adi Granth, the Guru is shown to have used as many as 31 Ragas, but he is said to have known almost all of them. And this in itself was indeed a great attainment of the Guru. Today Kirtan or the signing of the Guru's hymns is an

1. See M., i, p. 80.
essential part of Sikh congregations and the ball towards this was set rolling by Guru Nanak himself.

A great traveller and an adventurer, he went on foot all over the length and breadth of India which he is first to have called Hindustan in his compositions. In his 25 years of wanderings he traversed the whole of this country and a large part of Asia, reaching Baghdad and Mecca. And wherever he moved, he did so without a single copper in his pocket.

“As a language maker he occupies a unique place and it is a marvel how he fashioned countless words of superb beauty and melody whose kinship with simple Punjabi words is self-evident”.

A multifaced genius. The most learned man of his time. God’s own inspired poet, with God-intoxicated, God-immersed and God-filled poetry of alluring lilt and rhythm, grace of style and beauty of diction. A master-musician, a great philosopher and a great saint. Yet Guru Nanak was a great householder who did not forget the duties of a family life. He married and brought up a family. He loved Bibi Nanki as a brother loves his sister. He loved his sons as a father loves his children. Yet he did not permit the family attachments to interfere into his mission and impair his sense of merit and impartiality. Sri Chand was his eldest son, but Lehna with whom he had no family affiliation was a man of merit. The Guru preferred merit to the family tie and handed over the torch of his mission to the latter and not to the former.

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CHAPTER VI
TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION
OF SIKHISM
A—GURU ANGAD

His Life—I

Bhai Lehna who later became Guru Angad was son of a petty trader called Pheri. He was born at the village Harike in the Ferozepur district on March 31, 1504 and grew up to be a man of religious inclination under the supervision of his mother named Sabhrai. Bhai Lehna married in due time a lady called Khiyi. The lady belonged to Matte-di-Sarai, the ancestral village of Pheri who having grown weary of Harike decided to move back to that village. Soon, however, with Babur’s invasion Matte—di-Sarai was sacked by the Mughals and Baloches, and Pheri along with his family moved to Khadur, now a famous Sikh town in the district Amritsar. When Pheri died the entire burden of the family now fell upon Lehna.

Lehna is said to have been a regular visitor to Jawalamukhi to which place he used to conduct his family and a company of pilgrims every year. At Khadur, however, once he happened to hear a Sikh of Guru Nanak, called Jodha, who was singing the following hymns of Asa ki War:

“Ever remember that Lord by worshipping whom thou shalt find happiness,

Why hast thou done such evil deeds as thou shalt suffer for?[

Do absolutely nothing evil; look well before thee.

So throw the dice that thou mayest not lose with the Lord,

Nay, that thou mayest gain some profit!”

1 M . ii . p . 2

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This awakened the emotions of Lehna and he decided to visit Guru Nanak at Kartarpur on his way to Jawalamukhi. When, however, he met Guru Nanak he was so much impressed by his teachings that he threw away the bells with which he was to dance before the goddess at Jawalamukhi and decided to remain with him.

Several stories are told regarding Bhai Lehna's obedience and devotion to the Guru. Once on the Guru's bidding Lehna carried a load of wet and dripping grass full of mud from the Guru's fields to his home. His clothes were soiled, and when the Guru's wife asked if it was proper to impose such menial labour on a guest, the Guru replied that there was no mud on Lehna's clothes, it was rather saffron of the court of God. And according to orthodox Sikh accounts, the mud was actually converted into saffron. At another time when it was heavily raining in a very cold winter night, a part of the wall of the Guru's house fell. When everybody else, even the sons of the Guru, refused, Lehna got up immediately and repaired it. The Guru, however, professing to be dissatisfied asked Lehna to demolish it and build once again. Lehna did it, but again the Guru said it was crooked and got it razed to the ground. It was built for the third time and demolished again, and Lehna built it for the fourth time with as keen devotion as ever and the Guru's sons laughed at him and called him a fool.

The Guru was putting Lehna to trials to test his sincerity and to convince his sons that they were unfit to succeed him. Once while bathing the cup in his hand slipped and fell into a deep sink. While his sons refused, Lehna put his hand into the dirty water and restored the cup to the Guru. Again, on a very cold night, while everyone else refused Lehna washed the Guru's clothes. And his humility went to such an extent that once the Guru asked his sons to eat a human carcase, while they refused Lehna immediately jumped forward and removed the sheet to find to his astonishment a heap of sweetmeats in place of the carcase.

All such stories told in the Sikh literature may not be true to every word, yet all the authorities are unanimous that
Lehna was the very essence of obedience, and his devotion to the Guru was excessive and proverbial. And for this he got the reward when the Guru appointed him his successor and handed over to him the mission of uplifting the poor and showing the path to those who had lost it.

After Lehna was appointed successor Guru Nanak directed him to leave Kartarpur, perhaps from the fear of Lehna’s persecution at the hands of the Guru’s sons and asked him to move to Khadur. At Khadur Lehna, who now became Guru Angad, kept himself concealed in a room locked from outside, on the outskirts of the village. This was known only to a Jat girl named Nihali who brought him a cup of milk every day. He remained there for about six months after Guru Nanak’s death, till he was discovered through the supernatural knowledge of Bhai Budha. The Guru was perhaps forced to do this to escape the jealous eyes of his predecessor’s family.

After coming out of his seclusion Guru Angad carried on the mission entrusted to him by his predecessor. Crowds began to visit him and he preached to them the message left by Guru Nanak. The details of his life, however, continue to be legendary. Yogiis of different sects and penitents often visited the Guru and carried on conversations with him. But to all of them the Guru preached simplicity of life and abhorrence of supernatural power. Once some superior Yogiis were so much impressed with his talent that they invited the Guru to ask for some favour. The Guru replied that he desired poverty to continue with him, whereupon the Yogiis prayed to God that he should be given strength enough to remain humble and continue serving the poor. The purpose of such stories is to show the Guru’s determination to continue his strict adherence to the simplicity of his Master’s teachings.

In the same disposition seems to be fitted the story of Humayun’s visit to the Guru. It is said, after being defeated by Sher Shah Suri, Humayun being obliged to flee from Hindustan decided to see the wonder-working Guru on his way out. At the time of Humayun’s visit the Guru was in a deep trance and Humayun was kept standing. This enraged
him, and he tried to draw out his sword to sever the Guru's head. The sword, however, would not come out of the scabbard which made the fugitive Emperor repentant of his haste, and the Guru reproached him saying that the sword which should have been used against Sher Shah, Humayun tried to draw it on the priests of God; and that despite his reverses the Emperor had not been able to win over his false pride. Dr. Banerjee considers the very fact of the Emperor's visit as very doubtful. But there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the story, though we may not give a credit to its details.

We may relate one more story which is more important, for it resulted in the writing of the famous Coronation Ode, or the Tikke Di War which throws a flood of light on the early Sikh history. We are told that Guru Angad had two minstrels, Satta and Balwand, who were masters of music and who used to sing the Sikh hymns in the congregations. They once developed the belief that it was their musical skill, rather than any personal quality of the Guru, which attracted crowds to him; and they decided to stay out for some time to bring the fact home to the Guru. The Guru sent them messages to come and carry on their duty, but they paid no heed with the result that he now decided to do away with their services and declared that whosoever interceded on their behalf the Guru would have his beard and moustaches removed and with his face blackened he would be taken round the town mounted on a donkey. Soon after the minstrels realised their folly and they approached everybody to request the Guru in their behalf for forgiveness, but no one was prepared to undergo the punishment the Guru had prescribed for the one who did it. At last after two months Bhai Ladha of Lahore who had a considerable influence with the Guru was approached. Bhai Ladha removed his beard and moustaches and blackening his face mounted a donkey as prescribed in the punishment and approached the Guru. The Guru was utterly moved, he embraced Bhai Ladha and forgave the minstrels. The

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Minstrels restored, composed the above mentioned Coronation Ode which depicts the life history and the activities of the first five Gurus, as subsequently completed.

According to Bhai Santokh Singh¹, however, the Ode was composed in the time of Guru Arjan and then included in the Adi Granth. Bhai Gurdas also seems to support this view and mentions that Bhai Ladha lived in the time of Guru Arjan.² But this view does not seem to be supported by the internal evidence of the composition itself. Possibly Bhai Ladha continued living till Guru Arjan’s time, Satta also lived on and should have completed in Guru Arjan’s time the Ode begun in the time of Guru Angad.

The Ode mentions how Lehna obeyed Guru Nanak, while the Guru’s sons did not, and the result was that Lehna was appointed the successor. It gives details of Guru Angad’s devotion, penance, and austerities, and continues the panegyric on the Gurus up to the time of Guru Arjan.³

The details of Guru Angad’s life need not detain us long. Of greater historical significance are his activities which led to the transformation and further consolidation of the Sikh church. A separate note may here be added on this subject.

**The Transformation—II**

Dr. G. C. Narang writes: “Although object of Nanak was simply to leaven the social and religious thought of the Hindus, and to improve the general tone of their moral and spiritual life, and he had never thought of founding a sect, yet he was anxious that his work should continue after his death⁴.” And for this purpose, he appointed a successor. Dr. Narang writes again: “Had Nanak died without a successor there would have been no Sikhism to-day or at best simply another Kabirism⁵”. The same view is held by Dr. Trumpp.⁶ And Dr. I. B. Banerjee writes: “The nomination

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2. Gurdas, Bhai, *War XI*
6. Trumpp, *op. cit.*, p. LXXVII.
of Angad to the Guruship is a fact of the profoundest signi-
ficance in Sikh History.......................it was not diffi-
cult for Hinduism to accommodate the followers of Nanak
within its folds and absorb them totally in time................
If a separate existence for Sikhism as a religion was to be
made, "the appointment of Guru Angad to the Guruship
was the first great step in that direction." Other steps were
taken by the followers of Guru Nanak, but of "The ten
Gurus, the second, fourth, fifth, sixth and tenth were chiefly
responsible for measures which fostered communal conscious-
ness and welded the Sikhs into an independent community,"
as Khushwant Singh writes.\(^2\) The steps taken by Guru
Angad will here be considered.

**Invention of the Gurmukhi Alphabet**

Much has been said regarding the invention of the
Gurmukhi alphabet. But it can be conclusively proved that
it was not invented in the time of Guru Angad. Thus, for
instance, in the *Raga Asa* in the *Adi Granth* we come across
a *patti* of 35 verses of Guru Nanak each of which begins with
a letter of the alphabet.\(^3\) These letters, writes Ibbetson,
"are exactly the same 35, as are now found in the Gurmukhi
Alphabet even including the letter (r) which is peculiar to
Gurmukhi thus proving that the Gurmukhi Alphabet existed
before his time and was not invented by the second Guru
Angad, though the name Gurmukhi may have replaced its
original name."\(^4\)

Ahmad Bin Mohm-nad Ali writes in his *Mirat-ul-Ahwal-
Jahan-numa* that the alphabet was invented by Guru Nanak
and he is supported by, Forster.\(^5\) Dr. Trumpp, however,
goes to the extreme extent of saying that "Guru Angad was
altogether unlettered and could himself neither read nor
write. The later tradition which makes him the

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3. *Adi Granth*, Asa M. I. Patti Likhi, p. 432; see also Gopal Singh *op.
cit.*, i, p. 329.
*Janamsakhi* also holds a similar view (see p. 3).
inventor of the Gurmukhi letters, is therefore without any foundation."

There is no reason for us, however, to believe that Guru Angad was completely unlettered, as Dr. Trumpp suggests, but still it is clear that he did not invent the alphabet. We might agree with Grierson that Landa or clipped true alphabet of the Punjab existed in the time of Guru Nanak, but Guru Angad finding it imperfect in vowel sounds which were frequently omitted, improved it by borrowing signs from the Devanagari alphabet and after polishing it named it Gurmukhi. Or, as Macauliffe writes: Guru Angad "deeming that the compositions of Guru Nanak were worthy of a special written character of their own, adopted and modified a Punjabi alphabet, called Gurmukhi, to give expression to what fell from the Guru's lips." The alphabet which Guru Angad modified, it may however be added, was named Gurmukhi by the Guru himself, as Macauliffe also suggests; it was not known so before this.

After developing a suitable alphabet, the next step that Guru Angad took was that he wrote a primer in it, as Dr. Leitner writes: the Guru "like Professor Huxley, did not consider it beneath his dignity to write primers for children, and he accordingly composed a number of mottoes and moral maxims which accompany the letters of the Alphabets." Guru Nanak had condemned the people openly for their use of the languages other than their mother tongues, as he wrote:

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\begin{align*}
\text{ਬੰਦੇ ਖੰਭੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ}
\text{ਦੋਨੌਂ}
\text{ਅਕਾਲੀ ਨੌਨੀ}
\end{align*}
\]

And the step Guru Angad took to evolve the Gurmukhi created consequences simply remarkable in the transformation and consolidation of the Sikh Church.

1. Trumpp, op. cit., p. EXXVIII.
2. See also Archar, The Sikhs, p. 138.
5. M., ii, p. 56.
7. See M., i, p. 117
Gurmukhi, the very name of the modified script “reminded those who employed it, of their duty towards their Guru, and constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of Hinduism,” thus writes Dr. Narang.¹

And again, prior to the days of Guru Angad the compositions of the saints and reformers were for the most part written in the Sanskrit character. “The Gurmukhi character” as Macauliffe remarks, “was well calculated to make its readers part with Hindu compositions written in Sanskrit. The Gurmukhi S is the Sanskrit M, the Gurmukhi M is the Sanskrit Bh, the Gurmukhi W is the Sanskrit D, the Gurmukhi Dh is the Sanskrit P and the Gurmukhi B is nearly the Sanskrit Gh. When, therefore, one has become accustomed to the use of the Gurmukhi letters, a special and separate effort is required to read Sanskrit, however much one may have been previously acquainted with it. The result has been that in most cases Gurmukhi scholars have parted company with Sanskrit and the multitudinous works in the recondite language.”

The development of Gurmukhi led to the origin of a new class of literates in the Punjab. Prestige of the Brahmins had been based mainly on their knowledge of Sanskrit. The development of Gurmukhi gave serious blow to the Brahmanic influence and there was created the possibility of the preparation of a separate Sikh scripture, together with a new priestly class to replace the Brahmans.

Besides the development of Gurmukhi, the Guru took several other steps which, consciously or unconsciously, led to the transformation of Sikhism. Guru Nanak had written scores of hymns representing the faith he preached. Several of these were said to have been handed over by him to Guru Angad, while the rest of them lay in the possession of different persons he came in contact with. A foresighted step was taken by Guru Angad who by collecting them all together saved them from future interpolation and also laid

¹ Narang, G. C., op. cit., p. 29.
² M., ii, p. 57; Payne, A short History of the Sikhs, p. 238.
the foundation of the Sikh scripture which the fifth Sikh Guru compiled.

If we give a credit to the view that Bhai Bala's Janamsakhi or biography of Guru Nanak was prepared in the time of Guru Angad, which is very doubtful as we have already discussed, it was a monumental step which gave to the Sikhs a sacred book to draw inspiration from, just as the Hindus drew their inspiration from Ramayana and Mahabharata. And also, as Dr. Narang writes, these "memoirs compiled by Guru Angad formed the first prose work in the Punjabi language".

Guru Angad popularised the system of langar or community kitchen yet further. It was a great service to the poor and destitute. Besides, as the langar was run with the help of contributions made by the Guru's Sikhs and admirers, it gave a new direction to Sikh charities. Guru Nanak as Dr. Narang writes, "taught the Sikhs the first lesson of contributing money towards a common fund."

The langar, where the people of high and low castes all sat together, was also an effective machinery for breaking up the caste prejudices of the people and for forging a strong bond of union and love among them. It also concentrated the attention of the Sikhs on their Guru and acted, according to Dr. Narang, as a powerful "aid in the propaganda work." It goes to the credit of the Guru, however, that by developing the langar he in no way intended to minimise the dignity of labour and self-dependence. He characterised the offerings for the langar as a poison to himself and lived by twisting coarse twine made of munaj.

Guru Nanak had condemned ascetism and udas, as, according to Macauliffe he had said in reply to a Sanyasi at Dipalpur that the best thing for a man was "to make use of all things in this world and not deem them one's own, but only God's property, and ever to possess a desire to meet Him is udas." The merit of living pure amidst the impurities of the world was indeed repeatedly brought forth

1. Narang, op. cit., p.29.
2. Ibid. p. 48.
3. Ibid. p.30.
4. M., i, p.106.
Transformation and Consolidation of Sikhism

by Guru Nanak as he wrote: “When man in the midst of desires remaineth free from desires, then O Nanak, he meeteth the one God.” Moreover, towards the close of his life, by living the life of a householder in the midst of his family and by appointing Guru Angad, a man having wife and a family as his successor the Guru had confirmed it yet further that ascetism had no place in his beliefs. Yet some of his writings caused confusion and yielded meanings which encouraged the Udasi sect founded by Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak. Thus for instance, Guru Nanak’s words: “Wordly love, affection, and dainties, are all blackness and stains,” and:

“As herdsmen stay for a short time in the pasture-ground, so do men stay in this world.

Men by the exercise of falsehood build houses for themselves.

Awake, awake, ye sleepers; lo! the soul the dealer departs.

If ye are to remain here for ever, then build houses.

The body shall fall and the soul depart, if any one desires to know the truth.”

There was a possibility in such circumstances that Sikhism of Guru Nanak might relapse into Hinduism even with Kabirism and other such sects. Guru Angad forestalled it and took steps to clarify Guru Nanak’s teachings and thus helped the Sikhs remain free from the prevailing Hindu practices.

Besides the spiritual awakening, the Guru paid full attention to the physical development of his Sikhs. He prepared a wrestling ground at Khadur and took an active interest in developing sports among the Sikhs. If the words of Confucius that ‘a journey of a thousand miles is started only with a step’ are to be repeated, the Guru by such interests laid the foundations of the martial spirit which the sixth and the tenth Sikh Guru infused in the

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2. Ibid., p. 197.
3. Ibid., p. 117.
Sikhs and created the khalsa. The Guru continued the regular and disciplined life of Guru Nanak, i.e. rising early, taking bath and then having prayers and physical exercises etc., and all this separated the Sikhs from the common mass of people.

The greatest service which Guru Angad, however, rendered to the Sikh church was his appointment, before he died on March 29, 1552, of a deserving hand as his successor. If the Sikhs were to imbibe completely the teachings of Guru Nanak, and if they were not to fall back into the old and corrupt beliefs and practices of Hinduism, it was very essential that they should have the benefit of a mature guidance on the lines laid down by the first Guru, for some considerable time. The continuation of the Guru-Gadi, was a great step which Guru Angad took towards this direction.
CHAPTER VII

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION
OF SIKHISM

B—GURU AMAR DAS

His Life—I

King Ram Chandra, the hero of Ramayana, as we
know, had Bharat as his half-brother. It is said that
Khatris of the Bhatta tribe descended from this brother of
Ram Chandra,† and Tej Bhan the father of Guru Amar Das
belonged to this line. Tej Bhan’s wife Bakht Kaur bore
four sons, the eldest being Amar Das who was born at the
village Basarke in April, 1479. Amar Das married a
lady named Mansa Devi at the age of about twenty-four
and continued in his father’s profession of agriculture-cum-
trade.

Amar Das, a devout Hindu, was a zealous follower of
the Vaishnav faith and used to bathe in the Ganges every
year. But despite all his practices of a pious Hindu he could
not get solace and pined to get a spiritual teacher who could
guide him to the right path. Once, it is said, on his way
back from the Ganges he met a monk with whom he became
friendly and intimate. They ate together and after a the
monk enquired from him as to who was his Guru. Amar
Das replied that he had none so far, whereupon that monk
in his exasperation exclaimed that he (the monk) had
committed a serious sin by taking food from the hands of a
man who had no Guru, and that he would have to go back
to the Ganges to wash away that sin. And after this the
monk departed. This affected Amar Das very seriously and
he became more anxious in his search for a Guru.

One morning while he was engaged in his reflections
he heard the voice of some person from his brother’s house

† See *Bachitra Natak* of Guru Gobind Singh, II—V.
chanting the hymns of Guru Nanak. It was Bibi Amro, the
daughter of Guru Angad, who was chanting the hymns. She
had recently been married to the son of Amar Das’s brother.
This aroused Amar Das’s emotion and he immediately
approached Bibi Amro to enquire as to who was the author of
those hymns. She told him that they were composed by Guru
Nanak, but that she got them from her father, Guru Angad.
Amar Das immediately developed a desire to see Amro’s
father and requested her to accompany him. They both
proceeded thither and on reaching the Guru’s house Amar
Das fell at Guru Angad’s feet and thereafter began to lead
the life of devotion and service to him.

The life of strenuous discipline and humble service that
Amar Das followed at the feet of Guru Angad, need not be
delineated at length. Only one incident may be given to
draw home the subject. Amar Das remained at Khadur
from 1541 to 1552, i.e., for eleven years. Every day early
in the morning he would go to the Beas and bring water for
the Guru to bathe. Once, in the month of January, 1552,
when it was raining and it was very cold outside, Amar Das
set out as usual to bring water, but on his way back home
his foot struck against a peg of Karir wood and he fell down
before the house of a weaver. The weaver’s family was
sleeping inside and being disturbed with the noise the
weaver’s wife cried: ‘Ah, it must be that fool and homeless
Amru who revolves about the feet of that so called Guru.’
The news about it reached the Guru who called Amar Das
before him and declared that the latter would now no
longer be homeless. He would rather be a refuge to the home-
less and destitute. He appointed him as his successor and in
the month of March, the same year, the succession ceremony
was regularly performed, when Guru Angad declared before
the congregation that there would now be no difference
between himself and Amar Das, and that they both had
become one:

उर नैतिक भविष्य खुला रही।
मह ज्योत्र अर दीव खुला।
है ने रहित खो क्रम ना करू।
After acceding to the Guru Gaddi, however, Guru Amar Das was not destined to enjoy a peaceful life. Dasu and Datu, the two sons of Guru Angad, claimed that it was their hereditary right to succeede to the Gaddi after their father's death. While Dasu withdrew his claims as a result of his mother's advice, Datu continued his efforts and declared himself a Guru. Guru Amar Das who had foreseen such developments had retired to Goindwal where the Sikhs continued paying him their respect. Not being satisfied, Datu one day went himself to Goindwal and calling Guru Amar Das as his family servant kicked him with his foot in the midst of the congregation. Guru Amar Das, however, kept his patience and left on left Goindwal as well, and retired to Basarka. Soon, however, his Sikhs and Baba Budha prevailed upon the Guru and he came back to Goindwal to carry on his activities. Some of his activities which kept the torch of the Sikh faith alight and which separated the Sikhs yet further from the Hindus, may here be described.

The Transformation—II

Guru Amar Das carried on the langar started by Guru Nanak. As his minstrel Satta sang in the seventh pauri of the Coronation Ode:

"Guru Amar Das obtained the same mark, the same throne, and the same court.

The grandson was as acceptable as the father and grandfather."

Ever in thy kitchen, O Amar Das, are clarified butter and flour to eat.

Thou knowest the four quarters of the world; the Word is dear to thy soul."

2. "Guru Amar Das was as acceptable as Guru Angad and Guru Nanak. The terms of relationship are figurative." M., II, p. 58.
The Guru, rather, carried it a step further when he declared that nobody, whether high or lowly was to see him before he had partaken of food in the *langar*. No distinction was made in the *langar* between a Hindu and a Muslim, and between a high and low caste. The Sikh accounts go so far as to make Dr. Ganda Singh say that "even Akbar and the Raja of Haripur had to do the same. All had to sit in line and eat together." It might have been too difficult for Akbar to sit in line, though it may be believed that he partook of the food. This struck a further blow on the caste and creed prejudices which the Guru was never tired of condemning. Besides acting as a levelling influence, the *langar* continued forging a bond of love among the Sikhs and providing an outlet to the Sikh charities.

Hymns of Guru Nanak had been collected by Guru Angad. The latter, adding to them his own hymns, handed them over to Guru Amar Das who continued his efforts to collect the first Guru’s hymns and added to the collection those composed by himself. He propounded the same beliefs as his predecessors did, and thus the possibilities of the preparation of a Sikh scripture strengthened. A sample of his hymns may here be quoted.

"He who through the Guru’s instruction obtaineth divine knowledge, discrimination, and intelligence,

shall sing God’s praises and string a garland in his heart.

He shall be the purest of the pure and possess the highest intelligence.

He who meeteth such a person shall be saved by him."2

The influence of the Sikh Guru was developing and his message reached far and wide. There exist many legends regarding the miraculous powers of the Guru under the influence of which the number of votaries of his faith increased. While we may not accept them in detail, there is no doubt that the number of the followers of the Sikh faith did increase tremendously in Guru Amar Das’s time. We hear of several Muslims too having been converted to

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the Sikh faith. Among them the name of Alyar is significant.

As the number of the Sikh followers thus increased it became more difficult to keep them under effective supervision. Guru Amar Das took a great administrative step to solve the problem and divided his spiritual empire into twenty-two provinces each called a Manji and each being divided further into smaller-sections called Piris. Each of these Manjis, bishoprics or dioceses, was placed under the control of an expert whose duty it was to preach the Sikh message in his locality and act as a rallying point for the Sikhs. This measure of the third Guru, as Dr. Narang writes, "must have gone a long way in strengthening the foundations of the church and in carrying on the propaganda in parts of the country." 1

This step of the Guru, besides carrying the Sikh message far and wide, also gave to the Sikhs an organisation which could later be converted into a revenue producing agency. The charge of one of these Manjis was given to a Muslim of Kapurthala and several of them were placed under the control of women. Such steps of the Guru have led some writers to read political motives in his character, as if the Guru wanted to set up a parallel political authority against the ruling monarchy. We may not, however, believe that the Guru wanted to do some such thing intentionally, yet there is no doubt that these activities of the Guru did entail political consequences when a living contact with the Sikhs was established, through which not only financial needs of the Gurus were satisfied, but through which also the Sikh propaganda against the Muslim tyranny could be carried, the weapons for battles could be collected and the Sikh recruits into the Guru's forces procured as it was done in the times of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh.

The Guru constructed a Bawali, or a well with 84 descending steps at Goindwal where by reciting Japji on each step one could escape the eighty-four lakh incarnations. For the Sikhs now there was no more need to go to the Ganges or to the other Hindu places of pilgrimage. They

Sikh place of pilgrimage

got their own centre and a place of pilgrimage and this was another great step which helped in separating the Sikhs from the common mass of the Hindus.

An interesting story is told in connection with the construction of the Bawalt. Once the Guru fell into trance and through it he felt the necessity of constructing a Bawalt where God alone should be worshipped. The work for the Bawalt was commenced in 1552, and the Guru took personal interest in its execution:

मालवाल जवी वालमेह गाँव।
सालवाल कालाल दिव गाँव।

After digging considerably deep the Sikhs found a large stone which hindered their progress. The Guru thereupon enquired if there was a Sikh courageous enough to drive a peg into its base with the object of removing the obstruction. At the same time the Guru warned his hearers that the operation involved a great peril. The man who performed it must be able to stem the current which would issue from the aperture formed by the peg, otherwise he would be drowned. All the Sikhs remained silent and no one ventured to undertake such a perilous task. At last Manak Chand of Virowal, a young man with a sprouting beard who was married to a niece of the Guru, declared himself at the Guru’s service.

Manak Chand entered the pit and extracted the peg, whereupon there issued forth a gush of water which overflowed the Bawalt, and Manak Chand sank to the bottom. Next morning the lamentations of Manak Chand’s widowed mother and his young wife drew the Guru to the Bawalt, where after hearing the cause of their lamentation the Guru replied that Manak Chand had not in fact died. The Guru stood by the Bawalt and called Manak by his name, whereupon Manak’s body at once rose to the surface of the water. The Guru touched it with his foot, and Manak walked forth in full life and vigour.

Absurdity of the story is clear. The motive is to attach supernatural and miraculous powers to the Guru who used

1. See Gian Singh, Panth Prakash, pp. 70-78.
2. M., ii, pp. 95-96
them without a scruple to achieve his ends. Stories of religious leaders are always replete with crowds of such accounts manufactued by their zealous followers who in their ignorance commit the crime of dabbling in history, and do thereby a disservice to their professed cause. The Sikh Gurus had always condemned the display of miraculous power and they themselves could never have committed this folly.

Nevertheless, the story in no way minimises the importance of the construction of Bawali the water of which possessing the healing virtues, the place became an object of visit for crowds of Sikhs.

The Guru had prayed for the success of Akbar in his expedition on Chittor and Akbar was successful. During one of his periodical visits to Lahore, Akbar made a detour to Goindwal and accompanied by a large escort paid a state visit to the Guru. He observed the rule and before having an interview with the Guru he is said to have partaken of food from the langar. Being pleased with the refuge that the Guru's kitchen afforded to a large number of people, Akbar requested the Guru to ask for the grant of land as he desired. The Guru, however, refused as repeatedly as he was asked. Akbar thereupon granted some villages to Bibi Bhani, the Guru's daughter, and subsequently Bhai Budha is said to have been appointed by the Guru to manage the property.

This Time Akbar lay encamped along with his large escort at Lahore for a long time. As a result of this the prices at Lahore and in the adjoining areas rose and the peasants suffered. When the next harvest was ready Akbar prepared to march off leaving behind a strong possibility of sudden fall in the prices to ruin the peasants. The Guru is said to have sent a request to Akbar who remitted the whole land-tax for the year.

In connection with the Guru's relations with Akbar, several other stories are told by the Sikh chroniclers. It is said that at Goindwal the Guru did not have a very peaceful time. The city of Goindwal had been founded by a man named Gonda Marwaha who was a staunch follower of the
Guru and at whose invitation the Guru had settled there. The activities of the Guru at Goindwal were not looked upon with any sympathy by some Khattris and Brahmans of the place who made a common cause and after Gonda’s death incited his son to make a petition to the Emperor against an alleged illegal occupation of some land by the Guru. The Emperor invited the Guru to explain his case personally and favour him with his sight. The Guru, however, excused himself for his old age and sent Jetha to deputise in his behalf. Jetha presented the case effectively and the petition of the opponents was rejected. After this the Emperor took Jetha aside and told him to request the Guru to make pilgrimage to the Ganges. He told him that the Guru’s activities had administered a blow to the prestige of the Brahmans, and some Hindus felt that he wanted to destroy their religion and age-old beliefs and practices. The pilgrimage would divert the wrath of the Hindus. The Emperor also promised to issue orders that no Pilgrim’s tax should be levied on the Guru’s party.

The most important authority for the above written account is Suraj Prakash which was written about three centuries after the Guru’s death. Jetha who later became Guru Ram Das, has left us a contemporary account that Gonda’s son, “The perverse man sent his servant to slander and backbite others, but the result was that the faces of both were blackened.”¹ But he nowhere mentions the authority to whom the petition was made and the whole story of a petition to the Emperor may therefore be a concoction on the known acquaintance between the Guru and the Emperor, although it is difficult to understand Dr. Banerjee’s arguments against the opponents of the Guru coming together and making a common cause against him.²

As to the Guru’s pilgrimage to the Ganges, there can be no reason to disbelieve the contemporary account of Jetha that the “true Guru made the toil of pilgrimage in order to save all people; and Sikhs travelled with the Guru on his journey.”³ The motive of the pilgrimage introduced by

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¹ Adi Granth, Gauri ki War, I.
² Banerjee, op. cit., i, p. 175.
³ Adi Granth, Takhari Chhant; See M., ii, pp. 112–114.
Suraj Prakash and Macauliffe stands condemned. If the Guru was trying to give the Sikhs their own place of pilgrimage at Goindwal, and if the Hindu system of pilgrimage has been condemned right from the time of Guru Nanak, there is no reason for us to believe that Guru Amar Das should have shown the weakness of going to the Ganges to divert the wrath of the Hindus, as mentioned above, though it would be quite understandable if the Guru went himself to such places to preach his teachings and to secure converts, as Guru Nanak before him had done.

The Guru, as Jetha writes, first visited Kurukshetra, where "Yogis Digambars, Sanyasis, and men of the six schools entered into conversation with him." The Guru thus proceeded to the Jamna where he caused people to repeat God's name." Here the Guru and all those who professed to be his followers were exempted from the pilgrim's tax. Jetha continues:

"After he went to the Ganges and there was a marvellous scene.

All were entranced on seeing the saintly Guru, and there too no one took half a dam from him.

No one paid half a dam or put any money into the tollbox; the toll collectors' mouths were sealed.

They said, 'Brethren, what shall we do? Of whom shall we ask? Every one is escaping under cover of the Guru.'"

At Hardwar, Jetha continues, "The leading men of the city went in a body, and took shelter in the true Guru. They asked the true Guru concerning God, and he proved His existence from the Simritis."

Dr. Banerjee while accepting the story of the Guru's trip as correct, says that the fact that leading men of the city took shelter in the true Guru "might very well be of the nature of a pious wish." This, however, seems to be

1. A coin then current.
4. Banerjee, op. cit., i. p. 177
quite an uncalled for conclusion. If the Guru was so important that Akbar could pay him a visit, and if he was so important that many others who truly were not Sikhs should have escaped the pilgrim’s tax simply by taking his name, as he himself agrees, there is no reason to believe that the leading men of the city coming to seek spiritual guidance of the Guru should simply have been a “pious wish” of Jetha whose account Banerjee himself considers as sober.

Whatever be the details of the incidents, there is no doubt that the Guru’s relations with the Emperor must have increased his prestige, and we might agree with Panth Prakash that crowds of new followers came to him. The Guru had won the sympathy of a great number of peasants by getting their land revenue remitted, and they offered him a good number of converts. The fact that a great number of those who were not Sikhs, should have escaped pilgrim’s tax, should also have added to his prestige on the one hand, while on the other hand it helped in establishing the fact that the Sikhs occupied a position distinct from that of the Hindus, as the pilgrim’s tax realisable from Hindus was not realised from the Sikhs.

Another step of the Guru was to separate his Sikhs yet further from the Udasis. As we have discussed, Guru Nanak’s mission had been divided into two parts. While he handed over the Office of Guru to Angad, his son Sri Chand founded a new sect called Udasis which progressed with the progress of the Sikhs. The habits of the Udasis were more akin to the prevailing Hindu beliefs, and unless some solid steps were taken to distinguish Sikhs from the Udasis the danger of the Sikhs being lost in oblivion still lurked. The Guru realised the danger and declared that the Sikhs must dissociate themselves from the Udasis. According to Macauliffe, the Guru sent circulars to the Sikhs to the effect and actively preached in favour of a householders’s life. Macauliffe also relates a story that once a man named Gango enquired from the Guru as to the correct path to salvation. The Guru told him to go and open a shop at Delhi; earn an honest living and give a part of it in charity. Such activities of the Guru established a character of the Sikhs distinct from

that of the Udasis, and thus, writes Dr. Narang, "The Sikhs were once for all separated from them, and raised above ascetism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress."

Separate Social Practices

Hinduism, as it existed at that time and as it exists today, has been more a social organisation than a religious body, People worshipping different gods and goddesses have been able to remain together in the Hindu folds because of the almost similar social beliefs they have possessed. If, therefore, the Sikhs were to be created as a separate sect from the Hindus, it was very essential that they should be given a separate social structure. Guru Amar Das took certain steps which led to the establishment of different social practices among the Sikhs in due course of time. In taking such steps the Guru's motive does not seem to have been to wean his followers away from the Hindus purposely, as Macauliffe would like us to have it. His steps were rather religious which entailed social consequences.

The Guru proclaimed that the Sikh gatherings should be held on every first day of the months of Baisakh and Magh, and on the day of Dewali. This step of the Guru gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to meet in large numbers at least three times a year and thus to strengthen the Sikh brotherhood.

Thirty years after the death of Guru Amar Das, his great-grandson, Sundar Das, when requested by Guru Arjan, wrote an account of the instructions which Guru Amar Das left regarding the ceremonies to be performed at the time of his death. Sundar Das was not an eye-witness to the ceremonies actually performed, yet when he wrote out his account many of the Guru's contemporaries were still living, and the very fact that the account was accepted by Guru Arjan himself as authentic, leaves us with no reason to doubt its correctness. Thus wrote Sundar Das:

3. See M., ii, pp. 101-103
“Finally, the true Guru spoke: ‘After my death sing God’s praises.

‘Call God instead of a Pandit and, for the Garar Puran, read God’s word.

‘Read God’s word, hear God’s name; the Guru desireth God’s love instead of a lofty bier,

‘Barley rolls, bread on leaves, Hindu obsequies, lamps, and throwing his bones into the Ganges.

The true Guru spoke as it pleased God, and he was blended with the Omniscient Being.”

This was a clear departure from the Hindu social practices. There is no doubt in the fact that if the Guru desired the Hindu practices to be dispensed with at the time of his own death he should have suggested them during his life time to be followed by his Sikhs as well.

3. Epithalamium

The Sikh epithalamium, the Lawan, which is said to have been composed by Guru Ram Das at the time of his own marriage, is another departure from the Hindu social practices. This hymn, says Dr. Banerjee, may or may not have been written on the occasion of the Guru’s own marriage, “but that hardly affects its significance. It clearly appears that the Guru was commenting on a custom already in existence and we may as well accept the Sikh tradition that the change had been introduced by his predecessor.”

Besides, writes G. B. Scott, Guru Amar Das was the first reformer who condemned the prevailing Hindu practice of Sati and preached against it. In one of his hymns the Guru says that she is not a Sati who burns herself on her husband’s pyre, in fact she is a true Sati who dies afflicted by the grief of her husband’s departure.

पन्तौं दिन है अच्छीतल नें सती नाना सती
सती नैं वेदी ताराज, न मित्र तैं भूलैं ।

According to Payne, the Guru “is chiefly remembered

1. M., ii, pp. 151–158
for his vigorous crusade against the practice of Sati:"

Further, Macauliffe relates a story which shows that the Guru preached in favour of widow remarriage also. The Guru also condemned Purdah system. Mehma Prakash relates a story that not caring for the Guru's proclamation against Purdah, the queen of the ruler of Haripur visited him in Purdah. Spontaneously the words fell from the Guru's mouth: "why has this mad woman come here?" And actually the woman when she went out, became mad.

The Guru ordered his Sikhs in forceful words to abstain altogether from wine, as he said:

"One man bringeth the full goblet, another cometh and filleth the cup.
The intellect of him who drinketh departeth, and intoxication entereth his brain.
He distinguisheth not between mine and thine, and is buffeted by his master.
If possible, drink not at all the false wine,
By which man forgetteth God and receiveth punishment at His court.
Nanak, he who by God's look of favour meeteth the true Guru, obtaineth the true wine from him.
Thus shall man ever abide in the joy of Lord, and obtain a position in His court.

Before his death the Guru appointed Ram Das as his successor, to continue working on the lines laid down by Guru Nanak. The gaddi was given on the basis of merit, and this gave the Sikhs a further chance of spiritual guidance and consolidation.

Guru Amar Das, writes Latif, "was successful as a teacher, and his zeal and activity in preaching, combined with his genial habits and affable disposition, secured for him many converts to the new faith."

Payne calls him a

1. Payne, Short History of the Sikhs, p. 31.
3. See also Suraj Prakash, Ras I, XXXII.
salous preacher".¹ and according to M' Gregor he "was a wise and just Guru".² Dr. Banerjee writes: "The change he desired to introduce in the very important ceremonies connected with marriage and death struck at the very root of the influence of the priestly class, and though in such a matter, where long-standing customs and cherished practices were concerned, success must necessarily have been slow, the ball had been set rolling and Sikhism put on the way of gradual dissociation from Hinduism and consolidation into a separate sect."²

The pontificate of Guru Amar Das is indeed a turning point in the history of the Sikh church. Guru Nanak had condemned some of the social and religious beliefs obtaining among the Hindus, even with Gautma Budha and Mahavira. But the seeds he sowed were different from those sown by the latter two. Guru Amar Das's achievement was that he constructed a fence around the plant that germinated, lest it should be destroyed by the gale of all-consuming Hindu social practices. The plant got an opportunity to grow and fructify.

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¹ Payne, op. cit., p. 31.
² M' Gregor, History of the Sikhs, p. 31.
³ Banerjee, op. cit., p. 181—82.
CHAPTER VIII

TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

G—GURU RAM DAS

His Life—I

Guru Ram Das whose early name was Jetha, was born in Lahore in October 1534. His father, Hari Das, was a Khatri of the Sodhi tribe, and his mother, Anup Kaur, who was called Daya Kaur after her marriage was a pious lady given to the life of devotion and prayer. Jetha was given to religious and virtuous activities from his very childhood and the Sikh records relate that when his poor mother boiled some pulse and asked Jetha to take it to sell it for some profit, the boy took the basket to the river Ravi instead and distributed the pulse to a company of holy men. The story is similar to the one known as Sucha Soda told regarding Guru Nanak, but without entering into the merit or demerit of the story we may believe that Jetha was essentially a God-fearing boy.

The life of Jetha or Guru Ram Das as he later became, however, is not full of as many legendary details as the lives of the other Gurus. There seem to be two reasons for this, firstly that his life was not very eventful, and secondly that the Sikh chroniclers have tired themselves by now of manufacturing legends with the result that the difficulty we face now is not of separating facts from legends but the one of discovering facts from comparative darkness. Jetha, when quite young, is said to have fallen with a company of Sikhs who were singing the Guru’s hymns and were proceeding on their way with great rejoicing. On enquiry he learnt that they were going to have the sight of great Guru Amar Das who was the third in succession to Baba Nanak the great philosopher-saint. Being impressed with them and the
hymns they sang, Jetha decided to accompany them. On reaching Goindwal Jetha prostrated himself before the Guru, a life of devotion and service to whom, as usual, now commenced. Jetha was a young man of as much exterior beauty as of interior devotion. After some years of Jetha's stay with the Guru when Bibi Bhani the younger daughter of the Guru arrived at the age of puberty, the choice fell upon him and Jetha was married forthwith with her.

Guru Amar Das had two sons Mohri and Mohan, but all agree that Jetha was more obedient to the Guru than either of these two. Jetha commanded in himself a perfect confidence of the Guru. It was he who is said to have deputised on behalf of the Guru at the court of Akbar, as we have already discussed in the last chapter. He also accompanied the Guru on a pilgrimage to Hardwar and composed hymns giving an account of the journey. When the construction of the Bawali at Goindwal was commenced, here again he served in utter devotion and obedience to the Guru. The result of all this was that Jetha was chosen by the Guru as his successor. Guru Amar Das died at a ripe age and after his death Jetha succeeded to the pontificate in 1574 under the name of Guru Ram Das.

**The Transformation—II**

The Sadd written by Sundar Das reads that after appointing Ram Das Sodhi as his successor, Guru Amar Das ordered his disciples to bow before him. The Sadd continues:

> "As the Guru spoke, so his disciples obeyed his wishes. His son became obedient to him and fell at Ram Das's feet.

> Then all fell at the feet of the true Guru into whom Guru Amar Das had infused his spirit."

This gives us a suggestion that of the two sons of Guru Amar Das, Mohri alone perhaps reconciled himself to the succession of Guru Amar Das. Mohan, the other son, disapproved with it and although his opposition was not so insolent as that of Datu to his father, yet Guru Amar Das gave Guru

Ram Das the suggestion to shift to the land which had been granted by Akbar to Bibi Bhani, and where under the orders of Guru Amar Das the construction of a tank had already been commenced which later on grew into the city of Amritsar.

It is, however, very much debatable that the construction of the tank of Amritsar commenced in the time of Guru Amar Das as Suraj Prakash believes. The miracle connected with a pool which later formed the tank of nectar, the nucleus around which the city of Amritsar developed, and in which a lame man by taking bath became perfect, is placed by Suraj Prakash itself in the time of Guru Arjan. This would suggest that the tank and the city should have been built only in the time of Guru Arjan. But the fact that the city was previously known as Ramdaspur, raises a strong doubt regarding the authenticity of this account as well.

Forster,1 Ibbetson, Cunningham, Archer, and M’Gregor—all are of the view that the grant of the land at which the city of Amritsar developed, was made by Akbar to Guru Ram Das and it was the latter who founded the city. Sikhan De Raj Di Vithla supports the view that the city was founded by Guru Ram Das. M’Gregor writes that Akbar visited Guru Ram Das, was impressed with his dispositions and issued an order “that a certain portion of ground should be granted to Ram Das, which was accordingly done, and the ground, thus bestowed, being of a circular form, was named Chukkur Ram Das. In this enclosure the Gooroo built Umritsir, and went occasionally from Goindwal to reside there, and his disciples and followers settled at that place”. Guru Arjan, he continues, moved from Goindwal to Amritsar, completed the Holy Granth, placed it “in the temple erected in the tank, and crowds frequented it for the purpose of bathing and hearing the Granth read. The

3. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 45.
5. M’Gregor, History of the Sikhs, pp. 52-54.
Ram Das constructed it

Chukkur Ram Das was then enlarged."¹ According to the Amritsar District Gazetteer, the pool which formed the nucleus of the city had been a favourite resort of Guru Nanak. The site was first occupied by Guru Ram Das. In 1577 he obtained grant of the site together with 500 bigas of land from the Emperor Akbar on payment of Rs. 700/- akbari to the Zamindars of Tung, who owned the land. It may here be explained that none of these writers is a contemporary of Guru Amar Das and Ram Das. But the account given by the District Gazetteer and some European travellers seems definitely more authentic than that of Suraj Prakash; the Sikh tradition also being in their favour. Hence it seems more probable that the city was founded by Guru Ram Das.

"In founding the town of Amritsar at a central spot," thus writes Latif, "the Guru laid the foundation of the future greatness of the Sikhs as a nation, for they were enabled now to rally at a common place of worship, conveniently situated, both as regards distance and fertility of the soil".³ Amritsar, indeed has played a very important part in the History of the Sikhs. It has acted as a Mecca to the Sikhs and the Sikhs living at far away places have always deemed their visit to the Punjab as incomplete if they did not go to Amritsar. The tank of nectar at Amritsar has been a symbol of unity to the Sikhs, and it has played a very important part in the development of martial qualities among them. Whenever a tyrant wanted to destroy the Sikhs, he started with the destruction of the Harimandir or the temple at the tank, and the Sikhs always considered the protection of the tank and the Harimandir equivalent to the protection of their honour. The pages of the Sikh history are red with the blood of the thousands of the valiant sons of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh—the tenth Sikh Guru, who laid down their lives for this. Whenever an important expedition was undertaken by the Sikhs, they started with a dip at the tank. Once this was done, lambs were converted into lions, invincible and gallant, who

¹. Ibid.
². Amritsar Distt. Gazetteer (1883-84), p. 64.
³. Latif, op. cit., p. 353.
changed the very course of history.

Situated in the centre of the population of Jats—the flower of the Punjab people who recruited themselves into the forces of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh and thus acted as an important factor in transforming the Sikhs into Khalsa, Amritsar provided a convenient base for propaganda among them. Surrounded by fertile lands the city soon grew into a very important centre of trade in the Punjab, and thus it brought a very rich revenue to the Sikh Gurus in the shape of offerings and later to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the shape of taxes. Such has been the importance of this city which was founded and developed by Guru Ram Das whose this single step distinguished him as one of the Gurus who played very important part in the transformation and consolidation of the Sikh church.

Other activities of the Guru towards transformation of Sikhism are comparatively insignificant. The Guru is said to have earnestly taken up the propaganda for the spread of the Sikh faith. Several important Sikhs were sent for the purpose towards different directions. Bhai Gurdas went to Agra and made many new Sikhs. According to some writers it was Guru Ram Das who started Masand system which placed the financial position of the Sikhs on more firm footings.

Some of the compositions of the Guru led to the development of more of the distinct social practices among the Sikhs. The Guru composed ‘Ghorian’, or the songs to be sung at a ceremony before marriage. Before this the songs sung by the Sikh women on the occasion were filthy in character. The new songs replacing them also made it possible for the Sikhs to remember at all the times of happiness and sorrow alike the Almighty in whose name the songs were composed, and also remember the Guru who composed them. The famous song: वोटर भवनि वर्ण मुखां नाम अर्थीन was also composed by him, and thus the Sikhs developed distinct social practices and ceremonies to be performed at the time

1. Adi Granth, Vadhans M. IV, Ghoris, pp. 75—76.
2. Adi Granth, Sri Rag-ki war, M. IV.
of birth, marriage and death, which helped in separating them from the common mass of Hindus.

During the time of Guru Ram Das, Baba Sri Chand, the founder of the Udasi sect among the Sikhs, visited the Guru and now, after a long discussion, rapprochement was effected between the two. The superior character of the Sikhs seems to have been established, but both promised support to each other for the future; Guru Hargobind himself permitting his son Gurditta later on to enter the Udasi sect. After the death of Banda Bahadur, when the Mughal rulers decided to destroy the very seed of the Sikh faith in the Punjab, Udasis who could not easily be distinguished from the common mass of Hindus kept the spark of the Sikh faith alight. Whenever the ranks of the Khalsa were depleted, the Udasi sect offered a vast ground to replenish them.

Another development took place in the time of Guru Ram Das, which, to a very great extent, helped in changing the Sikh character from purely religious, to religious-cum-political. So far the succession to the Gaddi had been conferred only on merit, but now a change took place in the practice. The Sikh records relate a story that once Bibi Bhani was helping Guru Amar Das at the time of ablution when a leg of the footstool on which the Guru sat, broke. The Guru should have fallen down but for the presence of mind of Bibi Bhani who immediately placed her hand under the broken part. A nail pierced through her delicate hand and when the Guru noticed the colour of the water flowing down turn crimson with her blood he was moved at the 'Bibi’s act of sacrifice and invited her to ask for a boon. Bibi Bhani requested that the Guruship should be made hereditary in her line. The Guru was taken aback, but since he had made the promise he granted the boon with the qualification that it would be attended by many troubles. The successors would have to make many sacrifices.

In this connection, however, Bhai Gurdas says thus:

"What is Previously received must be restored and descend to the line that owneth it."
The Sodhi King Ram Das sat on the throne, and was called the true Guru. ¹

In this connection M’Gregor too writes: Ram Das was “of the Chuttree caste and Sodee family, a lineal descendant of Sodee Rao, who abdicated the throne of Lahore in favour of his uncle Kulput (Bedi)” in the ancient times with the promise that Bedis would return it to the Sodhis in the Kalyug. It was due to this fact that Guru Amar Das had to grant succession to Ram Das to remain hereditary in his line. A similar story is narrated by Guru Gobind Singh in his Bachitra Natak. ²

Guru Ram Das, thus, instead of choosing a person from outside his family, appointed his youngest son, Guru Arjan, to succeed him. Later Guru Arjan began to develop closer relations with Mehrbon, the son of his elder brother Prithi Mal. Hargobind, his son, and the boy’s mother grew apprehensive about the Gaddi, and asked the Guru to hand over to them the symbols of Guruship. Thus relate the Sikh records. Guru Arjan is said to have put these symbols in a room, closed it from the outside and set it on fire, and declared that whosoever brought them out would be granted the succession. Mehrban jumped into the fire and brought them out, but still he could not secure succession to the pontificate. Hargobind had better hereditary rights and the succession had to go to him ⁴. This established yet further the hereditary right in Guruship.

Without entering into the merit or demerit of these stories, we may consider the consequences of this new development. This, writes Latif, changed the very character of Guruship and “materially contributed to the growth of Sikh power, for henceforward the Guru was looked upon by his disciples not only in the light of a spiritual guide, but also as a worldly lord and a ruling sovereign.” ⁵ The Guru now became Sucha Padshah, or the true king, as Dr. Narang

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¹ Bhai Gurdas, War 1.
² M’Gregor, op. cit., p. 57-58.
³ Bachitra Natak, Section II—V.
⁴ Shamsher Singh, Sikh te Sikh Itas, pp. 50—51.
⁵ Latif, op. cit., p. 253.
writes, "The fundamental ideal of surrender and service," writes Dr. Banerjee, "is absent and the sole concern of the legend (regarding how Guruship was handed over to Sodhis) is to provide a sort of historical justification for succession to the Guruship on grounds of heredity." The succession seems now to have become a family and personal concern, and claims to it are paralleled with claims to a throne and hence to a sort of political power over the followers. We find a similar type of movement developing in the 19th century among the Kukas. The Kuka Gurus have been considered to be the successors in the line of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh by the Kukas, and there is nothing secret in the fact that the Kuka Guru Ram Singh was developing his contacts with Russia with a view to getting help to expel the British from India and establish the Sikh rule, at least in the Punjab, under perhaps kingship of the Kuka Guru himself. A kingdom was not aimed at in the sixteenth century by the Sikh Guru's themselves, yet their acts, such as the one making the Guruship hereditary, did give an impression to the Sikhs as if the Guru was their king, nay a True King or Sucha Padshah as against the false kings of the Mughals. The true king ruled his followers not only in the present life, but he was expected to rule and guide them in the lives to come as well. The orders of the true king were of greater importance than those of a false one, and herein lay the difference which prepared the Sikhs later to challenge the authority of the Mughals. Clearly thus, the establishment of hereditary principle in the Guruship was a step of far reaching consequences in transforming the character of the Sikhs.

CHAPTER IX
TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION
OF SIKHISM
D—GURU ARJAN

Life—I

Born at Goindwal on 15th April, 1563, Arjan Dev was the youngest son of Guru Ram Das. From his very childhood Arjan Dev loved seclusion and was a perfect picture of devotion and humility. Guru Amar Das had high estimations of this boy and once, thus says a tradition, when he was in his siesta, Arjan Dev, yet a child, found his way to his bed. It was a serious thing for anybody to disturb the Guru while taking a repose. Bibi Bhani ran to take him out of the room, but Guru Amar Das asked her to let him come, saying:

Born 1563

The prophecy

meaning thereby that 'this grandson of mine shall be a boat to take mankind across the ocean of the world.'

Three sons of Guru Ram Das

Guru Ram Das had three sons, the eldest was Prithia, the second Mahadev and the youngest Arjan Dev. The Guru had a greater attachment to the youngest, and while Mahadev being of other-worldly character did not mind it, Prithia felt very much jealous about it and was constantly intriguing to discredit Arjan Dev. Once, the records tell us, Sahari Mal, the first cousin of the Guru who lived at Lahore, came and invited the Guru to grace with his presence the marriage of his son. The Guru being busy, he asked Prithia to go instead. But the latter refused probably because of a two-fold motive; firstly, as the chronicler explains, Prithia being in-charge of the offerings to the Guru, a considerable portion of which he used furtively to set aside for himself, he did not want the illicit gain to fall to some one else.

Arjan was obedient

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during his absence. Secondly, the time for appointing the successor was drawing nigh and Prithia wanted to remain by his father’s side lest some one else should take the advantage. Mahadev took little interest in sublunary affairs, but Arjan Dev a perfect picture of humility who did not care for wealth and worldly advantages agreed willingly to do as his father was pleased to ask. Arjan Dev left for Lahore with the injunction that he would remain there at the temple to give religious instruction to the Sikhs till he was invited to come back. Arjan Dev remained at Lahore for a long time but no invitation to come back came from his father. His heart pined to have the sight of the true Guru and finally he did write him a letter beseeching him to grant him a chance to have his sight. The letter was however intercepted by Prithia, and it could not reach its destination. Arjan Dev wrote second letter, but it also met the same fate. Suspecting a foul play he wrote the third letter and writing No. 3 on it so that the Guru might know that already two letters had been written to him, he gave special instructions to the messenger to deliver it personally to the Guru. The third letter did reach its destination and the Guru getting Prithia’s house searched, to the discomfort of the deceitful man, discovered the first two letters hidden inside his coat. The Guru, thereupon, immediately sent a message to Arjan Dev to come back, and on his arrival sent for five paisa and a coconut, placed them before Arjan seating him on the throne, touched his feet and asked Bhai Budha to affix the Tilak or the mark of spiritual sovereignty to his head, proclaiming Arjan Dev thereafter as Guru. Prithia feeling insulted that he being the eldest son, had been ignored, vowed to take a revenge on Guru Arjan and did not hesitate even to insult his father on several occasions with the result that he was finally termed as Mina and turned out of the house. In this connection Guru Ram Das wrote in Suhi rag a few hymns such as:

“They render God hearty worship on whose forehead such destiny was recorded in the beginning.

How can one be jealous of those whom my God the
Creator assisteth?

God in the beginning bestowed on his saints the ambrosial
store-house of saintship.
The fool who trieth to rival them, shall have his face
blackened both in this world and the next.

In the case of the four Gurus none hath ever obtained the
Guruship by revilings; it is by God's service the
Guruship is obtained.11

In these hymns the name of Prithia is mentioned
nowhere. Yet considering the position he was placed in,
there can be no doubt regarding the correctness of the
tradition that these hymns were addressed by Guru Ram Das
to Prithia.

Arjan Dev thus succeeded to the pontificate in 1581 at
the age of 18 in the midst of opposition from his brother
Prithia who seems to have been determined not to let the
new Guru live in peace. The Sikh records relate several
stories of Prithia's intrigues to harm him. There might be
some exaggeration in regard to their details, but there can
be no doubt regarding Prithia's intentions towards the
Guru. Thus we learn that immediately after Guru Arjan's
accession, Prithia entered into intrigues with Sulahi Khan, a
revenue officer of the Lahore province, with whose help he
was able to secure all the taxes and house rents of the
Guru's property for himself and his brother Mahadev; Guru
Arjan retaining to himself only the voluntary offerings of
the faithful.

Karmo, Prithia's wife is said by the tradition to
have been very much instrumental in instigating the latter
against the Guru. We have Guru Arjan's own words in
Gauri ki War I which run thus:

"The perverse are all day occupied with avarice, though
they pretend otherwise;
At night oppressed by drowsiness and their nine apertures
relaxed, they worship not God.
Women exercise power over the perverse, and ever make
fair promises.

But they who act as women tell them, are impure, thoughtless, and foolish."

These hymns are said to have been written in connection with Karmo's instigations to Prithia, and although there is no mention of Prithia's name in them the composition itself, as it is, does not leave much doubt regarding the correctness of the tradition. The sole consolation left with Prithia and his wife after Guru Arjan's succession is said to have been the hope of their son Mihrban obtaining the Guruship after the death of Guru Arjan who had no son. But their hopes were dashed to the ground when after some time Gango, the Guru's wife, became pregnant. Prithia's hostile activities after this became more violent and the Guru therefore decided to leave Amritsar. He moved to Wadali, a village at a distance of six or seven miles from Amritsar, and there in 1595 was Hargobind born.

When the news of the birth of the young heir reached Amritsar, it "reminded the Sikhs of the time when the whole of Ajudhia rejoiced at the accession of Ram to the sovereignty, and Kekai, one of his father's wives alone, like Prithia and Karmo, mourned the event." Two Not reconciling to the fate, Prithia and his wife now began to plan poisoning of Hargobind to death. On two occasions the attempt was made to poison the child, but both the attempts failed. On one occasion a nurse was sent who poisoned the nipples of her breast and offered them to the child, but while doing so she fainted. At another occasion a Brahman was sent who slipped poison into a cup of milk meant for the child. The child, however, refused to take it and the Brahman died of colic shortly after. While regarding the story of the nurse we have only to rely upon the Sikh tradition, regarding the Brahman we have a definite proof in the shape of Guru Arjan's hymns in rage Bhairo which run thus:—

'The poison produced no impression whatever on him:
The evil Brahman died of the colic.'

1. M., iii, p. 42.
2. The joy of Guru Arjan is manifest in his two songs in the Asa. See G. S., ii, p. 392.
The Supreme Being himself preserved his servant; the sinner died by the Guru’s power.”

Without entering, however, into the details of Prithia’s activities to harm the Guru at this stage, which were very much instrumental in the execution of Guru Arjan and in bringing about many troubles to Hargobind after his accession to the pontificate and with which we shall deal at more proper places, we might study here the more important aspect of Guru Arjan’s life, which helped in yet further transformation and consolidation of the Sikh church.

**Transformation—II**

The first task before Guru Arjan was the completion of the tank at Amritsar, the sanctity of which was increased by the construction of Harmandir or the temple of God in its midst. According to the Sikh records, while the Hindu temples are closed on three sides and opened only towards the east or the rising sun, the great Sikh temple to Amritsar was purposely opened on all the four sides which meant that the Sikh worship was open to all and not concerned with sun-worship at all. After completing the temple, in his characteristic manner the Guru attributed all his success to the mercy of God and in the connection he composed many hymns. Thus he said: “the Creator stood in the midst of the work and not a hair of any man’s head was touched.”

The Guru also proclaimed on the advantages of the tank as:

“*He who batheth herein, having meditated on his God, Shall be completely restored to health.*

*He who batheth in the tank of the saints Shall obtain salvation.*”

The Guru also transferred his residence to Amritsar and the place developed soon into a city and the central place of the Sikh pilgrimage. Much has already been said regarding the importance of this tank and the temple in the Sikh history. Captain Bingley calls it a “common rallying point” of the Sikhs, and there is no doubt that ever since its completion the city of Amritsar has always acted as the

1. G. S., iv, p. 1056; M., iii, p. 47.
spiritual capital of the Sikhs.

The city of Taran Taran, the capital of the Sikhs of the Majha—the middle land between rivers the Beas and the Ravi, was also founded by Guru Arjan. The importance of this city in the Sikh history, too, can not be exaggerated. Surrounded by the Jat population of the province, it has acted as the "nursery of the chivalry of Native Army and the home of a sturdy and strong race of agriculturists", as writes the Amritsar District Gazetteer. According to Dr. G. C. Narang, "It was the light that radiated from Amritsar and Taran Taran that made the peasantry realise their strength, and transformed them from peaceful and toiling husbandmen into fiery soldiers and rulers of the soil whose ancestors had ploughed a few generations before them." At Taran Taran the Guru also opened an asylum for lepers and constructed a tank, proclaiming that the lepers taking bath in it would be cured. Even in the present times the city is visited by a large number of lepers every year and a large part of the city itself is inhabited by lepers.

Besides, the Guru also constructed a Bawali in the Dabbi Bazar at Lahore. This Bawali was later on filled up by Shah Jehan who built a mosque in its place. Maharaja Ranjit Singh destroyed the mosque and re-excavated the Bawali, but the Bawali was destroyed once again during the partition of 1947. The Guru is also said to have founded the Gobindpur town on the Beas to celebrate the birth of his son Hargobind. The town of Kartarpur near Jullundur was also founded by him. All these activities of the Guru added to the number of the places of Sikh pilgrimage, thereby dissociating them from such places of the Hindus.

Another step which the Guru took and which proved to be of a revolutionary character was his organisation of the Masand System. Some writers say that the system had been organised in the time of Guru Ram Das, but this is now conclusively proved that it was organised under Guru Arjan.

The Guru’s activities had been expanding. Besides the Langar which required ever increasing amount of resources to be run; the construction of temples, tanks and founding of the new cities and towns had also been undertaken by the successive Gurus. All this required funds. The Manji system had been organised in the time of Guru Amar Das, which met this problem to certain extent. But the main business of the owners of the Manjis had been to propagate the Sikh faith, and they were not much concerned with the collection of money for the expanding activities of the Guru. Moreover by this time the owners of the Manjis had gone corrupt and whatever utility they possessed had been lost. All this needed a drastic step to amend. And again, the Manji System seems to have been organised to keep contact with the Sikhs only within the Punjab, but by this time, as the Sikh records assert, the Sikhism had spread to almost all the parts of India. In order to reach them all it was essential that the system should be placed on a new footing. Moreover Prithia is said to have established personal contacts with majority of the Manji owners and he obstructed the collection of funds from them. All this necessitated reform and the Guru proclaiming that every true Sikh must contribute at least one tenth of his income towards the Guru’s funds, appointed some special representatives of his in each of the locality where the Sikhs were to be found to collect these funds and to bring them to the Guru on each Baisakhi day when a grand Darbar was held. These representatives were known as Masands.

The character of the Masand System has been differently commented upon by different writers. According to Dr. G. C. Narang, the Masand is the “shorter form of Masand-i-Ali or His Excellency, the title of Mughal Governors. This is another proof of the rising power of the Sikhs. When the Guru became the true king, his viceroys must of course be their excellencies.”

Regarding the tithes, thus writes Mohsin Fani: “Before the fifth period no tribute was exacted from the Sikhs, but presents were given by them according to their own discretion

1. Narang, op. cit., p. 43n.
to their Guru. Arjanmal sent in his time a person to the Sikhs of each town in order to collect a tribute, in that manner, the Sikhs accustomed themselves to the government of a masand or deputy.\textsuperscript{1} Commenting on this writes Dr. Banerjee: "It will be seen that the voluntary contributions of the faithful were now made compulsory and arrangement was made for their collection through authorised agents, who came to be known as masands." Cunningham and Latif also perhaps basing their account on the words of Mohsin Fani quoted above, have forwarded the similar views. But without disputing the intentions of Mohsin Fani, it seems difficult to understand that the Guru should have levied such compulsory tributes upon the Sikhs. The Guru's was no political or a police rule upon the Sikhs. It was voluntarily that the people joined this faith, and if the Guru was to ask for a price in the shape of tithes from those who desired to be his followers, much of the force which attracted the Sikhs to him should have waned. Nor did the Sikhs vis-a-vis the Guru occupy the status that of a subject to a ruler. The Sikhs were simply the followers of the Guru and if in the time of Guru Gobind Singh even without receiving baptism and keeping hair a Sikh could remain a Sikh, though he could not become a Singh, it is difficult to imagine that in the time of Guru Arjan without paying the tithes a Sikh could not remain a Sikh. Paying of the tithes could be made an essential condition pre-requisite for the membership of some inner circle, if ever there was one, it could not be made compulsory for the general mass of the followers majority of whom in every community or an organisation occupy only a status of sympathisers.

Nevertheless, the step taken by the Guru was indeed evolutionary. Even if the contribution levied was voluntary, the Sikhs paid it to the Guru more willingly than they paid their revenues to the Mughal Government. The Masands appointed their deputies to help them, they all propagated the Sikh faith and collected the tithes

\textsuperscript{1} Duhistan, Vol. II, p. 271.

\textsuperscript{2} Banerjee, op. cit., 1, p. 195.

\textsuperscript{3} Cunningham, op. cit., p. 47.

\textsuperscript{4} Latif, op. cit., 254.
which were willingly paid. And as all of them were considered to be the representatives of the Guru, they were respected and even in their mutual disputes etc. the Sikhs preferred to go to them than to any court of the State. The system thus entailed political authority without a desire for it on the Guru’s part. Moreover, as the financial sources of the Guru strengthened, it became easier for him to arrange his budget and to undertake more works of propagation and consolidation of the Sikh faith.

The Guru also undertook a propaganda tour of the Manjha country. The cause of this is said in the Sikh records to have been the Guru’s intention to escape the harassment at the hands of his quarrelsome brother Prithia. Nevertheless, the tour brought about very good results in the shape of a large number of people joining his faith. It was also during the course of this tour that the Guru laid the foundation of the cities of Taran Taran and Kartarpur. The Guru visited the village Bhaini, which was re-named as Cholha, then he visited Khanpur, and at Khara, pleased with “the flowering woods and glades, the limpid water, and the fresh and exhilarating atmosphere,” he founded the city of Taran Taran. In the Jullundur district the Guru founded another city named Kartarpur. During this tour he also visited, besides several other places, the shrine of Guru Nanak at Dera Baba Nanak in the Gurdaspur district, and thence he proceeded to Barath in the same district to visit Sri Chand, Guru Nanak’s son. Sri Chand is said to have censured here the conduct of Prithia, when he learnt from the Guru that he had to undertake the tour because of that. After that the Guru returned to Amritsar.

The monumental business done by the Guru was, however, his compilation of the *Adi Granth*. Copies of the hymns of the first three Gurus were said to have been procured by him from Mohan. The hymns of the fourth Guru were already in his possession, and adding to them those of his own, Guru Arjan compiled the *Granth*. We reserve this topic for discussion in a separate chapter and will not say anything more than a few words from Archer who writes that the *Granth* “at once occupied in the regard

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1. M., iii, p. 23.
of the Sikhs a position such as that of the Vedas, the Bible or the Koran.

"The compilation of the Granth was a process at once indicative in itself of what Sikhism was to be."  

The writers are almost unanimous that the Guru also did something to foster trade and industry among the Sikhs. While there is nothing unconceivable in the Guru doing this to emphasise the character of householders among the Sikhs, some writers in the heat of conjectures have gone to the extent of suggesting that the trade was carried out by the Guru himself with public funds of the community to strengthen the Sikh church, with a political motive. Cunningham writes, "Nor was Arjan heedless of other means of acquiring wealth and influence; he dispatched his followers into foreign countries to be as keen in traffic as they were zealous in belief, and it is probable that his transactions as a merchant were extensive, although confined to purchase of horses in Turkistan."  

But there is available no reliable evidence in support of these contentions. For instance the three horses brought by a Sikh named Sadah for the Guru from Iraq, and which were seized by a tyrant named Khalil Beg, were clearly said to be for the domestic use of the Guru, and there is no suggestion of trade profits either in this or in any other similar transaction.

But even if he himself did not practise and only encouraged his Sikhs in it, "this step," writes Dr. Narang, "though apparently most ordinary was productive of manifold good to the rising power of Sikh theocracy."  

In the first place, it was a blow to the caste system which was a barrier against the Hindus going trans-Indus. Secondly, for the purpose of these transactions the Sikhs had to pass through the lands inhabited by Mohammedans of fanatic character and the sturdy inhabitants of the Indian frontiers. The Sikh contacts

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   Archer also supports this view and says: the motive may not be "entirely commercial—it was at least missionary, also......(it) brought both it financial profit and its converts." Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
with such people developed and strengthened in them the characteristics of a warrior nation. The Sikhs undertaking this trade, earned huge profits and thus besides enriching themselves they also enriched the Guru's finances by their contributions in the shape of tithings. It also developed among the Sikhs a taste for riding and as Dr. Narang writes, it "laid the foundation of the future armies of the Khalsa," which played a significant role in the history of the Panjab. It also helped in establishing the domestic character of the Sikhism and removed the mis-understandings which some of the Guru Nanak's hymns supposed to be condemnatory of such professions had caused.

The Guru also introduced several reforms among the Sikh habits. He, for instance, encouraged widow re-marriage by encouraging a Sikh Hema Chaudhri to marry one. He condemned the use of intoxicants and opened the institutions such as the leprosy asylum at Taran Taran.

The pomp and splendour of the Guru's court grew in the time of Guru Arjan Panth Prakash writes that wealth and splendour kept at a distance of twenty miles from Guru Nank, the distance remained only six miles in the time of Guru Angad, they knocked at the door of Guru Amar Das, fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, and entered the very house of Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan sat on a throne and lived like a king. Although he remained as humble as ever as the tradition says that once, enquired, the Guru told Baba Sri Chand that he kept a long beard to wipe the feet of holy persons such as he was, yet he "kept great state," writes M'Gregor, "and lived in splendour unknown to his predecessors. He kept fine horses and was clothed in costly raiments." Payne writes: "Arjan is celebrated, not only as the compiler of the Granth Sahib, but as the first Guru to assume the temporal as well as the spiritual control of his followers." Or as Dr. Narang writes, "Though himself a man of simple habits and great humility his durbar became

1. Ibid. p. 44.
a place of splendour and magnificence."1 All these developments, though they might have been undertaken without the least political motive, yet were conducive to the development of the one. When there was money enough and followers many to do the Guru’s bidding, it could not be difficult to raise an army and carry territorial conquests and establish an empire. An army in the circumstances was actually raised by Guru Arjan’s successor, though for a different purpose. Territorial conquest was not made, nor a political power established, which seems to have been foreign to the Gurus elements. Yet it did raise apprehensions in the mind of the authorities, as Mohsin Fani writes, as if the Guru was developing a self-Government within the Empire, or a state within the State.2

While all these developments were taking place and the Guru was developing his influence and importance, his enemies were planning to bring about his ruin. The Guru’s inveterate foe, Prithia, had been considerably weakened by the accidental death of Sulahi Khan his friend and patron whose horse started at the accidental flight of a bird from under his feet and ran with his rider straight into a kiln in full blast which belonged to Prithia and which Sulahi Khan had come to visit, reducing in a moment’s time to a mass of cinders both rider and the horse. But soon Prithia was more than compensated for this loss by Chandu, the Dewan of Lahore and a man of more formidable character who joined the ranks of the Guru’s enemies. Chandu’s hostility against the Guru which is proverbial in the Sikh records, sprang from the Guru’s rejection of his daughter’s hand for Hargobind, the Guru’s son, because of some of his _ncalled for derogatory remarks against the Guru. Prithia incited both the Kazis and Brahmins telling them that the Guru had blasphemed both Muslims and the Hindus in his newly compiled Granth. They both lay a complaint against the Guru and their memorial was duly placed before the Emperor through the influence of Chandu. At the Emperor’s invitation the Guru deputed Bhai Budha and Bhai Gurdas to take the Granth before him, and they were able to convince the

1. _Nanak, op. cit._, p. 45.
2. See _Dastaran, ii_, pp. 270—71.
Emperor that the complaint against the Guru was groundless, whereafter they were both dismissed by the Emperor with dresses of honour for their Guru and for themselves.

Dr. Banerjee has characterised the above story as doubtful of occurrence in the absence of independent reliable testimony. But although there is no independent testimony in regard to this story which is based only on tradition, there is a similar story told at another place where a complaint was presented in the Emperor's court by Sulahi Khan together with Prithia, against the Guru, but which was rejected as the Emperor would not interfere in the affairs of the religious men. And regarding this we have a strong testimony in the shape of the Guru's own words. He says:

"The blind fool told lies in the true court.  
And smote his head with his hands.  
They who commit sin contract disease.  
God himself sat as the judge.  
Prithia is involved in the consequences of his own acts.  
All his wealth shall pass away with his life."

This clearly proves that the incidents of complaints going to the Emperor were by no means improbable, and in regard to the story referred to by Dr. Banerjee, if there is no independent testimony in its favour, there is no definite argument against it as well. A tradition can not be rejected merely because it is a tradition when there are no proofs to falsify it.

The tradition continues, the discomfiture of the conspirators became complete when the Emperor not only rejected the complaint, he rather also promised to go to visit the Guru when he would be returning from Lahore whither he was then proceeding. And that the Emperor actually paid a visit to the Guru, is corroborated by Badauni who according to Macauliffe "states that on another occasion, namely, the thirteenth of the month Azur (Jamadi ul sani), Akbar, with a gorgeous military retinue, crossed the Bias and went to Goindwal to visit Guru Arjan whose teaching and character he appreciated". Akbar was pleased with

1. M., iii, pp. 48-49.  
2. M. iii, p. 84.
the Guru at whose request, as the Sikh tradition says, the revenue of whole of the Punjab was remitted for the year due to the famine conditions that prevailed.¹

Akbar's visit to the Guru must be regarded as the high water-mark of the Guru's career from the secular point of view. This gave him an added prestige and facilitated the further propagation of his faith.

Unfortunately, however, the tolerant Emperor Akbar died soon after this and was succeeded by his fanatic son Jehangir, under whom the conspirators against the Guru got a full chance which resulted in the Guru's execution. This event proved to be a turning point in the history of the Sikhs, which would be better dealt with in detail, in a separate chapter that follows.

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¹ Santokh Singh, _Suraj Prakash_, Ras I, [Ch. 43, pp. 1504-5. This seems to be affirmed by Abul Fazl when he says that "increase of the tax to twelve was remitted to the Punjab" after, reaching Sarhind on 7th Dec., 1605. Akbar had paid visit to the Guru on 24th Nov. See _Akbarnamah_, III, p. 1118—also quoted by Mohmd. Akbar, _The Punjab Under the Mughals_, p. 190.
CHAPTER X
TRANSFORMATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM

E—THE EXECUTION OF GURU ARJAN

If we had a short review of the discussions so far held regarding the transformation of Sikhism, we would come across the following points. The faith as preached by Guru Nanak was not very much different from that preached by other Bhakti reformers. Yet Guru Nanak’s teachings led to the foundation of a separate church. His establishment of Sangats at different places gave an opportunity to the Sikhs to develop social contacts among themselves. The development of Langar acted as a levelling influence in the Sikh society and helped in destroying caste distinctions. The greatest step towards this direction was the Guru’s appointment of a successor to continue guiding the Sikhs and establish them ultimately as a separate church-nation. The Gurmukhi script had existed before, but by improving upon it, changing its name and making an extensive use of it Guru Angad developed it as a separate script for the Sikhs. The activities of Guru Nanak’s successors in separating the Sikhs from the Udasis established Sikhism as a religion of householders harmonising the worldly pursuits with true religion. The division of the temporal kingdom of the Sikhs by Guru Amar Das into 22 spiritual provinces each under the charge of a Sikh who looked after their religious affairs, strengthened the existence of the Sikhs yet further. New methods of celebrating festivals of Dewali etc., distinct social practices and habits for the Sikhs developed by the Guru distinguished the Sikhs yet further from the Hindus. Building of the cities such as that of Amritsar and the construction of Bawalis etc. gave the Sikhs their own places of pilgrimage. Guru Arjan gave the Sikhs a separate scrip-
ture and brought their finances on better footings by organising the *Masand* system. Of all the factors, however, three things are necessary for the formation of a nation—language, scripture and habits. All the three had been secured to the Sikhs by the end of Guru Arjan’s pontificate. The blood of a martyr always affixes a seal on what a nation has already achieved, and this was given to them when Guru Arjan laid down his life, thus in addition founding a tradition of sacrifices which the Sikhs developed and which gave to them a new line of action and thought and proved a turning point in their history.

**The Causes**

Investigation into the causes which led to the crisis makes an interesting study. The clash between the Sikhs and the Mughals was in fact inherent in the philosophy and thoughts of Guru Nanak, and in the history of the Sikhs itself. Guru Gobind Singh writes in his *Bachitra Natak*, from one side came Babur and from the other came Guru Nanak, the clash was imminent, as the Almighty Himself had desired it to be:

"ਸੁਪਰਦੀਸਤ, ਸਰਪੰਤੀ ਦੁਆਖ਼, ਪੰਨਾ ਵਰਦਾ ਪਿੰਤਾ ਸਤੀ" 1

Guru Nanak had condemned both the Lodhis and Babur in the most naked terms. He characterised the Babur’s invading army as the ‘Bridal procession of sins’ and condemned very fearlessly the destruction and havoc that it brought about in India. This clearly proved that if Babur’s successors did not rule the country in the right manner, Guru Nanak’s successors were going to challenge them in the manner most suitable in the circumstances. Guru Nanak was succeeded by Guru Angad, and Babur was succeeded by Humayun. We have discussed how during his flight from India in 1540, Humayun visited Guru Angad at Khadur. At the time of his arrival the Guru happened to be in a deep trance and Humayun had to keep standing for some time which enraged him and he drew out his sword to sever the Guru’s head. Had Humayun himself been

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1. See *Bachitar Natak*, Section IX.
not in trouble and had the Guru not shown fearless patience and calmness at the time, the first martyrdom of the Sikhs should perhaps have occurred there and then. Akbar was tolerant, and although many complaints reached him against the Sikh Gurus, his policy of forbearance and respect towards them kept peace. Jehangir was, however, a man of different character. He was determined to propagate Islam and keep less patience with the non-Muslims. On the other hand, by the time of his accession to power Guru Nanak's message had aroused the Sikh spirits. By 1604, as according to Banerjee, the Sikhs had established a strong and consolidated organisation of their own. The Sikh revenues had been put on scientific footings and definite rules of conduct had been given to them. Payne writes that Guru Arjan was first to combine religion with politics, and although a political figure the Guru may not have been, yet his activities were bound to entail politics upon him. His pomp and splendour like that of kings and his authority over the Sikhs had, according to Dr. Narang, created a state within State. All this was bound to prejudice the Muslims and arouse their antagonism, which was a clear writing on the wall.

There were certain other factors also which were definitely in favour of creating a trouble between the Guru and the Mughal authorities. It had been a custom with the Gurus that the Guru gaddi was to be given only to capable hands and according to merit, and this principle continued to be observed by the Gurus even when the Guruship became hereditary. Thus for instance, Guru Ram Das appointed Arjan Dev his youngest son, rather than Prithia his eldest son, as his successor. Under such circumstances many of the aspirants for Guruship were bound to be disappointed and they were bound to create troubles for the successful candidates. Baba Sri Chand, the son of Guru Nanak, thus opposed Guru Angad and tried to give him

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Datu, Dasu every trouble. Datu and Dasu, the sons of Guru Angad, opposed Guru Amar Das. Datu considered Guru Amar Das as his family servant and even kicked him with his foot. Guru Ram Das had to face the similar trouble at the hands of Mohan and Mohri though not as serious as it used to be. Guru Ram Das gave the Guruship, for the first time, to his son, but yet not to the eldest. With the accession of Guru Arjan thus, Prithia his eldest brother, was antagonised.

We have seen how Prithia tried to harm Arjan Dev for the favour of the father that he enjoyed, even before his accession to the gaddi. After his accession he intrigued against him with the help of Mughal officers. Efforts were also made to murder Hargobind, Guru Arjan's son, and complaints were brought against the Guru in the court of Emperor Akbar. But Akbar, with his tolerant policy, could not be antagonised and Prithia's plans having failed he migrated in disgust to the village Heri near Lahore. At the time Prince Khurram (Later Shah Jehan) was the Governor of Lahore. Efforts at the court of Akbar having failed, every effort was now made, as according to the Sikh records, to poison against the Guru the ears of Prince Khurram the third son of Salim, through his Dewans. Many poisonous stories were also said to have been sent by Prithia to Salim (Later Jehangir), the governor of Ajmer. And this antagonised him even before he acceded to the throne and resulted in the crisis, as Kesar Singh Chhibar writes:

चिह चिह भोगिका आरोधिता लापेठे।

किल हमती लक्ष बले तिस दीस।

हित हित हो सूझाती आदि लिहिक मिनट हूँ।

At the same time another factor was at work. Chandu's conflict with the Guru has already been referred to. His daughter's hand had been refused by Guru Arjan for his son Hargobind. Once the match was proposed and rejected, Chandu is said to have got permanent stigma attached to her career because of some derogatory remarks that he had passed against the Guru. The daughter now, according to the custom obtaining among the Hindus, could be married

to none else. And as she grew in age Chandu's anxiety grew. According to Macauliffe, Chandu tried to appease the Guru in every manner, but since the Sikhs of Delhi were opposed to the match the Guru could not be brought to agree to it. According to Latif, Chandu even sent an amount of one lakh rupees to the Guru as a sort of nanak, but without any success at converting him. All this enraged Chandu. His daughter was adding to her years and older she grew, the more her youth troubled him. Chandu enraged at the conduct of the Guru determined to have a revenge on him. Being a Dewan he had an approach in the court of Akbar whose ears he tried to poison, but without a success. But he, even with Prithia, was instrumental in antagonising Jehangir against the Guru before his accession to the throne, and after his accession Jehangir is said in the Sikh records to have played a major role in getting the Guru executed.

The Sikh chroniclers give us some more factors which led to the crisis. Some Hindu saints and poets were also antagonised against the Guru. At the time of the compilation of the Adi Granth the verses of many poets such as Kahna, Pilu, Shah Hussain and Chhaju were rejected and not entered into it, as they were supposed to be against the essential principles of Sikhism. Some of these poets withdrew themselves peacefully, while others grew indignant. The opposition of Kahna is said to have been the most virulent, who being the cousin of Chandu decided immediately to proceed to Lahore and move the authorities against some of the verses in the Granth supposed to be blasphemous of both the Hindu and the Muslim beliefs. Although Kahna died on his way to Lahore, the persons such as Prithia took an advantage of the situation and instigated both Hindus and the Muslims against the Guru. A complaint was duly presented before Akbar which, as we have discussed, was rejected.

Bir Bal, the minister of Akbar, is also said to have been ill-disposed towards the Sikhs upon whom he wanted to levy a tribute. When he was given the charge of the North

1. M., iii, p. 75.
West Frontier campaign, on his way thither he tried to impose a levy upon the Guru and threatened to sack Amritsar if the Guru did not pay. The Guru naturally refused and Bir Bal was just going to wreak his vengeance when he received the orders to proceed to the Frontier in haste. But he left with a warning that unless the Guru paid the contribution he would take his action against him on his return. But Bir Bal met his end in the campaign and thus no vengeance could be wreaked. Yet, however, all this vitiated the atmosphere, from the effect of which Akbar's successor Jehangir could not escape.

The crisis was, however, precipitated in 1606 when an incident occurred. Prince Khusrro, the younger son of Salim (Jehangir), who had been born of the sister of Raja Maan Singh and was married to the only daughter of Mirza Aziz Koka, being a young man of high moral character and excellent qualities of head and heart had created a very good impression on the mind of Akbar. Akbar was not favourably disposed towards Jehangir and he for sometime held the plan of giving the throne to him. Ultimately, however, Salim could not be easily brushed aside. His claims to the throne were recognised and he was appointed to succeed Akbar. Five months after Salim's accession to the throne, encouraged by Raja Maan Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka Khusrro revolted against his father, Jehangir. Jehangir ordered the Imperial forces to capture him, but Khusrro escaped and proceeded towards Afghanistan. On the way he visited the Guru and different views are expressed as to how the Guru got implicated in the rebellion.

Macauliffe writes that moved by compassion, his friendly feelings towards Khusrro who had visited him along with Akbar a few times previously, and his respect towards the late monarch whose grand son Khusrro was, the Guru "gave him five thousand rupees to defray his expenses to Kabal."

Mohsin Fani, however, says that the Guru merely offered prayers for Khusrro. While Jehangir himself writes: "At last

when Khusrō passed along this road this insignificant fellow (Arjan) proposed to wait upon him. Khusrō happened to halt at the place where he was, and he came out and did homage to him. He behaved to Khusrō in certain special ways and made on his forehead a fingermark in saffron which the Indians (Hinduwan) call qashqā and is considered propitious. According to some Sikh writers even if the saffron mark was made by the Guru on Khusrō’s forehead, it did not mean any complicity of the Guru in the rebellion. It was merely done as a good wish for his safe journey, for the Guru had a regard for Khusrō’s late grand father, Akbar. Be that as it may, it is doubtless true that the Guru did compromise himself, in however trivial manner, in the rebellion of Khusrō, which could be regarded something very serious.

Khusrō, however, was seized by the Imperial troops as he was crossing the Jhelum and taken in chains to his father. How much did this participation of the Guru in the Khusrō’s rebellion result in his execution, here again different views are available. Majority of the Sikh writers ignore the incident altogether and explain as if Chandu’s machinations alone brought the things to a head. Some of them do make its mention but in a very insignificant manner. The consensus of opinion among them is that the Guru’s increasing influence and wealth, his inclusion in the Granth of some hymns which, as it was said, blasphemed both Hindus and the Muslims, and his being called ‘Sachcha Padshah, or the ‘True King’ as against the ‘False Kings’ of the Mughals; all this had aroused the indignation of several interests. The fanatic Kázis in Jehangir’s court had also played their part against the Guru. And Chandu who had his own grievances against the Guru, took an advantage of the situation. When Jehangir visited the Punjab, the case of the Guru was brought before him under one pretext or another, and the Guru was shown to be a man who gave refuge to doubtful characters and who wanted to defame both the Hindu and the Muslim faiths. Jehangir ordered the Guru to present himself in his court and asked him there to erase certain

hymns from the Granth and add some in the praise of Islam which he naturally refused, and thus a punishment was imposed upon him. Some Sikh writers support the above account forwarding the proof that the Emperor had passed through the whole tract of Manjha, stopping even at Goindwal where the Guru resided, punishing those who had helped Khusro in one way or another, but no complaint in this respect was received by him against the Guru. It was only when he had finished with the business, they assert, and was preparing to go hunting that the Guru’s case came before him. Clearly thus, had the Guru been blamed of having a complicity in the Khusro’s rebellion, he should have been punished earlier along with others blamed of the same crime.

Strangely enough, this seems to be supported by the account given by Jehangir himself who writes thus: “In Goindwal, which is on the river Biyah (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjun, in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simple-hearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him Guru and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations (of spiritual successors) they had kept his shop warm. Many times it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam.”¹ This would tend to prove that the Guru’s religious practices had already antagonised the Emperor against the Guru, and even if the Guru was involved in any manner in the Khusro’s rebellion it was not the main cause of his execution, although it could have provided an opportunity for the purpose. The Guru was mainly a victim of religious fanaticism which was made a use of by the interested persons such as Chandu and Prithia. Mr. Sarkar’s view that “Guru Arjan merely suffered the customary

¹ Rogers and Beveridge, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 72.
punishment of a political offender," seems thus to be a hasty conclusion drawn without discerning truth from legendary details.

Regarding the punishment that was awarded to the Guru, the Sikh tradition holds that the Guru was asked by the Emperor to pay a fine of two lakh rupees and erase certain hymns from the Granth, which were opposed to the Hindu and the Muslim faiths. The Guru, however, refused to do any of the things and said that the money he possessed belonged to the Sikhs and the views expressed in the Granth represented truth, and it was impossible for him to violate either the trust or the truth. According to some Sikh chroniclers, Chandu paid the fine from his own pocket and purchased the person of the Guru to do with him as he liked. They further assert that the Guru was determined to make the sacrifice to create a healthy tradition for the Sikhs. They forward a proof to the effect saying that the Sikhs of Lahore offered to unite and raise a subscription to discharge the Guru's obligation, but the Guru ordered them strictly to desist from such action. The offer of Mian Mir, a Muslim saint of Lahore, to intercede on the Guru's behalf, and that of the daughter-in-law of Chandu to help him, were similarly rejected. And the Guru preferred to bear the punishment than to pay the fine. The Guru was thus, subjected by Chandu to different types of torture. He was seated in hot cauldrons for hours together, burning sand was poured on his head and the heat of the month of May at Lahore was itself made the worst use of. After five days of torture, according to some, with blisters all over his body the Guru asked for a permission to go to the Ravi for a bath, which was granted by Chandu. The Guru went to the Ravi and there vanished into the water. This would, however, amount to a sort of suicide which ill-matches with the Guru's refusal to accept help against the punishment from any quarter. The possibility seems to be that with blisters all over his body when the Guru plunged himself into the cold water of the Ravi, it caused him a shooting pain, of which he died.

Mohsin Fani writes: "The king ordered the imprisonment of Arjun-mal, and wanted to extort a large sum of money from him. The Guru was helpless; they kept him a prisoner in the sandy country of Lahore, until he died of the heat of the sun and ill-treatment." The Emperor himself however does not make a mention of the fine at all and seems perhaps to exclude the possibility of tortures as well, as he says: "When this (news about Guru Arjan and Khusro) came to my ear and I clearly understood the folly, I ordered them to produce him and handed over his houses, dwelling-place, and children to Murtaza Khan, and having confiscated his property commanded that he should be put to death." But the account of Mohsin Fani and the very strong Sikh tradition in this respect cannot be very easily brushed aside. Jehangir has not given much space in his book to his dealings with the Guru, and has disposed it off only in a few lines. There is every possibility, rather a certainty that the information regarding Guru's torture was not sent to Jehangir at all, and that his order to put the Guru to death should also have been dealt with only in a casual manner in his book.

Jadunath Sarkar agreeing that the Guru was tortured to death, seems to have gone to the extremity of haste and carelessness when he says that "these were the usual punishments of revenue defaulters of those days." Writes Dr. Banerjee "it appears that to call Guru Arjan a revenue defaulter because of his inability or refusal to pay the fine and then justify the tortures inflicted on him on grounds of current usage, ignoring all the other circumstances connected with his death, show a perversity of judgement, which can hardly be excused in a historian."

The sacrifice of Guru Arjan is a mile-stone in the history of the Sikhs. According to Dr. Trumpp: "Guru Arjan's death is the great turning point in the development of the Sikh community, as from that time the struggle commenced

2. Rogers and Beveridge, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 72, 73.
that changed the entire character of the reformatory religious movement."1

At the time of his death, Guru Arjan left the following message to be taken by his Sikhs to Hargobind: I have succeeded in effecting the object of my life. Go to my son the holy Hargobind, and give him from me ample consolation. Bid him not to mourn or indulge in unmanly lamentations but sing God's praises.........Let him sit fully armed on his throne, and maintain an army to the best of his ability. Let him affix the patch of Guruship to his forehead according to ancient custom, and ever treat his Sikhs with the utmost courtesy."2 Here was a seed of revolution sown, which germinated and transformed the character of the Sikhs from mere saints into saint-soldiers who later challenged the mightiest of the Oriental empires and who later rolled the flood of the never-ending foreign invasions across the river Indus.

In a short time after Guru Arjan’s martyrdom, as Macauliffe writes, the Guru changed his character from a mere religious to a spiritual-cum-military leader.3 It was as a result of this that Guru Hargobind later on began to raise an army, he gave martial tunes to the Sikhs to sing their songs upon, and took to hunting and physical exercises. Guru Arjan’s martyrdom, writes Khazan Singh,4 inflamed the peaceful Sikh hearts. It set the ball rolling and generated the spirit which later on converted the ordinary hair-cutters and water-drawers into the greatest of soldiers and generals of the time. The Sikhs burned with the spirit of revenge and prepared to learn the art of swords and battle-fields.

According to Latif: “The death of Guru Arjan is a great turning point in the history of the Sikh nation, for it inflamed the religious passion of the Sikhs, and it was at this time that those seeds of hatred of the Muslim power were sown which took such deep root in the minds of all the

faithful followers of Nanak.”* The sacrifice also started in the Sikh history the new chapter of Sikh persecutions. As the Sikh zeal to take a revenge strengthened, the wave of arrests, fines and threats to the Sikhs spread. The more an effort was made to suppress them, the more the Sikhs burnt with the fire of enthusiasm and sacrifice. A precedent had been set which was strengthened by the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur, and which was converted into a tradition when the tenth Guru sacrificed all of his home and hearth in the protection of the just interests of mankind.

The greatest service rendered by the fifth Guru’s sacrifice, however, was that it consolidated what the Sikhs had so far attained, and it separated the Sikhs definitely from the common mass of the Hindus. One of the causes of the Guru’s sacrifice had been the hymns in the Granth, which were supposed to be blasphemous of the Hindus, and which the Guru refused to erase. The sacrifice established the Sikhs as a sect distinct from the Hindus.
CHAPTER XI

THE ADI GRANTH

There existed three editions of the Adi Granth in the days of the Sikh Gurus, the first transcribed by Bhai Gur Das and dictated by Guru Arjan, the second prepared by Banno and the third by Bhai Mani Singh under the supervision of Guru Gobind Singh. The first two are said to be still in existence, one at Kartarpur and the other till recently at Manjat in the Gujrat district of the Punjab. "The third and most complete edition was either destroyed or taken away by Ahmad Shah Durani when he despoiled the temple at Amritsar."1 Regarding the origin of Bhai Banno’s edition different views are held. According to one view, Bhai Banno having learnt of the compilation of the Granth by Guru Arjan, went to see it, requested for a loan of it and copied it for himself; adding into it some verses excluded by Guru Arjan. According to another view, Guru Arjan entrusted the Granth to Banno to have it bound from Lahore, but he prepared an unauthorised copy of it. We here, however, are concerned mainly with the first edition compiled by Guru Arjan.

A—The Need of it.

Regarding the circumstances under which it was written, thus writes Macauliffe: "Guru Arjan now felt the necessity of laying down rules for the guidance of his followers in the performance of their daily religious duties and expiratory rites. This course would reduce his religion to consistency, and hinder divergent tenets and rituals. That consummation, however, could only be attained when the exact words of the Gurus were permanently recorded in one grand volume."2 Moreover, there is said to have been another

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reason which necessitated its compilation. Prithia in the Sikh records is said to have started composing religious hymns of his own which he described as the compositions of Guru Nanak and his successors. And under these circumstances if the compositions of the Sikh Gurus were to be saved from the bad attempts of such persons it was necessary to collect them together in a compiled form, as:

बचत लोगे, इतहो गुरुवारं मागु मो हो बनाई मुंहा वही।

मैं सर सजी ही सज, मैं हिसाबी वह पती हे।

And again, as according to Gordon, if the independence of the Sikh race was to be established it was essential that they should have an independent source of religious inspiration. The Sikhs had been given a script and a language of their own, and they had to be given a definite literature in them which could form a strong base for their development. That the Guru was really planning by such actions to establish the Sikhs as a separate sect or a race, as Gordon and some other writers suggest, we may not agree, yet there is every possibility that the existing sacred Hindu literature being in the Sanskrit language, the Guru should have thought it essential to give his followers a book in their own language, which could atonce replace the Hindu Granths in their aim and purpose. Moreover, to keep the Sikhs above the existing corrupt socio-religious practices, Guru Amar Das also had left definite instructions in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth pauris of the Anand that the real hymns of the Guru alone should be repeated and revered by the Sikhs, and for that reason Guru Arjan may have felt himself duty-bound to save these hymns from possible interpolations. Yet more so, because by this time several hymns had already got currency among the Sikhs, which were supposed to have been composed by the Sikh Gurus but which actually they had not been. One of such hymns thus was:

3. Ibid.
There was by this time a rich treasure of hymns composed by Guru Arjan’s predecessors which was either in his own possession or in that of some other persons. The Guru’s own work was also voluminous, and besides, the hymns of several other Bhaktas were also available. The Guru decided to bring all of them together in the shape of a Granth.

**B — The Collection**

The Guru seems to have faced a considerable trouble in the collection of the material for the Granth. Major portion of the hymns of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das lay with Baba Mohan at Goindwal. Guru Arjan, according to Macauliffe, sent Bhai Gurdas to borrow these volumes from Baba Mohan for the purpose of copying them down; the latter, however, “had locked himself in his house, and was said to be intent on his devotions. Gurdas remained knocking at his door for a whole night, but failed to receive an answer.” After this Bhai Budha was sent to Baba Mohan. But he also after knocking the door for a long time and finding no response, had only to break open the door to find that Mohan was in a state which simulated unconsciousness. On the advice of Mohri, Mohan’s younger brother, Bhai Budha desisted from awakening the sleeper and returned to Amritsar. After this the Guru went personally, but after finding no response to his calls the Guru addressed Mohan with the following stanza:

“O Mohan, lofty is thy mansion and matchless thy palace;
O Mohan, saints adorn the doors of thy temple.
In the temple they ever sing the praises of the infinite and merciful God.

1. Where according to Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, the manuscript consisting of two volumes was with the descendants of Baba Mohan up to very recently, but now one of them, bearing the date 1652 Bk. (1595 A.D.) is traceable to Ahipur, a village in Hoshiarpur district, and other to a Sikh, named Baba Bhagat Singh, living in the Frontier Province.” *Short History of the Sikhs* (1850), p. 30.

Where the company of the saints assemble, there they meditate on thee.

Show compassion and kindness, O compassionate Lord; be merciful to the poor.

Nanak representeth, I am thirsting for a sight of thee, grant it to me, and all happiness shall be mine!"

At this Mohan softened and opened the door. This view is supported by majority of the Sikh writers. Professor Sahib Singh, however, has tried to contradict it saying that these hymns are addressed to God, or Mohan, the enchanter and not to Baba Mohan. But this view does not seem correct. The above mentioned song seems to be addressed to both Mohan and God, the former being expanded and replaced by God as the song proceeds, as in the case of all such songs. The Guru's visit to Baba Mohan and his obtaining the above mentioned manuscript from him is completely confirmed from some other hymns in the Granth which, as we have no reason to disbelieve, were composed in the same connection. Thus for instance, in another stanza the Guru says:

"O Mohan, incomparable are thy words, and superior thy deportment.

O Mohan, thou believest in one God, all others thou test as refuse."

And when the Guru did obtain the manuscript from him he uttered the concluding stanza:

"O Mohan, mayest thou be successful with thy family!

O Mohan, thy children, friends, brethren, and family, all hast thou saved.

Thou hast also saved those who having beheld thee have dispelled their pride.

Death never approacheth those who magnify Thee.

Endless are Thine excellences; they cannot be described,

O True Guru, and Supreme God.

Nanak representeth, Thou hast preserved a prop by clinging to which the world shall be saved."

2. See his Kaj Hor Dharmik Lekh.
It is clear thus that if Mohan were to mean only God, the Guru would not say: "thou believest in one God, all others thou treatest as refuse." Nor would the Guru give the blessing: "O Mohan, mayest thou be successful with thy family." From the concluding stanza it is also clear that Mohan and God have both been addressed, the word Mohan being expanded and magnified, as the song proceeds.

After obtaining the hymns of the first three Gurus the Guru added to them the hymns of his father, the fourth Guru, which were in his own possession. Then the hymns of the different Bhaktas were collected. The suggestion of some Sikh writers that since almost all these Bhaktas had died their spirits were called by the Guru to give the correct form of the hymns, may be treated as absurd. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh hold that the Guru had inherited from his predecessors the hymns of the Bhaktas such as Kabir and Farid, to which he added the hymns of others which he obtained from the followers of their respective sect. Macauliffe also holds the similar view and says: "It may be here conceded that those hymns received some alterations in the process of transmission from the saints to their followers who were contemporaries of Guru Arjan; and this will explain why so many Punjabi words are found in the Bhagat's writings, and why they differ from their compositions preserved in other parts of India."

That Guru Nanak and his successors did have in their possession the hymns of Kabir and Farid may further be proved from the fact that many of the expressions of these Bhaktas are embodied in the expressions of the Gurus. Teja Singh, Ganda Singh may here be quoted in this connection: "Sutak will enter into our kitchens" (Var Aša) is found also in Kabir's Gauri. 'The mind is born out of the five senses occurring in Guru Nanak's Aša is the same as 'The mind is the creature of the five senses' of Kabir's Gauri...... Some couplets of Farid are embodied in the writings of Guru

Nanak (e.g. 113 and 114). Sometimes the Guru criticises Farid’s views and inserts his own shlokas after his (e.g. 119-120 and 123-124). See also Farid’s Suhi (ii) and Guru Nanak’s reply to it in the same ghar 6 (ii)." And again they write: "A similar identity or correspondence in expression is found between Second, Third and Fourth Gurus, on the one hand, and Farid and Kabir, on the other. This could only be explained by the supposition that the predecessors of Guru Arjan had before them the writings of these Bhagats!"

When Kahna, Chhaju, Shah Hussain and Pilo, the four religious men of Lahore learnt that the Guru was compiling the Granth, they requested the Guru to find a place in his Granth for their compositions also. A reference may here be made to their rejected compositions which would incidentally show what the Guru would not like Sikhism to be. Kahna thus delivered his composition:

"I am He, I am He
Whom the Veds and Purans sing, but Whom none hath found by search."

1. Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, op. cit., p. 31. Prof. Sahib Singh has made an interesting study of the facts in his book, Steek Shalok Farid, pp. 32-38. He quotes several verses of Farid to establish their identity with those of Guru Nanak, and to prove clearly that the latter could not have composed them unless he had the relevant verses of the former with him. Thus in one verse Farid says:

पिछले पिछले द्वारके, हसु हो पर्वत वर्जि।

से मनोदि लविलि मे, नायल के भागि ॥१७७॥

It is only they who meditate on Him early in the morning, will deserve his benevolence. Guru Nanak, fearing lest those meditating as such should be proud of it and claim His benevolence as a matter of right, comments that the benevolence can come only if He Himself is pleased to bestow. Those with whom He is not pleased, may not get His benevolence even by getting up early; and those with whom He is pleased, may be awakened by Himself and bestowed the benevolence upon:

साधीय मैथिली मंडल, सिमा चर्चि इस दिनगि ॥

देव साधी चे कहाणि, दिवंगत मूख्या रोटि पृष्ठि ॥१७६॥

Ibid. p. 32.

The Guru rejected this composition as rank blasphemy. Chhaju then offered his composition:

"Look thou not on woman, even though she be cut out of paper;
Like a plundering band of Baloches she will take thee away and kill thee!"

This was rejected as being too derogatory to the female sex. According to Guru Nanak domestic life was the best of all, and Guru Arjan had no wish to deprecate women. Shah Hussain's composition was:

"Be silent, 0 my friend, be silent;
There is no necessity, 0 my friend, for speaking;
My friend, there is no necessity for speaking."

This was rejected because the Guru said that so long as one remained in the world, he must exchange his views with others, and if one be a holy man he should preach the message of God among the people. Lastly, Pilo submitted:

"They who have died at their birth are superior to us;
They do not thrust their feet into the mire, and are not befouled therewith."

This was rejected on the ground that better is the man who struggles with the world to make his life profitable than he who quits the scene at the outset.

C—The Authors

The Granth thus compiled by Guru Arjan consists of the Shalokas, Shabads and the Pauris etc. of the first five Gurus as follows. To Guru Nanak belong 974 of these compositions, to Guru Angad belong 62, to Guru Amar Das 907, to Guru Ram Das 679 and to Guru Arjan 2216. Thus the greatest contribution is that of Guru Arjan himself. Afterwards 116 Shabads and 2 Shalokas of Guru Teg Bahadur were added to it, and only one line was added to it belonging to the tenth Guru, which according to Trumpp and Munshi Sohan Lal

1 Ibid.
2 M., iii, pp. 62–63.
3 Trumpp, op. cit., cit.
4 Sohan Lal, Munshi, Tarikh-Ranjit Singh, p. 69.
formed a reply to his father's letter addressed to him from the prison at Delhi, but which is of very doubtful origin.

The sixteen Hindu and Muslim Bhaktas whose hymns were included in the Granth were: Kabir, Farid, Trilochan, Beni, Ramdas, Dhana, Namdev, Jai Dev, Bhikhan, Sein, Pipa, Ramana, Parma Nand, Sadhna and Sur Das.

A hymn of Mira Bai is preserved in Bhai Banno's edition, but it is not found in the first edition of Guru Arjan. The compositions of 15 Bhattis or minstrels are included in the Granth. These 15 minstrels are: Bhalhau, Bhika, Ball, Ganga, Haribans, Jallau, Jalap, Kal, Kalas, Kalashar, Kirat, Mathura, Nal, Rad, and Sal. All these Bhattis, according to Panth Prakash, are Brahmans. Cunningham, however, writes that the number of these Bhattis was nine, and adds: "The names are evidently fanciful, and perhaps fictitious. In the book called the Guru Bilas eight Bhattis only are enumerated, all the names except Ball are different from those in the Granth." 2

The Granth includes the War written by Satta and Balwand. Satta who visited Guru Ram Das, came and completed the War started by Balwand by adding a few verses in praise of Guru Arjan. Sach Nam di bani, written by Sundar, the nephew of Guru Amar Das is also included, and the Granth includes the three Shubdas supposed to be written by Murdana, but which are of doubtful origin.

"It would thus appear," writes Dr. Narang, "that 75 percent of the authors of the Granth were Hindus by faith, as well as by birth, if, of course, the Gurus themselves are to be regarded as Sikhs and not as Hindus. 3

D—Arrangement of the Matter.

The Granth as compiled by Guru Arjan starts with the 'Japji', or 'Japji Sahib' as the Sikhs call it, also called as Guru Mantr. It occupies seven pages and consists of 40

2. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 325.
sections of irregular lengths, called *Pauris*. Written by Guru Nanak, “the mode of composition implies the presence of a questioner and an answerer, and the Sikhs believe the questioner to have been the disciple Angad,” writes Cunningham.¹ The *Japji* is repeated by the Sikhs every morning. Next follows the ‘Sodar Reh Ras’, the evening prayer, which occupies 3½ pages. This was also composed by Guru Nanak, but later on additions to it were made by Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan. Cunningham writes: “*Sudar*, a particular kind of verse; *Rah*, admonisher; *Ras*, the expression used for the play or recitative of Krishna. It is sometime corruptly called the ‘Rowh Ras,’ from Rowh, the Punjabi for a road.”²

The meaning drawn by Cunningham for *Sodar*, however, does not seem correct. *Sodar* means ‘that door’, as it is implied in the very first sentence of the hymn when it says:

*Where is that door of Thine,*
*Where is that house of Thine*
*From where Thou controlest every thing.*

After it follows *So Purakh*, which means ‘that Supreme Being’, and this is also recited with the evening prayer. Then *Kirtan Sohila* which is recited in the night before going to bed, and which occupies one page and one or two lines more. It was also composed by Guru Nanak, but Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan added some verses to it. *Kirtan* follows from the word *Kirti* which means praise. *Sohila* stands for a rejoicing song.

Next portion of the Granth, and which constitutes its central body, is divided into 31 sections each according to a particular *raga*. The thirty-one *ragas* or musical measures used are:

- *Sri Rag, Majh, Gauri, Asa, Gujri, Dev Gandhari, Bihagra, Wadhans, Sorath, Dhanasri, Jai Sri, Todli, Bairari, Tilang, Sudhi, Bilawal, Gaund, Ramkali, Nat Narayan, Mali-Gaura, Maru, Tukhari, Kedara, BhaiRon, Besant,*

¹ Cunningham, op. cit., Appendix XVII, p. 323.
² Ibid., p. 323.
Sarang Malhar, Manhra, Kalian, Parbhati and Jai Jalwanti. Whole of this central portion occupies 1,154 pages. The musical measures such as Megh and Hindol or Jog and Deepak which work the mind to the extremes of joy or sadness are purposely excluded to keep moderation. Each of these sections begins with an invocation to God and then follow the hymns of the Gurus in order of their succession, each one of whom calls himself by the common appellation of Nanak and is distinguished only by the words in the beginning such as Mehta 1, Mehta 2, Mehta 3 and so on. After it in each section follow the hymns of the Bhaktas or the Saints, beginning with Kabir and ending with Fadil, if there by any hymn from the latter.

Towards the end are given the Savayyas of the minstrels who admirably sum up the characteristics of the different Gurus.1 After a miscellany of shlokas left over from insertion in the Wars, the book closes with an epilogue called Mundavani in which the author says:

"In this dish are placed three things: Truth, Harmony and Wisdom. These are seasoned with the Name of God which is the ground of all. Whoever eats and enjoys it will be saved.

And then he adds, with a genuine pride in the work he has accomplished for the regeneration of mankind:

"It is a thing you cannot afford to ignore; You must clasp it to your hearts."2

And after this, as if from self-abasement, the Guru writes:

"I did not appreciate what Thou didst for me, and yet Thou madest me worthy.

I am full of demerits; I possess no merit, and yet Thou Thyself hast compassion on me.

Thou showest compassion and kindness unto me; I have found the true Guru, the friend.

Nanak, if I obtain the Name, I shall live, and my body and soul shall be refreshed."¹

The Granth concludes with the Rag Mala which is a part of the work separately available of a Mohammedan poet called Alim. The complete work is of 353 stanzas and purports to be an account of the loves of Madhava Nal and a lady called Kam Kandala, Alam’s work is supposed to have been written in 1583 and the Rag Mala which extends from the sixty-third to its seventy-second stanza contains a list of ragas and raginis and their subdivisions. There is a controversy whether the Rag Mala forms an essential part of the Granth at all, because the ragas mentioned in it do not correspond to those thirty-one in the Granth, nor do we know how it was included in the sacred volume.

The Granth was completed and installed in the Harimandir at Amritsar in 1604, and Baba Budha was appointed the first Granthi, to be the in-charge of it. The Granth was brought to its final shape by Guru Gobind Singh who added into it the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and one of his own the origin of which is supposed to be controversial.

E—The Nature of Contents and its Importance.

The Adi Granth of Guru Arjan is supposed to be the first religious work in which all the racial and national differences have been set aside. The list of the authors in the Granth consists of persons belonging to various communities and to different parts of the country. When Akbar saw it, he remarked that the Granth was "the greatest book of synthesis, worthy of reverence."²

The subject of discussion in the Granth is: the true shape of Truthfulness, how to attain it, those who have attained it and those who have not attained it. Dr. Trumpp writes: "Prayer to the Supreme is hardly ever mentioned in the

¹ M., iii. p. 64.
² Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari.
Granth." But comments Dr. Narang: "The statement is simply absurd, and literally hundreds of prayers to the Supreme could be produced from the book." The Granth in fact starts with a prayer to the Supreme, invokes God in every passage of its body and ends with a prayer to him. And Dr. Trumpp's words simply prove what Professor Max Muller said about the untrustworthiness of his account. In the Granth, continues Dr. Narang, "there is absolutely no dissertation on any particular subject and no stories of Guru's lives or miracles." Its main part consists only of songs in praise of God and prayers to him.

Dr. Trumpp's complaint of repetitions in the Adi Granth proves further his failure to put himself in tune with their spiritual significance. He has perhaps brought "too intellectual an outlook on the ecstatic and spontaneous outpourings of a highly charged emotional quality. Hence for him, the repetitions were just repetitions." Macauliffe writes: "It is intelligible that repetitions should be found in the sacred books of several religions. For the teachings of their prophets were orally addressed to crowds who clustered round them and repetitions served to impress on the listeners the instructions accorded." He further elucidates the point: "The cardinal principle for the Gurus and Bhagats whose writings find place in the sacred books of the Sikhs was the unity of God. This is everywhere inculcated in the Sikh sacred writings with ample and perhaps not unnecessary iteration, considering the forces Sikhism had to contend with in an age of ignorance and superstition."

Dr. Trumpp further complains of a lack of order and classification in the Granth. But writes Dr. Narang, the

1. Trumpp, op. cit., p. cx-Quoted also by Narang, op. cit., p. 246 n.
5. Harnam Singh, Giani, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. VII.
6. M., i, pp. XVII.
7. Ibid, p. 1-II.
8. Trumpp, op. cit., p. CIX.
Granth resembles *Rig Veda* in this "with this difference that whereas the *Veda* generally deals with the same subject in the same stanza, the Granth does not confine itself to any particular subject even in one stanza." But since there are no personal lives, or miraculous powers discussed in it, "the very nature of the contents of the Granth could not, therefore, yield to any rigid classification based upon a community or similarity of the subject dealt with......the teachings of the Gurus about morality, as well as their doctrines and beliefs, lie scattered all over the book, and must be gathered by a careful study of the whole volume." And further writes Dr. Narang: "Being a collection of so many authors, uniformity of belief or theological doctrine could not be expected."1

The Granth, if we approach it dispassionately, has in fact merits which are too high for a common intelligence to grasp. Leaving aside its religious philosophy, its literary excellence itself is so high that it would attract every person of that bend of mind. "The writing in the Adi Granth," writes Khushwant Singh, "is the best that Punjabi literature has hitherto achieved. It has a form and finish not equalled by subsequent writers. The beauty of its composition has a powerful appeal."2 The Granth is a treasure of Indian languages, as Dr. Trumpp writes.3 There are some stanzas in it, such as those of Jai Dev, which are very much like Sanskrit. One or two stanzas are in pure Persian. Nam Dev and Trilochan, belonging to the Deccan, have a strong impress of Marathi on their contributions. Contributions of Kabir and Ramanand are in pure Hindi of the time, which, along with the Punjabi of those times, forms the medium of expression for the main body of the Granth. Pure Punjabi is thus represented in the typical songs in the tradition of Farid:

Sindhi
Lehndi

2. Great literary work

Pure love

If a literary work is to be defined as the one in which one gets a perception of beauty and tastefulness, the Granth which has both is one of the greatest literary works ever produced. 2 A tide of pure love with the Invisible One is perceptible when we read for instance that one should love Him as fish love water, and without which they cannot remain alive:

3. Beauty

Some of its lines and verses are important more for their beauty than for their meaning, as:

4. Different types

Different types in poetry are used such as Bara Mahan, Ghorim and Arti. The symbols used in the Granth betray as to how vast a knowledge the authors possessed regarding nature and their surroundings. For instance, a verse compares the useless search of mind to one’s wandering in the jungles, while patience (µa) is compared to the greenness of woods:

5. Symbols

2. See Dr. Gopal Singh, Punjabi Sahit Da Itkas, pp. 85 etc.
3. We find such a beautiful expression of love in Gauri Balragan M.I, Adi Granth, p. 157, also see Asa M. 5, pp. 454-55.
4. Guru Nanak sings in Vadhans:

"The peacocks dance: to the rains have come. O Lord. Thy dagger-sharp eyes are alluring like a woman’s and I am enticed away by their lure."

G. S., ii, p. 545
And again addressing the man as a black stag, a verse runs:

दु कुट फिरा गलिया, की लिड़े आ. घम।

विंि देख नींता दरा दिश, विि उंदे सलम। ¹

Restrictive in words, yet so penetrative and expressive of the deepest meaning, the Granth has yet another literary excellence in it, i.e., that of free use of similes, as:

हस नहीं फििन देवी गली, रास दवी अर दिश।

सम धीन, संघी, मुभा, तथ साती देव। ²

Its restrictive use of language has, further, added many new proverbs into the Punjabi language, such as Pain works as a cure, while happiness does as a disease—in happiness one forgets Him:

सुक वेषु मुइं देव विदिव। ³

And again:

'Unmarried girl was anxious for marriage, but the married one has her problems'

सो चुपचाली व चढ़ी, बििती व भागौ। ⁴

"Guru Nanak," thus writes Dr. Mohan Singh Dewana, "lived from A. D. 1469 to 1538; his literary and religious tradition was continued till 1708 when Guru Gobind Singh expired at Nander in Hyderabad". And during this period: "In Punjabi........the tradition of religious, lyrical, romantic—legendary and balladic output were carried forward by the House of Nanak, primarily and primely, by a host of Hindu Muslim saints who owed their afflatus direct to Nanak

2. Ibid. Soauth M. 1, p. 535
3. Adi Granth, Asa M. 1, p. 489, Shaloka M. 1,
and Farid and their spiritual successors". The great literary qualities of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan may here be specially discussed.

Regarding Guru Nanak, Khushwant Singh explains beautifully thus: "Most didactic poetry suffers from a cramping narrowness imposed by the purpose for which it is written, but Guru Nanak's poetry displays a remarkable freedom of expression." The beauty of pastoral Punjab, the ripening cornfields, the break of dawn and the awakening of birds, the graceful flight of deer in the woodlands, the majesty of monsoon clouds and the music of rainfall, all aroused him to religious and poetic frenzy." Peculiarities of the joint Hindu families, relations between husband and wife and other such domestic situations work as similes for Guru Nanak; and his metaphors are drawn from the picking of cotton and gleaning of corn, milking of cattle and churning of butter, spinning and weaving. Thus he says comparing spouse to God:

"Accursed is her life who is separated from her spouse; she is ruined by mammon.

Like a wall impregnated with kallar she crumbleth down day and night."*

And:

"Nanak, by spinning falsehood, the web of falsehood is woven.

"False is the cloth therefrom and its measurement; false the raiment and the pride thereof."**

In Guru Nanak's poetry there is frankness, directness, simplicity and humility. He understands all the measures of the folk-music and can use all the types of poetry and important forms of verse such as Chhant, Dupade, Chaupde, Bara Manh and Salok. All the important details of the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist cultural and religious vocabulary are available in his hymns. He knows all the different

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types of mysticism, such as the mysticism of detached action (ਫਰਸਾਈ ਸਰਨ), of emotion (ਜੱਹ), of yoga, nature and soul. In his poetry the Buddhist sense of humanity has reached its best form; and he displays the Vedantic freedom, Muslim solidarity and co-operation and the Sikh socio-political justice in the most lucid manner. Cosmic humour, eternal joy (ਅਤੇਂ), the decided preference for the life of a householder and avoidance of polemics, rabid denunciation and ralioincation are his special traits. With him the language of militarism, religionism, trade and travel has come to acquire peculiar universalism of its own.

The attainments of Guru Arjan in this respect, too, are high. "His verse abounds with jewelled phrases and has a haunting melody produced by the use of alliteration and repetition of words," thus writes Khushwant Singh. Being an inhabitant of the Majha and known far and wide, poets and writers came to him from far off places and seem to have influenced his knowledge of different languages which shows many aspects. It is a wonder indeed that Guru Arjan knew not only main but the details even of the sub-languages of the Punjab. An instance of his pure Punjabi is:


His capability and hold on different languages is manifest in Jalsari ki War where he uses as many as three languages of the time.


Three in one

2. See Surinder Singh Kohli and Swinder Singh Uppal, Punjabi Sahit Bare, pp. 100-108.
The study of Guru Arjan's compositions reveals not only his knowledge of different sub-languages, it reveals also his mastery over different poetic styles. Thus he uses the Chhants and Pehra styles in Sri Rag; Baramahan and Din Raine in Rag Majh; Thiti in Rag Gauri; Bihari in Rag Asa; Jaitrari in Rag Gurjri; Maru (a War) in Ramkali and Bihare and Din Raine in Rag Maru. His hymns being composed in Ragas or musical measures, they have definite and regular compositions. Number of lines have also been duly calculated. In every Pada there are generally two sentences; where two Padas are used the composition is known as Dupde; where three are used it is known as Tipde and similarly where sixteen are used it is Suhile. The Chhants used are, further, of different kinds such as Dohra, Chaupai, Chhapai, Phunch, Chaubles, Swaya and Sorath etc.

Guru Arjan's simile and metaphors also reveal his vast knowledge of and love for nature and agricultural life. High meanings are conveyed in simple similes concerned with the life of the masses. Thus

"Mouths without the Name are empty
Like husks devoid of grain."

Domestic life and qualities of a good husband and wife etc. are also fully drawn upon to bring home the meaning of the Guru's teachings as:

"God hath given me possession of the household: I have become the housewife.

2. Chhants and Salaka are in praise, but without any limitation. In Pehra, Baramahan, Bawan Akhi and Thiti, names of months, letters and dates must be mentioned in the beginning of every Pada. In War, Purri is used.
3. Though on page 294, in Raag Gauri Purbi, the first hymn has a Pada of only one sentence.
My Spouse hath made the ten organs of action and reflection my slaves.

I have put together all the things of the house,
And with thirsty desire I long for my Beloved.
What merits of my beloved Spouse shall I mention?
He is the wise, handsome, and compassionate God.
I have put on chastity as my ornaments and applied the fear of God as a pigment to mine eyes.

I chew the ambrosial Name as my betel;
My bracelets, my dress, mine ornament admirably become me.

A woman obtaineth all happiness if her Beloved go to her house."

The poetry of the Sikh Gurus in the Granth is far superior to that of the Bhaktas in its freedom from insipid repetition, imagery, ordonnance and harmonies, in its far greater emotion and its lesser doctrinality, riper scholarship and altogether wider contemplative and descriptive sweep.

The Adi Granth of Guru Arjan "is nowhere narrative or historical," says Cunningham. Yet it throws ample light on social, political, religious and economic life of the age. Corruption of the Lodhi rule, the destruction brought about by Babur's invasions, the battles and the military weapons etc. have all been pressed into service by Guru Nanak to explain his ideas. Thus:

"There was a contest between the Mughals and Pathans; the sword was wielded in the battle.

One side aimed and discharged their guns, the other also handled their weapons."

In the social life the family relations, customs and ceremonies performed at birth, marriage and death; the evils of Sati, Purdah and widow, are all mentioned and it has been

shown that the practice of prostitution existed, as the verse says:

"The prostitute sins without hesitation.
She commits adultery without shame." \(^1\)

Games and amusements such as dancing, acrobatics and singing; the musical instruments such as drum, flute, rebeck *Shehnai* and *Timbourine* etc.; articles of dress and ornaments such as jacket, coat, skirt, shoes, blanket, ear-rings, and necklace etc. are all mentioned. People wore turban and respected it, as:

\(^2\)

Some wore moustache and beard and kept long hair, as it says:

\(^3\)

Different articles of diet used by the people are mentioned, as milk, rice, wheat, pulses, butter, butter-milk, sugar, sweets and garlic etc. Some people took meat and wine, the fruits such as grapes and mangoes. Buttered bread of rich and dry of poor find the characteristic expression in the verses of Sheikh Farid.\(^4\)

Religious practices of the people and general degradation in their religious life are referred to in their details, as for instance:

"One man calls on Rama, on Khuda another, One implores Gosayan, to Allah other pray; Some bathe at tirths and other visit Mecca, Some engage in puja and some perform salat, Some read the Veds, the Quran some others, Some affirm them Hindus, some say Musulmans, Some look to swarga and others to the Garden, But he fulfils the will of God, saith Nanak, \(^5\) Who knows God in the secret of True Name."

We also can manufacture an account of the economic life from references to it given at different \(...\)es in the Granth. The Granth refers to the means of ...ation, to

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trade, weights and measures, and to carts and boats as means of communication. It refers to agricultural practices, pastoral pursuits and different professions such as weaving and spinning. Different terms such as financier, counterfeit goods, capital, interest, cobbler, weaver, peasant, bunya, diamond, ruby, kauri, gold and silver; they all refer to the economic practices of the people. The economic standard of the people can well be judged from the requirements of Dhanna, after meeting which he would get perfect satisfaction. He says:

"O God, I Thine afflicted servant come to Thee: Thou arrangeth the affairs of those who perform Thy service.
Dal, flour, and ghi I beg of Thee
So shall my heart be ever happy.
Shoes and good clothes,
The seven sorts of corn, I beg of Thee.
Milch cows and buffaloes I beg;
A good Turkistanl mare,
And a good wife.
The slave Dhanna beggeth of Thee."\(^1\)

We also come across old historical references in the Granth such as Vishnu the creator of Maya who has a quoit in hand, thousand eyes and is lover of Lakshmi.

We have references in it to the discoveries later made by science such as, that moon has no light of its own and that life started first in water.

Importance of the Granth lies in the fact that whereas we learn of the philosophy of socrates only from Plato and Xeno Pher; of the philosophy of Christ from Methew and John; whereas Buddha and Confucious have left no original record of their teachings; the philosophy of the Sikh Gurus is preserved in such secure and original form, and under the locks of poetical metres that it is well nigh impossible to adulterate or deform it.

Its importance to the Sikhs, as already referred

to, can hardly be exaggerated. Although in philosophy it is nothing more than the old wine in new bottles, yet it has given to the Sikhs something separate to draw their inspiration from. It gives them their rules of conduct of life and helps them effectively in establishing their entity distinct from the general mass of Hindus. It also gives them unity of religious aim and social purpose.

In this Granth, the old complicated philosophy has been brought out in its simpler and purer form, within the understanding of the common man in the street. And its general importance was realised by the Guru himself when he said that the time would come when it would be translated into different languages and people would be attracted towards it in great numbers. Thus he wrote:

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ਸੰਸਦ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਬਰਾਤੁ ਕਾਮਾ
ਕਾਮ ਸੰਕਰਤ ਕਵਾਤ ਕੈਮ ਘਰੀ
ਲਾ ਸਨਹਤ ਭਾਗਤ ਕੈਮ ਸਿਗੀ
ਕਾਮ ਸਨਹਤ ਮੁ ਚਲਤਹਤ ਪਹਾਵੀ
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CHAPTER XII
GURU HARGOBIND

We already have had a short account of the early life of Guru Hargobind in a previous chapter. When Guru Arjan sacrificed his life in 1606 Hargobind was just a lad of eleven years. The dying message which the father had left for his son was; Let my son “sit fully armed on his throne, and maintain an army to the best of his ability.” And the lad himself is said to have realised at that young age that the times had now changed and if the Sikh religion was to continue its existence, Sikhs, the saints, had to be converted into saint-soldiers. Some Sikh records show the Guru having delivered a fiery speech at the time of his coming to office, in which he declared that henceforward the best offering to him would be a good youth, arms and horses. His best pleasure would be exercises, duels, horse-riding and hunting. His poets would now inspire the people with poems of heroic deeds, and his musicians would sing the Sikh hearts into martial inspiration. He asked the Sikhs to raise fire in their breasts and not to fear that their number was small. For he said only a small spark of fire could burn the whole jungle to ashes. “According to the Sikh chronicler the Guru rained instructions like clouds in Sawan, and the Sikhs flourished under it like thirsty rice-fields.”

A—The Changes

At the time of the Guru’s succession Bhai Budha clothed Guru Hargobind in a new raiment and placed before him a Selī—a woollen cord worn as a necklace or twisted round the head by the former Gurus—and a turban, as appurtenance of his calling. Guru Hargobind ordered that

the *Seli* should be placed in the treasury, apparently because it was not suited to the altered political conditions of the Sikhs. And he addressed that ‘my *Seli* shall be sword-belt, and I shall wear my turban with a royal aigrette.’ He then sent for his arms and arrayed himself in martial style so that, as the Sikh chronicler states, his splendour shone like sun.¹

Guru Hargobind seems to have been seriously affected by his father’s sacrifice and his dying message, and it changed the entire course of his life. As a writer says: “Arjan trafficked as a merchant, and played his part as a priest in affairs of policy; but Har Gobind grasped a sword, and marched with his devoted followers among the troops of the empire, or boldly led them to oppose and overcome provincial governors or personal enemies.” But this does not mean, as it was not so regarding his father, that Guru Hargobind left off the religious pursuits. Besides teaching honest and prayerful life of the first five Gurus, Guru Hargobind taught his Sikhs the Manu’s principle of self-defence. The Sikhs began to be trained in the use of arms and disciplined in the arts and habits of soldiers. The Guru himself started wearing a military dress with two swords, one on the left and the other on the right, and when asked he explained that the one sword represented *Miri*, or his temporal power, while the other represented *Piri*, or his spiritual power.

The Guru issued proclamations to the *Masands* that they should encourage the Sikhs to make him the offerings of the weapons of war and horses. Several warriors and wrestlers, writes Macauliffe, hearing of the Guru’s fame came to him for service.² He enrolled as his body-guards fifty-two heroes who burned for the fray. A nucleus was thus formed and soon the number of recruits began to rise. Five hundred youths came from the countries of Manjha and Malwa and offered their lives to him for mere two meals a day, a new uniform every half a year and the religious instructions to enlighten their souls. The five hundred enlisted

¹ M., iv. p. 2.
² M., iv. p. 4.
in the beginning were divided into five troops of one hundred each, and Bidhi Chand, Pirana, Jetha, Piara and Langaha were made the captains, one of each. The total establishment of the Guru rose further and according to Cunningham² and Archer³, the Guru developed a stable of 800 horses. Three hundred mounted followers were constantly kept in attendance as bodyguards, sixty matchlock-men secured his safety, and the trumpeters, dogs of the best pedigree and domesticated lions studded his new military set up. According to Mohsin Fani, 2,500 volunteers remained ever ready to lay down their lives, and besides there was the special regiment of Pathans under the command of Painde Khan.⁴

When the people wondered how the Guru would be able to maintain such a large army, the Guru quoted from Guru Arjan:

"God putteth their food even before the insects which He created in rocks and stones; He provideth every one with his daily food; O man, why art thou afraid?"⁵

Majority of the Guru’s regiment of Pathans is said to have consisted of the Mughal renegades who not getting regular payment of salaries deserted the Mughal army and recruited themselves with the Guru. Some writers criticise the Guru for his having recruited into his small army even the worst criminals and highway men. Although majority of the Sikh writers deny it, according to Dr. Banerjee the hope of booty and plunder must have attracted many, though “it would be too much to expect that this could be true in majority of cases.”⁶ But seeing the character and the mission which the Guru carried, a better explanation would perhaps be that these criminals and highway men should have renounced the life of loot and plunder and

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2. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 51.
5. M., iv, pp. 4-5
should have changed under the Guru’s influence from robbers into the fighters for the right cause, for the Guru offered no good prospects to the former. It is a fact that Bidhi Chand, a notorious robber, did join the Guru’s forces, but after this we do not hear of him having shed an innocent blood.

The Guru also introduced several changes in his own habits and in those of his followers. He systematically turned his attention to the chase. He rose before day-break, bathed, dressed himself in full armour and then went to the Har Mandar to worship and preach to the Sikhs. After this, breakfast was distributed indiscriminately to his troops and followers as they sat in rows for the purpose. After taking rest for about an hour, the Guru prepared for the chase. Accompanied by an army of forest beaters, hounds, tame leopards, and hawks of every variety, he used to sally forth and traverse long distances. Though disputed by some, contrary to the practice of the preceding Gurus he became a flesh eater and the Sikhs imitated him.

The central temple of Amritsar, or the Har Mandar, had so far been the only place where the Guru addressed his Sikhs and conducted their affairs. But now a new building was constructed a few paces beyond, where on a raised platform he began to attend regularly to the Sikh temporal affairs. Regarding this writes Archer: “He completed a shrine which Arjan had begun, the Akal Takht, or “throne of the Timeless”.” Khazan Singh calls it Akal-bunga, or the house of God. The use to which this new building was put, introduced considerable change in the Sikh character and organisation. Here the Guru sat like a king and administered justice to the Sikhs. Here also he accepted offerings and checked the accounts of the Masands. Duels were fought below and the Guru enjoyed them from here. Here the Guru also told his Sikhs the heroic tales and prepared their minds for the heroic deeds. According to some writers there was a definite purpose in the Guru’s building of the Akal Takht just opposite the Har Mandar. The former

was connected with Sikh politics, while the latter with religion, and each was visible from the other place so that when they were in the Akal Takht they should not forget their religion, and while they were in the Har Mandar they should not forget their politics. Or in other words, it was the blending of the Sikh politics with the Sikh religion. And writes Kharaz Singh: “He said that as long as he continued in Harmandar, he should be reckoned as a saint and in Akalbunga he should be looked upon as a king.”

And with all this development the Sikhs actually stopped looking towards Delhi. They felt they had their own kingdom, with Guru Hargobind as their king, nay the Sachcha Padshah or the ‘True King’ as against the false kings of the Mughals.

The Guru also fortified his possessions. A wall was constructed around the city of Amritsar, and a fort was constructed in it and named Lohgarh. In the fort the arms were collected and the military preparations went ahead.

The special type of Dhad singing on the martial tunes is also said to have been started for the first time by Guru Hargobind. The special Dhadis or the bards such as Abdulla and Natha Mal were appointed to sing heroic stories on the martial tunes. The Asa-di-War began to be sung two times every morning, first by the rebeck players inside the Har Mandar, and then by the Dhadis in the Akal Takht. In the night, singing the hymns from the Granth with raised voices and with alight torches in their hands, the Sikhs walked round the Har Mandar and energised their spirits. This system, again, is said to have been started for the first time by Guru Hargobind. And in all this, write Teja Singh Ganda Singh, the Guru himself being yet young, he was trained by Bhai Budha as according to the instructions of Guru Arjan.

Such activities of the Guru developed a new spirit among the Sikhs. They prepared as if for a great venture-in-the-making. But some people began to raise doubts in their

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2. Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, op. cit., p. 37
minds that the Guru was leaving the peaceful pursuits of his predecessors and getting power-drunk. He was trying as if to realise some of his materialistic ends. This change in the Guru’s policy has been commented upon variously even by some modern writers. Arnold Toynbee, a world-famous historian remarks thus: Sikhism “fell from its religious height into a political trough, because the Sikh Gurus, Hargovind and Govind Singh.............succumbed to the temptation to use force.” And further he comments that this ‘downfall’ of Sikhism was used by a clever militant Hindu reaction against the Mughal Empire as its instrument.

But both these conclusions of Arnold Toynbee seem to be based on his misconception of the essentials of the Sikh religion. In fact by having a resort to the sword the Sikh Guru’s neither fell from some high principles of spiritual thought, nor did the Sikhs permit themselves to be used unduly as a tool by some clever militant Hindu reaction against the Mughal Empire. The Sikh religion started as a protest against corruption in the Hindu religious thought and against the political depravity of the ruling classes, and it declared right in the beginning that war was a perfectly legitimate and permissible activity both as a measure of national policy and as an individual activity expressing itself in the use of force and employment of retributive measure. Secondly, war and violence were to be resorted to as a means and not as an end. And thirdly, the use of force was to be resorted to as a last choice when all other peaceful means of solving the problems had failed. And when a war was fought for a right cause, for the protection of justice and of one’s genuine beliefs and practices, and for the protection of one’s honour and integrity, Guru Nanak declared: “it is the privilege and right of the true men to fight for, and die of righteousness.”

Guru Gobind Singh also prayed to the Almighty for blessings

2. Ibid, p p. 112-123.
3. M., i, p. 337.
so that he “should die fighting for a right cause in the battlefield.” Force and violence are not per se evil, and Guru Gobind Singh remarked in the second epistle of his Zafarnamah that the hand may legitimately move to the hilt of the sword only when all peaceful means have failed: Chun dast az hamah hilte darguzasht, halal ast burdan b-shamshir dast. And there is no doubt that in the case of the Sikh Gurus the peaceful means had been tried to their utmost possibility. But when they failed, the sword had to be resorted to.

Be that as it may, not understanding the true import of the change in the Guru’s policy, some of Guru Hargobind’s contemporaries went to Mata Ganga, the Guru’s mother, and appealed to her to ask the Guru to desist from the wrong path he had adopted; as that might entail upon him and his followers the wrath of the Mughal authorities. Similar appeals were made to Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Budha, and Bhai Budha in some records is actually said to have gone to persuade the Guru. But if it is correct that Guru Hargobind was doing all that under the training of Bhai Budha, the fact of his having gone to the Guru for this purpose ill-matches it. Bhai Gurdas’s reaction to such approaches which continued to be made to him even after the Guru’s imprisonment and release, is signified in following of his verses:

“People say the former Gurus used to sit in the temple; the present Guru remaineth not in any one place.

The former Emperors used to visit the former Gurus; the present Guru was sent into fortress by the Emperor.

In former times the Guru’s darbar could not contain the sect; the present Guru leadeth a roving life and feareth nobody.

The former Gurus sitting on their thrones used to console the Sikhs; the present Guru keepeth dogs and hunteth.”

1. Chandi Charitra.
The former Gurus used to compose hymns, listen to them, and sing them; the present Guru composeth not hymns, or listeneth to them, or singeth them."

But in order to justify the Guru's change in the policy under the peculiar circumstances, Bhai Gurdas writes again:

"Just as one has to tie pall's neck while taking out water, to get Muni snake is to be killed. To get Kasturi from deer's neck, deer is to be killed. To get oil, til is to be crushed.

To get kernel pomegranate is to be broken. Similarly to correct senseless people, sword has to be taken up."

The change in the policy was in fact the only course open to the Guru, and if he had not done that the Sikhs should have fallen back as saints, medicsants and friars to be absorbed into the great ocean of the Hindu beliefs.

B—The Imprisonment

The Guru, however, could not continue his war-like practices for a long time. For he was soon imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior for which different reasons have been forwarded. Archer gives a very strange account of it and says that there "is some evidence that the Guru himself was once captured by a band of irregulars, whether they were Sikhs or Rajputs, and was detained by them in Gwaliyar fortress until a fine was paid for his release." The fortress to which Archer refers was however neither in the possession of Rajputs, nor of Sikhs. And Archer's absurdity of having written the account without getting it confirmed from reliable sources is proved from the fact that Bhai Gurdas himself in the above quoted verse confirms that the Guru was imprisoned in that fort by the Mughal Emperor.

The Sikh accounts assert that after the Guru's succession to the pontificate Chandu once again requested the Guru to accept the hand of his daughter whose youth was being wasted as she could be married to none else in the circumstances. The Guru having refused, Chandu began to

1. M., iv, pp. 76-77.
pian troubles for him at Delhi. Once when the Emperor Jahangir had fallen seriously ill, he called in some astrologers to advise him on the manner he could restore his health. Chandu bribed the astrologers to say that Jahangir’s disease could be cured by the penance of some holy man in the fort of Gwalior, and Guru Hargobind was recommended for the purpose. Jahangir gave in and ordered the Guru to be imprisoned in that fort. This account, however, writes Dr. Banerjee, “presents more of fable than of history.”

Some accounts say that Guru Hargobind was for some time in the service of the Emperor, acting as a commander of his forces in the Punjab. Cunningham basing his account on the utterly irrelevant translation of a passage from Dabistan by Captain Troyer, writes that the Guru became “involved in difficulties with the Emperor about retaining for himself that money which he should have disbursed to his troops.” Or as Mohmad Akbar writes, the Guru was imprisoned on charge of embezzlement of some money. But Macauliffe giving the passage of Dabistan in original Persian, remarks: “Here there is not one word about money due to the army, about Hargobind’s criminal misappropriation, or about his having carried his sword against his father (as Troyer writes). The translation of the passage is this: “He had many difficulties to contend with. One of them was, that he adopted the style of a soldier, wore a sword contrary to the custom of his father, maintained a retinue, and began to follow the chase. The Emperor in order to extort from him the balance of the fine which had been imposed on Arjan Mal, sent him to Gualiari.’”

The account of Dabistan as translated by Macauliffe, seems to be more reliable regarding the reason for the Guru’s imprisonment. Though—if we agree that Chandu paid the fine and purchased Guru Arjan’s person to realise from him

2. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 51.
the amount as he desired, as some Sikh records assert—it is difficult to believe that the Emperor imprisoned the Guru for the fine which Chandu had already paid in his father’s behalf, yet there can be no doubt that the Guru’s war-like preparations should not have been taken kindly by the authorities, and as according to Beni Prasad, Jehangir does seem to have been under the influence of some of the Guru’s enemies and the Guru might have been sent to the fort. This seems to be supported by Bhai Gurdas as well, when in the already quoted verses he writes: “The former Emperors used to visit the former Gurus; the present Guru was sent into the fortress by the Emperor.” And this the Emperor did definitely because: “The former Gurus sitting on their thrones used to console the Sikhs; the present Guru keepeth dogs and hunteth,” and does other things like that. We might agree with Payne that “so much did his royal estate and military array alarm Jehangir that he was seized and imprisoned in the Gwalior fortress.”

C—The period

The next question that arises is regarding the period for which the Guru was imprisoned. Gordon writes that the Guru was imprisoned for twelve years by Jehangir and was released only in the time of Shah Jehan. But according to Mohsin Fani, the Guru was on friendly terms with Jehangir and was in his employment towards the close of the latter’s life. Therefore the Guru must have been imprisoned and released in the time of Jehangir alone. Mohsin Fani also writes that the Guru remained in the fort for twelve years. But Dr. Banerjee forwards some very potent arguments to prove that this might be a mis-print in Mohsin Fani’s book. Since Jehangir died in 1627 and the Guru succeeded to the pontificate in 1606, if the Guru was imprisoned for twelve years we must find a gap of that period in his activities.

2. Bhai Gurdas, War 26-M., iv, pp. 76-77
3. Payne, op. cit., Latif in his History of the Punjab and Gough in The Sikhs and Sikh Wars also support this view.
5. Dabistan, ii, p. 274.
during the period of 21 years i.e. from 1606 to 1627. And since the Guru was on friendly relations with Jehangir towards the close of his life, he could not have been put into the jail later than 1614. But we know that the Guru excavated Kaulsar tank in the name of Kaulan in 1621. According to Macauliffe, Baba Atal Rai, the Guru's son by Nanaki was born in 1621. Before this the Guru had passed some of his time with Faujdar Yar Khan. Ani Rai the third son of the Guru was born in 1618, Suraj Mal the second son was born in 1617, and Baba Gurditta the eldest son was born in 1613. Thus there is no gap of 12 years in the Guru's life between 1614 and 1626, during which he might have been in the jail. The opinion of some writers that the Guru was summoned to Delhi in 1616, also does not seem tenable. For we know that Jehangir left Agra in 1613 to establish his court and camp at Ajmer for his operations against Mewar. Jehangir left Mewar in November, 1616 and entered Mandu in March 1617. Then he turned to Gujrat and returned to Agra only in April, 1619.

There is, however, a period of about 5 years from 1612 which has to be accounted for in respect to his activities. If Macauliffe is correct that the Guru was married to Nanaki only a short time before the birth of Gurditta in 1613, then the question arises that the Guru having succeeded to the Gaddi in 1606, why was his marriage postponed till that time. The argument that Nanaki was then too young, may not perhaps carry any weight, because we know that the practice of child-marriage obtained, and that when the hand of Chandu's daughter who also should have been a bit younger, or at the most of the age of Hargobind, was offered for him much before his pontificate, she was considered to be of quite ripe age so that her parents felt immediate necessity of seeking a bride-groom for her. Moreover, even if Nanaki was young, according to the prevailing custom, it was not essential that the bride should go and live with the bride-groom immediately after her marriage; and unless there should have been some serious reason the mother of the Guru should not have postponed

1. M., iv, p. 68.
the marriage till that late. Obviously, writes Dr. Banerjee, the serious reason must have been his internment in the Gwalior fort where probably he remained for five years i.e. from 1607 to 1612.¹

But here we might introduce one more argument. If the Guru was seized due to his war-like activities, he must have carried such activities to a considerable length before he was arrested. We must, therefore, allow at least two or even three years for his preparations so that they should be of magnitude sufficiently high as to move the Mughal authorities against him. Thus if we permit two years on this score, the Guru should have been imprisoned for about four years in 1608, and if we permit three years he should have been in the fort for about three years from 1609 to 1612.

The view of some Sikh writers that the Guru was imprisoned for forty days, while that of some others that he was imprisoned for over two months, may not at all be tenable for the reason that the incidents which are said to have occurred during the Guru's imprisonment, are so varied that they cannot all be compressed within the space of either of these short periods.

**D—The Release**

Regarding the release of the Guru, again, Macauliffe says that Bhai Jetha, a pious Sikh went on a mission to Delhi to secure the Guru's release. He succeeded in soothing the Emperor who had been troubled with fearful visions, and thus obtained the orders for the Guru's release². In the meanwhile, according to Dr. Narang, Mian Mir also interceded in behalf of the Guru and it had a desired affect upon the Emperor³. Wazir Khan, a Mughal noble, also pleaded in his behalf and so long as the Guru remained in the fort the fort became a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs who organised night processions with torches in their hands and bowed before the walls of the fort and touched their foreheads with

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² See *M.*, iv, pp. 24–27.
³ *Narang, op. cit.*, p. 48.
the soil below. Writes Cunningham: "They flocked to Gwalior, and bowed themselves before the walls which restrained their persecuted Guru, till at last the prince, moved, perhaps, as much by superstition as by pity, released him from confinement." 1

The Guru, however, when confronted with the order of his release, refused to leave the fort so long as the fifty-two kings who had been imprisoned there as hostages of millions of money and with whose release there was supposed to be a danger of their inciting rebellion, were not released along with him. The Guru stood surety for their loyal behaviour and the Emperor who seems by this time to have been thoroughly educated regarding the Guru's merit, and regarding the perfidy of Chandu who had been instrumental in poisoning his ears against the Guru, ordered the release of these kings as well. Because of this reason the Guru is mentioned in the Sikh records as Bandi Chhor Baba—the noble man who secures freedom to others from confinement.

The victory of the Guru seems to have been complete. The Guru was called to the Emperor's presence, who expressed his regret over what had happened and "made over Chandu, as was the custom at that time, to the Guru for punishment," writes Macauliffe. 2 The Emperor also sent for Chandu's wife and son and made them over to the Guru; the Guru, however, said that the most severe punishment to them would be that they should see Chandu's sufferings. After this, on a "a signal from the Guru, Bhai Bidhi Chand and Bhai Jeha seized Chandu, led him outside the fort, took off his turban, tied his hands behind his back, and showered blows of slippers on his devoted head. While being thus castigated he was led through the streets of the city, a warning to all men. He was pelted with stones, mud, and filth, and several people spat on his face. He had said that he would attack the Guru like a mad dog, and his threat recoiled on himself... The Sikhs bound him and made him over to pariahs as if he were a mad dog, and dirt and filth continued to be

poured on him, and he was reduced to a condition in which no one could recognize him. When his wife and son had seen his treatment, they were allowed to depart. Everybody congratulated the Guru on the mercy he had shown. Finally somebody stabbed Chandu to death, and thus closes one chapter of the Guru's life.

E—The Friendly Relations

After this there followed a period of friendly relations between the Guru and the Emperor, and in the meanwhile the Guru's military preparations went apace. Dr. Trumpp expresses astonishment that the Mughal authorities were either too short-sighted or indolent or too powerless to stop effectively the course of such a turbulent and dangerous growth. But in fact the Guru seems to have been too wise for them. He continued his friendly relations with the Mughals, and under that cover he found time enough to carry on his military preparations.

During this period the Guru also gave due attention to the religious activities. He undertook several tours of different parts of the country. Once, leaving Amritsar the Guru proceeded on a preaching tour towards Kartarpur. He visited several adjoining villages and stayed at Kartarpur for about seven months. After visiting Mukerian and Hargobindpur, and after having recruited many able bodied persons into his army, the Guru returned to Amritsar. Jahangir is also said in the Sikh records to have visited the Guru once at Amritsar, and offered the Guru some pecuniary aid in his building activities, which the latter politely refused.

The Guru received an intimation that a pious Udasi Sikh, Almast, who had been preaching the Sikh religion at Gorakhmata, the place which after Guru Nanak's visit had begun to be called Nanakmata, was being persecuted by some Yogis who after ousting him from the shrine were preparing to destroy the pipal tree under which Guru Nanak had held discussions with the followers of Gorakh Nath. The

2. Trumpp, op. cit., p. LXXXIV.
Guru went there personally, restored order and organised regular preaching work under Almast. The incident however insignificant shows how the Guru’s influence spread far and wide.

The Guru also visited Srinagar at the call of some Sikhs and of that of an old lady Bhag Bhari who had no eye-sight. He proceeded thither through Sialkot, Malotia, Wazirabad, Mirpur, Bhimber and Behram etc. He also met there Bhai Sewa Das who had been carrying on the preaching work for some time, and then went to Bhag Bhari whose eye-sight is said to have been restored. There is now a Sikh Gurdwara at the place where Mai Bhag Bhari used to live. After a short stay at Srinagar the Guru proceeded to Bara-mula, Uri, Muzaffarabad, and then to Gujrat. At Gujrat the Guru met a Mohammedan saint, Shah Daula, with whom he stayed for some time and discussed with him the change he had introduced in his practices. From Gujrat the Guru came back to Amritsar.

Some Sikh writers assert that the Guru went to Kashmir accompanied by Jehangir, but there is no strong evidence in support of this assertion. We also do not get a reliable account regarding the type of relations with Jehangir the Guru had. The more important Sikh records are silent about it. But Panth Prakash and Ithias Guru Khalsa write that the Guru was appointed a supervisor over the Punjab officials and was put in command of 700 horse, 1,000 foot and 7 guns. He is also said to have subdued Raja Tara Chand of Nalagarh at the request of the Emperor.1

We however cannot place our full reliance upon such accounts. Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri in which Jehangir gives an account of his officers and in which even some trivial events are discussed in detail, does not mention even the name of the Guru. Some Sikh writers definitely reject the idea that the Guru was in the Emperor’s employ at all. They say that he had friendly relations with Jehangir and accompanied him on a tour to Kashmir and Rajputana and on some of

the Emperor's expeditions rather as a friend.

Mohsin Fani, the contemporary writer, says: "Hargobind was always attached to the stirrup of the victorious Jehangir," and "after Jehangir's death was attached, in some capacity or the other, to the Mughal Government." 1 From this Dr. Banerjee has concluded that the Guru's position in the Emperor's employ seems to have been just minor. 2 The detached study of the character of the Guru, however, makes it difficult for us to believe that the Guru should have accepted some paid employment under the Government at all. It is however possible that he should have acted as an advisor to the high Government officials in one capacity or another.

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that after the Guru's release from the fort his friendly relations with the Emperor Jehangir continued till the latter's death.

F—The Open Hostilities

The friendly relations between the Guru and the Mughals could not continue for long. The Guru's enemies seem always to have been at work against him. Prithia died just before the death of Guru Arjan. But his son Mehrban succeeded him in his hostile activities against Guru Hargobind, just as the Guru succeeded his father to the pontificate. On the other hand after the death of Chandu his son Karam Chand took up his father's mission for the Guru's destruction. Both of the Guru's enemies exchanged their turbans as a mark of life-long friendship. They, together with some other persons jealous of the Guru's position, tried to poison the ears of Jehangir, but having failed there they turned to the Khuram's Durbar who at the time was Governor of Ajmer and the adjacent provinces. Just as they succeeded in poisoning Jehangir's ears in the time of Akbar, they succeeded in poisoning the ears of Khuram, the heir-apparent when Jehangir was in power; and according to Macauliffe, when Khuram succeeded to power as Shah Jehan after the death of his father Jehangir, he remembered many forged stories

1. Tahistan, ii, p. 274.
against the Guru. Moreover Shah Jehan himself was an orthodox Muslim whose reign from 1727 to 1757 represented religious fanaticism at its considerable height. Badshahnama, a contemporary work, tells us that Shah Jehan ordered the destruction of all temples which were under construction and had not yet been completed. The famous baoli of Guru Arjan at Lahore was also filled up, and in its place a mosque was constructed. This should naturally have annoyed the Sikhs. It is also said to have been proclaimed that in future there would be no conversions from Islam, and this also went against the Sikh interests.

There was another cause which considerably embittered the feelings between the Guru and the Mughal authorities. Different views are forwarded regarding Kaulan’s connection with the Guru. Some Sikh accounts say that a Masand named Sujan was bringing a beautiful horse for the Guru from Kabul. The horse was forcibly captured by an imperial officer who presented it to the Emperor. The Emperor, however, conferred it on Kazi Rustam Khan of Lahore from whom the Guru recovered it forcibly and along with that abducted his daughter, Kaulan, regarding whom Bhai Budha had already made a prophecy and said that the Guru would one day become the Kazi’s son-in-law. This story of the Guru’s abduction of Kaulan may however be rejected outright. For, Mohsin Fani who in order to judge the Guru’s character makes so close an observation of him as to see whether the Guru while discharging his arrows brings some feeling of anger on his face or not, must have made a reference to it if the Guru had any illicit relations with Kaulan. Moreover the tradition of the personal characters which the Gurus enjoyed, forbids us to believe the story which some orthodox Sikh writers seem to have forwarded to magnify the Guru under their own standard of things, but which is nothing short of a blasphemy and a slur on his character.

Some other accounts say that Kaulan, the Kazi’s daughter, hearing stories regarding the Guru and his religion

1. M., iv, p. 76.
2. See Narang, op. cit., p. 61.
3. See Dabistun, ii, pp. 274—75.
from Abdulla Shah, a disciple of Mian Mir, was converted to his views and used to sing the Sikh hymns for which her father began to ill-treat her and she, under the advice of Mian Mir, escaped to seek protection under the Guru who treated her with consideration and gave her every opportunity for her spiritual development. Dr. G. C. Narang and Cunningham hold that she was simply a concubine of the Kazi. She originally was Hindu, as her name Kaulan (lotus) signifies, and was forcibly abducted by the Kazi, but later escaped to the Guru the champion of the Hindu religion. Some consider her merely a maid-servant of the Kazi.

Whatever be the details of the fact, there is no doubt that Kaulan, a Muslim lady, did come under the influence of the Sikh religion. The fact must have been reported to the Emperor who already having issued the proclamation against the Muslims being converted into other faiths, should have been considerably antagonised against the Guru thus contributing to the hostilities between the two.

Beside the increasing power of the Guru, his taking into his service of a large number of soldiers including Pathan mercenaries and the Mughal deserters, could not have failed in arousing suspicion in the minds of the Provincial authorities regarding the actual character of the Guru. Dr. Trumpp writes: "As the Guru’s expeditions were nearly always directed against the Mohammedans and the extortionate provincial authorities, we need not wonder that his popularity fast increased with the ill-treated Hindu rural population; every fugitive or oppressed man took refuge in his camp, where he was sure to be welcomed without being much troubled about religion, and the charms of a vagrant life and the hope of booty attracted numbers of warlike Jats, who willingly acknowledged him as their Guru, the more so as he allowed his followers to eat all kinds of flesh, that of cow excepted."

As a result of all these developments a stage seems to have been set, ammunition was supplied and only a spark was

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2. Cunningham, History of Sikhs, p. 52.
3. Trumpp, op. cit., p. LXXXIV.
needed. The slightest cause could be sufficient to explode the magazine. And this is what actually happened.

One day, in 1628, the Emperor went hunting to a place known as Guntala which was situated where now the district courts of Amritsar stand. The Guru was also incidentally occupied in the similar pursuits at that place. Here one of the Emperor's hawks came flying after a victim. Moved by compassion the Sikhs set their own hawk after it and the Emperor's hawk was brought down. Khazan Singh says the Emperor's hawk itself came to the Guru, as if to seek refuge. The Emperor's soldiers came to recover it, but the Sikhs refused to return. The Emperor naturally being enraged, writes Khazan Singh, sent Gulam Rasul Khan with 7,000 soldiers against the Guru, but he was defeated. After this Mukhlis Khan was sent with 15,000 troops. But the latter too faced nothing but discomfiture, at which the Emperor being further enraged, he was preparing to send another expedition against the Guru when he was dissuaded from it by the Lahore Governor Wazir Khan who said nothing would come out of it. Other accounts, however, say that only one expedition was sent under Mukhlis Khan with 700 soldiers. According to Mobsin Fani, the Mughal forces plundered the city and looted the Guru's property as well. The second view seems to be curiously corroborated by a Sikh account that a Sikh detachment in the Lohgarh being too small, was destroyed by the Mohammedans; the next day being fixed for the marriage of Bibi Viro, the Guru's daughter, a lot of sweets had been stored in the fort which the Muslim soldiers ate to their fill and fell to deep sleep. The Sikhs finding an opportunity fell upon them and slaughtered great many of them, the rest having fled away. It makes at least this much certain that the Emperor's forces were not defeated in the manner as Khazan Singh writes. They did plunder the Guru's house, and it is possible that they should also have suffered a heavy loss, just as the Sikhs did. That the Sikhs had no complete victory seems to be further

2. Ibid.
confirmed by the fact that the Guru now left Amritsar and moved towards Kartarpur, as the Sikh accounts say. Mohsin Fani writes that the Guru now fled to Kartarpur, which again does not seem correct. ¹ For had the Guru fled, Kartarpur was not far away and the Mughals could have followed him up. It seems a sort of balance was kept, neither side winning a complete victory over the other.

At Hargobindpur the Guru fought another battle with the Mughal soldiers, in 1630. It is said that one Bhagwana, a relation of Chandu Lal, had mis-appropriated some of the Guru's property. Bhagwana was killed by the Sikhs, but Rattan Chand, his son, appealed to Abdulla Khan, the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab who marched upon the Sikhs with his soldiers but was completely defeated and fled from the battle field. The battle however does not seem to be very significant, because we do not get even a mention of it in many accounts.

Shortly after however, the Guru had to measure swords with the imperial forces once again. It is said that two Masands Bakht Mal and Tara Chand were bringing two horses for the Guru when their horses were seized by the imperial officers and sent to the Emperor. Sikh accounts give us interesting stories how Bidhi Chand, formerly a notorious robber, recovered them one by one from the Emperor's stable. The first time he went there and got a service in the stable, and getting an opportunity he disappeared with one horse. The second time he appeared as an astrologer and deceived his way into the stable once again, disappearing with the other horse shortly after. Thereupon an army under the command Lala Beg and Kamar Beg was sent to chastise the Guru. When the Guru learnt of it, he retired towards the Bathinda wastes, south of the Sutlej, where at a village known as Lehira, a battle was fought in 1631. Here the imperial forces seem to have been completely routed by the Sikhs. It was a great victory for the Guru. He having moved into the wastes first, is said to have been in an advantageous position. Macauliffe writes: "The Guru's

¹ Dabistan, ii, p. 275.
army was so disposed round the only tank in the area that when the enemy arrived they could not obtain access to its water, and thus must inevitably perish from thirst. The total number of soldiers killed on both the sides was 1200. This account of the complete victory of the Guru seems to be confirmed further from the fact that the Guru now returned to the plains and came back to Kartarpur.

At Kartarpur the third of the battles with the imperial forces was fought. There was one Painda Khan regarding whom Cunningham writes that his mother being a nurse of the Guru, he rose to a high position in the Guru's service. According to Macauliffe, however, he was only a Pathan mercenary. This Painda Khan had served the Guru faithfully for a considerable time, but later on having developed a pride in himself he fell out with the Guru and joined the imperial forces. There he prevailed upon the Emperor and a strong imperial force was sent under the joint command of Painda Khan and Kale Khan the brother of Mukhlis Khan, who invaded Kartarpur. The Guru also had made his preparations and his forces were commanded by Bhai Gurditta and Bhai Bidhi Chand. As the action was being fought, Cunningham says, a man rushed with his sword upon the Guru and wielded it against him. The Guru, however, parried it and with another stroke severed his head saying: "Not so, but thus, is the sword used." The Guru, as if, was performing his teaching duties even in the battlefield. After this, it is said, Painda Khan challenged the Guru in a duel, the Guru accepted the challenge. Painda Khan was however defeated and he fell down seriously wounded. Just as he was dying, the Guru protected his face with his shield against the scorching rays of sun and asked him to repeat the Kalma. Painda Khan, however, in a regretful attitude replied that the Guru's sword was his Kalma, and he died. Kale Khan was also killed, and the fact of the Guru's complete

1. M., iv, p. 179.
2. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 52.
3. Narang, op. cit., p. 64; Cunningham, op. cit., p. 52.
Guru's victory is confirmed by Mohsin Fani. This battle was fought in 1634.

After this considering his resources slender, the Guru decided to retire from active hostilities to the Mughals. He came to Phagwara, but writes Macauliffe, as "the town was on the road to Lahore, whence reinforcement could easily be sent against him, he continued his march to Kiratpur." And thus ends another chapter in the life of Guru Har gobind, a chapter of active hostilities against the Mughals.

G—The Last Ten Years

Kiratpur, meaning a place where God's praises are ever sung, is said to have been visited by Guru Nanak. Situated at the base of the Kehlur mountain, the place presents a beautiful site for those given to worship and meditations. Baba Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind, built this city where the Guru spent his last days. Here with the exception of one event in 1642, in which the Guru helped Raja Tara Chand against the Nawab of Rupar, he lived a life of peace, devotion and propaganda. The enmity between the Guru and the Emperor is also said to have been removed shortly after as a result of the advice of Wazir Khan to the latter, and the Guru had no anxiety to face from this side.

The Guru now completely diverted his attention towards the propaganda work. Gurditta was given a special assignment for the purpose, and he together with Almast, Phul, Gonda and Balu Hasna, who worked under him, carried on the preaching work effectively. Bhai Bidhi Chand was sent to preach in Bengal, while Bhai Gurdas was asked to make Kabul as his preaching centre. The Guru is also said to have made a proselytize of the rulers of Kangra and Pilibhit. Guru Amar Das had converted the Raja of Hirapur, while the Rajas of Kul, Suket, Chamba and Haripura had been brought to the Sikh faith by Guru Arjan. These hill states, thus writes Panth Parkash, became the

2. Gian Singh, Bhal, Panth Parkash, p. 119; Macauliffe, iv, p. 213.
strongholds of Sikhism. Sikhism, however, does not seem to have survived there for a long time after the Guru, for we have always known these Rajas as only staunch Hindus.

In his domestic life the Guru had to face certain troubles during this period. Gurditta had been a very faithful son to the Guru, but his desire to marry the daughter of a Sikh named Naghara not being liked by the Guru, although the son bowed to the father's wishes, it did arouse some bitterness. He is also said to have incurred his father's displeasure due to his performance of a miracle in which to save one of his Sikhs from the wrath of some shepherds whose cow the Sikh had accidentally shot, he had to restore the animal to life. When the Guru showed his anger, Macauliffe writes, Gurditta circumambulated the Guru in token of offering himself as a sacrifice to him and departed for Budhan Shah's shrine, where he died. This happened in 1638. Dhir Mal, Gurditta's son, had proved to be another Prithia, as the Guru himself had prophesied. He remained at Kartarpur where he appropriated to himself the Guru's property and refused to part with the original copy of the Granth with the delusion that it could perhaps get him Guruship. When after repeated invitations he did visit Kartarpur, he showed an arrogant attitude towards the Guru. Atal Rai, another son of the Guru had, died young due to a similar reason as that of Gurditta. The Guru's first wife, Damodari, died in 1631, and his second wife, Marwahi, died shortly after the death of Gurditta. All this must have made the last years of the Guru's life less peaceful.

As the Guru's end approached, he appointed Har Rai, the second son of Gurditta as his successor. Bhai Bhana the son of Bhai Budha who had died, affixed the tilak to Har Rai's forehead and decorated him with a necklace of flowers. The Guru died in 1645, on the testimony of the author of the Dabistan-i-Mazahib, who according to Macauliffe, seems

2. Dabistan, ii, pp. 281-82.
4. Ibid, pp. 221-23.
to have been present at the Guru's death. When the Guru's body was borne on a beautiful bier for cremation, the Sikhs sang the following hymn from the Sukhmani:

"He who knoweth God must always be happy,
And God will blend him with Himself.

The object of his coming was
That through him the Name might be remembered.
He was saved himself and he saved the world:
To him, Nanak, I ever make obeisance." ¹

I.—A General Estimate

In the end we may have a general survey of Guru Hargobind's activities and achievements. There has been a lot of misunderstanding regarding his activities, both among the modern writers and among the contemporaries of the Guru. The general complaints against the Guru are, firstly, as Dr. Trumpp writes⁵, where as his predecessors were great men of religion and composed many hymns for the guidance of their Sikhs, Guru Hargobind did not compose even a single such hymn for the purpose. Then, instead of staying at home and looking after the religious problem of the Sikhs, the Guru idled away his time in hunting and other such useless activities. Further, the old policy of the Sikh Gurus as Guru Amar Das used to forward: "it is not proper for saints to take revenge" was changed by Guru Hargobind. He recruited soldiers, kept a large army and fought like kings. The Sikhism thus "fell from its religious height into a political trough", as Arnold Toynbee would like us to have it⁴. And again, the Guru recruited into his army the renegades from the Mughal army, plunderers, robbers and other men of doubtful character. The effect of such activities of the Guru was that the Sikhs were degenerating in their character. The Guru gave refuge to many Muslims who were supposed to be the sworn enemies of the Sikh faith, and he also maintained a friendship with the Mughals who were putting the Hindus under every type of persecution. Even Bhai

¹ M., iv, pp. 238-39.
² Trumpp, op. cit., p. LXXXIV.
³ Toynbee, op. cit., p. 110.
Gurdas, a contemporary of the Guru, who could understand him better than any one else, compromised himself once into saying that:

"If a mother becomes unchaste, how can her son disgrace her?

If a cow swallow a gem, one would not tear open her belly and kill her.

Even if a husband visit several women, his wife should preserve her chastity.

Even if a ruler make current a leather coin, the subjects are powerless, and ought to accept it.

If Brahmins drink wine, shall people burn them?
Even if the Guru become a play-actor, his Sikhs should not lose their faith."

Later on, however, Bhai Gurdas seems to have understood the situation when he wrote; 'Just as one has to tie pail's neck while taking out water, to get Mani snake is to be killed. To get Kasturi from deer's neck, deer is to be killed. To get oil, til is to be crushed. To get kernel pomegranate is to be broken. Similarly to correct senseless people, sword has to be taken up.'

In fact the circumstances under which the Guru succeeded to the pontificate were such as there was no alternative but to do what the Guru did. The times were difficult after the execution of Guru Arjan. A stern hand was needed to correct the Mughal tyrants and those who had been challenging the peaceful lives of the Guru and peaceful spread of the Sikh faith. Akbar's policy of religious toleration had ended with his life. Religious fanaticism of the ruling race was developing, and the Sikhs had to be prepared to meet it. Moreover, in the Sikh satp, a large number of the Jats of the Majha and Malwa had been brought. They were an illustrious and a brave race and were a mass of discontentment and a fiery vengeance against the persecuting

1. M., iv, pp. 133-137
2. Ibid, pp. 76-77.
Mughal authorities. A use of this turbulent mass of people had to be made, as the "senseless people" had to be corrected. That was the time when, as Dr. Trumpp writes, a nation in the making must defend itself and be ready for an offensive, if necessary. For if this did not happen, it would simply vanish into the the limbo of oblivion. It "is not proper for saints to take revenge," it is true. But when the whole of a few generation's work of a saint's followers, and of those for whose good he would make any sacrifice on earth, is at stake, a saint must show the other side of his character and fight for the protection of that which is Right. For Guru Nanak himself had said: "it is the privilege and right of the true men to fight for and die of righteousness." If the Sikh religion was to be a religion of householders and not that of monks and mendicants, it had to accept the challenges of the life of a household or vanish into thin air.

Guru Hargobind, indeed, was a great organiser and a great statesman who understood the dictates of the time and acted as the circumstances required it. The steps he took and the changes he introduced to infuse a new spirit among the Sikhs, were indeed the signs of a high understanding and excellent qualities of head and heart that he possessed. He kept two swords, lest while planning his temporal ventures he should forget his spiritual duties. He built the Akal Takht wherefrom to work his politics, yet it was built just opposite the Har Mandar lest while talking of politics the Sikhs should forget their religion. He organised his body-guards and thousands collected around him to lay down their lives at his bidding, and that at the simple material remuneration of only two meals a day. The Guru understood the principles of military training thoroughly well, and kept his Sikhs on regular hunting expeditions and held for them regular physical exercises. A new martial music was given to them to raise their souls in rebellion. The practice of chorus singing was started, and when the Sikhs walked round the Har Mandar with their voices raised and torches in their hands, when the trumpets sounded and heroic music burst forth, the people felt that a new

1. Trumpp., op. cit., pp. LXXXIV.
nation already had been born, the nation with a surging spirit and a martial character, yet humble of attitude and pure of deeds. The Guru admitted into his army, no doubt, the highwaymen and robbers, but such men as these once under the shadow of his magnetic personality, were converted into the men of the noblest character.

Guru Hargobind, thus writes Gordon, quite changed the character of Nanak's peaceful disciples,¹ and not laying aside their rosaries, he taught them the art of sword. Judging from his capacity as an organiser, thus writes Payne, the Guru "infused a military spirit among his disciples as that was needed most at that time, and soon had formidable body of fighting men at his command."² Yet more, writes Cunningham, the time was not far ahead when the Sikhs should have fallen back into the folds of Hinduism as so many other faiths had done. He saved them from premature death, and "separated them a long way from all other sects."³ And then we may say, in order to start from a scratch and blend in the character of his followers the qualities of a martial race, time was needed, and it was necessary that the authorities should be given no chance for a doubt. A master-diplomat as the Guru was, he kept friendly relations with the Mughals as his military preparations went apace.

Not only a statesman and a great organiser, the Guru was a great military leader as well. He built his army from a mere scratch, and it became so powerful within a short time that it defeated the mightiest power in India in almost all the actions it fought. Macauliffe relates an incident which shows how he kept patience in a serious danger and could work his brain in the thickest of his troubles. During the battle of Amritsar, thus, the "Sikhs told the Guru that a big gun was necessary for the defence of Lohgarh. The Guru replied, 'There is a hollow tree lying there which will serve as a cannon.' It is said that from the hollow tree thus converted into a weapon of artillery the Sikhs subsequently

discharged stones in such a manner as to dismay their adversaries and seriously thin their ranks.”

In another incident in the battle of Kartarpur, it is said, a man aimed a blow of his sword against the Guru. The Guru parried the blow and with another blow he struck off his head saying: ‘Not in that manner, but so the sword is used.’ When a companion asked Mohsin Fani as to what did those words of Guru imply, he replied: “It was to give instruction, as it belongs to a Guru to teach also how to strike a blow with a sword; for a Guru is called a teacher: he did not strike out of anger, which would have been blamable.” This also shows how the Guru could keep his sense of humour even in the thickest of a battle.

Again, as Malcolm writes, the Guru won all the battles he fought with his adversaries, yet he did not acquire even an inch of territory. All the Guru’s battles were defensive, and pointed towards the realisation of a definite aim. In the battle of Amritsar, it is wrong to say that the Guru fought merely for the sake of a hawk. The hawk, in fact, was a mere pretext; the main principles involved being the self-respect of a race which had learnt so far to be treated as mere pariahs. It was to assert their surging spirit and to strengthen the self-confidence in them. By his changed mode of living, by the physical exercises he introduced and by the victories the Guru achieved for the Sikhs, thus writes Binglay, the Guru added military zeal and system to the civil organisation, and this placed him among the very great warriors of the time.

Despite his being a great military genius, a great diplomat and a great general, the Guru did remain in the heart of hearts only a saint. After Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind is said to be the first Guru who undertook long travels for the purpose of preaching his faith. He went as far as Nanakmata near Pilibhit on the one side, and on the other side he went to Srinagar and on his way visited several

1. M., iv, p. 82.
4. Binglay, Captain, op. cit., p. 74.
places where he quenched the spiritual thirst of many. A saint Ram Das is said to have asked the Guru at Srinagar that while Guru Nanak was a Tyagi who had renounced all wealth and splendour, why had he changed the mode of life when he considered himself to be the sixth representative of Guru Nanak himself. The Guru replied that Baba Nanak was a Tyagi; yet he had renounced Maya–egotism and an attachment to the world alone and not the world itself. Guru Nanak had declared the protection of righteousness to be the duty of every righteous person, and therefore his change in the habits did not represent any departure from the essentials of Guru Nanak’s philosophy. He kept his arms for the protection of the poor and destruction of the tyrants.

To put the propaganda work on more efficient footing, the Guru appointed Bhai Gurditta with four persons under him to plan and execute the work. Preachers were sent as far as Bengal in the east, and as far as Kabul in the west. And thus, there were not many cities in the inhabited country where some Sikhs were not found. Hindu and Muslim converts came to Sikhism in thousands.

Thus, judging from his activities and temperament, writes Greenlees: "though it is true; his somewhat romantic temperament led him into ways different from those of his predecessors, it seems clear to us that one Guru Nanak willed through his body who prepared the Sikhs to become a manly fighting men." ¹

Humble as a man, his personal traits are perceivable from some of the incidents of his life. At Srinagar, thus relates Macauliffe: "A company of Sikhs was coming from a distant village with offerings of honey for the Guru. On the way they stayed with Kattu Shah, who pressed them to let him have some of the offering. They refused saying that they could not offer to the Guru Kattu Shah’s leavings." When, however, the Sikhs reached the Guru, he refused to accept from them the honey which they had re-

¹ Greenlees, The Philosophy of Sikh Religion.
fused to a needy person. The Sikhs had to go back and satisfy Kattu Shah before the Guru could partake of it. This is a clear proof of the high respect and love the Guru had for the feelings of the poor and needy persons.

At Kiratpur the Guru built a mosque for the Muslims at his own expense, and he had some of his best friends belonging to the same faith. Thus, Mian Mir, a Muslim Pir, had the highest regard for the Guru's ideology. Wazir Khan a Muslim noble, pleaded for several times in the Guru's behalf in the court of Jehangir and Shah Jehan. Thus Macauliffe writes, when the Emperor learnt he 'was astonished and inquired why the Guru had constructed a mosque. Wazir Khan's answer was prompt—'Sire, Gurus and Pirs are all men's property. They feel neither love nor hate. The Guru sitteth on Guru Nanak's throne. His is the abode of miracle. He looketh on Hindus and Mohammedans with an equal eye.' We get another instance of his follow-feeling which was his high and characteristic mark, at the Gwalior fort where he refused to leave till the fifty-two Rajas had been released along with him.

Mohsin Fani relates an anecdote as to how humble the Guru felt himself to be despite his kingly habits and possessions. Thus, once the Guru asked a Brahman named Deva, 'is not the whole world but one Being?' Deva replied, 'it is'. Then to drive the point home to him, he pointed towards an ass and asked, 'Do you know what this is?' But Deva replied, 'you are one with God, and therefore you are also this.' And the Guru merely smiled it away.

The Guru made no distinction between the low placed and the high placed, and even to his own sons he worked more as a reformer than as a father. Baba Atal and Baba Gurditta, the two of the Guru's sons, thus, performed some miracles and they had to pay for it with their own lives. Of the five sons of the Guru, Baba Atal, Gurditta and Ani Rai had died during his life time. But of the living two i.e. Suraj Mal and Teg Bahadur, he appointed neither as his

2. ibid, p. 140.
successor. Regarding Suraj Mal, he said, he was too much of a worldly being, while Teg Bahadur to him was too much of a non-worldly character. The Guru had a discerning eye for merit, he found in Har Rai, the son of Gurditta, a fit man for Guruship, and he appointed him his successor.

The love and devotion in which the Guru was held by his followers is proved from Mohsin Fani's account that when after the Guru's death his corpse was placed on a pyre, "and when, the fire rose up in high flames, a Rajput called Rajarama, who had been his servant, precipitated himself into the fire, and walked several paces in the midst of the flames, until he reached the feet of the corpse, and having laid his face upon the soles of the Guru's feet, he did not move until he expired. After him, the son of a Jat, who was in the service of Hargobind's son-in-law, leaped into fire. Many other Sikhs wished to follow his example, but the Guru Har Rai forbade it." And commenting on this, writes Dr. Banerjee: "These eloquent examples of devotion and self-sacrifice enable us to understand the Guru's success against the heaviest of odds and show conclusively what high esteem he commanded as a leader and as a man."

1. Dabistan, ii, pp. 280-81.
CHAPTER XIII

GURU HAR RAI

Born of Gurditta’s wife Nihal Kaur, in 1631, Har Rai succeeded to the pontificate after his grand-father’s death in 1645. Regarding the life and career of Guru Har Rai, our sources of information are very scanty, and even Mohsin Fani who supposes himself to be a close friend of the Guru, writes only a few words regarding him,¹ which do not give us anything beyond the information that the Guru should have been a man of very peaceful disposition. For a number of years after the death of Guru Hargobind Sikhism in fact seems to have gone into repose, and Guru Har Rai seems to represent that period when all the essentials of a church-nation having been evolved by the time of Guru Arjan, and a-fighting strength added to it by Guru Hargobind, the Sikhs entered into a life of peace, as if to prepare for a great venture which was in the making and which was to change the very course of their history in the time of Guru Gobind Singh.

Only a few facts available to us regarding the career of Guru Har Rai show that the Guru continued maintaining an army of 2,000 strong, as he had been advised by his predecessor. But this was to be only as a precautionary measure, and some Sikh records tell us that Guru Hargobind had left him an advice that he should not enter into any venture against the Mughals. For some time the Guru’s relations seem to have continued remaining friendly with the Mughals. It is said that once Aurangzeb, a cunning and clever son of Shah Jehan, out of his jealousy administered tiger’s whiskers in a dainty dish to his eldest brother, Dara Shikoh, the heir-apparent. Dara became dangerously ill as a consequence. Several physicians were tried, but when all failed some wise

¹ See Dabistan, ii, p. 262.
men suggested that if a chbulic myrobalan weighing fourteen chataks and a clove weighing one masha could be produced and administered to the patient, he would be restored to health. These things were said to be available only with the Guru. The Emperor addressed a letter to the Guru who willingly obliged him by giving the required medicine which effected a speedy and complete cure. The Emperor was naturally pleased, and he forgot all his enmity towards the Guru.\(^1\)

Once it is said that while the Guru was proceeding along the Sutlej towards Malwa, he met some Mohammedan troops one of the officers of which recognising him as the grand son of Guru Hargobind who had killed the officer’s grandfather, Mukhlis Khan, waylaid the Guru’s wives who were following him, and attempted violence. As the Guru had been forbidden by his predecessor from engaging in warfare, Gaura, the Raja of Bhatinda who was a Sikh of the Guru, using his own troops protected the Guru’s wives and the Muslims as the result of a fight escaped under the cover of darkness. Had Gaura incidentally not been present there, we do not know what should have happened. On the one hand the records say that the Guru maintained his troops as a precautionary measure, but on the other hand they assert that his predecessor had forbidden their use. The two things are difficult to reconcile.

Shortly after when the Emperor Shah Jehan fell ill, a war of succession started among his sons even before he died. Aurangzeb proved to be the strongest of all his brothers and Dara, the heir-apparent, directed his steps to the Punjab. Aurangzeb being a man of fanaticism in his religious beliefs the better sympathies of the non-Muslims naturally lay with Dara, more so those of the Guru with whom Dara had friendly relations. Dara decided to visit the Guru and seek his assistance against Aurangzeb. He met him but the writers differ as to what definite help was given to him by the Guru. According to Dr. Trumpp, the Guru actually joined Dara with his Sikhs.\(^2\) *Khulasatu-t-Tawarih* also seems to

2. Trumpp., op. cit., p. LXXXV.
imply the same thing. According to Macauliffe, Dara met the Guru on the right bank of the Beas, and received his blessings. The "next morning the prince was informed that Aurangzeb's army was pursuing him. He then departed for Lahore requesting the Guru to impede its progress as much as possible."

Be that as it may, it is almost certain that Dara met the Guru, and that the sympathies of the latter did lay with him. Naturally, therefore, when Aurangzeb, ultimately succeeded in capturing the power at Delhi, the enemies of the Guru got a chance and decided to take revenge on him. Aurangzeb was advised to call the Guru to his presence and convert him to Islam. Aurangzeb, therefore, addressed a letter to the Guru expressing his desire to behold him. His purpose was that once the Guru came to Delhi, it would be easy to handle him as he desired. The Guru, however, refused to oblige him with a visit. The Emperor then ordered one of his nobles to go and arrest the Guru and bring him to Delhi. The noble, however, died on his way to the Guru, and his mission remained unfulfilled. Two or three more of Aurangzeb's similar efforts toward the direction are also said to have failed. And ultimately Mohammedan priests counselled him not to use a harsh language in his summons, and invite the Guru in a friendly manner. The Emperor did so, and when the letter reached the Guru he decided to send his son Ram Rai in his place to the Emperor. We do not know how far the details of the story quoted above from the Sikh records are true, but this much is certain that the Guru did send Ram Rai to meet the Emperor.

At the time of Ram Rai's departure special instructions were given to him by the Guru as to how he would behave in the Emperor's court. 'The Guru strictly impressed on Ram Rai the propriety of not countenancing any objections the Emperor might make to the Granth Sahib, but of replying to him patiently and to the purpose. Ram Rai, however, forgot the instructions of his father when he reached the court of the Emperor. He not only performed several mira-

cles at that place, he rather did the most criminal thing in altering a line of Guru Nanak in the Granth as well, in order to gratify the Emperor. The verse was:

"The ashes of the Mohammedan fall into the potter's clod:
Vessels and bricks are fashioned from them; they cry out as they burn."

When asked upon to explain the above, Ram Rai said that the original words, 'Mitti Musalman ki', meaning 'the ashes of the Mohammedan', was a misprint. The correct words according to him should have been, 'Mitti beiman ki', or 'the ashes of the faithless.' There is no doubt that by doing this Ram Rai was able to give a perfect satisfaction to the Emperor. But here was a misconduct on his part, and a mis-representation of a reality in the Granth with which the Guru was hardly going to put up. When Ram Rai's perjury was reported to the Guru, being distressed at this insult to Guru Nanak and the Granth, he immediately decided that Ram Rai was not fit to succeed him to the Gaddi. "The Guruship", said he, "is like a tigress's milk which can only be contained in a golden cup. Only he who is ready to devote his life thereto is worthy of it. Let Ram Rai not look on my face again. Let him abide with Aurangzeb, and amass money at his court."

When Ram Rai took leave of the Emperor and came back, he pitched his tent at a spot twelve miles from Kiratpur and wrote his father a letter imploring his forgiveness. But the Guru replied that he wanted to see him never again, and that he could go wherever he desired. Ram Rai wrote to his uncle Dhir Mal to intercede in his behalf. But nothing could help him to win back his father's favour.

Another incident that is said to have occurred in the time of the Guru was that he laid the foundation of the future Phulkian states in the Malwa. Once during his preaching tours when the Guru came to see the tank near

2. Ibid. iv, p. 310.
Nathana, where his grand-father had fought a battle against the Mughals, two brothers, Kala and Karam Chand of the Marhaj tribe complained to the Guru that the people of the Kaura tribe would not permit them to live peacefully. Thereupon the Guru sent for Jait Pirana, the head of the Kaura tribe, and tried to induce him to give the brothers some land for their maintenance. The leader refused it, and after some other efforts towards the direction also had failed the Guru helped the brothers to occupy some land forcibly, and in the fight that ensued Jait Pirana was killed. After Kala and his friends had settled down they complained of another difficulty to the Guru that the people of Kaura tribe, their neighbours, would not intermarry with them. Thereupon the Guru recommended to the Sikhs to form marriage alliances with the Marhaj people.

So long as the Guru stayed in the Malwa, Kala and his friends frequently waited on him. Once during his visit Kala took his two nephews, Phul and Sandali, the sons of Rup Chand to the Guru. Phul was hungry at the time, and out of compassion for the fatherless child the Guru blessed him saying that he would become a great, famous and wealthy man. This prophecy proved correct. Phul had six sons; from Tilok Singh, the eldest of them, the Rajas of Nabha and Jind descended; and from Ram Singh, his second son, descended the Maharaja of Patiala.

The predecessors of Guru Har Rai had made Majha as the centre of their activities, but this Guru is said to have been the first to take up the preaching work in the Malwa seriously. Besides his preaching tours elsewhere, he made Malwa a special object of his visits. As the Matands appointed by Guru Arjan had slackened in their preaching duties, the Guru is said to have appointed Bhagat Bhagwan as head-preacher in the east where the latter together with his followers established as many as 360 Goddis. Bhagat Bhagwan was originally a Bairagi monk and was named as Bhagat Gir, it was only when he became the Guru's Sikh that he got the name Bhagwan. The Guru established another preaching centre in the central districts of the Punjab and appointed his devoted Sikhs to carry on the
work. Thus, two missionary centres were established by Guru Har Rai to which the third was added by Guru Tegh Bahadur and the fourth and the fifth by Guru Gobind Singh who did away with the Masand system altogether.

These were in short the achievements of Guru Har Rai. He died on 6th October, 1661 at the young age of only 31. Ram Rai having already discredited himself, the Guru appointed Har Krishan, his younger son only six years old at the time, as his successor and then closed his eyes for an eternal sleep.
CHAPTER XIV

GURU HAR KRISHAN

Born in 1656, Guru Har Krishan was the second son of Guru Har Rai. Even in his young age the Guru was given to keen devotion and regular religious practices. His merit had been recognised by his father, and we have discussed how his elder brother, Ram Rai, was rejected and this child was appointed to succeed the father.

At the time of Guru Har Krishan’s succession to the pontificate, his elder brother Ram Rai is said to have been at Delhi. Basing all his account on Macauliffe, we do not understand how Dr. Banerjee has drawn the conclusion that the Sikh accounts have unjustly blackened the character of Ram Rai, and that “though Ram Rai sometimes represented as having been his father’s envoy at the imperial court, he was in reality nothing but a hostage whom the Emperor kept as a security for the continued good conduct of Guru Har Rai.”1 It cannot be denied that whenever the choice for Guruship fell upon a younger member of the family, the elder member did feel jealous. We have the instances such as that of Prithia who had no compunction even in seeing his younger brother subjected to the most brutal tortures. Efforts were made even to poison Guru Arjan’s son to death. Such things had been happening right from the time of Guru Nanak, and if Ram Rai repeated the history in his case, or even if he was goaded into doing so by somebody, he being quite young at the time, there was nothing strange in it, as such inducements had been given by the interested persons in the case of others too. Moreover, when Ram Rai can freely move among the Sikhs at Delhi, he can be goaded into action and he can plan it as well as Dr. Banerjee agrees, and he can leave Delhi at his will and come back as he

wishes, it is difficult to understand how he could be considered a hostage in the court of Aurangzeb.

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt in the fact that when Guru Har Rai died, Ram Rai was either already at Delhi, or he went there immediately after that. He obtained an audience with the Emperor and placed his case before him telling him that he was the rightful successor to his father, but that his younger brother had taken the possession of the throne. He requested the Emperor to intercede in his behalf. The Emperor saw in this a very good opportunity for realising his religious mission. If he could get Ram Rai the gaddi, the latter would be a mere tool in his hands and through him he would perhaps be able to spread the Islamic faith in the Punjab. Or even if he was able to "set both brothers at variance, and they shall die by mutual slaughter," his purpose would be served.

The Emperor called Raja Jai Singh to his presence and ordered him to summon Guru Har Krishan to Delhi, and also to see that the child Guru was treated with all respect during his journey. The Guru had been forbidden by his late father from going to the Emperor and seeing his face. The child Guru, therefore, refused to oblige Raja Jai Singh. But ultimately he was prevailed upon to visit Delhi where if he did not so desire he might not go to the Emperor's presence. The child Guru soon reached Delhi. There efforts were made to make him agree to visiting the Emperor. But in the meanwhile the child Guru fell seriously ill, contracting small-pox, and of this he died on March 30, 1664 at the very young age of eight years.

Before, however, the child Guru died, he sent for five paise and a coconut and not being able to move his body waved his hand three times in the air in token of circumambulating his successor, and on the enquiry of a Masand as to who would be his successor, he could utter only these words: 'Baba Bakale', that is his successor would be found in the village Bakala.

During the short period of Guru Har Krishan's ponti-

ficate, the already deteriorating institution of Masand declined yet further. "The masands began to beat and plunder poor Sikhs, and threatened with the Guru’s curse all who resented their conduct...............The masands became proud and rebellious, and kept the greater part of the offerings for themselves......for they deemed that all the Sikhs were in their own power and that they could appoint to the Guruship whomsoever they pleased,"1 little knowing that by planning and thinking so they were aiming simply at self-destruction.

CHAPTER XV

GURU TEG BAHADUR

Teg Bahadur was the son of the sixth Guru, Hargobind, born of his wife Nanaki in 1622. In his very childhood he was given to deep meditation and would often indulge in trains of thought during which he would speak to none. He was married to Gujri, a daughter of one Lal Chand who belonged to Kartarpur in the district Jullundur. Guru Hargobind did not select him for Guruship for his other-worldly character, but he is said to have prophesied that he would one day become a Guru and play a significant role for the protection of his faith. Greenlees writes that he was named Teg Bahadur because his father Guru Hargobind foresaw in him a man brave in sword.

We have already studied how when the end of Guru Har Krishan’s life drew near, he called for five paisa and a coconut, waved his hand three times in air in token of circumambulating his successor, and uttered the word’s Baba Bakale which meant that his successor would be found in the village Bakala. After the death of Guru Har Gobind, Teg Bahadur with his wife and mother had gone to live in that village and had been there since then meditating and absorbed in the worship of God. After Guru Har Krishan had died now a search for the Guru started in the village Bakala, but it was not easy to discover the true Guru. For we learn that hearing of the last words of Guru Har Krishan, as many as twenty-two of the Sodhis of Bakala began to claim succession and set up themselves as Gurus each calling the rest as hypocrites and deceivers. For a long time the things continued in a confusion and no decision could be made whether one was the true Guru or the other, till at last an incident is said to have occurred which distinguished the true Guru from the hypocrites. It is said that

1. Greenlees, Philosophy of Sikh Religion.
a Sikh named Makkhan Shah who, according to Sukha Singh, belonged to Gujrat in the Deccan and was a rich merchant, once facing a shipwreck prayed to the Guru who might have been occupying the throne of Guru Nanak, that if he escaped he would make an offering of five hundred gold mohars. He was saved and he soon reached Bakala with the offering. But reaching there he found as may as twenty-two persons claiming to be the true Guru with the result that he was quite perplexed. Ultimately he resolved to make a trial of the pretenders. He visited each and made him an offering of two mohars and observed him with the idea that if he was a true Guru he would demand the rest of 498 as well. None of the twenty-two, however, could discover what the man had in his mind. Makkhan Shah was still more perplexed and he was about to leave the village in his utter disappointment when somebody told him that there was one more person in the village, namely Teg Bahadur, who did not pretend to be a Guru but whom he could try if he was the one. Makkhan Shah proceeded thither and made an offering of two mohars, but to his delightful surprise Teg Bahadur remarked: 'How now, O Sikh, thou Art trying to wheedle the Guru by presenting him with two gold mohars? Where are the five hundred gold mohars thou didst promise when thy vessel was sinking?' Makkhan Shah hailed Teg Bahadur as the true Guru and searcher of hearts, and ascending a house-top and waving a flag proclaimed from there, 'I have found the Guru! I have found the Guru!!' 'On hearing this the Sikhs assembled from every quarter, and with all due formalities and observances placed Teg Bahadur, then in his forty-third year and the very image of Guru Nanak, on Guru's throne?'

Whatever be the merit of this story we can be pretty sure that by the time of Guru Teg Bahadur the contest for Guruship had seriously sharpened and the Guru gaddi for him was not going to be a bed of roses. Out of their jealousy of the position the Guru occupied, some Sodhi Khatri,

1. Sukha Singh, Gur Bilas, Chap. I.
notable among them being Dhir Mal, the eldest son of Gurditta, were determined to put an end to the Guru’s life and assume the Guruship themselves. Of the several efforts made by these persons in their nefarious designs to harm the Guru, a few may here be narrated. Thus it is said that when Dhir Mal saw how Teg Bahadur had been honoured by Makkhan Shah, he became violently jealous of him and ultimately prevailed upon a masand, named Sihan, who taking a score of men to kill the Guru actually fired at him. The bullet did strike the intended victim, although it did not prove fatal. The masand seized all the movable property of the Guru together with the mohars offered by Makkhan Shah and decamped with it to the house of Dhir Mal. When Makkhan Shah learnt of it, he invaded Dhir Mal’s house and seized him and his accomplices. The Guru’s property was recovered and Dhir Mal’s property was also seized, and with it Dhir Mal and his accomplices were brought to the Guru. On the Guru’s order, however, all the persons thus seized were released and their property was also restored to them, though the Guru kept his own property to himself.

This however did not bring the Guru’s enemies to their senses and they continued in their designs to harm him. Shortly after this when the Guru visited Amritsar to behold the temple of Guru Ram Das, after he had bathed the ministrants of the temple closed the doors of the Harmandar against him, and he had to return without fulfilling his mission. The Guru now decided to leave the village Bakala to escape from the persecuting hands of his enemies and went to Kiratpur. But here again he was plagued with the jealousy of the Sodhis, and he sought rest on some land about six miles distant which he subsequently purchased from the Raja of Kehlur and thus founded the town of Anandpur. Archer says: “This Anandpur was off-centre, and remote, but expediency warranted the choice, as circumstances soon confirmed.”

This, however, further enraged Dhir Mal who now began to conspire with Ram Rai who was at Delhi.

1 Archer, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.
Forster, Malcolm, Cunningham and Latif all agree as in the words of Latif that Ram Rai sought an opportunity of injuring Teg Bahadur, by representing to the Emperor that his designs were detrimental to the State, and suggesting that immediate measures should be taken to check his ambition. Warrants were accordingly issued from the court for the arrest of Teg Bahadur, as a pretender to power and disturber of the public peace." According to Latif, the Guru was actually brought to Delhi where he was lodged in the house of the Raja of Jaipur. "The Raja interceded in his behalf with the Emperor, and assured his majesty that Teg Bahadur was a peacefu faqir and aspired to no political power, that he preferred the life of a recluse, and had resolved upon visiting holy places on a pilgrimage." Latif's view that the Guru was actually brought to Delhi is not accepted by some others, while they do agree that Raja of Jaipur interceded in his behalf. The Sikh tradition, however, disagrees with the whole proposal that the Guru was summoned to Delhi at all. According to it, when the Guru could not get peace at the newly founded town of Anandpur, he decided to leave it and to proceed on a preaching tour to avoid annoyance at the hands of his relations. The Guru proceeded to the Malwa country and visited several villages in the present state of Patiala. Thence he proceeded to Kurukshetra he crossed the Jamna, visited Agra, Itawa and Priyag. At Priyag the Guru remained for about six months and here his wife Gujari became pregnant. From here he proceeded to Banaras, thence to Gaya and Patna. Patna at the time was a strong Mohammedan centre. Crowds of both sexes began to visit him and the Guru said: 'Wherever is the congregation of Saints, there it is God's order for me to abide.' Here after a few days of his stay Mirza Raja Ram Singh, the son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh, requested the Guru to assist him in his military expedition to the Kamrup country, which had been entrusted to him by the Emperor and upon the success of

1. Forster, Travels, i, pp. 299-300.
3. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 56.
which depended the future of the whole of Rajputana which he would annex in case of its failure. The Guru agreed to assist and asking his mother and wife to remain at Patna he proceeded against the Ahom king of Kamrup (Assam). The expedition was successful. But soon after the Guru learning of the birth of a son to his wife, hurried back to Patna.

The fact of Guru's accompanying Mirza Raja Ram Singh in an expedition against the Ahom king has been intriguing the historians' mind. While there is an indisputable evidence that the Guru did visit Kamrup, it seems difficult to connect it with Mirza Raja Ram Singh and then say that the Guru returned when he received the news of the birth of his son. Because we know that Guru Gobind Singh, the son of Guru Teg Bahadur, was born in 1666, while the expedition against the Ahom king was led by Mirza Raja Ram Singh in 1668. Possibly, the Guru's visit to Kamrup has been wrongly mixed up with an expedition of Mirza Raja Ram Singh. The Guru, instead, might have accompanied Raja Subal Singh Sesodia in his expedition to Chittagong, which was led during the winter of 1665-66, as evidently suggested by Gurbux Singh, but although we do not know whether this proposal too will bear a close scrutiny.

Whatever it be, after returning to Patna and a protracted residence there, the Guru communicated his resolve to return to the Punjab to his mother, and leaving an instruction for his family to join him in the Punjab on receipt of a message from him to the effect, he left Patna. The Guru did not take his family along possibly because he still apprehended some trouble in that quarter. But after finding the situation in the Punjab comparatively calm, he sent for his family. But the Guru was not destined to enjoy peace for long. There were other factors hostile to the Guru, and the clouds were gathering to bring about a catastrophe and to shake the Sikhism to its very roots, opening up before it new fields of activities. The Guru was executed at Delhi which brought about a violent change in the Sikh character, and acted as a mile-stone in the Sikh history. We might study here the factors which led to this execution.

The Execution

The character of Guru Teg Bahadur has been a subject of serious controversy among some writers. Thus writes Golam Hussein: Teg Bahadur "finding himself at the head of so many thousands of people, became aspiring; and he united his concerns with one Hafyz-aadeem, a Mohammedan fakir... These two men no sooner saw themselves followed by multitudes, implicitly addicted to their chief's will, than forsaking every honest calling, they fell to subsisting by plunder and rapine, laying waste the whole province of Pendjab." And further he writes: that both these persons were seized by the Governor of Lahore under the order of the Emperor. The Guru was confined in the fort of Gwalior, while the Muslim fakir was deported to Afghanistan. After some time the Governor of the fort was ordered "to put Tygh-Bahadur to death, to cut his body into four quarters and to hang them at the four gates of the fortress, a sentence which was literally executed." 1 The absurdity of this account hardly needs to be emphasised. The Sisganj Gurdwara at Delhi which stands to commemorate the Guru's execution at that place, and the strong and unanimous tradition of the Sikhs regarding the event leaves absolutely no reason to believe that the Guru could have been executed in the manner expressed by Golam Hussein. And if this part of his statement is rejected, it casts a serious reflection on the authenticity of the whole account of this author which obviously thus we should read but very cautiously. But the tragedy is that without sifting and without trying to test the authenticity of the facts mentioned in his book by this author some writers have permitted themselves freely to be misled, and have woven around the Guru's character a fabric of cheap politics which seems hardly creditable to the scholars of history. Dr. Trumpp writes thus: "The Guru appears by no means as a humble spiritual instructor, but riding at the front of well armed disciples, who, if not willingly provided, levied contributions on the Zamindars and the inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, and made predatory

incursions on the Mohammedan population.” And further he continues: the Mohammedan reports “which ascribe his capture and execution to political reasons deserve therefore full credit, the Sikh tradition itself confirming by these Sakhis the charges brought against him.” Cunningham also writes that the Guru was “more of the kingly than priestly spirit.” And J. N. Sirkar also seems to imply the same thing.

That the Guru was the least interested in any splendour much less in levying contributions on Zamindars, is proved from the unimpeachable evidence of Guru Hargobind Singh himself who did not select him as his successor because he was of other worldly character, and was less interested in matters mundane than he should have been. Moreover none of the earlier Gurus had done anything in the way of levying contributions on Zamindars and ‘inhabitants’, and the ninth Guru who was the representative of the same spirit and faith as his predecessors were, could hardly be expected to do so. That the ninth Guru’s execution was connected with politics in the least, and that it was a self-sought sacrifice given for the protection of the Hindu faith and as a result of the Guru’s refusal to perform any miracle at the Emperor’s court in Delhi is perfectly proved by the evidence of Guru Gobind Singh himself who writes in his Bachitra Natak thus:

"After him (Har Krishan) came Teg Bahadur,
Who protected the frontal marks and sacrificial threads of the Hindus
And displayed great bravery in the Kal Age.
When he put an end to his life for the sake of holy men,
He gave his head but uttered not a groan.
He suffered martyrdom for the sake of his religion;
He gave his head but swerved not from his determination.
God’s people would be ashamed
To perform the tricks of mountebanks and cheats."

3. Sirkar, J. N., History of Aurangzeb, iii, p. 312. Also see mom. AKBAR
The Punjab under the Mughals, p. 202n.
“Having broken his potshed on the head of the king of Delhi he departed to paradise. No one else coming into the world acted like Teg Bahadur.”

Moreover, in the Sakhis regarding the Guru’s “predatory incursions on the Mohammedan population,” as Dr. Trumpp himself writes, “no distinct line is drawn between the wanderings of Guru Teg Bahadur and those of Guru Gobind Singh, so that it remains uncertain, where the first end, and where the second commence.” Possibly therefore, the activities of Guru Gobind Singh have been mixed up with those of Guru Teg Bahadur, and a character is assigned to the latter which is wholly foreign to his person.

There were in fact factors other than anything like a political ambition, which led to the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur. Guru Teg Bahadur had undertaken long preaching tours making many new conversions to the Sikh faith. While such activities of the non-Muslims could be tolerated under benignant rulers such as Akbar, they could hardly be put up with under the religious fanatics as Aurangzeb was. As Payne writes: “When in 1658, Aurangzeb ascended the throne he lost no opportunity of persecuting the Gurus and their war-like disciples.” Ram Rai had already been in Delhi adding fuel to the fire. A distorted picture of the Guru’s character was presented at the Emperor’s court. For Aurangzeb there was no distinction between politics and religion, and one of the essential parts of the Emperor’s state-policy being the conversion of the entire mass of the Hindus to his faith, the religious activities of the Guru were viewed from a different angle. This may also perhaps explain why the Muslim writers have tried to give a political colour to the Guru’s religious activities, which by them have been declared to be dangerous for the public peace.

Aurangzeb’s character, in fact, had been known even before he acceded to the throne. It is said that during the

2. Trumpp., p. lxxix, foot-note.
3. Payne, op. cit., p. 32.
time Aurangzeb worked as the viceroy in Gujrat, he took certain such steps against the Hindus as made them shudder at the very thought that such a persecuting monarch should become an Emperor of India. In 1644, thus, he issued an order under which all the newly built Hindu temples were destroyed in the province of Gujrat. After his accession to the throne, orders were issued to pull down all the temples in Orissa built during the last ten years. According to Sirkar: "A systematic plan was followed for carrying out the policy of iconoclasm. Officers were appointed in all the subdivisions and cities of the Empire... to enforce the regulations of Islam, such as the suppression of the use of wine and bhang, and of gambling. The destruction of the Hindu places of worship was one of their chief duties, and so large was the number of officers employed in the task that a 'Director-General' had to be placed over them to guide their activity."

Hindu schools were destroyed, the temples of Somath, Mathura and Benaras were the objects of special destructive attention. Jazia continued upon the Hindus, and custom duties on the Muslims were abolished. He issued proclamations throughout the empire that the Hindus should embrace Islam, and that those who did so should receive jagirs, state services and all the immunities granted to royal favourites. The Emperor took the advice of his priests, and all the plans suggested by them were adopted.

The experiment of mass conversion was first tried in Kashmir. Macauliffe writes: "There were two reasons for this. In the first place, the Kashmiri Pandits were supposed to be educated, and it was thought that, if they were converted, the inhabitants of Hindustan would readily follow their example; secondly, Peshawar and Kabul, Mohammediàn countries were near, and if the Kashmiris offered any resistance to their conversion, the Mohammandans might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them". "Sher Afghan Khan, the Emperor's viceroy in Kashmir, set about converting the Kashmiris by the sword and massacred those

2. M., iv, p. 369. e
who preserved in their adherence to the faith of their forefathers. It is said that there was piled up a heap of one maund and a quarter, or a hundred weight of janeus or sacrificial threads. The Hindus who would not be converted and whom Sher Afghan Khan’s troops could not capture fled the country. Even Mohammadans who in any way assisted the Hindus were mercilessly put to death.”

It is said that when the persecuting policy of Sher Afghan khan in Kashmir reached its utmost limit, some Kashmiri Pandits decided to approach Guru Teg Bahadur at Anandpur. When the Guru learnt their sad story, after some contemplation he reached at the conclusion that the malady to be uprooted, required the sacrifice of some great man. The child Gobind Rai happened to come to him just this time, and on enquiry when he learnt what the Guru had in his mind, he remarked: ‘For that purpose who is more worthy than thou who art at once generous and brave?’ This precipitated the matter, and the Guru instructed the Pandits to go to the Emperor and tell him that if he could convert Guru Teg Bahadur to Islam, he being the ninth Sikh Guru, on the throne of Baba Nanak and being protector of their faith and religion, all the people including themselves would adopt the Islamic faith without any resistance. The Pandits did the same, and the Emperor sent two officers forthwith to summon the Guru. The Guru replied that he would come to Delhi after the rainy season, and after the officers had left he took leave of his family and started for Delhi, on his way visiting several places and preaching his faith. Soon he reached a place near the present fort of Bahadurgarh in the Patiala state and spent the rainy season there with a Muslim friend, Saif-ul-din. When the rainy season ended the Emperor’s officers reached Anandpur once again to summon the Guru, but not finding him there, they reported the case to Emperor who issued orders to his officers to search for the Guru and

2. This version is of Sukha Singh’s, Gur Bilas, Chap. v; according to Suraj Prakash, however, though summoned by his father from Patna to Anandpur, Gobind Rai never met him again. See also M., iv, pp. 368, 372.
arrest him wherever he was found. It was also proclaimed that whosoever acted as a host to the Guru would be awarded a severe punishment. Meanwhile, after the rainy season ended, the Guru took leave of his Muslim friend and started at ease towards Delhi, halting and preaching his faith, but yet not being discovered by the Government officials. At last the Guru reached Agra and encamped in a garden outside the city. He is here said to have given a shepherd boy a large gold ring from his finger, set with diamonds, and asked him to bring two-rupee worth sweets. The Guru's purpose clearly was to get himself arrested. The shepherd boy went to a confectioner who inquired from him as to where had he got that priceless ring from. On getting the required information, the confectioner reported the matter to the police. The police accompanied the shepherd boy to the owner of the ring, who readily disclosed his identity. The Guru thus was arrested and brought to the Emperor in Delhi.

Here the Guru was given three alternatives i.e., to accept Islam, to perform some miracle, or to accept punishment. The Guru naturally preferred the last alternative. He was locked up in an iron cage, and for quite some time the efforts continued to convert the Guru to Islam. Here, after a long time of confinement and harassment, according to some Sikh writers, the Guru became hopeless, desperate and lost his heart, when he addressed his son the following verse:

"My strength is exhausted; I am in chains, and have no resource.
Saith Nanak, God is now my refuge; He will succour me as He did the elephant."

To this the son, Gobind Rai, replied:

"Strength is thine; thy fetters are loosed; thou hast every resource.
Nanak, everything is in thy power; it is only thou who canst assist thyself."

1. A legend has it that an elephant named Gaj was about to be drowned when God saved him by pulling him out from the tip of his trunk which was the only part of his body left out of the water,
The interpretation given by these Sikh writers to the above two verses which are found in the *Adi Granth* seems however to be utterly misleading. That the Guru did keep up his spirit till his end, and treated his life to be a mere dream, not to be valued beyond his principle, is completely proved from another verse which he is said to have addressed at the same time to his wife, thus:

"Ram passed away, Rawan passed away with his large family; Saith Nanak, nothing is permanent; the world is like a dream." 

Moreover, desperation and heartlessness ill-match the Guru's character who willingly offered himself for sacrifice and at the last stage got himself arrested. The only explanation for the above two verses is that both of them belong to the ninth Guru, the tenth Sikh Guru having added no hymn of his own to the Granth. In these two verses the Guru poses a problem in the first, and then replies himself in the second in the traditional poetical style of Guru Nanak. The word tenth *Mehla* has not been used with the verse supposed to be that of Guru Gobind Singh, and there is no other proof to assert that it did belong to him.

Whatever it be, the Guru suffered in the iron cage for a long time, and when every effort in inducing him to accept Islam or perform some miracle failed, ultimately it is said to have been proposed to subject the Guru to some barbarous tortures. The Guru thereupon resolved to play a trick, and expressed his readiness to show a miracle. Latif writes: "He was arrayed before the Emperor, all the *Omerahs* of the State being present to witness the miracle he was about to perform. The Guru said, before the assembly of the *Omerahs*, that the duty of the man was to pray to the Lord, but since he had been commanded by his majesty to show a miracle, he had resolved upon complying with the king's orders. He wrote on a piece of paper, which he said was charmed, and then, having tied it round his neck, declared that the sword would fall harmless on it by the affect of the charm which

1. *M.*, iv, pp. 384-385
was written upon it. The executioner was now summoned to test the miraculous charm. The blow was given and the head of the Guru rolled on the floor to the amazement of the court. The paper was then read and contained these words: "Sir dia, Sar na dia"—meaning that he had given his head, but not his secret." This happened in 1675. "We may take it therefore," writes Dr. Banerjee, "that the Guru fell a victim to religious bigotry and it is understandable why later Mohammedan writers sought to cloud the issue by giving it a political colour."2

Significance

The martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur is a great event in the history of the Punjab. Some Muslim writers have tried to minimise its importance by saying that the Guru had to lay down his life as a result of his violation of peace in the Punjab. Latif also after giving an account of the martyrdom as based on the Sikh writings, concludes thus: "Such is the account given by a wonder-loving people, though it is more probable that the Guru was executed as a rebel against Government."3 The views of the author of Siyar-ul-Mutakhkharin have also been quoted in this respect, according to which the Guru forsaking every honest calling, fell to subsisting by plunder and rapine which resulted in his execution in the fort of Gwalior.4 But those who have tried to indulge into such calculated probabilities, seem to have failed in taking into account the barbaric practices of Aurangzeb which created a sort of panic in the country. If thousands of temples were destroyed in Gujrat and in Orissa, and if lakhs of people who did not want to come into the Islamic faith were either forced into Islam, or forced into the lives of pariahs or were butchered like animals, nobody has ventured to say that all these innocent people had thus to suffer because of some political part which they tried to play in order to disturb the public peace. The entire mass of the Hindu population of India had not sold away their

moral courage and desire to live a life of honour so as to be treated as the Muslim authorities were determined to treat them. Some were bound to resist it, whether by arms or by some sort of propaganda among the people, and if one calls it the forsaking of honest calling, or by his intellectual depravity and religious perversity one stretches it to mean 'plunder' and 'rapine', one will be writing no history, though one may deceive oneself by saying otherwise. The writings of the Muslim authors "are utterly incompatible with the whole tenor of Guru Teg Bahadur's life and writings," says Macauliffe, and they "cannot be accepted as even an approach to history." The Guru simply fell a victim to the Muslim religious bigotry, and it was bound to have the consequences similar to those the sacrifices of the great martyrs ever resulted into.

Thus writes Dr. Narang: "In his death the Guru surpassed anything that he had done in his life. He was known throughout Upper India, was highly revered by Rajput Princes, and was actually worshipped by the peasantry of the Punjab...His execution was universally regarded by the Hindus as a sacrifice for their faith. The whole Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge."  

Besides, on the character of the Sikhs too the sacrifice was bound to have a far reaching affect. Just as after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind had to have a resort to sword and army; after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur, his successor Guru Gobind Singh had to appeal to arms, but this time resulting into consequences, simply unique. After the Guru had been executed, not a Sikh in Delhi dared to come forward and take away his body for cremation, because of the fear of arrest and similar treatment. Only under the cover of late stormy night, Bhai Jaita, a Sikh of Lobana tribe, removed the Guru's body for cremation while his head was taken away to Anandpur by Bhai Jiwan. It was an eye-opener, indeed, to Guru Gobind Singh who is said to have taken a decision forthwith to

give to his Sikhs such shape and form as would help none of them henceforth to conceal himself and yet call himself a Sikh only when the circumstances favoured it. It was as a result of this resolve that the militant Khalsa later on took birth, with five of their own symbols to distinguish them from the rest of the humanity.

It was as a result of this martyrdom that Guru Gobind Singh started maintaining a huge army once again, and fought battles with the tyrants. The reaction continued in the shape of Banda Bahadur’s valiant marches against the corrupt Muslim rulers in the Punjab. It continued later in the rise of different Sikh Misl and then ended ultimately in Ranjit Singh’s raising a Sikh standard of monarchy, and in the consolidation of the Sikhs into a distinct nation in itself.

The execution of Guru Teg Bahadur, as according to Gordon,¹ sowed dragon-teeth in Delhi, which soon brought its harvest.

Moreover, as a result of this sacrifice the Hindu religion was saved. Latif writes: “when the courtiers, tinged with superstition, saw what had occurred, they were struck with horror and surprise. The Emperor himself was disgusted and displeased, and ordered the crowd to be dispersed.”² He was convinced that it was no more possible to convert the entire mass of Hindus into Islam. We may repeat what Guru Gobind Singh wrote in his Bachitra Natak thus:

He “protected the frontal marks and sacrificial thread of the Hindus.
And displayed great bravery in this Kal age.
When he put an end to his life for the sake of holy men,
He gave his head, but uttered not a groan.”

“Having broken his potsherdd on the head of the King of Delhi he departed to paradise.
No one else coming into the world acted like Teg Bahadur.”

“The world was in mourning for the demise of Teg Bahadur:
There was weeping for him in the whole world, but rejoicing in paradise.”³

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¹ Gordon, op. cit., p. 35.
² Latif, p. 260.
³ M., iv, p. 392.
CHAPTER XVI
GURU GOBIND SINGH

A—The Circumstances

Guru Gobind Singh was born at Patna in 1666. We have already studied how his father laid down his life in Delhi in 1675, after which Gobind Rai a mere boy of nine years of age succeeded to the Gaddi. The circumstances at the time were peculiar. The Guru was a mere boy, but the problems he was called upon to face were great. The policy of comparative peace which his immediate predecessors had followed, had brought about simply catastrophic results. The family grudges and religious fervour of the rulers which had resulted into the execution of Guru Arjan and of that of Guru Teg Bahadur, still persisted. Will of the sovereign continued to be the law of the land. Hindus paid the capitation taxes and were treated like pariahs, while Muslims were considered as favoured children of the State. While the strong proselytising attitude of the state exhibited during the early years of Aurangzeb’s reign had slackened to certain extent, temples still continued to be razed to the ground and the sacred threads of the Hindus continued to be broken. And the tragedy is that “although the masses of the Hindus were bitter against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officially loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements.”1 The petty hill states which were supposed to be the strong-holds of the Hindus, were most averse to any change in their age-worn practices and to the recognition of the exigencies of the time. They were loyal to the Mughals, looked upon the lower classes with disdain, and were first class idolaters; while these were precisely the

things to which the Sikh Gurus were most opposed. The Hill rajas such as Bhim Chand and Hari Chand are said to have threatened even Guru Teg Bahadur for his beliefs. A great number of the followers of the Sikh faith were Jats who were looked down upon by these chiefs, and therefore the Gurus were supposed to be the leaders of only low caste Hindus and hence to be despised. The Punjab being the first to come under the Muslim yoke, here the Muslim population was proportionately larger than in any other part of the country, and therefore less easy to contend with. The Governors of the Punjab were to certain extent free from Delhi, more fanatic, and therefore less likely to put up with the movements such as the Sikhism was. They, on the other hand, are said to have incited the Hill rajas against the Guru telling them that the successors of Guru Nanak had fallen from the essential philosophy preached by him, and degenerated into aspirants of political power.

The general mass of the Hindus too was not such as could be made alive to the situation easily. They were more or less a dead race which had completely forgotten the glory of its past. The centuries old galling slavery had destroyed their self-confidence. They had no well-developed language except Sanskrit. But Sanskrit had long since ceased to be the language of the people. Languages of the everyday use were poor in literature, and hence were unable to inspire their speakers to the glories of a living race, and into a national pride and confidence.

Nearer at home, the things were yet more difficult. The family grudges continued to be the bane of the Guru Gaddi. None of the successors of Guru Nanak had been permitted to live in peace. This was a strong factor which made not an insignificant contribution towards the execution of Guru Arjan. It was because of them that Guru Teg Bahadur had to leave the Punjab and remain in a sort of exile for a pretty long time. The persons who had made the life of Guru Teg Bahadur utterly difficult in the Punjab, were still alive and
majority of them continued to be a thorn by the Guru’s side.¹

Besides, the Sikh organisation itself had by now fallen only into the hands of loose-thinking self-seekers. Guru Har Rai had died in the prime of his youth. Guru Har Krishan was a mere child to think seriously of bringing the house to order. Guru Teg Bahadur was too old and too much preoccupied in other things to plan seriously renovation of the entire system. The consequences were natural. The Masands had gone corrupt and began to feel themselves strong enough to make or unmake a Guru. “They used to boast that the Guru was of their own making, and, if they did not serve him, no one would even look at him. They practised oppression in every form; they embezzled offerings made to the Guru and committed many other enormities.”² The Guru himself writes:

“If any one go to the masands, they will tell him to bring his property at once and give it to them.

They put oil into their eyes to make people believe that they are shedding tears.

If they see any of their own worshippers wealthy, they serve up sacred food and feed them with it.”

¹ A genealogical table from the fourth Guru under whom Guruship became hereditary, may here be given.

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Guru Ram Das (4th)
    /       \
  Arjun (5th) Prithi Chand Mahadev
    |       |
  Hargobind (6th) Mehrban
    
Gurudita Teg Bahadur (9th) Sura Mal Ani Rai Atal Rai
    |       |
  Gobind Singh (10th)
    |
Har Rai (7th)
    |
Ram Rai
    |
Har Krishan (8th)
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² M., v., p. 23.
If they see him without wealth, they give him nothing, though he beg for it; they will not even show him their faces.

Those beasts plunder men, and never sing the praises of the Supreme Being."  

Majority of the Guru’s followers were poor, and therefore offered no very good source of steady income. The Sikh army organised by Guru Hargobind had been dispersed, and his victories in the battle-field now went rather against Guru Gobind Singh in the Mughal court. As a result of the policy of peace followed by the successors of Guru Hargobind, the Sikhs were getting ‘disused’ to the military practices, and it was a problem to reorganise them to the martial tune.

There, however, also existed some factors which went to his favour. The movement which had been founded by Bapu Nanak, had by this time developed into the creation of a separate sect with its own language and scripture, with its separate beliefs and practices and separate centres of pilgrimage and sources of spiritual and cultural enlightenment. This new sect also had developed by the time of the tenth Guru a sufficiently strong tradition of valour and sacrifice. And for the Guru, such a past “was not a mean asset in the glorious career upon which he was about to enter.”

The policy of non-violence had failed. After using violence in the time of Guru Hargobind, non-violence had been tried fully in the time of his successors again. The sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur itself promised no lasting escape from theocratic tyranny. The silent sufferings and the sacrifice of the 9th Guru had charged the atmosphere. It had shaken some Hindu thinking minds from their age-old slumber, and they were now willing to be organised for the protection of their honour and self-respect. Among the Muslims themselves now a sort of definite division seemed to have been created. Many remained fanatic with their proselytising zeal, specially so among the ruling classes; but among the

2. See Narang, op. cit., pp. 74-75.
general mass of the people a process of re-examining the persecuting behaviour had commenced.

Aurangzeb, too, was at this time busy in Deccan and had "left the Punjab free for any enterprising spirit to mature plans."1 In the south Shiva ji had succeeded and had crowned himself as a King at Raigarh in 1674. Jats near Delhi, though once beaten by the imperial forces, were continuing their resistance. The tribesmen in the north-west frontiers were raising their head and threatening the peace in the adjoining territories. There were disorderly elements in Bengal, and pirates along the Bengal coast had been keeping the Bengal Governor, Shayista Khan, busy since long. About a hundred miles south-west of Delhi, the Satnamis were organising themselves to make the Mughal life difficult. The Mughals were in fact on a waning glory.2

Nor had the destructive religious zeal exhibited by Aurangzeb been applauded by all the sections of the Muslim society abroad. The religious policy followed by Aurangzeb in India was considered anti-Islamic by the Khalifa at Mecca who refused to receive an ambassador from the Emperor. Shah Abbas of Iran hated the religious policy of Aurangzeb likewise. And in India too, there were not few well-meaning Muslims who considered him to be a misled compatriot. Some Muslims such as Pir Budhu Shah openly sided with the Guru and gave him every assistance, material as well as physical, in the realisation of his aim. And not few of the Muslims enlisted themselves in the Guru’s army to fight for his cause.

The Mughal army itself was getting demoralised. Its soldiers, ill-paid mercenaries, had lost their old zeal and strength and many deserted it in the thick of the troubles. Quite a few of them later offered themselves to fight for the Guru.

Such was the state of things when Guru Teg Bahadur broke his potsherds on the head of Aurangzeb in Delhi, and when Gobind Rai became a young Guru. The best recruits

1. Narang, op cit., p. 74.
2. See Khan Khan, Muntakhabul Lubab, ii., p. 252 (B. D., viii pp. 204-97.)
to the Sikh faith were the Jats of Majha and the Malwa. Their character was martial, and they were great lovers of freedom. The greatest testimony to the constructive genius of the Guru would be only if he could seize what was vital in the situation, and as Cunningham writes, reissue it with Promethean fire.¹ The Sikh gave the Guru the ideal, the Jat the material, and combining the two, the Guru actually forged "a dynamic force, which none could henceforward ignore."²

B—The Battle of Bhangani

The Guru writes in his Bachitra Natak: 'When I obtained sovereignty, I promoted religion to the best of my power. I hunted various sorts of game in the forest, and killed bears, nilguas, and elks. Afterwards I left that country, and proceeded to the city of Paunta.'³ These two factors, the promotion of religion to the best of his power and his hunting of various sorts of game, were bound to affect adversely the feelings of some Hill rajas; because, as we know, these Hills had always been a strong-hold of Hindu religion and the idol-worshippers, while the Guru was an idol-breaker. Secondly, the Guru’s hunting of various sorts of game shows that before he left for Paunta he was reviving the princely and martial practices of Guru Hargobind, and this must have caused some jealousy or apprehension in the minds of some Hill chiefs. Bachitra Natak does not give us any information regarding the Guru’s activities at Anandpur beyond what has been quoted above. Several Sikh accounts, however, come to our aid.

We learn that so long as the Guru remained at Anandpur, before proceeding to Paunta he undertook a regular plan of turning the emasculated people around him into men of valour, strong in body, mind, and spirit. For the development of self-confidence and manly pride, the Guru seems to have understood the necessity of a glorious tradition. The Hindu past had been valorous and intrepid, but it had all been buried in a language which had ceased to be the language

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¹ Cunningham, op. cit., p. 75.
² Banerjee, op. cit., ii, p. 67.
³ Bachitra Natak, viii.
of the people since long. If their past glories were to be re-told, they had to be translated into their current languages. And realising this the Guru embarked upon an ambitious plan to supply that requirement. The Guru himself was poet of a high eminence, and besides he collected around him an army of 52 poets to render the heroic tales from Sanskrit and Persian into the spoken language of the people. The warlike deeds of Rama, Krishna and Arjun were re-told in soul-inspiring and heart-stirring manner. And when they were sung in martial tunes by the court bards, a sort of electric current ran through the nerves of the listeners and they were animated to perform heroic deeds. All this must have caused some anxiety in the mind of the Hill rajas.

The Guru issued a proclamation calling upon the Sikhs having four sons to send at least two of them to enlist in the Guru’s army. Prof. Kartar Singh writes: “The news of the Guru’s fondness for warlike pastimes soon spread abroad. Persons whose fathers and grand-fathers had fought Guru Hargobind’s battles flocked to the Guru’s darbar. His orders went forth that of all presents the most welcome to him were horses, arms, ammunition and other materials for military equipment. These orders were zealously obeyed. The Guru’s army grew apace, and his armoury became full of weapons of various types.”

According to Gordon, the number of soldiers in the Guru’s army soon reached the figure 80,000. The figure given by Gordon may seem too high for the initial stages, but as according to Khushwaqat Rai, the people did begin “to gather round him in exceedingly large numbers. ‘Guru Gobind Singh called himself a king and received royal honours from his followers...........Rajas of Kehlur and Handur began to fear that if he was allowed to continue in that way he might become too powerful for them........For this reason they sometimes obstructed the people carrying offerings such as horses, elephants, etc. to the Guru. This was what provided the Guru with a cause for hostility with the rajas.”

The Guru's life and daily programmes which seemed to be aiming at some high venture, are said to have been fairly regular at this time. Thus writes Macauliffe: "The Guru, according to the custom of his predecessors, used to rise in the end of the night and perform his devotions. He particularly delighted to listen to the Asa Ki War. After day-break he gave his Sikhs divine instruction and then practised martial exercises. In the afternoon he received his Sikhs, went shooting, or raced horses; and ended the evening by performing the divine service of the Rahiras."¹

The Guru received ambassadors from kings and moved like an Emperor in the midst of his followers. His Sikhs from Kabul, Kandhar, Balkh, Bukhara and Ghazni brought to him many presents peculiar to that part of the world. The costliest and the most magnificent of such presents said to have been made to him on the occasion of Baisakhi in 1680, "was a woollen tent on which were embroidered, in gold and silver, numerous objects and scenes of beauty and splendour. This tent was the humble offering of a Sikh from Kabul, named Duni Chand. Others had also helped in its preparation. Its magnificence surpassed that of even the Emperor's tent."²

Of all the different types of presents, however, the Guru preferred the offerings of arms. "The Guru was overjoyed to see arms. He almost worshipped them", as according to Mehma Prakash Wartak, "One who presents him with arms could win his favour more easily than one who simply offered money, etc."³ The Guru also ordered a big drum to be prepared which he named as Ranjit Nogara. It was a sort of war-drum which the Guru caused to be beat when he went hunting. Such drums were generally carried with armies in those days, and such practices, according to M'Gregor, were followed only by Rajas,⁴ and it looked as if Guru had founded a separate state of his own.

1. M., V, p. 3.
All this was causing a consternation in the minds of the Hill Rajas. There were said to have been other causes for this as well. The Hill rajas were idol-worshippers, while as we have already discussed, the Guru was an idol-breaker. Moreover the Rajas knew that Aurangzeb was bent upon destroying the Sikhs, and if they allied themselves with the Guru that would endanger their safety yet more. While on the other hand, if they accepted the Guru’s mission they would have to accept his leadership which they did not like.

“It was not long before” thus, writes Payne, “the growing power of Govind Singh excited the jealousy of the surrounding hill chiefs, who saw in his democratic teaching and the military zeal of his followers a serious menace to their own influence and independence. Foremost among these was Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, who looked upon the Sikhs as upstarts, and lost no opportunity by molesting them.”

The matter was precipitated by an incident. During his visit there, we learn that Raja Ram of Assam had “implored Guru Teg Bahadur’s intercession for a son, and a prince called Ratan Rai was duly born to him. Raja Ram died when his son was seven years old. When Ratan Rai attained the age of twelve, he felt an inclination to see the son of the Guru by whose mediation he had been born. He accordingly, with his mother and several of his ministers, proceeded to Anandpur. He took with him as an offering five horses with golden trappings, a very small but sagacious elephant, a weapon out of which five sorts of arms could be made—first a pistol, then by pressing a spring a sword, then a lance, then a dagger, and finally a club—a throne from which, by pressing a spring, puppets emerged and played chouper, and drinking cup of great value, and several costly and beautiful jewels and raiment.” The raja was received in great state by the Guru, and he stayed for a couple of days with him, during which he showed the Guru the

working on his articles of offerings. The elephant, otherwise black as a coal, had a beautiful white stripe stretching from the tip of his trunk, along the forehead and back, right up to the tip of its tail. It waved a fan or Chauri over the Guru and held a jug of water in his trunk while the Guru’s feet were being washed. It wiped the Guru’s feet with a towel, placed his shoes in order, fetched the arrows shot by him and at night “took two lighted torches in his trunk and showed the Guru and the raja their homeward ways.” The raja was of almost the same age as the Guru. He stayed with him for about five months and then departed.

Raja Bhim Chand of Kehur, in whose state all these activities were being carried on, hearing of the growing splendour of the Guru once went to visit him at Anandpur. He was received in the Darbar with great honour by the Guru. On the prayer of Bhim Chand the Guru showed him the presents from the king of Assam. The costly tent from Kabul was erected the next morning to receive the Raja in. The Raja was astonished at the magnificence of the presents shown him, on his homeward journey his mind still more burned with envy of the Guru’s state and wealth, and he decided to secure from the Guru the possession at least of the elephant, by force or stratagem. Shortly after, the betrothal ceremony of the Raja’s son was to be performed with the daughter of Raja Fateh Shah of Sringar in the present district of Garhwal. Taking the opportunity Bhim Chand sent some of his officers to the Guru to borrow the elephant for the occasion. The Guru, however, having read the intention behind, refused to part with it. This caused a bitterness in Bhim Chand’s mind and he determined to take a revenge on the Guru. His ministers, however, advised him to desist from the action till the marriage of his son was over. As the marriage of the Raja’s son approached, one or two more attempts were made to secure the elephant from the Guru, but this all failed. All this charged the atmosphere.

On the other hand, when some cowards among the Masands learnt of all these developments, they who were said

to have fattened themselves in peace and were afraid of losing their ease and comfort, felt agitated and went to the Guru’s mother, requesting her to dissuade the Guru from his war-like propensities, lest it should bring some trouble to him. All this, however, bore no fruit for the Masands, and the Guru’s activities went apace. Just this time, however, another development took place. Raja Medni Prakash of Nahn, it is said, had very bitter relations with Fateh Shah of Srinagar. Fateh Shah was a strong king. He had very good relations with Ram Rai, the disinherited son of Guru Har Rai, who had developed his influence far and wide, and who due to his super-natural powers commanded a very good respect at the court of the Emperor Aurangzeb. Fateh Shah’s matrimonial relation with the strong Raja Bhim Chand added yet further to his power and prestige. Medni Prakash, growing afraid of the ever-increasing power of Fateh Shah, decided to have friendly relations with the Guru, and therefore invited the Guru to spend some time in his state. When the Masands learnt of it, they approached the Guru’s mother once again and requested her to insist that the Guru should accept the invitation, so that he would have some respite from the growing enmity with Bhim Chand. When the Guru was approached once again, he agreed, and after some time they all left for Nahn.

The Guru was duly greeted by Raja Medni Prakash, and here again the Guru busied himself with chase and other such activities. It is said that once when the Raja went with the Guru on a hunting excursion, he told him that Fateh Shah had often quarrelled with him on the ground where they stood, and requested the Guru to build there a fort for the protection of the state. The Guru accepted the proposal, the foundations of the fort were duly laid, and in due time the fort was ready, which was named Paunta. The Guru stayed there and continued to increase his army and enlist Mohammedans as well as the Hindus who presented themselves for his service.

Ram Rai who was at Dehra Dun, only about thirty miles from Paunta, began to apprehend that the Guru had come there to punish him for his previous misdeeds. The Guru
however, sent a Sikh to reassure him, and shortly after when Ram Rai and the Guru met at a middle spot, friendship between the two was established. Raja Fateh Shah of Srinagar was also advised by his ministers to be on good terms with the Guru, and he decided to visit the Guru when he had approached so near his territory. The Guru received Fateh Shah with due honour, and at his proposal friendship between Fateh Shah and Medni Prakash was also restored.

The Guru after this, is said to have set about extending Paunta and beautifying it with gardens and pleasure grounds. The day fixed for marriage of Fateh Shah’s daughter also approached and the Guru received an invitation from the raja to grace the occasion. The Guru, however, declined the invitation for his enmity with Bhim Chand, but promised to send his finance minister with some troops to represent him. In the meanwhile Bhim Chand also started with the marriage party from Kehlur. He had to pass through Paunta in order to proceed to Srinagar, but since he had brought with him an unusual number of troops, as according to Bhai Vir Singh, the Guru doubted his intentions and permitted only the bridegroom and a small number of officers to cross the ferry near Paunta. The rest had to reach Srinagar by a circuitous path.

Bhim Chand was naturally enraged at this. The Guru sent Dewan Nand Chand with some troops, and some valuable presents, including a necklace worth about a lakh and a quarter of rupees, as a wedding present for the bride. Bhim Chand threatened to return without marrying his son if Fateh Chand accepted the Guru’s present. The result was that Nand Chand had to bring all the presents back. On his way back Nand Chand was attacked by Bhim Chand’s troops, but giving them a good fight he was able to return unhurt. After the marriage was over Bhim Chand held a conference with Fateh Chand and some other Hill rajas present there, such as Kirpal of Katoch, Gopal of Guler,

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Hari Chand of Handur and the Raja of Jaswal. They all decided to attack the Guru on their way back home.

On the other hand when the Guru got the intelligence regarding such developments, he intensified his preparations. Of the 500 Pathans enlisted by Pir Budhu Shah in the Guru's army, 400 deserted him. Only Kale Khan with one hundred Pathans under his command remained loyal. The 400 Pathans joined the already large army of the Hill rajas and encouraged these chiefs by saying that 'The Guru's main dependence is on us. The rest of his army is a miscellaneous rabble who have never seen war, and will run away when they hear the first shot fired.' They joined the Hill rajas' army without pay with a promise that they would be permitted to plunder the riches of the Guru. The Udasis also fled hearing of the approaching war. Only one of them, Mahant Kirpal, remained with the Guru. Budhu Shah was immediately informed of the misconduct of the Pathans, who, to wipe away this disgrace, placed himself, his brother, his four sons, and seven hundred disciples at the Guru's disposal. The Guru selected Bhangani, six miles distant from Paunta, as the battle-field and marched his forces thither. The battle was fought in which the combined forces of all the hill chiefs were defeated, and the Guru immediately after that returned to Anandpur, as he himself writes: 'when I returned after the victory I did not remain at Paunta. I went to Kehler and there established the village of Anandpur.'

Now almost all the Sikh accounts agree with the circumstances leading to the battle of Bhangani as given above. There are, however, certain points brought out by Dr. Banerjee which, as he implies almost all of them seem to have failed in comprehending. These accounts are almost unanimous that the Guru left Anandpur just on the eve of the marriage of the son of Bhum Chand, and came back to that place just after it, which means that the Guru's stay at Paunta was just nominal. The activities of the Guru at

1. Bachitra Nama, viii.
Paonta given by these accounts, and the Guru's construction of the fort of Paonta etc., however, are so varied that they could not be compressed within that short period, if the Guru went there just before the marriage and returned immediately after it. We have, therefore, "very good reasons to believe that he made somewhat protracted stay at Paonta,"¹ writes Dr Banerjee. Since we are pretty certain, as the Guru himself writes about it, that he returned to Anandpur immediately after the battle which was fought immediately after the marriage, the first point raised is that the Guru should definitely not have gone to Paonta just before the marriage. And if this is so, the entire story that the bitterness between the Guru and Bhim Chand grew as a result of the Guru's refusal to lend the elephant on the marriage of his son, falls to the ground. Secondly concluding from the Guru's words that after the battle of Bhangani, 'I did not remain at Paonta, I went to Kehlur and there established the village of Anandpur,' Dr. Banerjee writes that if the Guru established the Anandpur after the battle, "it clearly indicates that the Guru's earlier stay at Anandpur—Makhowal was purely nominal and that it was made the real centre of his activities after the battle of Bhangani."²

Taking the second of Dr. Banerjee's points first, we must say that it does not seem to be very strong. If we can conclude from the above quoted statement of the Guru that his earlier stay at Anandpur was nominal, we can conclude from his earlier statement in the beginning of his account of the battle that it was not so, because therein he writes that after obtaining the sovereignty he conducted religious affairs to the best of knowledge, and hunted various sorts of game in the forests. When the Guru's father died, he was at Anandpur, and was only nine years of age. Under such circumstances it was not possible for the boy Guru to leave the secluded hills and come back to the plains. He must thus have continued at Anandpur, and if he conducted

2. Ibid, p. 70.
religious affairs and had hunted various sorts of game, obviously he could not have done all that and be a cause of bitterness with Bhim Chand at that young age. He must have stayed at Anandpur for a considerable time till he matured in his age and ideas, as the Sikh traditions almost unanimously hold. It is, however, possible that after the Guru left Anandpur for Paunta, the former should have lost much of its importance which was re-established after his return.

As to the first point, there exists a very strong Sikh tradition which connects the bitterness between the Guru and Bhim Chand with the marriage of the latter’s son. There is one possible solution for the problem posed by Dr. Banerjee, which he perhaps has failed to perceive. That is, we might say that Bhim Chand tried to borrow the elephant at his son’s betrothal and not at the marriage. The Guru’s refusal to part with it caused bitterness, and at Medni Prakash’s invitation he left Anandpur. The marriage was performed quite a good time after the betrothal, as it has been the custom among the Indians, and by that time the Guru should have carried on all his activities at Paunta. If this is correct, there might be some truth in Prof. Kartar Singh’s words that the Guru remained absent from Anandpur for a little over three years.  

The third point raised by Dr. Banerjee, however, seems to be very significant. The Sikh tradition makes the Guru’s bitterness with Bhim Chand as the main and the immediate cause of the battle of Bhangani, and it is very curious indeed that in the account of the battle given by the Guru himself in his Bachitra Natak, he does not mention the name of Bhim Chand even once. Regarding the cause of the battle, the Guru merely says in his Bachitra Natak, after reaching Paunta: “There I hunted and killed many lions, nilgai and bears. Fateh Shah, the king, became angry and came to blows with me without any reason.” And immediately after this, the account of the battle follows: “There Sri Shah ragged and the five stately heroes took their position firmly on

he field of battle ......... " In the body of the account too, whereas the Guru mentions the names of the petty chiefs such as the Rajas of Jaswal, Dadhwal and Chandel, there is nowhere a mention of the name of Bhim Chand who is supposed to have been the main cause of the battle. There is every possibility, therefore, that the main cause of the battle was the Guru's relations with Fateh Shah. In the battle Fateh Shah was joined by several other Hill Rajas, but not by Bhim Chand.

The account may possibly be given like this. The Guru in the earlier part of his life remained at Anandpur for a pretty long time, where he developed some bitterness with Bhim Chand. The Guru received an invitation from Medni Prakash, and his mother and others advised him to leave Anandpur for sometime and accept the invitation. At Paunta, the Guru established friendship with Medni Prakash and Fateh Shah. Later on, however, as the Guru obstructed the passage of Bhim Chand's marriage party for obvious reasons, the latter who was already bitter prevailed upon Fateh Shah to break with the Guru. The marriage was duly performed and Bhim Chand returned to his state. As the friendly relations between the Guru and Fateh Shah had already been broken, the Guru somehow got involved in some boundary dispute between Medni Prakash and Fateh Shah, perhaps immediately after the marriage. The progressive activities of the Guru were not liked by the staunch Hindu chiefs of the Hills who joined Fateh Shah against the Guru, and thus the battle started in which the Guru was victorious. This battle, according to Sunder Singh, was fought about the year 1686.*

After this victory, the Guru was in a stronger position. His Sikhs, as according to Sukha Singh, were so overjoyed that they actually made wild plans of attacking Srinagar and Delhi.† The Guru then decided to return to Anandpur. The Sikhs committed several acts of hostility against Bhim Chand,

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1. Bachitra Natak, VIII.
carried out several raids in his territory, as both Gur Bilas and Suraj Prakash agree. The Guru’s grand victory at Bhangani had considerably cowed down Bhim Chand, and he dared not come out openly to challenge the Sikhs. Besides, he was also facing certain troubles at the hands of the Mughal authorities. The Guru’s fame was spreading. Macauliffe writes, and therefore when he came back to Anandpur, Bhim Chand was advised to sue for peace. He made an offer, the both met, and now friendship was restored between the two, which served a common cause of the hill chiefs in a battle the account of which will follow.

The battle of Bhangani is said to be an event which set the ball rolling towards a major clash between the Guru and the Mughals. The Mughals had thought the Guru would be destroyed in his clash with the Hill rajas and, according to some accounts, they had encouraged these chiefs towards the direction. But this battle convinced them that the Guru was getting too formidable a power. They lost their confidence in the Hill rajas as a weapon against the Guru, and it was doubtful if these chiefs would now occupy the same privileged position in the Mughal eyes as before. The politics which ensued as a result of this battle was therefore confused. And the Hill rajas in this proved to be perfectly immature politicians, buffeted about like pebbles on the sea shore, sometimes aligning themselves with this power and sometimes with that.

Another result of this battle was that the belief of the Sikhs in the super-natural power of the Guru was established. The Guru had won a great victory, yet he did not acquire an inch of land, or subdue a state, exterminate its authorities and establish a political power. This disinterestedness of the Guru spread his fame far and wide, and people flocked around him in ever greater numbers. The Guru’s arms supply increased, and a large number of people offered themselves to be enrolled in the Guru’s army.

The battle of Bhangani also gave the Guru an opportunity of understanding the real character of some of his

followers. The wicked and dishonest people who had joined the Guru merely for the sake of some booty, or to fatten themselves in peace at the Guru's expense, were going to have no room with him. And the Guru himself writes that after he returned to Anandpur: "Those who had kept themselves away from the battle, I drove out of the place; and I patronised those who had distinguished themselves there. Many days passed in this way and I fostered the faithful and rooted out all the wicked."

C—The Battle of Nadaun

These Hill states about which we have been talking, had been brought under control by Akbar, and later on by Todar Mal who annexed the fertile tracts but left the bare hills as tributary states. Although these states continued to be treated liberally, yet all of them had to keep a prince each at the Mughal court as a hostage for their good conduct, and pay their regular tributes every year. This state of affairs continued till the time of Aurangzeb under whom the situation changed. The Emperor was kept busy in the Deccan for a pretty long time during which great administrative irregularities commenced in the north which weakened the Central hold on this part of the country. These Hill states also seem to have been encouraged by the situation, and they started refusing to pay the annual tribute. They were encouraged in this attitude by another factor as well. According to Dr. Narang, the defeat of the Hill chiefs in the battle of Bhangani resulted into a change in their attitude towards the Guru's mission, and they began to regard it with the seriousness it deserved. They entered into offensive and defensive alliance with him,² which encouraged them yet further in refusing to pay their annual tribute. And this resulted in the battle of Nadaun.

Mian Khan, an imperial commander, went to Jammu and therefrom sent his assistant, Alaf Khan to realise the tribute from the Hill chiefs. Raja Kirpal Chand of Kangra and Dyal of Bijarwal paid the tribute, and the former advis-

ed Alaf Khan that Bhim Chand being the strongest Hill raja if he could realise the tribute from him, the rest would pay it automatically. Alaf Khan took this advice, demanded the tribute from Bhim Chand, but getting a refusal he prepared for a battle. Bhim Chand approached the Guru for assistance. The Guru by this time was on friendly terms with him, and he was only too glad to help him in this movement towards liberation from the Mughal Tyranny.

Alaf Khan, together with his allies, Raja Kirpal and Dyal, took his position on an eminence near the town of Nadaun, 20 miles south-east of Kangra, on the left bank of the Beas. On the other side Bhim Chand joined by the Guru, Raja Sukhdev of Jasrot, Pirthi Chand of Dadhwar, Raj Singh and Ram Singh, marched to the battle-field. The Guru gives a short account of the battle in his *Bachitra Natak*. Bhim Chand opened the attack, but the position of the enemy being on an eminence, the arrows and shots of his soldiers struck only the wooden rafters below. Kirpal and Dyal repulsed the attack. Bhim Chand led another attack, invoking the help of the monkey-god, Hanuman. Kirpal and Dyal came out of their fortress and a furious battle raged inflicting heavy losses on both the sides. The troops of Bhim Chand seemed to be swerving. Raja Dyal seemed to be plying his arrows with great effect. Seeing the situation critical, the Guru advanced. He writes: "Then this Thy insignificant creature (the Guru) took up his gun, aimed it at the heart of a raja. Fighting bravely he tottered to the ground. Even when falling the proud warrior in his rage shouted 'kill'. I put aside the gun and took up my bow, shot four arrows with my right hand and three with my left. I could not see whether they struck anybody. By that time God turned the battle in our favour. The enemy was driven into the river. Arrows and bullets flew in abundance as if the warriors were playing 'holy'."  

The Guru continues the account. Alaf Khan fled the battlefield, and all the other heroes retreated precipitately. The Guru remained on the bank of the river for

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eight days, then he visited the palaces of the various Rajas and returned home. Then towards the end he writes: “The two parties came to terms and therefore the story ends. I came back here after having plundered Alsun (on my way back) and having reached Ananopur, enjoyed myself in various ways.”

The last sentences of the Guru raise two new questions. It is not clear as to what “two parties came to terms” implies. Does it refer to certain differences between some two parties of the Hill rajas which were removed, or was it that the differences between Bhim Chand and his party on the one side, and Alaf Khan on the other side, which were removed? The latter part of the above statement seems to be more probable. For we know that after the battle of Nadaun, Bhim Chand understanding the futility of his hostility with the Mughals, did make his submission to them. And, moreover since it is the story of the conflict between Bhim Chand and Alaf Khan that the Guru is narrating, his words that the “two parties came to terms and therefore the story ends,” do seem to refer to the end of hostilities between Bhim Chand and Alaf Khan which ended the story.

Regarding the Guru’s plunder of Alsun, however, the position is not clear. Alsun, according to Macauliffe, was a village situated within the territories of Raja Bhim Chand, and Dr. Banerjee hints at the possibility of its being plundered as a mark of the Guru’s retaliation against Bhim Chand who made his submission before Alaf Khan despite his victory. But according to Gian Singh, the inhabitants of Alsun had thrice before looted the Sikhs, and now again insulted some of them which resulted into their being plundered. Suraj Prakash also hints at the loot of the Sikh Sangat in that village. Moreover if the Guru had some differences with Bhim Chand, it seems difficult to understand why he should

1. B.chitra Natak, ix.
2. M., v, p. 54.
have plundered some of his innocent people in that village, as Dr. Banerjee rather likes us to have it.\(^1\) Such practices were foreign to the Guru’s character. We must therefore accept the view of Gian Singh in this respect. The battle of Nadaun, according to Sunder Singh, was fought about the year 1687.\(^2\)

D—The Expedition of the Khanzada

After this the Guru spent some years in peace, putting his house in order. Bhim Chand and several other Hill chiefs had made their submissions, and the Guru alone now remained to be subdued by the Mughals. As the fame of the Guru was spreading and number of recruits in his army was increasing, the Mughal authorities thought it prudent to curb the Guru’s rising power immediately. Accordingly, Dilawar Khan\(^3\) sent his son Rustam Khan against the Guru. Macauliffe writes: “One Dilawar Khan, who had attained power in the Punjab during the insurrections which arose while Aurangzeb was employed in the Dakhan, became jealous of the Guru’s fame and success, and sent his son with a force of one thousand men to exact tribute from him. If he refused, then Anandpur was to be sacked. When this was accomplished, Dilawar’s son was to take tribute in a similar manner from all the Hill rajas.”\(^4\) It seems, however, difficult to take Dilawar Khan, as Macauliffe would like us to take him. Narang\(^5\) considers Dilawar Khan to be the Governor of Kangra, while Panth Prakash\(^6\) considers him to be the Governor of Kashmir. According to Suraj Prakash, he was Subedar of Lahore.\(^7\) Whatever position Dilawar Khan occupied, it obviously seems most probable that he was a Mughal officer and not a man who had attained power during the insurrection, as Macauliffe believes it. A further proof of this is the fact that

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3. Akbar, Mohd., op. cit.
7. Santokh Singh, Bhai, Suraj Prakash, p. 4849.
the expedition of Alutf Khan, and then those sent by Dilawar Khan, all seem to be the parts of a chain in which these expeditions having failed, the news reached Aurangzeb and the chain ended with the Emperor sending one of his own sons to subdue the Hill chiefs, as we shall shortly see. Obviously if Dilawar Khan was not a Mughal officer, his efforts should not have ended in the Emperor sending his own son with an expedition.

From the Guru’s account of the expedition of the son of Dilawar Khan, we learn that the plan of the Mughals was to take the Guru by a surprise. The enemy troops crossed the Sutlej just before midnight, and just this time a Guru’s scout ran to inform him of the fact. Alam, a deorhidar woke the Guru up, and immediately a sound of alarm was made. Everybody stirred up and took up his arms with a fiery zeal. The enemy troops seem to have already been tired by the day’s march, and were almost numbed with the coldness of the water. They were unprepared when the Sikhs suddenly discharged volleys of shots. Drums beat, bugles blew, soldiers thundered and the guns roared. It was a dreadful appearance “and the bloody Khans fled with their weapons unused.” While fleeing away, they plundered the village Barwan, stayed for sometime at Bhalan, and then returned to Dilawar Khan. Thus the Guru got the victory without a fight, as he writes: “Through God’s favour, the wretched fools could not even touch me, and they fled.”

E—The Expedition of Hussain Khan

Soon Dilawar Khan’s son reached back home and hung his head in shame. Thereupon Hussain, a slave of Dilawar Khan, offered to march against the Guru. Dilawar sent him with a large army to subject the Guru to the Mughal rule. Hussain proceeded with fury and on his way he brought the Raja of Dhadwal completely under his control, making slaves of his sons. He also plundered Dun Kirpal Chand of Kangra had already paid his tribute. faithless Raja Bhim Chand cast his lot

with Hussain, and all the three proceeded towards Anandpur. The Guru also made his preparations, but here an incident occurred which entirely changed the future course of developments.

Raja Gopal of Guler hearing of the submission of Bhim Chand and Kirpal, proceeded to negotiate with Hussain. But the slave of Dilawar having the rajas of Kehlur and Katoch by his side, considered himself to be peerless in the world, and extremely flattered and blind in vanity he did not even condescend to notice the Raja of Guler, Gopal had gone along with Raja Ram Singh of Jaswal, and took with him some money to pay to Hussain, but the latter was not prepared to accept anything less than ten thousand rupees. Gopal refused to pay that sum and came back. Hussain became angry and without pausing to take care of any tactical considerations, he laid siege to the town of Guler. The inhabitants of the town being soon reduced to straits, Gopal sued for peace, but Hussain would not accept anything less than ten thousand rupees as a condition for it.

Thereupon Gopal approached the Guru—who sent Sangtia and seven other Sikhs for his help. Sangtia re-opened the negotiations with Hussain in Gopal’s behalf, and brought the latter to Hussain’s camp on his own security. The two sides, however, once again failed to reach any agreement. Kirpal and Bhim Chand began to conspire to arrest Gopal, but the latter getting the scent, escaped before he could be harmed. Kirpal at this, raged in fury, and he together with Himmat and Hussain immediately marched on the city, and a fight commenced with indescribable vehemence. Hussain killed a lot of enemy’s soldiers. Shortly after, however, some of Gopal’s soldiers crying ‘kill, kill,’ fell upon him, an arrow struck Hussain and he fell down dead. After this Raja Kirpal also fell fighting, and several of their brave officers such as Himmat and Kimmat also fell. On the side of Gopal too there was a heavy loss, and Sangtia also died together with his seven companions fighting in the battle-field.
Thus was Gopal able to get a victory. The Guru writes:

"Gopal was victorious and the battle came to an end. Everybody then went home and the rain of bullets that was originally intended for me was showered by the Almighty elsewhere".\(^1\)

**F—Expedition of Jujhar Singh**

This catastrophe made Dilawar Khan still more angry, and he decided to send yet another expedition under Jujhar Singh. When Jujhar Singh, however, reached Bhalan, Gaj Singh of Jaswal mobilised his troops and fell upon him early in the morning. Jujhar Singh fought like a hero, but was soon surrounded from all sides. He, however, without any hesitation, rushed into the enemy’s ranks and wielding his weapon with great dexterity, killed many valiant soldiers, but at last he himself fell dead and the battle thus ended.\(^2\)

**C—Shahzada leads the Expedition**

The news of the repeated failures of the expeditions against the Guru reached Aurangzeb in Deccan. At this Aurangzeb became very angry and sent one of his own sons, prince Muazim, afterwards known as Bahadur Shah, for the restoration of order in the Hills. The people were frightened and they fled to the hills. Many deserted the Guru as well, and some tried even to frighten him. But as the Guru writes: "They did not understand the ways of the Almighty."\(^3\) The prince himself stayed at Lahore and sent a Mughal officer named Mirza Beg to wreak vengeance on the hills. The Guru continues: "Then Aurangzeb’s son became very angry, and he sent a subordinate officer to pull down the habitations of those who had left me. Both Guru Nanak’s and Babar’s successors have been set up by God. The former should be regarded as spiritual kings and the latter as temporal kings. The Babar’s descendants shall exact money forcibly from those who did not pay Guru Nanak’s dues. They shall punish them and loot their

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1. Bachitra Natak, XI.
2. Ibid, Section xii.
3. Ibid, Section xiii.
villages completely." And then, after Mirza Beg had destroyed the homes of the apostates, the prince sent four more officers who "plundered the houses of the apostates who had escaped destruction at Mirza Beg Khan’s hand."

Dr. Narang also writes that "The Rajas were taught a severe lesson by Mirza Beg, the imperial general. He inflicted upon them defeat after defeat, gave up their country to plunder, set to fire villages, took hundreds of prisoners and in order to make a lesson of them had them shaved clean, and their faces blackened, seated them on donkeys and made an exhibition of them throughout the disturbed area." Commenting on this Dr. Banerjee writes: "We, however, find it difficult to accept these details though there cannot possibly be any doubt that the Rajas were taught a severe lesson on this occasion." Moreover the Gurus object seems to have been to preach "a homily on loyalty to one’s spiritual guide, and therefore we need not take his words as literally true." "Guru’s main object in introducing this topic seems to have been to read a lesson on apostasy."

So far as the first part of Dr. Banerjee’s statement is concerned, we may not have to say much on this, but on the second part of it we find difficult to agree. Dr. Banerjee himself agrees with the views of Sukha Singh that the reason which contributed to the Guru’s escape from a trouble at the Prince’s hands—that the Guru did apprehend a serious trouble—is proved from his letter dated Sambat 1753 or 1696 A.D. which he addressed to Rama and Tiloka the ancestors of the later rulers of the Phulkian states, requesting them to send some soldiers for his assistance—seem to be the successful pleading in the Guru’s behalf, of a Khatri of Delhi named Nand Chand who possessed some influence with the Prince. But he does not seem to have perceived another very strong probability, from which we find it difficult to escape. In fact, there seems no reason for us to agree with

1. Bachitra Natak, xlii.
2. Narang, op. cit, p. 158.
Dr. Banerjee that the Guru’s purpose in his account is “to read a lesson on apostasy”. There seems in fact no confusion in the Guru’s statement quoted above, which clearly implies that all those who deserted the Guru were purposely destroyed by the Prince’s officers. The Guru’s influence had spread far and wide, and as Aurangzeb’s last days could not be far ahead, there is every probability that to win the Guru’s favour which was later actually helpful to the Prince in securing the throne, he, with or without any understanding with the Guru, did order to destroy all the Guru’s enemies.¹

The letter which the Guru addressed to Rama and Tiloka is dated Sambat 1753 or 1696 A.D. Obviously the Prince came to the Punjab in that year, and the battle with Hussain should have been fought about the year 1695, as the Guru himself says the Prince came soon after this battle. The expedition of Jujhar Singh should be placed somewhere in between.

**H - Battle with Alam Chand and Balia Chand.**

Soon after the Guru himself was called upon to fight an action. The neighbouring Hill chiefs were jealous of the growing power of the Guru. Besides, the repeated raids of the Sikhs in the hostile territories constantly reminded some of the chiefs of the growing danger. And therefore they were always in search of an opportunity to do a short work of the Guru.

One day, it is said, when the Guru went out hunting in the Dun, with only a small number of the Sikhs, two Hill chiefs Alam Chand and Balia Chand, finding an easy opportunity fell upon him. The Sikhs, a small number of them as it was, gave a determined fight, but being too few they had to retreat a little at the face of a strong opposition from the enemy. The Guru, seeing this, advanced and the Sikhs gathering courage resumed the fight. In the meanwhile a timely reinforcement under Ude Singh also arrived, and the situation was saved. Alam Chand lost his right arm and left the battle-field. Balia Chand continued, but he too later fell down wounded, and their soldiers took to heels. The Guru returned victorious.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CREATION OF KHALSA

On the day of Baisakhi in 1699 there occurred a revolution in the Punjab. On this day at Keshgarh in Anandpur a new nation was created by Guru Gobind Singh, a nation of warriors who, thus writes Dr. Indu Bhushan Banerjee, "blunted the edge of the Abdali's aggressive power, which even the Marathas had failed to resist, and turned the great triumph of Panipat into a barren victory." It would be interesting to study the circumstances which necessitated this creation.

At the time Guru Gobind Singh was born, India was being ruled by Aurangzeb, a religious fanatic whose will was the law of the land, and under whom, thus writes Dr. Narang, "temples were razed to the ground, sacred threads were broken and Hindus were compelled to embrace Islam. Although the masses of Hindus were against the galling yoke of tyranny, the so-called natural leaders of the people were most officially loyal to the throne and most bitterly hostile to all progressive movements". Since the fall of Anangpall, no political leader had arisen in the Punjab and the Hindus had indeed "ceased to exist as a political power." It was very essential that this ancient race of India, with the glories of Vedas and Upanishads and the heroic deeds of Rama and Lakshman studded as precious jewels in its historical past, should be taught to develop confidence in itself and be filled with lofty although fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy.

During the pre-Khalsa period the Guru seems to have entered into fraternity of Hill rajas as one of equals and had completely identified himself with them when they rose.

in rebellion against the Mughals. The combined armies of
the Hill rajas and of the Guru gave a crushing defeat to
Mian Khan and Alif Khan at Nidhaon. This political unity
between the Guru and the Hill rajas, however, was not des-
tined to last long. Soon after this the Hill chiefs received
threatening letters from Dilawar Khan, and they chose to
dissociate themselves from the Guru to win the favour of
the supreme rulers. The Guru, however, although taken by sur-
pise, defeated single handedly a huge force sent by Dilawar
Khan under his son Lo Khan. Whereas on the one hand this
incident encouraged the Guru's Sikhs for their valour, on the
other hand it brought a conviction to the Guru that if the
great power like that of the Mughals was successfully to be
challenged, the Sikhs must have a reliance upon none else
but their own power and resources.

Another circumstance leading to the creation of Khalsa
was a hopeless disintegration among the Sikhs themselves.
The institution of Masands which had been organised by Guru
Arjan to carry on Guru Nanak's message of purity, modesty
and God-realisation far and wide in India, had fallen into
decadence. Guru Gobind Singh himself wrote about them :

"If any one serve the masands, they will say, "Fetch and
give us all thine offerings.

Go at once and make a present to us of whatever property
is in thy house.

Think on us night and day, and mention not others even
by mistake.

If they hear of any one giving, they run to him even at
night, they are not at all pleased at not receiving."

Macauliffe writes : "The Guru continued to receive
many complaints against the masands. One of them in parti-
cular billeted himself on a poor Sikh, and claimed sweets
instead of crushed pulse and unleavened bread which formed
the staple food of his host. The masand took the bread,
threw it into his host's face, and dashed the crushed pulse
on the ground. He then began to abuse the Sikh, and would

not cease until the poor man had sold his wife’s petticoat to provide him with sweets. One day a company of mimes went to perform before the Guru. He ordered them to imitate the masands. One of them accordingly dressed as a masand, two as a masand’s servants, and a fourth as a masand’s courtesan riding behind him on horse-back as he went to collect offerings for the Guru. The mimes portrayed to life the villainies and oppressions by the masands. The Guru upon this finally resolved to free his Sikhs from their tyranny. He ordered that all the masands should be arraigned for their misdemeanours. He listened in every case to their defences and explanations, punished those whom he found guilty, and pardoned those who succeeded in establishing their innocence.† According to one view, the Guru thus destroyed about 2,200 Masands in boiling oil and by other torments. That such great number of men were thus destroyed, may not seem credible, as Dr. Banerjee believes, yet the Sikh records are almost unanimous that punishments were awarded to many, and the order of Masands was abolished for ever.

The Guru, however, was not satisfied at that. Although those who exploited the Sikhs had thus to be punished, the Guru felt that such maladies could not be uprooted unless the courage and understanding of the victims themselves were raised. This required some drastic action which the Guru had to take.

Then there was the problem of the dissenting sects. The Minas, Dhirmalias and Ram Rayees had repeatedly created troubles for the Guru’s predecessors. Prithia in complicity with Chandu Shah, had been an important factor which led to the execution of Guru Arjan. Prithia’s son Mihirban had been a bitter enemy of Guru Hargobind. It was, again, to escape the jealous and hostile activities of these dissenting sects that Guru Teg Bahadur had for some time to leave Punjab and go away to Assam. Peaceful

approach towards them had failed.

And again, though the teachings of his predecessors and the unique examples of martyrdom had elevated the spirits of the Sikhs, the old social shackles of the Hindu community, such as caste system, had not yet been completely broken. This, writes Dr. Ganda Singh, "hindered the growth of a homogeneous well-knit class of people inspired by a common national ideal. In fact, the idea of nationalism had not yet been born in this community. The ancient idea of the division of labour had created among the people well marked groups and classes which, with the passage of time, had developed into rigid castes with deep-rooted prejudices. The Sikh institution of Sangat and Pangat had gone a long way towards demolishing caste. But the difference in the social level of the low-caste Sudras and the highborn Brahmans and Kshatriyas was so great that" this also required a drastic action to be removed.

Political reform, as it is said, must always be preceded by a general renaissance and awakening, and this latter had already been brought about by the predecessors of Guru Gobind Singh. "The work of religious and social instructions had now been carried on for more than two centuries." Guru Nanak had revolted against the age-old institutions of caste and Sati. Sikhs had been taught not to believe in the system of pilgrimages and idol worship. Guru Hargobind had taught them how to fight for the protection of their self-respect. By the time of Guru Gobind Singh a definite code of conduct had been given to the Sikhs, a definite philosophy preached among them, a definite language and script and a definite scripture had been given to them. All this separated the Sikh community from rest of the population. What was now required was to give this community a definite organisation, which Guru Gobind Singh did.

And lastly, the Guru had a mission with which he was born. He was performing penance on the mountains of Hem Kund, writes he in his Bachitra Natak, and by his great

austerities had become one with Lord who ordered him to assume birth. The Lord had told him how He had sent many Sakhis, Sidhas, Rikhis and Prophets to propagate His religion in the world, but they all had become absorbed in themselves. He now ordered the Guru to go and preach a religion in which people believed in one God, the Eternal and Endless. He also ordained him to save the saints and extirpate the tyrants. And if the tyrants were to be extirpated, which seemed to be a new note struck in the philosophy of the Sikh religion, a resort to the sword was to be had and a race of warriors had to be created.

"Guru Gobind Singh," thus writes Prof. Abdul Majid Khan, "saw that the people of the Punjab were slaves of prejudice, pride and passion and that they attached undue importance to theological disputes, conventions and customs, with the result that either they were unbalanced or steeped in sloth. So, the situation was pretty hopeless and the atmosphere was very depressing. Political tyranny of the Mughals, shackles of the caste system, and vested interests of the obscurantist and obstructionist religious fraternities were the odds he had to contend with...Guru Gobind Singh put an end to all hazy indetermination, impotent rage and idle dreams of the sluggards and the cowards.″ And realising as Gur Bilas\(^2\) says, that the Kalyug had reached that stage where stone must be returned for stone, the Guru resolved upon doing as the circumstances commanded.

On a day before the first of Baisakh, Sambat 1756, corresponding to 12th of April, 1699, the Guru convened a large gathering in the open air at Keshgarh, near Anandpur. On this day, the Sikhs had been invited by special hukamnams from far off places. Divine music was sung, and as the chanting of Asa Di War concluded the Guru retired inside the tent. Shortly after he came out and bradishing his sword aloft, he addressed the assembly: "My devoted friends, this goddess is daily clamouring for the head of a dear

1. Bachitra Natak, Section, VI.
2. Spokesman weekly, Baisakhi No. 1959, p. 27.
Sikh. Is there any one among you all, ready to lay down his life at a call from me? It was an amazing call; there was a deep silence and everybody wondered as to what the Guru was up to. At last Bhai Daya Ram, a thirty-year-old Khatri of Lahore, stood up and bowing himself before the Guru he offered his head. The Guru seized the man by the arm, dragged him with apparent hurry and violence. There was a thud inside, the people heard it, and the next moment the Guru walked out with his sword aloft dripping with blood, and repeated the same amazing call. The people stupefied with horror got convinced that actually a murder had taken place. A dead silence followed again, and now Bhai Dharm Das, a thirty-three-year-old Jat of Delhi stood up and offered himself to the Guru. He was also dragged away likewise. The Guru came out and gave the third call. Some people felt that the Guru had gone mad, and they began to fritter away. Amidst the death-like silence, now the third man Bhai Muhkam Chand, a thirty-six-year-old washerman of Dwarka offered himself. The Guru came out with his dripping sword and gave the fourth call, and thus repeating the process, he gave the fifth call. On the fourth call a thirty-seven-year-old Bhai Sahib Chand of Bidar, a barbar by caste; and on his fifth call a thirty-eight-year-old Bhai Himmat Rai of Jagannath, a water-carrier (Kahar) by caste, offered themselves.

After taking the fifth man inside, the Guru now took longer time to come out. And at last when he came out, thank Lord, his sword was sheathed; but to the amazement of the people again, “his face was beaming with joy and satisfaction, and his eyes were drunk with the cheer which filled his heart.” And behind him walked they, who had apparently been killed. “They were all dressed like the master in saffron dyed garments. Their faces, their dress, and their whole appearance, were all like the Master’s. There was, on their faces, a glow which appeared to be a reflection to the light that illuminated the Guru’s face. They had given him their heads, and he had given them himself and his

The next day, on the day of Baisakhi, the Sangat assembled again every body with inquisitive anxieties in the mind. The Guru came dressed all in white and sat on the throne. The five Sikhs who had offered their heads, were now initiated by him in the new manner which he introduced. In the time of Guru Nanak the Sikhs used to be initiated by giving them to drink the water which had been touched with the Guru’s toe. This was to develop in them humility. In the time of Guru Arjan water placed under the Guru’s manja began to be administered for the purpose. But now the times had been changed. Now fearless bravery and skill in arms were required to meet the challenges to one’s faith. The manner of initiation which the Guru now adopted, was calculated to give the Sikhs courage, fortitude and will to face the trials of an honourable life.

The five Sikhs, now called Panj Piyaras, or the Beloved Five, were asked to stand up, fixing their thoughts on the Almighty and their gaze on the Guru; while the Guru taking pure water in an iron vessel kept stirring it with Khanda, or a two-edged dagger, till the hymns prescribed for the ceremony were chanted. The substitution of dagger for the toe had its obvious significance which was to make them brave in arms. The iron vessel signified strength of heart and mind. The chanting of hymns was meant for giving the Sikhs a faith in their religion and in the Almighty Lord. Now to this were added sugar crystals, called patashas, which, incidentally, the Guru’s wife Mata Sahib Kaur brought in at the moment. This was meant to bless the initiates, besides with courage and strength, also “with the grace of womanly sweetness.”

With the nectar thus prepared and called Khande ka Pahul, the Guru stood up, and asked the ‘Five’ to kneel on their left knees. Gazing into their eyes the Guru showered the nectar in the eyes of each, one by one, and asked each

2. They were Japji, Jap Sahib, Anand, Swayyas and Chaupai.
by his turn to speak aloud: *Wah-i-Guru Ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wah-i-Guru Ji ki Fateh*—or 'this is the Khalsa, and God’s is the victory.' Then the next or *Amrit* was sprinkled in each one’s hair, and then each was asked to take deep draughts of the *Amrit* from the same cup turn by turn. This, thus, transforming them into lions, knit them together in a brotherly love, destroying the distinctions of caste and creed. After this then, the Guru gave each the appellation of *Singh*, or a lion.

The more remarkable part of the ceremony came when after initiating the Five, the Guru himself knelt before them in supplication with folded hands, and prayed them now to initiate him into the new faith. Exactly similar practice was followed in his case, and Guru Gobind Rai taking the appellation of *Singh*, now became Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru now exclaimed, writes Gordon: "The Khalsa arose from the Guru and the Guru from the Khalsa. They are mutually protectors of each other." And this gave the Sikhs a perfect principle of democracy, the Guru declaring, wherever any five of his Sikhs would be, there would he himself be present. The five Sikhs together will have an authority superior to that of his own.

The Guru now gave his instructions to the Sikhs. Chulam Mahai-ul-Din, a Persian historian, gives the text of the report sent by an official news-writer present there, to Aurangzeb. The Guru said: "Let all embrace one creed and obliterate differences of religion. Let the four Hindu castes who have different rules for their guidance abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration, and become brothers. Let no one deem himself superior to another. Let none pay heed to the Ganges, and other places of pilgrimage which are spoken of with reverence in the Shastras, or adore incarnations such as Ram, Krishan, Brahma, and Durga, but believe in Guru Nanak and the other Sikh Gurus. Let men of four castes receive my baptism, eat out of one dish, and feel no disgust or contempt for one another."

2. Translation by Macauliffe, v, pp. 93-94.
Then the other instructions followed. The Sikhs were to wear five Ks. i.e. Kachha, Kara, Kirpan, Kanga and Kes; or the short breeches, an iron bracelet, a sword, a comb and hair. The Kachha, according to some writers, was to represent modesty and character; Kara would act as a weapon of defence, and worn on the right wrist it would remind one of the Guru whenever doing something by the right hand. Kirpan was a symbol of strength and self-respect, to be used for the defence of one's faith. Kanga was a symbol of cleanliness. And Kes a symbol of submission to God in remaining as God created; besides, it was to be a mark of distinction for the Sikhs.

The Sikhs now became Singhs and Khalsa—or 'Pure', and they were to be the sons of Guru Gobind Singh and their mother would be Sahib Kaur. The Sikhs were not to show any disrespect towards their hair, nor cut them or shave them. They would not use intoxicants; would not eat halal, or an animal killed after the Muslim fashion; they would chant five Banis as chanted at the time of initiation every morning; they would not share bed with any woman except their duly married wife—and whenever they fell from any of the rules thus prescribed, they were to admit of it and ask for forgiveness before the Sangat. They were to live a truthful life, give one-tenth of their income in charity, and were to worship one God, as:

नाबाज नैठ सेवा तिम स्वयं, देव विष्ठा भव तवि हो आरहे।
पुरुष पूज पूजीन माई, बृह बृह मही भव हुइ स आरहे।
वीका लहर नव सागर सुध नंबर, नेवारित तविवेष पहरे।
पुरुष नैठ सेवा घट मे, उब धर्माय उठि स्वर्गसे नाठें।

"Female infanticide, a custom prevalent then and for many years after in the Punjab, was strictly forbidden, as was also the practice of Sati; and rules and regulations were enjoined relating to daily worship, marriage, the law of inheritance, and other matters in which the Sikhs had hitherto conformed to Hindu law."

2. Payne, op. cit., p. 35.
Thus "Gobind took away from his followers each ancient solace of superstition." 1

The newswriter who wrote to the Emperor, further submitted: "When the Guru had thus addressed the crowd, several Brahmans and Khatri stood up, and said that they accepted the religion of Guru Nanak and of the other Gurus. Others, on the contrary, said that they would never accept any religion which was opposed to the teaching of the Vedas and the Shastars, and that they would not renounce at the bidding of a boy the ancient faith which had descended to them from their ancestors. Thus, though several refused to accept the God's religion, about twenty thousand men stood up and promised to obey him, as they had the fullest faith in his divine mission." 2

The Significance

Commenting on this, thus writes Gordon: "All was designed to give the Sikhs a distinct national character in opposition to the ways of other people, and to keep alive a sense of duty and profession of faith." And further he adds: "The dry bones of an oppressed peasantry were stirred into life, and the institution of the Sikh baptismal rite at the hands of a few disciples anywhere—in a place of worship, in the house, or by the roadside—brought about the more full and widespread development of the new faith." 3 Payne also writes: "One of the most important results of Govind Singh's activity was the large increase in the number of his followers." 4

Sunder Singh writes: The Guru "wanted to create a mass awakening and to show to the people that they were strong enough to check the tide of political tyranny and religious persecution; and later events only show that he admirably succeeded in the mission that he had undertaken." 5 Under the new system, militarism was adopted as an article of faith. Sword became with the Sikhs an object of worship, as the Guru says:

5. Sunder Singh, op. cit., p. 28.
"All-steel, I am Thy slave.
Deeming me Thine own preserve me;
Think of mine honour, whose arm Thou hast taken.
Deeming me Thine own, cherish me,
Single out and destroy mine enemies.
May both my kitchen and my sword prevail in the world."

And the best mode of death was the death while fighting in the battle-field. As the Guru said:

"Grant, O God......when the period of life may draw to its close, on the field of battle, may I die like a hero."

"The psychological effect of the new manner of naming the Sikhs is quite evident. A person belonging to the lowest caste took Amrit and became a Singh. He felt that he was as good and high as the famous Rajputs whose valiant deeds he had heard very often. He shook off all fear and cowardice. He was a 'lion', for that is the literal meaning of the word 'Singh.'"

"What Guru Gobind Singh did was this. Now that he had successfully fought a few battles with the Hill chiefs and the Imperial Subedar and found out that even among the so-called rabble of the population, amongst castes that were ever oppressed viz., barbers, washermen, jat and chamars (sweepers) there was the material with which he could oppose the very highest in the social ranks. The only thing required was to give them a proper organisation and instil into their minds the beliefs that the lowest among them were equal to the highest." And all this was done.

Guru Gobind Singh realised that the people had religion, but no national feeling. "The only way to make a nation of

them was to make nationalism their religion."¹ The Guru did make nationalism the religion with his Sikhs, and realising that unity was an essential constituent of nationalism, and that the greatest barrier against unity was the existing institution of caste, he struck at the very root of this evil by taking men of all castes into his faith and by making them to drink from the same vessel.

The Guru is reported to have said, "The four tribes of the Hindus, the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra would, like pan (beetle leaf), chuna (lime), supari (beetle-nut) and kaisha (terra aponica or catechu), become all of one colour, when well chewed."²

Rajputs and Kshatrias had so far been the only class which followed the profession of fighting. This distinction had been one of the causes of the slavery of the Hindus, because whenever an invader came only a small portion of this community went to the battle-field to check the invader, the rest simply stood by to accept the destiny as it came. The Guru destroyed this distinction when the men of the lowest castes were among the first to be accepted in his order. It was a magic touch that the most despised caste of the scavengers who now became Mazhabi Sikhs, proved to be one of the best fighters after they got this initiation.

The bravest of the Guru's generals is said to have been Jiwan Singh, a Mazhabi Sikh, who fell fighting at Chamkaur and whose tomb still perhaps exists at that place.

Economics, politics, socialism etc. are all parts of one body, and effect mutually. The service of Guru Gobind Singh was that he united politics with religion and thus purified politics. But while doing this, he himself did not develop any political ambition, as towards the close of his life, he wrote to Aurangzeb: "Thou art proud of thy empire, while I am proud of the empire of the immortal world."³ Nor is it

¹. Narang, op. cit., p. 80.
². Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 45.
³. See his Zafarnama addressed to Aurangzeb.
correct to say as Sirkar does, that the Guru: "converted the
spiritual unity of the Sikhs into a means of worldly success;
dwarfed the unity of a religious sect into an instrument
of political advancement." Despite all his successes, the Guru
did not acquire even an inch of land for himself. The Sikhs
were simply called upon to fight tyranny, and to protect their
faith. Destruction of tyranny was, however, bound to bring
dominion and political power to the Sikhs, which, though the
Guru himself avoided, made the Sikhs after his death to suc-
cumb before itself. But then this was only a by-product, and
if this could not be avoided it in no way commanded that
the main object of the destruction of the tyrants was to be
postponed or given up altogether.

Nor is it correct to say that by his practices the Guru
fell from some high principles of religion laid down by Guru
Nanak, or by any one of his predecessors. As Dr. Narang
writes: "Gobind himself, in fact, as well as his work, was
the natural product of the process of evolution that had
been going on ever since the foundation of Sikhism. The
harvest which ripened in the time of Guru Gobind Singh had
been sown by Guru Nanak and watered by his successors.
The sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was un-
doubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provid-
ed by Nanak." 2 Guru Nanak had condemned Babur and his
activities, and Guru Gobind Singh had challenged Babur's
successors and their activities. And just as Guru Nanak's
condemnation in the most naked terms of Lodhis and Babur
did not entail upon him a diversion from religion which was
his base and an ultimate end; so also Guru Gobind's chal-
lenging of the tyrants with a naked sword did not lessen his
faith in the Almighty and sharpen his interest in things
material. The best man is he, Gurn Gobind Singh wrote, who
utters God's name from his lips, even while he thinks of war
in his heart:

\[\text{वर और चीन विय जन सवं नै, भूष तै गुज्ज तिरश में सुप दिल्ली}^3\]

And in his following words we find a clear echo of Guru Nanak's beliefs:

"God is in the water, God is in the dry land,
God is in the heart, God is in the forest,
God is in the mountain, God is in the cave,
God is in the earth, God is in heaven,
God is here, God is there."

Prem Sumarg sums up the Guru's ideology very clearly:

"The Khalsa should be ever armed. He should be a lion at heart with the meek appearance of a cow. When he finds that evil does persist in mischief and the king does not dispense justice, and religion is in danger, then seeing his opportunity, he should take up arms. After all, this is the last resort."
CHAPTER XVIII

AFTER THE KHALSA WAS CREATED

The creation of the Khalsa came to the Hill chiefs as a bolt from the blue. The growing military strength of the Guru and the increasing number of his followers, necessitated a great increase in the amount of his essential supplies, and since Bhim Chand gave the Guru no co-operation, and the adjoining villages often refused supplies to the Sikhs, the Sikhs were compelled to get the supply by force and sometimes to plunder the villages which opposed them. The Hill chief considered the Guru as an intruder, and a menace to his power and position. Balia and Alam Chand had already been defeated by the Guru, and there seemed to him to be no prospect of peace until the Guru was either expelled from his territory, or destroyed. Bhim Chand of Kehlur, Bir Singh of Jaswal and Madan Pal of Sirmur met in a conference, and sent an envoy to the Emperor's viceroy in Delhi, requesting him for a help against the Guru. Their request was forwarded to the Emperor in Deccan, who replied that Imperial army could be sent to their help if they were prepared to meet its expense. The rajas willingly agreed to do so, and the two Imperial Panjazari Sardars, Painde Khan and Dina Beg, were sent with their troops, who joined by the three rajas marched on Anandpur.

On the other side the Guru also had made his preparations. The two opposing armies met, as the drums beat and the bugles blew. Painde Khan is said to have challenged the Guru in a duel, but was killed. The Hill chiefs took to their heels, Dina Beg who continued fighting for some time, was wounded, but finally fled the field and was pursued by the Sikhs upto Khidrabad. And thus ended the first battle of Anandpur, yielding a complete victory to the Guru and his Sikhs.
Though defeated, Bhim Chand was not prepared to rest at peace while the Guru's influence and power increased. Determined to make one more trial, the Hill chiefs met in a council once again. The proposal to send another request for a help to the Emperor was countered by Handuria at whose suggestion it was decided to invite all the Hill chiefs to make a combined attack upon the Guru. Almost all the Hill chiefs thus were invited, and this included those of Mandi, Kulu, Kainthal, Nurpur, Kotech Jammu, Chander, Busher, Dadhwal and Srinagar (Garhwal). Besides, Gujjars and Ranghars who had a long-standing enmity with the Sikhs, were also invited to join. A letter was despatched to the Guru inviting him either to vacate Anandpur or pay a rent, failing which he was threatened destruction at the hands of a formidable combination of the Hill chiefs. The Guru, however, refused any of the two alternatives, saying that the land where the town of Anandpur developed had been purchased by his father, and hence there was no question of paying any rent. He accepted the alternative of another trial in the battle-field.

Receiving this reply the Hill chiefs were enraged and they marched their combined forces on Anandpur. As they approached the city, the eldest son of the Guru, Prince Ajit Singh, fell upon Gujjars and Ranghars with his four thousand Sikhs; while Daya Singh, Alim Singh and Udhe Singh taking with them the Sikhs of Majha directed their attacks against the hill armies. "Such was the dash and vigour displayed by them that the hill armies, though far superior in numbers and equipment, were reduced to a sore plight, and, towards the close of the day were forced to retreat." Thus ended the first day's fight yielding complete victory to the Sikhs. The story was repeated on the next day, and the Hill chiefs now decided the blockade of the town to be the safest alternative.

The town was now closely invested, and the siege continued for full twenty days, thus says Gur Bilas; but

1. Prof. Kartar Singh, op. cit., p. 179.
without any visible success. At last, at the suggestion of Kesri Chand, a drunken elephant with a spear projecting from his forehead and his body covered with steel, followed by Hill chiefs and their armies, was directed to gate-crash through the fort. The Guru appointed Bachitar Singh, one of his personal bodyguards, to meet the elephant. This Sikh proceeded with such a vehemence on a horse that when he struck his spear on the elephant's forehead, it pierced deep. With a loud cry the elephant turned back and trod underfoot many of its own men, thus causing a complete confusion among them. The Sikhs fell upon this confused mass of their opponents and did several noted chiefs to death. But finding themselves greatly outnumbered they later on retired into the fort.

As the night fell, the Hill chiefs met together and reviewed the situation. Ultimately, resolving to play a trick on the Guru they wrote a letter to him acknowledging his unconquerable might, but requesting him to leave Anandpur at least for one day to save them from the shame and humiliation which would be involved in their retreat in that condition. They also swore by the cow that they would not put the Guru to any harm. Determined to demonstrate the faithlessness of the Hill chiefs, as some records say, the Guru, entrusting the protection of the fort to the hands of a brave body of Sikhs, selected a band of warriors and retired to Nirmoh, at a distance of about two miles from Anandpur. Mixing up the first battle of Anandpur and the Guru's clash with Alim Chand and Balia Chand, Dr. Banerjee seems to have confused himself at the way the second battle of Anandpur ended. But the account is clear, and calls for the least of argumentation.

At Nirmoh the Guru stationed himself on an eminence. In the meanwhile the Hill chiefs having thrown their vows to the wind, fell upon the small number of the Sikhs who accompanied the Guru. But here again they were beaten back. The Hill chiefs, however, continued their efforts again-

2. Dr. Banerjee, ii, p. 128.
After the Khalsa was Created

al the Guru. They made one more appeal to Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sarhind, for help. After hearing of the defeat of the Imperial army in the first battle of Anandpur, Aurangzeb himself is said to have sent an order to Wazir Khan by this time to proceed against the Guru.

Wazir Khan thus proceeded with a large number of troops to the assistance of the Hill chiefs. The Guru had already been apprised of this development. Several Sikhs who had come to Nirmoh to have the Guru’s darshan, were detained by him to fight the enemy. The enemy marched, and the Mughals attacked the Guru from one side, while the Hill chiefs attacked him from the other. The fight continued fiercely for the whole day, and as the night fell the enemy forces were compelled to retire. The next morning, the attack was re-started and the Guru finding himself badly outnumbered, decided to retire from the place. An invitation had already been received from the raja of Basali, and the Guru proceeded thither. The enemy, however, pursued him and the Guru decided to give them another battle in which the combined forces of the Mughals and the Hill chiefs were decisively rolled back. In this battle, however, the Guru lost Sahib Chand, a hero of the battle of Bhangani, on whose body a fierce action was fought which resulted into the victory of the Sikhs.

The Guru crossed the Sutlej safely with all his baggage, and proceeded towards Basali with his Sikhs. The Hill chiefs overjoyed at their so called success in forcing the Guru to leave the place, made suitable presents to Wazir Khan and went home. But soon the Raja of Kehlur is said to have led another attack against the Guru at Basali, which, however, the Guru did not have much difficulty in beating back. After this battle which is known as the battle of Basali, the Guru stayed for some time at Basali and then at Bhabaur, and then returned to Anandpur from where he had already received repeated calls to come back.

The Guru was offered no resistance on his return. The Raja of Kehlur was completely demoralised by this time, and he with some other Hill chiefs approached the Guru once
again for peace and friendship. The Guru who was only too anxious to live and let live in peace, accepted the offer; and thus for some time the hostilities were called off. But the Guru having no faith in the Hill rajas, he continued his preparations and greater number of Sikhs began to visit him and to offer themselves to be enrolled in his army.

The peace between the Guru and the Hill chiefs could not continue for long. Once, it is said, as the Guru lay encamped near Chamkaur, two Imperial officers, going from Lahore to Delhi, were requested by the Raja of Kehlur to attack the Guru, promising to pay them large sums of money. Though a small contingent, the Sikhs gave a resolute fight to the Imperial army, but just when the fight was at its thickest, an amazing thing occurred. Saiyad Beg, one of the Imperial officers, had already heard of the name and fame of the Guru, and when he saw him in the battlefield he was so much impressed by his saintly looks that he, pursuing as many of his soldiers as he could, joined the Guru. When Alif Khan, the other officer, saw it, he left the battlefield and beat a hasty retreat. Considering Guri Bilas as the most reliable authority on this subject, which does not mention this incident, Dr. Banerjee has omitted this account from the main body of his book as being of dubious nature. Guri Sobha also does not mention this, but an account of it is available in Sau Sakhii and Suraj Prakash. The incident may perhaps have been too small to attract the attention of all, but all the same it does seem to have occurred, as we hear Saiyad Beg to have stayed on with the Guru and later on his mention is made as having fought for the Guru in some battles which followed.

After the above-mentioned incident, Sau Sakhii and Suraj Prakash write that being convinced of the treacherous designs of the Kehlur chief, the Sikhs began to raid his territories. Numerous complaints came against the Sikh exploits, and the Kehlur chief now decided once again to give a call

2. See ibid., p. 134 (Foot Note).
to the Hill rajas to come to his aid against the Guru. Some of them responded to his call and joined him in an attack on the Sikhs. This time again, however, the old story was repeated and the Hill chiefs had to take to their heels.

As the news of the repeated failures of the Hill chiefs and of the Mughal Officers reached Aurangzeb in the Deccan, he sent a large army under Saida Khan to bring the Guru to submission. It was the harvest time when Saida Khan marched on Anandpur, and the Guru had dispersed all the Sikhs except about five hundred. This small number of the Sikhs gave a determined fight to the Mughal army, but as they could not stand a large army for a long time, the Guru ordered the evacuation of Anandpur. As the Sikhs left the town, the Mughals entered it and plundered it badly, after which they proceeded towards Sirhind in an hilarious mood. The Sikhs, however, taking the Guru's permission, attacked them from the rear; putting a large number of them to sword in the confusion that followed. The Sikhs were thus successful in recovering the booty which the enemy had captured from Anandpur.

Some writers omit the three actions given above altogether, and proceed directly to say that after about two years' peace during which the Guru's Sikhs had a full control on some of the adjoining villages which had been ceded to the Guru by the Kehlur chief as a result of an agreement, and which solved their problem of supply almost completely, some misunderstanding developed again resulting into a clash. But in our opinion, though the writers may differ as to their details, it should be erroneous to assert that all these are pious fabrications of the later age. Without detaining ourselves here for long, however, we shall proceed to the next event regarding which we are more or less on firm footing and which, if the above three incidents are correct, may be called the fifth battle of Anandpur.

The Emperor was now alarmed yet further. According to Suraj Prakash, Bhim Chand of Kehlur himself went to the Emperor to inform him of the situation. And the

1. This is different from Salay Beg referred to above.
Emperor sent express orders to Wazir Khan of Sarhind and Zabardast Khan of Labore to proceed with a large army against the Guru. The chiefs of Kehlur, Kangra, Jaswal, Mandi, Kulu, Nalagarh, Kaithal, Nurpur, Chamba, Jammu, Busaher, Dhadwal, Darauli, Bajarwal and Srinagar (Garhwal) joined their forces, and this formidable army marched against the Guru to have another trial with him.

The Guru also was ready and a large number of the Sikhs had joined him from the Majha and the Malwa. As the flood of the enemy soldiers appeared before Anandpur, cannons were drawn in order and the Guru ordered them to be discharged. Musketeers took fatal aims at the opposing artillery men. Fierce battle raged throughout the day and by the time night fell, nine hundred of the enemy lay dead; having got killed a far less number of the Sikhs.

The next day the enemy decided to batter the walls of the fort, aimed their guns from a distance. But failing to make any strong impression, the allied cavalry proceeded to fight at a close quarter. It was rolled back by a fearful discharge of the Sikh guns and arrows. The story was repeated on the third day, and thereafter the allies decided upon the siege of the town as the only possible alternative to annihilate the Guru.

The town of Anandpur was now surrounded from all sides, and all the ingress and egress was stopped. The Sikhs took a defensive position and the days now began slowly to crawl by. On one occasion, seeing the enemy come close to the town, away from their defences, Nanar Singh and Sher Singh suddenly fell upon them in the night, thus causing them a grievous loss. As their supplies failed, the Sikhs occasionally led desultory sallies to seize the supplies from the enemy; on one single occasion seizing of it as much as to last for several days. But the enemy understanding their tactics tightened their hold, and the life inside the fort became utterly difficult, as Senapat writes.1

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stores being exhausted, the bark of trees inside the fort began to be ground down and bread prepared of it. The trees were cleared of their leaves, and the Sikhs ate anything they could lay their hands upon. Just at this time, the Guru received an envoy from the Hill chiefs promising a safe conduct for him and his Sikhs if they vacated Anandpur peacefully. The Guru’s mother and some Sikhs approached the Guru to accept the offer, but to demonstrate the futility of putting reliance upon the enemy’s promises, the Guru sent but some bullocks loaded with rags and stones, covered with golden clothes, giving out that it was the Guru’s treasure and the Sikhs and he himself were to follow it. As however, the bullocks passed through the enemy lines, they were looted out. only to their disappointment. The Sikhs thus continued to hold inside for seven months, and now came an autograph letter from Aurangzeb that “I have sworn on Quran not to harm thee.”

and that the Guru should vacate Anandpur and come either to the Emperor or go anywhere he liked. Some writers doubt the statement that the Emperor should have written any such letter to the Guru at all. But the Guru’s own words in the letter he later on addressed to the Emperor, make the thing explicitly clear. He says: “I have no faith in thine oath to which thou tookest the one God as witness. I have not a particle of confidence in thee.... He who putteth faith in thine oath on the Quran is thereby a ruined man.”

It is thus clear that Aurangzeb must have written a letter to the Guru to the above stated effect.

When the Emperor’s letter reached the Guru, he still refused to place any reliance upon the enemy’s promises; but some Sikhs who were now utterly tired of the life of hardships, approached the Guru’s mother again, who in turn approached the Guru to leave the fort; but all this to no avail. Consequently the things are said to have come to such a pass that a large number of the Sikhs wrote out a deed of renunciation saying, ‘Neither you are our Guru, nor are we your Sikhs.’ They handed it to the Guru and left the fort. Some of these

1. See Zafarnama, the Guru’s letter to Aurangzeb in Persian. It has also been translated; Kartar Singh, op. cit., p. 209.
Sikhs repented afterwards and came unexpectedly to the Guru's assistance at the battle of Khidrana. Here at Anandpur, however, ultimately the Guru himself seems to have been prevailed upon, though it is not clear how, and he left the fort together with his four sons, mother, wives, and Sikhs—the definite number of whom cannot be ascertained.

The oath taken by the Hindus on their cow and by the Muslims on their Quran wis, however, wantonly violated, as the Guru refers to in his Zafarnama—the letter later on written to the Emperor, as quoted above. It is said, as the Guru reached the flooded Sarsa the enemy fell upon him. A complete confusion was caused, the Guru's mother with his two youngest sons going towards one side, his wives—Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Kaur going towards an other side and ultimately reaching Delhi, and the Guru himself with his two eldest sons and with only forty Sikhs going to yet another side and finally reaching Chamkaur.

The Guru's mother, Mata Gujri, with his two youngest sons, Jujhar Singh aged 9 and Fateh Singh aged 7, being separated from the Guru, took refuge at Kheri near Sarhind, with a Brahman, an old discharged cook of the Guru. With the hope of getting some reward, the Brahman, however, later on deceived them, and all the three were handed to Wazir Khan, the governor of Sarhind who on of anger at the way the small Princes fearlessly behaved, and at the instigation of one Suchanand Khatri who had some enmity with the Guru, got them mercilessly bricked alive, despite the advice of the Nawab of Maler Kotla to the contrary. The Guru's mother died of grief at this sad end of her grandchildren.

The Guru with his forty Sikhs and two eldest sons, pursued by the enemy, now reached Chamkaur where occupying a mudbuilt house on an eminence, he prepared to give a battle.1 Here then occurred an event which showed

1. The house belonged to a Jat, which according to Gur Sobha (p. xii, 7) was willingly offered, but which according to Sarai Prakash (pp. 57, 39-40) and Gur Bilas (p. xxi) was occupied forcibly, putting the owner under arrest.
what heroic endurance and undaunted courage the Guru and his Sikhs possessed; and before which even the heroism of the Spartan of the Pass of Thermopylae would faint into insignificance. The Guru here had only forty Sikhs, as it is clear from the Zafarani where in he writes: "what could forty men do when a hundred thousand came unawares."\(^1\)

Against the forty of the Guru, the enemy, as the Guru says, were a hundred thousand. Even if we do not accept the literal meaning of these words as one lakh being the number of the enemy, there is no doubt that the number of the enemy soldiers was overwhelmingly large.\(^2\) Latif writes: "The Guru himself behaved with great bravery, killing with his own hand Nahar Khan, the commander of the imperial troops, and wounding the other, Khwaja Mohamed. It was, however, a combat of a handful of men against overwhelming numbers. The devoted little band fought to the last, but the Guru, taking advantage of a dark night, and accompanied by five of his disciples, threaded his way to the outskirts of the camp in disguise."\(^3\)

Here, in this battle, the two eldest of the Guru's sons were killed, and it is said that the Guru himself was determined not to leave when five Sikhs, or the Panj Pyaras, ordered him to effect his escape. The Guru had to bow before the order, as he himself had promised at the time of the creation of the Khalsa that the authority of the Five-Beloved would be higher than even that of the Guru. A Sikh, named Sant Singh, put himself into the Guru's disguise, and he along with another Sikh Sargat Singh, remained behind to be captured by the enemy the next day, and be beheaded mistakenly for the Guru himself.

According to the Sikh accounts the Guru escaped only with three Sikhs, and they too were separated from him as he threaded his way through the enemy lines. The Guru

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1. M., v, p. 202,
2. Author of Akham-i-Alamgiri Rampuri, pp. 255 B-255 A, a contemporary writer says, the cavalry, besides the artillery, numbered only 700; but this at the sight of other accounts, Sikh as well as non-Sikh, seems too much of an underestimation. See Latif. History of the Punjab, p. 256.
reached the Machhiwara forest where out of fatigue he fell asleep, and in the meanwhile he was discovered by the three Sikhs. Soon after, the Guru met two Muslims, Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan who had some time sold some horses to him and who held him in a very high respect. They disguised the Guru as a Pir, and together with the two Sikhs, Man Singh and Dharm Singh in disguise, they lifted him in a litter, while the third Sikh, Daya Singh waved a Chauri from behind. As they moved, they were actually intercepted by a contingent of the Muslim army, but they escaped saying it was a high Pir of Uchch, whom they were carrying.

The Guru thus reached Perar, and stayed for sometime at Dina near Kangar. It was here that the Guru wrote out his Zafarnama, the letter to the Emperor in which he called Aurangzeb a "crafty and deceitful fox" and said: "were the Prophet himself present here, I would make it my special object to inform him of the treachery. Do what is incumbent on thee, and adhere to thy "written promise." The letter was written perhaps to ask the Emperor to meet out proper punishment to those who misbehaved with him and his Sikhs. And it was sent to him through Bhai Daya Singh.

In the meanwhile the Sikhs began to flock to the Guru here once again, and soon the Guru had a good number of soldiers under his command. Wazir Khan hearing of it, sent a large army against him. The Guru left Dina in search of a strategic spot. The Chaudri of Kot Kapura having refused him the use of his fort, the Guru proceeded to Khidrana and waited for the approaching enemy. In the meanwhile the 'forty' of the Sikhs who had renounced the Guru at Anandpur, feeling repentant, were proceeding to ask for the Guru's forgiveness when near Khidrana on seeing the Muslim army they decided to wash the blot and prepared to give them a battle. It was a well contested combat, the Guru also dis-

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1. Uchch is a town in the south-western Punjab (now in Pakistan) and priests of this town were held by the Muslims in high respect and awe.
charging his arrows from a distance. It was a desert country where the battle was fought, and the only pool of water was where the Guru himself encamped. Hard pressed for want of water, after many of their number had been killed, the enemy retired yielding victory to the Guru. After that the Guru came out to the battle field where leader of the forty, Mahar Singh, still had some life in him. The Guru moved with utter love, wiped his face with his handkerchief and asked him his last desire. On being requested, the Guru sent for the deed of renunciation these Sikhs had signed, and tore it away. These forty Sikhs are known in the Sikh history as the Forty Muktas, or the 'Forty Saved Ones'; and the place where the battle was fought is now known as Muktsar.

Relations with the Emperors.

The relations of Guru Gobind Singh with the Mughals have been a subject of great controversy. Irvine writes that "the Muhammadan authors assert that Guru Govind now sent in petitions to Almgir, offering to make his submission, coupled with a promise to accept Islam." And Latif says, the Emperor "issued a mandate summoning the Guru to his presence. When the messenger reached Gobind and delivered the royal firman to him, he kissed it and placed it on his head in token of respect... he regarded himself as a dependent vassal of the "King of Kings", and that to obey his majesty's command would be an honour to him, but that, before accompanying the messenger, he would like to submit his grievances to the Emperor in writing." And the Guru now composed his Zafarnama.²

The two views quoted above clearly show that the Mohammedan writers' accounts are not free from bias. It would be simply preposterous to assume that the Guru prepared himself to accept the Emperor's faith whom he condemned in the Zafarnama saying: "I do not deem thou knowest God, since thou hast done acts of oppression. Where-

1. Irvine, Later Mughals, p. 141.
fore the great God knoweth thee not, and will not receive thee with all thy wealth."¹ Nor should he have kissed any of the King’s firman and placed it on his head, when he addressed him as "crafty and deceitful as a fox."²

Still, however, there is no doubt in the fact that the Guru did try to contact the Emperor through his letter, his purpose, as is obvious, being to get those punished who were responsible for such large scale destruction in the Punjab. Moreover, the fact that after the battle of Khidrana no effort was made to harass him in any manner, and that the Guru could rest after this for some time at Damdama, making disciples and carrying on his intellectual activities, shows that by this time some sort of understanding must have been reached between him and the authorities. The views of Gur Sobha may here, therefore, be safely accepted that when the Guru’s letter reached the Emperor, he repented upon his actions and issued the orders that the Guru might not be harassed in any manner, and should be permitted to go wherever he liked.³

Further, the Guru writes in the Zafarnama: "I will not enter thy presence, nor travel on the same road with thee. But if God so will it, I will proceed towards thee."⁴ And this shows that although the Guru wanted no interview with the Emperor, he did want to be at a closer quarter with him, wherefrom perhaps to carry on his negotiations through the envoy’s representation. And after some time the Guru actually set out towards Deccan; the Emperor, however, having died before he reached there.

After this the Guru is said to have sent Bhai Dharam Singh with some Sikhs to help Bahadur Shah in his war of succession in the battle of Jajau, as the latter was already on good terms with him. Soon Bahadur Shah was successful, and invited the Guru to meet him at Agra, where the Guru

1. Zafarnama, Translation by Macauliffe, v. p. 205
2. Ibid. p. 233
was received with due honour." At Agra the Guru stayed in
a garden about four miles from the Imperial residence, and
the two met occasionally. Later on the Guru also accompa-
nied the Emperor in his campaign of Haidrabad. During all
this time the Guru's purpose seems to have been to get a
proper punishment for his enemies in the Punjab, and he
was also hopeful of getting it as it is clear from his letter
to the inhabitants of Dhaul, wherein he writes that "Baha-
dur Shah had granted him a Khillat, of Rs. 60,000, and a
Dhuk-dhuki (golden chain with a pendant) and that talks
were proceeding satisfactorily on other matters under dis-
cussion and he might soon return to the Punjab."

But this hope of getting justice from Bahadur Shah,
too, as he had desired, seems to have been belied, and finally
instead of coming back to the Punjab, he proceeded towards
Deccan where he met Banda Bairagi and handed over the
mission of punishing the wrong doers in the Punjab to him,
as we shall study in a following chapter.

Some writers, such as Latif, have tried to show that the
Guru did not accompany the Emperor in his campaigns as a
mere companion the Emperor rather "appointed him to the
command of five thousand men in the army, thus utilizing
the services of an insurrectionary leader to the benefit of
the State." It seems, however, difficult to believe that with
the sort of character the Guru possessed, he should have
accepted any service under the Mughal authorities. Besides,
we have clear evidence of a contemporary writer Khafi
Khan who despite his unkindly feelings towards the Guru
makes the fact clear that the Guru was a mere companion.
He says: "During the days when Bahadur Shah directed
his attention towards Haidrabad or when he started towards
that place, one of the leaders of that infamous community,
Gobind by name came unto the presence of the Emperor,
accompanied by two or three hundred sawars carrying spears

1. See Khafi Khan, Muntkhab-al-Luhab, ii, p. 651(F. & D., vii, p. 413.).
2. Surinder Singh, op. cit., p. 68 (Foot Note).
and some infantry, and proceeded in the company of the Emperor.\footnote{Kha\footnotesymbol{i} Khan, \textit{Muntahab-ul-Lubab}—E.D, vii, p. 413.}

The Death

Finally the Guru reached Nander, a place on the Godawari river, and here he began to follow regular religious practices and the preaching work. After some time of his stay here, one day the Guru was stabbed by a Pathan. His wound was washed and sewn up, but as one day he was exercising on a bow, the threads broke up again. The wound was again sewn up, but the Guru knew that his end was approaching. When at last he felt that his last moment had arrived, he "opened the Granth Sahib and placing five paisa and a coconut before it, solemnly bowed to it as his successor. Then uttering 'Wahguru ji ka Khalsa! Wahguru ji ki Fateh!' he circumambulated the sacred volume and said, 'O beloved Khalsa, let him who desireth to behold me, behold the Granth. Obey the Granth Sahib. It is the visible body of the Guru. And let him who desireth to meet me diligently search its hymns.'\footnote{M., v, p. 244.} About one and a half hours after midnight, he got up, and carried on his usual recitation of the hymns, and then calling aloud his Sikhs, bade them farewell. The Guru departed from this world on Thursday, the 18th of October, 1708.

Different views have been expressed by different writers as to who this Pathan was who stabbed the Guru. Without entering into any debate, we might accept the view of Senapat\footnote{Senapat, \textit{op. cit.}, xiv.} who was one of the fifty-two poets of the Guru's Darbar, and whose account is therefore contemporary and based on better information. His view is supported by Chattr Jugi, another valuable document written by Bhagwan Singh. According to this view, as the Guru moved about with Bahadur Shah, Wazir Khan of Sirhind got apprehensive lest the Emperor should be moved to award him punishment due to his activities. He therefore deputed a
young Pathan to murder the Guru, and the Pathan getting information regarding the Guru’s whereabouts from his wife at Delhi, proceeded to Nander, and taking his opportunity stabbed him, but was instantaneously killed by the Guru by his sword after he had done his job. The Guru later on died of this wound.¹

Causes of the Guru’s Success

During the space of about twenty years ending 1705, the Guru is said to have fought as many as fourteen actions. And in almost all these actions the Guru was successful, except when he was hopelessly outnumbered by the enemy troops. We might give here a short account of the factors which led to such a grand success of the Guru, against such heavy odds.

The first and the most important reason of the Guru’s success was of course the personal qualities of head and heart that the Guru possessed. He was a military genius of the highest order. The patience and resolve with which he set out not only to revive amongst his Sikhs a military spirit of Guru Hargobind’s time, but even to carry it to the hitherto unapproached climax where he declared his one Sikh to be equivalent to one and a quarter lakhs of his enemies, show us clearly the high inborn qualities that the Guru possessed. As a great General, the Guru had a very keen understanding of the art of military strategy. His selection of a spot at Machhiwara, and another at Muktsar, to give battles to the overwhelming number of his enemy, are a very potent proof of this. The selection of Anandpur as the centre of his activities is in itself an action meriting high military appreciation. Situated at the foot of the hills, Anandpur had a natural fortification on the three of its sides, while to protect himself on the fourth, the Guru built four strong forts i.e. the forts of Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Keshgarh and Fategharh. This is how he met the Imperial as well as the Hill chiefs’ challenge.

The Guru, besides, was an adept in the use of arms. As Payne writes, he was "an expert horseman, swordsman, archer, and swimmer, and was a keen follower of the chase." The patience and fortitude with which he put up only forty men at Machhiwara to fight a flood of enemy troops, prove his qualities of leadership. And there is no doubt that such qualities of leadership were a strong factor which brought the Sikhs' success.

Another factor was the religious enthusiasm of the Sikhs. They were no mercenaries fighting for some material gains. They fought on the basis of their conviction, and had their heart and soul in the fight. They had a confidence that they were fighting for a right cause, and their success in the battle-field would get them not only an honour in this world, but also peace and a privileged position in the next. Suraj Prakash writes thus: "The Sikhs were delighted at the prospect of the battle and congratulated themselves on their good fortune in being allowed to fight for their Guru and their faith. Several of them put on saffron coloured clothes in token of rejoicing and said: 'we have only four days to live in the world. Why should we not obtain the exalted dignity of martyrdom which will ensure salvation?' The Sikhs had their heart in the cause for which they had taken up the sword and every one thought it his duty to do his little bit towards that end. They were not mere mercenaries like their opponents." Payne writes: "There was no higher duty for a Sikh than to die fighting in defence of his faith; ....... Govind promised mukti or exemption from transmigration, to any of his followers who should fall." Then, as Gough writes, the Sikhs "believed him to be special favourite of heaven." Gobind Singh was their Guru, and ideal of absolute surrender to the Guru had been one of the fundamental principles of the Sikh religion. Bhai Gurdas wrote about it, that to be a Sikh was to be dead.

3. Payne, op. cit., p. 35.
Sikh was a purchased slave to be yoked by the Guru to any work as he desired. And therefore once ordered by the Guru to do a particular job, the Sikh had either to do it or die. There were the traditions such as that of Jahandas who had a wound in his foot, and once asked by the Guru not to envelop it and keep it raised from the ground, he kept his foot raised and the wound remained uncovered for three months when the Guru met him again and told him that his instruction was intended only as a precaution to keep the wound clean. Under Guru Gobind Singh, there is only one instance at Anandpur where the Sikhs deserted him, but here too they later on returned and died fighting for him to a man.

The Jat element among the Sikhs had a particular part to play. As Payne writes: "The Jats are neither an intellectual nor a cultural race .... But what the Jat lacks in intelligence he makes up for by his courage, his honesty, his thrift, and his unfailing industry." The Jats formed the backbone of the Guru's army, and their devotion and faithfulness coupled with their bravery and fortitude, were another strong factor which brought the Sikhs victories.

On the other hand, the Mughal army consisted -only of mercenaries, having no faith in the cause they were fighting for, especially when they were fighting against the Guru. Nor were they efficiently led and conducted by their leaders. In the Anandpur battles command of these forces was often given in more than one hand, and the commanders differed with one another as regard to strategy and methods of war. Twice atleast the Mughal forces were deserted by their own officers, once by Said Khan and at another time by Saiyal Beg both of whom went over to the Guru. Moreover the imperial forces had exhausted much of their energy and strength in their campaigns against Shivaji and the Marathas in the Deccan. The Mughal empire itself was tottering, there being a lot of mis-

management and slackness in the North due to Aurangzeb's continuous absence from that part of the country. All these circumstances contributed to their failure.

Nor were the Hill chiefs strong enough or better placed in this respect. Besides their internal weakness, they were immature politicians who could not even know where their good lay, and crossed several times in favour and against the Guru. Their troops consisted of mercenary soldiers who fought neither out of conviction nor with confidence. They had no efficient leaders to lead them, and the Hill chiefs suffered from mutual jealousies and lack of perfect co-operation. We have the instances such as those of the chiefs of Basali and Mandi who joined the coalition against the Guru due to their fear of being excluded from the brotherhood but secretly sympathised with him. Under such circumstances if all the Hill chiefs together failed in their fight against the Guru, there was nothing to be wondered at.
CHAPTER XIX

GURU GOBIND SINGH

A—Character Estimate

Born with a great mission, the Guru writes about himself:

"I shall now tell my own history,
How God brought me into the world as I was performing penance.
On the mountain of Hem Kunt,

I performed such penance
That I became blended with God.

When God gave me the order
I assumed birth in this Kal age.
I did not desire to come.
As my attention was fixed on God's feet.
God remonstrated earnestly with me,
And sent me into this world with the following orders:—
When I created this world
I first made the demons, who became enemies and oppressors.
They became intoxicated with the strength of their arms,
And ceased to worship Me, the Supreme Being.
I became angry and at once destroyed them.
In their place I established the gods:
They also busied themselves with receiving sacrifices and worship,
And called themselves supreme beings.

I have cherished thee as My son
And created thee to extend My religion.
Go and spread My religion there,
And restrain the world from senseless acts.

Understand this, ye holy men, in your souls,
I assumed birth for the purpose
Of spreading the faith, saving the saints,
And extirpating all tyrants."

Commenting on this, Dr. Narang writes: "He seems to have been deeply impressed by the idea which runs throughout the Puranic literature, the idea of the saviour appearing from time to time to uphold righteousness and destroy unrighteousness, to uproot evil and establish good, to destroy the oppressor and rescue the weak and innocent." And on this Dr. Banerjee remarks: "The sad plight in which he found his followers as well as the Hindus in general, religious strife brought about by the persecuting policy of Aurangzeb, the prevailing corruption, ignorance and superstition, and his own personal resentment at his father's execution must have generated in his mind an earnest conviction that this was undoubtedly the time for the rise of a saviour and his strong impulses and the force of circumstances in which he was placed soon led him to work himself up into a belief that he himself was the man the times need."

The point brought out is that while Dr. Narang and Dr. Banerjee may or may not accept the Puranic idea that God sends a saviour to uphold righteousness, the Guru's claim to be one such saviour seems to them to be definitely contrary to their order of reasoning. It is indeed a height of tragedy that the best brains of this age had their intellectual flights limited within the material plane of which every nook and corner they could explore; but the moment they saw a vision of the spiritual plane they either closed their eyes at it and became perfectly blind, or if they did see something they

tampered its vision with the reasonings of the material world and presented such a distorted picture of the reality, that even those who could perceive the truth themselves would be blinded to it. All the sacred books of the ancients were not written in vain; there is truth in them whether one can understand it or not; and those who cannot see it, the less they speak on the matter the better.

There is nothing wrong in the claim that the Guru did remember his past lives, that in his previous life he was performing penance on Hem Kunt where he did receive the order from the Omnipresent, yet Formless and Unseen Who gave him the instructions, and he came out in this world with a mission to work on those instructions. And since one of the essentials of his mission was ‘saving the saints, and extirpating all tyrants’, he had purposely to have a resort to the sword and do what he did.

Blind to the actual teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, and basing their account on heresy some writers have represented some events of his life in such a manner as shows utter irresponsibility and their failure to discern facts from fables. Some European writers are conspicuous in this, and one such event misinterpreted and mis-stated is the alleged worship of Durga by the Guru. Thus it is said that to secure energy and supervision for his mission, the Guru invited the help of a Brahman Dattanand. Under his supervision a homa (ceremony of burnt offering) was performed to manifest the goddess Durga and get her blessings. M’Gregor writes thus: "A light was burned night and day in the house, and the Brahmin began to read munter (prayers). When another year had passed, Debee, the goddess with eight feet and eight hands, was present! Then the Brahmin said, ‘I have now fulfilled my engagement and you must supply my place so long as Debee is here. Do not be alarmed or afraid at what you may see.’ Gobind having armed himself took the Brahmin’s place, and waited for the appearance of Debee. He continued to read the munter and make vows. At length Debee appeared. The goddess had a frightful aspect, and Gobind

1. See Bachitra Natak, VI.
on seeing her became so alarmed and frightened, that he fainted, but soon recovering, he put himself in an attitude for defence, though he was unable to utter a word. Debee seized his sword by the handle, and left her mark on it; after this she disappeared. Govind at length recovered his senses and came forth." An irregularity, however, having been committed, the Brahman asked the Guru to cast the head of one of his sons there. His mother, Gujree, however, refused to permit this sacrifice. "Govind hearing that his mother disobeyed his orders, swore that if she did not comply he would murder the four children before her eyes.........Finding that Gujree was obstinate......he addressed his followers with a view of inducing some one to offer himself as a sacrifice. His appeal was for a long time fruitless, and Gobind was so exasperated that he cursed them all." At length twenty-five Sikhs offered their heads. "Gobind cut off one, and threw it into the fire......." The writer has been quoted at length without apology, to show the extent of absurdity to which he has gone.

There are several other versions of the incident for which we have no space here, and without entering into detailed arguments we would simply forward that even a cursory glance over his teachings shows that the Guru never believed in any manner in the advisability of worshipping gods and goddesses, except the Almighty, Invisible and Timeless. His mission was rather to suppress the worship of such goddesses, as it is clear from his own account of his mission quoted above. The Guru writes in Krishan Avtar:

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I \text{ do not propitiate Ganesh; } \\
\text{Nor do I meditate on Krishna or Vishnu.} \\
\text{Of Whom I have heard but Whom I have seen not}; \\
\text{It is His feet that I constantly meditate on.}
\]

2. Macauliffe has wrongly translated this line to connect it with the first two to mean that the Guru has heard of Ganesh, Krishna and Vishnu, but knows them not. See M., vol. v. pp. 310-311.
Since majority of the writers are unanimous that the Guru did perform a *homa*, it is possible that he should have done it to demonstrate the futility of such beliefs. There is absolutely no reason to make us believe that the goddess appeared or that the Guru gave the sacrifice of any Sikh's head to her.

The Guru was thus a worshipper only of the Timeless and Invisible, and he was born with a mission to preach His religion and extirpate tyrants, and to this objective he adhered up to the last of his breath.

The Guru was unique as a General. Such men are rarely born who can start from scratch, and yet within such a short time can prepare such a formidable army which should be able successfully to challenge the mightiest of the powers of the time. As according to Cunningham, the wisdom which he used in the construction of forts at Anandpur, clearly proves his qualities of a General. The Guru seems to be perfect in handling almost all the weapons in use at the time, as it is obvious from his *Shastar Nam Mala* wherein he explains their workings. He was an expert archer and his arrows pierced through a score of people. He was an expert swordsman and an expert military planner. In every battle, although thrust upon him, he fought with a definite plan, and that was the reason why he could put up a small number of forty Sikhs against a surging mass of human heads. "No odds, however heavy, damped his valour and resolve; no personal danger made him shirk his duty. Wounds only stirred him to greater exertion."

Sirkar writes regarding the Guru: 'The Mughal Government under Aurangzeb did succeed in breaking up the Guru's power. It robbed the Sikhs of a common leader and a rallying centre. Thereafter the Sikhs continued to disturb public peace, but only in isolated bands. They were no longer an army fighting under one chief, with a definite political aim but merely moving bodies of brigands, extremely brave, enthusiastic, and hardy, but essentially

1. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 75.
plunderers uninspired by any ambition to build up an organised Government in the land. If Aurangzeb had been followed by worthy successor, these Sikh bands would have been hunted down as surely as the Mirzas and Champat Rai Bundela had been in the past, and Dhundhia Wang and Tantia Topi were to be under British rule.” Commenting on this writes Dr. Banerjee: “These statements betray such a complete misconception of Guru Gobind Singh’s life-work and the ideology that he had created that one need hardly take them seriously.” Replying to his points, Banerjee further writes, the Mughals did not rob the Sikhs of a common leader, the Guru himself rather left leadership to common wisdom, and leaders such as Kapur Singh and Jasa Singh Kalal were produced. It was they whom Sirkar calls roving bands of plunderers, those who “blunted the edge of Abdali’s aggressive power, which even the Marathas had failed to resist, and turned great triumph of Panipat into a barren victory.” No worthier successor of Aurangzeb should have done better to suppress the Sikhs, than what Lahore Viceroy’s did. And lastly, it is wrong to compare the Sikhs with Mirzas or Champat Rai Bundela. Quoting N. K. Sinha, Dr. Banerjee fittingly concludes that it must not be forgotten that in the case of the Sikhs, “a nation was up in arms against its enemies and it is the collective efforts of the masses rather than individual achievements that ultimately made the revolution a success.”

Despite being a great soldier, the Guru’s conduct remained saint-like. The Guru resorted to the sword only when forced to do so, and even after winning battles against the mightiest of his foes, the Guru did not claim an inch of land for his personal possession. He in fact used his sword only for the protection of the poor and the helpless and to extirpate the tyrants, and sometimes his arrows are said each to have carried a Tola of gold to help the victims after they were wounded. There is the instance of Bhai Ghanaya who

in the battle-field gave water not only to friends but even to the foes, and when the case was reported to the Guru he patted the Bhat saying he had recognised the right path.

The Guru lost Anandpur, his home and hearth; he got separated from his companions and wives, mother and sons. In the battle of Chamkaur he lost his two sons and the rest of the Sikhs who accompanied him. He moved about in the forests of Machhiwara, a king become pauper. He was all alone, and later on he got the news of execution of the rest of his sons and the death of his mother as well. Yet with such a complete resignation did he accept all this, as made the event to look only insignificant. After all this had happened and after he had suffered such great loss, he sat down with a composed mind to compile a new recension of the Adi Granth in which the mental exercise of the highest order was required; and then he undertook the religious preachings in the Malwa, as if very fresh in mind and happy of home. Such habits only super-humans and saints of the highest order could possess. The Guru was fighting against the Muslims, the Muslims had robbed him of his family love and of everything that he possessed, yet there was not even an iota of hatred against them as a religion, and he preached:

"Some men are Hindus and other Musalmans: among the latter are Rafazis, Imams, and Shafais—know that all men are of the same caste.

Karta (the Creator) and the Karim (the Beneficent) are the same, Razak (the Provider) and Rahim (the Merciful) are the same; let no man even by mistake suppose there is a difference."

The Guru perfectly understood it that he was fighting not against the Muslims, but against the Mughal Empire; and he never confused the two together. Amongst the best friends of the Guru were the Muslims such as Pir Budhu Shah who sacrificed all his four sons for the sake of the Guru.

1 M.V, p. 275
And "that the Empire rather than Islam was the object of his animosity is shown by his readiness to make use of the services of Pathan mercenaries."

And then the Guru was a great poet, a versatile scholar and a great educationist. The Guru mastered the entire range of the epic literature in Sanskrit and the soul-stirring legends of Mahabharta and Puranas. He kept in his court fifty-two poets of the highest eminence and learnt from them everything they could teach. And at the young age of only 32 he created works many of which were destroyed in the Sarsa, but those which were saved are wonders even today. For instance his Akal Ustot is a work of a very high standard, and he was the first prophet who wrote the story of his Soul. He is said to be the first man who has expressed his own battles in poetry. His Shastar Nam Mala gives such a beautiful account of the use of weapons as besides attracting its reader towards them, gives him a high literary taste as well. His War Sri Bhagoti ji ki is a poetical wonder in which the selection of words and similes is such as creates a deep spiritual impression upon its reader. His Chandi Charitra contains the stories of gods and goddesses; and his Kabir Swaya is another instance of its own type. ‘Chandi di War, his only work in Panjabi, is a Model War of the Panjabi literature.’ In his Durea’s story of killing a lion, the Guru uses three different languages which only a master could do. There are several others of his works such as Chobit Avtar and Gobind Geet etc., in the Dasam Granth, regarding which the critics differ whether they belong to the Guru at all. His Zafarnama is an immortal work in Persian, which is unique for its style, expression and simile.

Most of the Guru’s writings are in the form of epic, and are full of a heroic and chivalrous inspiration. He was a great linguist and an accomplished scholar of Hindi, Persian and Sanskrit, Bihari, Brij Bhasha, Majhi and Panjabi. In many of his works the language employed is scholarly Hindi with

its rich mixture of Sanskritic phraseology. In his works, the Guru does not care for traditional forms of metre, he rather gives supreme importance to the prevailing atmosphere and ideas. Sometimes his poetry is reduced to a single-word metre, sometimes to two-worded and sometimes to three-worded metres, the best example of which we get in his Jap Sahib. His single-word metre is thus:

Two-worded metre:

The three-worded metre:

The Guru wrote very little in Punjabi, yet he gave many wonders to the Punjabi literature. He is said to have been the first poet to depict battle-fields in stirring Punjabi language. The credit of introducing blank verse in the Punjabi with such wonderful success, also goes to him. His Chandide-Var is an instance of this type.

The Guru's "language, the metre, the lift and style create a rich, strange, weird, unearthly, martial music which inspires and inspires the reciters and listeners with mystic visions and knightly chivalry." He was a renaissance of Indian learning in himself. Once more he placed the Kathas of the Avtaras and Puranas before the people in their own language. Sanskrit had ceased to exist as a living language. He adapted ancient stories and Kathas in 'Brij Bhasha' and popularised them. He adapted the 'Chandi Chiton' in vigorous Punjabi also. It was a revival of ancient literature.

The Guru sent a number of his Sikhs to Benaras to acquire the knowledge of Hindu philosophy. They came

back and preached among the Sikhs and created a *Nirmala* School which has been a bridge between the Hindus and the Sikhs. For physical training the Guru established a school at Anandpur. The arts of war were regularly taught. Wrestling was made common, and the *Hola* festival was fixed as the day of tournaments, which continues to be so even to-day.

The Guru, besides, was a great transformer. Cunningham writes thus: "Nanak disengaged his little society of worshippers from Hindu idolatry and Mohammedan superstition, and placed them free on broad basis of religion and moral purity: Amardas preserved the infant community from declining into a sect of quietists or ascetics. Arjan gave his increasing followers a written rule of conduct and civil organisation; Hargobind added to it the use of arms and a military system: Gobind Singh bestowed upon them a distinct political existence and inspired them with the desire of being socially free and naturally independent." After administering the baptism of sword, Guru Gobind Singh transformed the Hindus into Sikhs. But a mass of wax figures bearing the same hall mark and dressed up in the same fashion could not form an effective machine. He therefore declared that the Sikhs were under the special protection of God, and wherever five of them were present God was present there too. They were given the appellation Singh, and they became lions. Each one of the Sikhs was equivalent to a hundred thousand men. He channelised the energy of the *Jats*, which should otherwise have been wasted. Banerjee says: "Speaking dialectically, we may say that the Sikh was the thesis, the *Jat* the antithesis, and the synthesis came in the Khalsa." The freebooters were transformed into a disciplined force, and the Guru laid the foundation of that Kingdom which a hundred years later Ranjit Singh established.

The Guru used two means as a lever to raise human souls into a suitable vehicle for the creation and sustenance

of this human fraternity. The first was the principle that politics which govern the relations between States, and between rulers and the ruled, should be completely in accord with the principles of ethics. The second was his sangha where people met morning and evening and facilitated the emergence of global fraternity. The lever worked, patriotism and nationalism became a part of religion, or as Dr. Narang says, nationalism itself became religion, and the result was the creation of a fraternity unique in character and in its programmes.

As an apostle of democracy, the "Guru not only reaffirmed the absolute equality of every Sikh in the eyes of God, but he altogether prohibited the observance of caste distinctions within the Khalsa." The Langar and the Sangat of Guru Nanak continued, but the new method of administering pahul was unique in its effect. It gave the Sikhs not only a partnership of beliefs and practices, it gave them also the partnership of life and blood.

As a householder, he was "an obedient son, a considerate father, a kind master, and a loving husband." Yet he had an attachment to none. "When his mother was gone and his sons were murdered or cut to pieces, he bore these bereavements with a firmness which has no parallel elsewhere."

And above all, the Guru was a great riddle. "Not many understood him aright. At times for sixteen hours together he was in trance ecstatically singing "Tui, Tui, Tui." When the bullets were flying about, he would sit down to chant Guru Nanak's morning service of Asa-di-War. For eleven months, he was alone in a solitary cave at Bhabour, on the rocky side of a cliff overlooking the Sutlej." And yet this great Saint was a great scholar and a warrior.

2. Payne, op. cit., p. 34.
CHAPTER XX

BANDA BAHADUR

The most important sources of information regarding Banda Bahadur are the works of the Muslim writers, some of whom were his contemporaries. But these accounts are sometimes so full of prejudice and bias that it becomes very difficult to extract from them the facts of history. Mohammed Kasim Lahori is one of these contemporaries who was present at the Haidri Flag and other incidents. His book Ibrat Nama is an important book for the subject if carefully studied. Khafi Khan's Muntakhab ul-Lubab is a very partial account, yet an interesting and a very good source of information for those who can discern facts.\(^1\) Muasur-ul Umra is an account of Muslim chiefs, but it also gives some facts regarding Banda. Hodika-ul Akalim is another such source of information. Siar-ul-Mutakhrin also deals with the subject, but the account given is generally wrong and based on hearsay. Twarikh-i-Ahmad Shah, written by Ahmad Shah of Batala is a better account in this respect.

Besides, there is Twarikh-i-Mohammad Shai, written by Khushal Chand. It gives a good account of the life and career of Banda. Some early British records also deal with the subject. Thus for instance, an account of the execution of Banda is given in the early British correspondence with Farukh Saiyar. Similarly one can look into the Calcutta Review, Vol. LX, with some real advantage.

The first Sikh account of the subject seems to have been given by Bhai Ratan Singh in his Prachin Panth Parkash.

\(^1\) Khafi Khan introduces Banda thus: "This worthless dog, having published this statement (That Gobind had come to life again as a bearded man in his body, for the purpose of taking revenge) stirred up disaffection ...... By jugglery, charms, and sorcery, he pretended to perform miracles before credulous people, and gave himself the name Sacha Padoshah "True King",' vii, p. 413.
The author was a grandson of Mehtab Singh Miran Kotiya, and his father was present in the Ghallugharas and some other actions fought by the Sikhs. The author has based his account on the stories he heard from his forefathers. Panth Prakash of Bhai Gian Singh is almost a copy of the above account. But the dates given in this account seem almost all to be wrong. Sometime back an account of the events in the life of Banda was prepared by some Arya Samajists. But this account again is nothing but a copy of the Panth Prakash.

Many writers of Indian History deal with the subject. But the accounts of almost all such writers seem to be based on Elphinstone’s History of India.

The account, as we get from all these sources, tells us that Banda was born at Rajauri, in district Poonch of the Western Kashmir on 27th October, 1660. His father, Ram Dev, was a Rajput ploughman, and his early name was Lachhman Das. In his early years Lachhman Das is said to have been given too much to chivalrous pursuits. He often went hunting, and on one such occasion an event is said to have occurred which changed the entire course of his life. The story goes that once he killed a doe, which was pregnant and as she died, from her womb fell down her young one which died on the spot just before his eyes. This incident was sufficient for Lachhman Das to shake him and to make him have a review of his life and activities. Convinced of the futility of the life he had been living in the past years, he decided to renounce it and became a Biatagi under the name Madho Das.

Banda now roamed from place to place meeting saints and yogis, and finally coming at Nasik on the bank of the Godavri he came into contact with a yogi named Augher Nath from whom he learnt occultism, and then moved to Nander in the Deccan where he established his monastery.

It is here that Madho Das came in contact with Guru Gobind Singh. It is said that Banda used to take delight in practising tricks with the help of his occult powers. He
used to make his visitors sit on a cot, and then with his occult powers he would upturn the cot throwing the visitors down. When Guru Gobind Singh visited his monastery, he tried to play the same trick on him but here he found no ordinary mortal to be thus victimised. After having tried all his occult powers but failed, he fell at the Guru’s feet and begged for his pardon. The Guru asked him who he was, and in utter humility Madho Das replied that he was the Guru’s Banda, or his slave. Pleased with his humility, the Guru patted him and giving him the title of Banda he commissioned him to go to the Punjab.1

At the time Banda was commissioned, the Guru gave him five arrows from out of his quiver, and handed over to him his drum and banner as emblems of his authority. The Guru instructed Banda to remain pure of heart and honest. He was not to touch another man’s wife, was to look upon himself as a servant of the Khalsa who would be his true Guru. He was to undertake no important task without an ardas, or a prayer to the Almighty. Whatever he did, he was to take in him the advice of the “Five Sikhs.” Among the “Five Sikhs” who were asked by the Guru to accompany Banda were Baj Singh, Binod Singh and Kahan Singh. Banda was not to found any sect, nor call himself a Guru. He was not to permit his victories to elate him, nor his defeats should depress him. These were in brief the instructions which the Guru gave to Banda.

With these instructions Banda marched towards the Punjab. On his way he learnt of the details of the Sikh

1. See Karm Singh Historian, Banda Bahadur (in Punjabi), pp. 25-26. The author of this book forwards the view that Banda never received the baptism of the double-edged sword. The present writer adopted this view in the first edition of this book against which, however, Dr. Ganda Singh, a well known scholar of the Punjab History, wrote an article in the Sikh Review forwarding certain very cogent arguments to prove that Banda was definitely baptised. The present writer is grateful to Dr. Ganda Singh and accepts his views. In the same connection, however, a letter to the editor also appeared in the Sikh Review which was not good in taste and which seemed to be an exhibition only of blind fanaticism. See Sikh Review, Vol IX, No. 4 (April, 1931), published from Calcutta.
activities in that province. He had learnt how when negotiations between the Guru and Bahadur Shah were being carried out a Pathan had stabbed the former which later on resulted into his death. The peaceful means under the tenth Guru's predecessors had failed to bring about any fruit, and the tenth Guru had to have a resort to the sword. He learnt of the Guru's victories against the Hill chiefs and the Imperial forces, he learnt how the Guru was deceived out of Anandpur, how he got separated from his Sikhs and his family, how his two sons were executed and the other two he himself sacrificed. Banda was thus inspired not only with the spirit of revenge, but also with the mission of continuing a holy war against the tyrants. For had this not been the case, he should have stopped after he destroyed Sarhend. His mission seems to have become to extirpate the tyrants and establish perhaps a Sikh raj in their place.

Marching towards the Punjab when Banda reached Sehr Khanday, about twenty five miles north-west of Delhi, he sent a hukamnama of Guru Gobind Singh to Sikhs in the different parts of the country, telling them in a circular letter that he had come to punish Wazir Khan of Sarhend and to chastise the Hill rajas; and he called upon them to join him in the largest numbers. Panth Prakash writes thus:

"सेवक से प्रति उठकर हृदयः \ ।
जीत परिवर्तन मुख से वह 'व्रष्टः' ।

हाल धार बरा दिनां दृष्टीदृष्टि,\ ।
अन्दरूनी स्वामी* सह स्वामी ।

हेतु वह बाहे पुर्दे, हिल,\ ।
अपने नित्यम बरी धव देसा ।

हेतु वह बाहे नाम मैं* , अम\ ।
सदिह भुज उप यी 'मुख बैद्यः' ॥""

On hearing the call of Banda, persons such as Bhai Fateh Singh, a descendant of Bhai Bhagtu, joined him with large

1. Gian Singh, Bhai, op. cit., XXV.
numbers of companions. Ram Singh and Tilok Singh of the Phulkian family, though themselves not joining Banda, yet contributed their resources liberally; and a large number of the Sikh peasantry of Majha and Malwa joined his banners with zeal and enthusiasm.

On his way to Sarhind Banda plundered many places. He attacked Samana, the native place of Jalal-ud-Din who had been employed in the execution of Guru Teg Bahadur. Here he is said to have killed about 10,000 Muslims who opposed him, and gathered an immense booty. Then passing through Ghuram, Thaska, Shahabad and Mustafabad, Banda invaded Kapuri. The faujdar of this place had been notorious for his lustful campaigns. Kapuri was utterly plundered and finally set on fire.

Just at this time, it is said, some Hindus of Sadhaura approached Banda with a complaint that the Muslims of the place had made their life utterly difficult. They killed cows and left their entrails and blood in their streets. They were not permitted to perform their religious ceremonies. Banda also learnt that the faujdar of Sadhaura had tortured Pir Budhu Shah to death for his help to the Guru in the battle of Bhangani. Banda marched with his Sikhs on Sadhaura, he was joined by the local peasantry in large numbers, and soon the place became a scene of utter plunder and destruction. It is said many Muslims of the place took shelter in the mansion of Pir Budhu Shah, with the vain hope that they would escape destruction. The mansion was attacked and the Muslims in it were murdered. The place has since been known as Qatalgarhi.

Towards Sarhind

Banda now marched towards Sarhind. At Sarhind it was that the two youngest sons of the Guru had been bricked alive. Governor of the place, Wazir Khan, had harassed the Guru, and it was fighting against his soldiers at Chamkaur that the two eldest sons of the Guru had fallen. Wazir Khan's troops had pursued the Guru and given him a battle at Khidrana where the 'Forty Saved Ones' had laid down their lives. It was his emissary who is later on said to have stabbed the Guru at Nander. Sarhind was thus an
accursed place where every Sikh was longing to wreak his vengeance.

Hearing of Banda's approach, Wazir Khan too had made his preparations. He had called to his help the faujdars of Hissar, Eminabad, Lahore and of some other places. The total number of his soldiers with whom he prepared to meet Banda was said to be 20,000.

For Banda this was going to be the first major clash, and the most important target of his march. Banda had no artillery, no elephants, not even a sufficient number of horses. He had been joined by a large number of booty-lovers who despite being of an advantage, could be source of a serious menace, as it actually happened. The two opposing armies met at Chappar-Chiri, a place twelve miles from Sarhind, on the 12th May, 1710. As the battle started, the booty-lovers among the followers fled the field leaving a confusion amongst the true lovers of the cause. Some persons were also said to have been smuggled into Banda's forces by the notorious Hindu Diwan of Sarhind, named Sucha Nand. They also fled finding their opportunity. It was now necessary to stem the tide of desertion to avoid disaster, and Banda marched to lead the attack in person. A bloody fight ensued, which was well contested and in which many heroes from both the sides fell fighting. At last Wazir Khan was killed by Fateh Singh, and the whole of his army was destroyed by the Sikhs. It was a complete victory for Banda, after which, says Ahwal-i-Salatin-i-Hind, he prepared to march on Sarhind. He attacked Sarhind after two days of the battle of Chappar-Chiri, and here he fought another battle in which he is said to have lost five hundred killed. After this victory the town of Sarhind was given to free plunder. Many Muslims were murdered, and it is said only those escaped who fled under Hindu disguise. Sucha Nand was captured and given the punishment he deserved. A booty worth two crores of rupees fell into the hands of Banda from the house of Wazir Khan alone. Several lakhs worth of Sucha Nand's property was also plundered.

Khani Khan\(^1\) gives a horrible account of the Sikh destruction.

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tion of Sarhind, and he is supported by some other Muslim writers also. Latif writes: Banda "punished the city in a vindictive and barbarous manner. He commanded it to be fired, and all the inhabitants to be put to death....They slaughtered the inhabitants indiscriminately without regard to age or sex. They butchered, bayoneted, strangled, hanged, shot down, hacked to pieces, and burnt alive, every Mohammedan in the place.....The corpse of Wazir Khan was hanged on a tree, and left to the tender mercies of the crows and vultures. The sanctity of graveyards was violated, and corpses were exhumed, hewn to pieces, and exposed as carrions for the wolves, jackals, and other nocturnal visitants to these abodes of the dead. The mosques were polluted and burnt down, and the mullahs, moulvis and hafizes subjected to the greatest indignities and tortures."¹ These writers, however, are not to be relied upon. Dr. Narang writes: "The Mausoleum of Ahmad Shah, the most magnificent of such buildings, still stands as it did before the battle, and is, I think, sufficient evidence of the exaggeration in Latif's account."² There is only one instance of the digging of a grave, according to the Sikh accounts. Bibi Anup Kaur, a Sikh woman who was carried away by Sher Mohammad Khan, had committed suicide to save her honour and had been buried. Her body was dug out and cremated. And it is possible that some people should have misunderstood this fact and later on the writers like Latif exaggerating it made such horrible incidents out of such simple acts.

Still, however, there is no doubt that for three full days the city continued to be plundered, and Banda Bahadur, if not that barbarous as the Muslim historians have depicted him to be, was less cautious of blood shed than Guru Gobind Singh himself should have been, which was partly due to the revengeful spirit that he carried. The city was saved from complete destruction only as a result of the intervention of the Hindus of the place.³

1. Latif, op. cit., p. 274-75.
2. Narang, op. cit., p. 103, n
After this the Imperial deputies in charge of several parganas of Sarhind submitted peacefully, and the entire province from Karnal to Ludhiana with an annual revenue of 36 lakhs, fell into the hands of the Sikhs. Banda appointed Baj Singh as the Governor of Sarhind, and some other places like Samana were put in the charge of some other Sikhs.

Banda now fixed Mukhlispur near Sadhaura, a pleasant hill resort, as his head quarters, and is said to have assumed royal title and struck coins in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. On the official seal for state papers, too, the name of Guru Gobind Singh was inscribed. And Banda started a new era from the date of the conquest of Sarhind. One of the most important of his state measures is said to be his abolition of zamindari. The story goes that some tillers of the land in the neighbourhood of Sadhaura came to him and complained of the atrocities of zamindars. Banda asked them to stand in a line and ordered Baj Singh to shoot them down; and then with a violent voice he condemned them that such large number of them as they were, they could not put down only a small number of zamindars. This had the desired effect, they went back and in a few days the zamindars in those localities were nowhere to be seen. Banda became a defender of the faith of the helpless. Large number of people came to him every day with complaints against the Muslim officials, and Banda helped them in removing their grievances.

Within the territories held by the Sikhs themselves, violent changes were brought about on the socialistic lines. Reputation and awe of Banda spread to such an extent, writes Irvine, that even if a scavenger who had joined his forces returned to his village, the wealthiest would come out to welcome him and vied with one another to escort him home.¹

**The Gangetic Doab**

As Banda carried on his activities, he received some

Complaints against

Jalal Khan

Jalalabad invested

But Banda retreated

Every Sikh rose

Shamas Khan's appeal A jehad

At Rahon

newly converted Sikhs from the village Unarsa, in Jalalabad, who complained against the persecutions of the Hindus by Jalal Khan, the founder and Faujdar of Jalalabad. Banda marched forthwith towards Jalalabad, on his way he captured Saharanpur and, at a distance of seventeen miles from that place, he killed the Peerzadas of Behat to a man for their anti-Hindu activities. Messengers were sent to Jalal Khan to release some Sikhs whom he had imprisoned. The messengers were badly insulted, which enraged Banda who ordered the siege of Jalalabad. Soon, however, the heavy rains, inundation of the Krishna river, and the urgent calls for help from the Jullundur Doab obliged Banda to abandon the siege and he ordered a retreat.

The Jullundur Doab

As Sarhind had been captured and Banda was spreading his activities far and wide, the Sikhs in the Jullundur Doab felt that their day of deliverance had arrived. They rose to a man, ousted the Muslim officials and in their place appointed the Sikhs; and sent a Parvana to Shamas Khan, the Faujdar of the Jullundur Doab asking him to effect certain reforms and hand over his treasures personally to the Khalsa. The Faujdar appealed to the Muslims of the Doab for a Jehad against these infidels, and says Khan Khan, more than a hundred thousand Muslims collected and marched towards Sultanpur, the capital of the Doab where, according to him, about seventy-five thousand Sikhs had collected. An urgent call at this was sent to Banda in the Gangetic Doab, who soon joined them. Seeing a large army of the Muslims marching towards them, the Sikhs retired to Rahon. The Muslims marched after them and the Sikhs were besieged. But in the darkness of the night they escaped, and the next morning seeing Shamas Khan having retired to his capital, they attacked the Muslims in the fort suddenly, and after a bloody battle they drove out the garrison. This hap-

2. About seven kos from Sultanpur in the Jullundur Doab.
3. This shows that the number of the Sikhs here given by Khafi Khan is exaggerated, as otherwise the Sikhs should not have retired to Rahon and then escaped when besieged in this manner.
pened on October 12, 1710. As a result of this, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur fell before the Sikhs without much effort and they became now masters of the Jullundur Doab.

The Haidri Flag

This was a great victory for the Sikhs which inspired them to further activities, and they now began to lay down wide plans of occupying the whole of the Punjab. Soon when about eight thousand Sikhs of the Majha and the surrounding countries met at Amritsar, they conferred together and decided to overrun all the territories of the Punjab. According to Ibratnamah of Muhammad Kasim, they marched on Batala and Kalanaur, and removing the Government officials from the offices, they appointed their own men instead. Moving further they occupied the Parganah of Pathankot, and on the other side they carried their swords to the very walls of Lahore. The Faujdar of Lahore, Sayyed Islam Khan, was so much overawed that he dared not come out and face them.

Finding their ruler too cowardly and faint-hearted to protect them, some Mullahs collected together, raised a green banner and calling it 'Haidri Flag' they gave a general call to the Muslims to collect under it for a Jihad against the infidels, and for the protection of their properties and honour. Soon the Muslims collected once again in large numbers, and they were also joined by some Hindus. Collected together they marched against the Sikhs and besieged them in the Bhagwant Rai fort, near Lahore in the village Bharat. The Sikhs, however, keeping their spirits undaunted, pierced through their lines and escaped to the utter chagrin of the Mullahs. The Mullahs sent another force against the Sikhs near Kotla Begum, but it also met a similar fate. This was an end of their ambition, and they with their men marched back to Lahore. But while they were on the move, the Sikhs suddenly fell upon them and brought about a general destruction and utter devastation in their ranks. This was a complete victory of the Sikhs over the Muslims, whereafter the entire Majha and Riarki fell under the Sikh control.

1. Muhammad Kasim, Ibratnamah.
March of the Royal Forces

Such incessant victories of Banda Bahadur and his Sikhs created a terror among the Muslims. And the contemporary writers tell us that such an awe of Banda was created in their minds that they began to believe him possessing some supernatural powers. Rumours regarding him floated about and the people said that Banda was made up of such material as would permit no weapon to have affect upon him. Flames issued from his mouth and he possessed a monstrous power and energy. If just about this time Bahadur Shah had not left Deccan and marched towards the north, the whole of India, as according to Malcolm, should "have been subdued by these" invaders.

Bahadur Shah, hearing of such large scale devastation brought about by the Sikhs in the Punjab, left Ajmer on 27th June, 1710 and marched towards the north. As he marched, he issued orders to the governors of Oudh and Delhi, Sayyads of Barha and the Nazis and Faujars of Allahabad and Moradabad, to join him. Orders were issued to all Hindu officials to shave off their heads and beards, lest they should be mistaken for the Sikhs.

The Sikhs, however, were not taken unprepared. As the Imperial forces under Mohammad Amin Khan reached Sadhaura, the Sikhs fell upon them and writes Khafi Khan, 'struck terror into the royal troops.' The Imperial reinforcement, however, soon reached, and the Sikhs retreated towards the Lohgarh fort. The Imperial forces marched thither and the fort was invested. The siege continued for a long time, and the Sikhs inside were driven to such despair that they began to eat their horses and other animals. There seemed to be no end to this misery, and finally Gulab Singh offered to sacrifice his life. He sat in Banda's disguise and Banda in another disguise darted through the Imperial lines and escaped to the safety of the Hills. Banda, writes Latif, "well how to disguise himself, and so dexterous was he

1. Malcolm, op. cit., p. 79.
in this accomplishment, that his most intimate acquaintances were unable to recognize him when he wished to evade detection.1

Next morning the Imperial forces marched upon the fort, Gulab Singh was captured, but to his utter disappointment and dismay the Emperor learnt that Banda had escaped towards the Hills. The pursuit of Banda into the Hills was immediately ordered.

In the Hills

When Banda reached the Hills, there too he continued his activities with the same spirit and energy. Hukammamahis were issued to the Sikhs in all directions, and soon the Sikhs flocked at Kiratpaur. With this fresh force Banda now decided to attack the Hill Rajas. The first victim of Banda was the Raja of Kehlur who was defeated in a pitched battle. The chiefs such as Sidh Sain of Mandi declared themselves to be the followers of Guru Nanak's faith and escaped. The chief of Mandi gave Banda in marriage a girl from his family and thus secured himself against the Sikhs. Banda marched on Jammu and killed its Faujdar on the 4th of June, 1711. Raipur, Behampur, Kalanaur and Batala fell before him, and Banda strengthened his power. Bahadur Shah issued orders that wherever a Sikh was found, he should be killed. A large number of the Sikhs were thus butchered and the Imperial forces marched in pursuit of Banda, at the face of which Banda had to retire to Jammu again.

Bahadur Shah retired to Lahore, where he died on 18th February, 1712. His death was followed, as usual, by a contest for power among his sons and confusion and anarchy ensued once again. Bahadur Shah was succeeded by Jahandar Shah, but he was soon ousted and the throne was now occupied by Farukh Siyar in 1713.

1. Latif, op. cit., p. 278; Khafi Khan comments; "The hawk had flown and an owl had been caught."
The Sikh thus captured was placed in an iron cage and sent to Delhi. (E. & D., vii, pp. 424-425.)

2. Latif, op. cit., p. 278.
During these commotions, descending on the plains bordering on the Indus, the Sikhs again flocked around the banner of Banda who reoccupied Sadhaura and Lohgarh. In the meanwhile, however, Farukh Siyar having come to power, determined on the extirpation of the Sikhs. Abdul Samad Khan, surnamed Diler Jang, a Turani nobleman who was the governor of Kashmir, was ordered by him to assume the command of the Punjab and punish the Sikhs. Abdul Samad Khan marched with several thousand brave men and reached Lahore, here he was joined by Mohammad Amin Khan who had been sent thither by the Emperor with a large number of chosen soldiers from the eastern districts. Banda on hearing this again fled and took refuge in the Jammu Hills where now he married his second wife. He made his abode at the present Dera Baba Banda Singh where his descendants still live. Banda now did not move to the plains for another one year.

Mohammad Amin Khan was now recalled to Delhi, and Abdul Samad Khan being appointed Lahore Governor, he was ordered to restore order in the Lahore territories.

Captured

After a respite of about one year Banda once again marched to the plains and captured Kalanaur and Batala. About thirty-five thousand warriors flocked around his banner, and he prepared for bigger ventures. The Faujdar of Ambala, Sheik Mohammad Daem, tried to encounter him but was given a bitter defeat, and he fled to Lahore. Abdul Samad Khan, now Governor of Lahore, moved against Banda and he was reinforced by the Imperial troops under Mir Ahmad Khan, the Faujdar of Aurangabad. Some Hindu chiefs were also ordered to join him, and the combined forces fell upon Banda. In a desperate action Banda showed a great valour, and according to Siyarul Mutakhrin, he was very near giving a complete defeat to the Imperial general, when having no strong position for defence he had to give way to superior numbers. Banda was now driven from place to

place until he reached the village Gurdas-Nangal, about four miles west of Gurdaspur. Finding his position desperate, Banda here occupied an ahata of Bhai Duni Chand, dug a moat around it, filled it with water and prepared to give a determined fight to the enemy. This small and temporary fortress was invested by the enemy troops, till at last the besieged were driven to a desperate plight, eating horses and asses to satisfy their hunger. But before this was done, Banda and his Sikhs caused a terror in the enemy lines; forty or fifty Sikhs sallying out occasionally and looting the provisions from the enemy stores. As according to Ibratnamah: "Such was the terror...commander of the royal army prayed that God might so ordain things that Banda should seek his safety in flight from the garhi."1

As the condition worsened, differences arose between Binod Singh and Banda. The former advised that they all should cut through enemy lines and escape, while Banda persisted in remaining there. Some hot words were also said to have been exchanged between the two, and finally on the advice of his son Kahan Singh, Binod Singh dashed out and cutting through the enemy lines, he escaped. Inside the garhi the things grew worse, eight months' siege reduced the Sikhs inside to grinding bones, leaves and bark of the trees into flour, and making bread of it. Finally, on 7th December, 1715, the Imperial forces marched on the garhi, no resistance was offered, Banda and his companions were put in chains and sent away to Lahore. Of those who were captured here, between two and three hundred Sikhs were "bound hand and foot and made over to the Imperial troops, who, under the orders of the Nawab, carried them to the banks of the Ravi, and there, having beheaded them, threw their bodies into the river."2

Several reasons have been forwarded for this ultimate defeat of Banda; the most important reason obviously being the exhaustion of the Sikh provisions. Besides, here the

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1. Mohd, Kasim, Ibratnamah.
2. Isaf, op. cit., p. 279. According to Khafi Khan three or four thousand persons were captured and put to the sword which filled that extensive plain with blood as if it had been a dish. E.D., vii., p. 457.
Sikhs were facing the Imperial forces which were better disciplined, and had inexhaustible sources of supply behind them; whereas on the other hand the Sikhs had only the strength and determination of their spirit to commend them. The joining of the Hindu chiefs against Banda had weakened his moral stand and, according to some, his invention of the new salutation Fateh Darshan, in place of Wahe Guru Ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahe Guru Ji ki Fateh, had alienated many a Sikh from him. The difference of opinion between him and Binod Singh at this moment was unfortunate, and there is no doubt that this weakened the Sikh resistance. All these causes, however, even if accepted, would make only a minor factor leading to his defeat. The major factor, it must be said, was the superior number of the enemy troops, and Banda having been taken by surprise when he did not have the advantage even of a strong position of defence.

To come back to the main story, Banda and some of his associates were taken to Lahore where by killing Sikhs in the villages, there number was swelled to 740. "They were mounted upon lame, worn out hungry assess and camels, each of them having a paper cap on his head. In this condition they were led into the streets of Lahore, followed by a mob which jeered and cursed them."

On the following day Abdul Samad Khan took these Sikhs to Delhi, putting his son Zakaryia Khan in charge of the prisoners during the journey. Banda was confined in an iron cage. M'Gregor writes, the Muslim soldiers "maintained that Banda was a 'magician', and would make his escape on the road. One of the Moghuls rose and said, 'Tie us together on the same elephant and if he attempts to escape, I will plunge this dagger into his body.' Banda was accordingly tied to this man......"

At Delhi the Sikhs were treated with the greatest ignominy. A procession was formed. At the head of it 2,000 Sikh heads were carried on poles, with their hair streaming in the

air. Along with them was the body of a cat to signify that no creature was left in the garhi of Gurdas-Nangal. In order to give them a contemptible and ludicrous appearance, the Sikhs "were forced to dress themselves in sheep skins, and were then mounted on assess and camels, and exhibited in all the thoroughfares and places of public resort of the city." "Banda was placed on an elephant, with his face smeared with black, and a woollen cap placed over his head, and an executioner standing over him, sword in hand. He was made to take the lead, as their mock chief."² Mirza Mohammed Harisi describes it as a great tamasha³ when crowds stood on both sides of the road and they mocked at them. The carnage began on the 5th March 1716, and one hundred Sikhs were executed every day near the Hardinge Library. But such was the undaunted spirit of the Sikhs that they vied with one another to go to the executioner, and called him a Mukta, or a deliverer. According to Khân Khan, a young Sikh boy rebuked his widow mother when at the time of his execution she brought for him an order of reprieve.⁴ And according to Mehma Prakash, when the Emperor sent for Baj Singh to see him as he had been specially blessed by Guru Gobind Singh for his bravery, the Sikh asked him to be freed if he wanted to see a tamasha. His fetters were removed, and instantaneously he despatched two or three of his captors to the other world, when finally he was apprehended once again and executed.⁵

**Banda Executed**

Giani Gian Singh's view that after being dragged behind an elephant, Banda was thrown in an unconscious state on the bank of the Jamuna from where after recovering he moved to Dera Baba Banda to die in 1741, is not borne out by contemporary and other writers. The more accepted view is that Banda was executed on 9th June, 1716.

Very horrible details are given regarding the execution of Banda. After being given the usual choice between Islam

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5. Hundred executed a day
6. A boy's spirit
7. Baj Singh's tamasha
8. Not left alive
9. Horrible execution
and death, out of which he accepted the latter, his seven or eight years old son Ajai Singh was placed in his lap, and he was asked to kill him, which according to Cunningham, he instantaneously did. According to Elphinstone, however, he refused to do so. The boy was taken and dashed against the ground, his quivering heart was taken out and thrust into Banda’s mouth. After this Banda’s right and then left hand, his right and then left eye, were cut off and removed. His feet were similarly cut off. His body or what remained of it, was then torn to pieces with red hot irons, and thus did this man of “undaunted valour” and bravery meet his death with an exemplary coolness of mind, and “glorying in having been raised up by God to be the scourge of inequities and oppressions of the age.” His body, was later on removed by the Sikhs of Delhi with a special permission of the authorities, and cremated near Bara-pula.

Banda’s Achievements

Varying opinions have been forwarded regarding the character and achievements of Banda. Contemporary Muslim writers have painted his picture in the darkest colours and basing their accounts on these writings, many European writers too have failed in giving him a kind consideration. Cunningham writes thus: “The memory of Banda is not held in much esteem by the Sikhs... He did not perhaps comprehend the general nature of Nanak’s and Gobind’s reforms.” Similar views are forwarded by M’Gregor. The basis on which he has been condemned is that he was a monster who shed a lot of innocent blood of the Muslims without any compunction. Sometimes Banda is compared with Guru Gobind Singh, and it is asserted that had the latter been alive, he should have been less retributive against the Muslims than the former was. Some even go to

1. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 79.
2. Elphinstone, History of India, ii, p. 564.
5. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 79.
such extent as to say that Guru Gobind Singh's widow, Mata Sundri, did not like the activities of Banda, and in collusion with the Mughals she even asked the Sikhs to dissociate themselves from Banda.

So far as the first point is concerned, that Banda shed innocent blood, and that he had a general hatred against the Muslims, we need cite only one example to prove the futility of this allegation. It is said that during Banda's stay at Kalanaur in April 1711—as an official news writer wrote to Bahadur Shah—after he gave them an assurance of non-interference in their religion, and due payment for their services, about 5,000 Muslims enlisted themselves in his army and fought against their own brethren. The point need not be laboured beyond this. Nor is it certain that the Guru himself should have been less retributive where Banda was more. The Muslim barbarism had already crossed the limits of the Guru's toleration. The brickling alive of the innocent little sons of the Guru at Sarhind was not less barbaric than the worst barbarism of Banda, and at least at Sarhind where Banda's barbaric activities are said to have reached their climax, there is little doubt that the punishment the Guru "would have inflicted on the Mussulmans, though differing in kind, would have been equally ample with that bestowed by Banda." And lastly, the fact of Mata Sundri's differences with Banda itself does not seem to be borne out even by the most unkind of the contemporary Muslim writers. Tazirat-us-Salatī of Kamwar Khan, which gives almost a daily account of the events on the front against Banda, makes no mention of this, which if true should have been regarded as a very important development. Later writings like Mehmo Prakash of Sarup Singh and Umdat-ul-Twarih of Sohan Lal also do not bear it out; nor do any of the European writers such as Thornton and M'Gregor make a mention of it. The fact is mentioned only by Bhangu Rattan Singh in his Prachin Panth Prakash, which may well be based on a wrong information.

1. M'Gregor, op. cit., p. 110.
Banda in fact was neither a monster, nor a ruthless blood-sucker. An utterly irresponsible and prodigiously revolting treatment had been meted out to the Sikhs by some religious fanatics and morally perverts at Sarhind. They had to be taught a lesson, and if Banda transgressed some limits which may have been observed by the super-humans such as Guru Gobind Singh, he was after all a disciple and not a master, and human and not a super-human. The greatest service that Banda rendered to his country was that he organized a revolution and gave a fore-taste of independence to his countrymen, but for which the course of future history of India should have been different from what it actually has been. The spirit had been aroused by Banda, the Sikhs continued following the path he laid down, and finally they not only gave a death blow to the Mughal authority in the Punjab, but even blunted the edge of Abdali's invasions and rolled them across the Indus, which otherwise should undoubtedly have swept all over India and probably destroyed even the memory of what had in the ancient times been the glory of Hindu culture and civilization.

Banda in fact was the first man in the Punjab to realize that the only escape from the Mughal atrocities and religious persecutions was to destroy the Mughal power itself. Guru Gobind Singh had won battles, but had not appropriated any political authority to himself. Banda replaced Muslim Government officials by the Sikhs, and made a start towards creating the Sikh State. His administrative measures showed the way his mind was working. After the conquest of Sadhana, Mukhliopur and Sarhind etc., all these territories were placed under the Sikh administrators. His companion and counsellor, Baj Singh, was appointed the Governor of Sarhind; Fateh Singh was handed over the charge of Sana; and Ram Singh, the brother of Baj Singh, assumed jointly with Baba Binod Singh the charge of Thanesar. Banda fixing up his headquarters in Sadhana, started to repair its hitherto neglected fort, renaming it Loh Garh. He assumed royal authority and struck coins which on their obverse bore the inscription:—
"By True Lord's grace is struck the coin in the two worlds:

Guru Nanak's sword is the grantor of all boons, and victory belongs to the king of kings, Guru Gobind Singh."

On its reverse the coins read:

"Struck in the city of Peace, illustrating the beauty of civil life and the ornament of the blessed throne

"The kettle and the sword (which are symbols of Charity and Power), victory and patronage obtained from Guru Nanak and Gobind Singh."

The most important state measure of Banda, however, was his abolition of Zamindari. Zamindars were the bane of the obtaining administrative system, in whose affairs the State did not interfere and who had been utterly oppressive and tyrannical towards the tillers of their land. The author of Sahib-ul-Akhbar writes: "The affairs were mismanaged in all the provinces and no control was maintained over the government officials or the Zamindars. All classes of government were addicted alike to corruption and extortion." We have seen how when a few tillers came to him with a complaint against their Zamindars, he inspired them and soon they ejected the Zamindars from the lands they tilled. Their example was copied by others, and thus Zamindari was abolished in many parts of the Punjab. In fact the oppressive Zamindars of U. P. and other provinces of India have been conspicuous by their absence in the Punjab, and thanks to Banda, much of their power was destroyed by him, and this evil could never later on grow into that monstrous shape in the Punjab as it did elsewhere.

Banda was a great general and a conqueror. There is no doubt that Guru Gobind Singh breathed a new spirit in the Sikhs, but, writes Dr. Narang, "it was Banda who taught them first how to fight and conquer, with the result that the whole country from Lahore to Panipat lay for once, particularly at Banda's feet."

Banda had to contend with

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many difficulties. It was unfortunate thus, that only poor Sikhs and not many rich joined him and helped him. Hindus generally kept aloof, and some chiefs such as Bachan Singh Kachhwaha and Rajas of the Shivalik Hills rather took an active part against him. Further, Farrukh Siyar was a vigorous ruler with the policy of "slay, slay and slay," and under him the Governors like Abdul Samad Khan had to gratify him or to go. Nor did the Sikhs have a well established arms supply, Banda not possessing the position of the tenth Guru so that the Sikhs, rich and poor, should have flocked to him with presents of arms. It is also alleged that Banda failed to act on the advice of 'Five Sikhs' as enjoined by the Guru. He substituted 'Fateh Darshan', in place of the salutation 'Wahe Guru ji ka Khalsa, Sri Wahe Guru ji ki Fateh,' and though later on he withdrew the new slogan, many Sikhs should definitely have been estranged against him, as Rattan Singh Bhangu claims. And then he was a vaishnava as against the Sikhs being meat-eaters. He is also alleged to have founded a new sect of Bandels, or the followers of Banda as the eleventh Sikh Guru after Guru Gobind Singh, as against the Tatwa Khalsa who considered Guru Gobind Singh to be the last Guru in human body; though it is held by some writers such as Karam Singh that it was only a later development and that those not differing with Banda's views in his own time though being called Bandels they never became a sect distinct from the other Sikhs so long as Banda lived. Banda himself is said at the time of his execution to have expressed this: "What power had any one to kill me? The order of the True Guru (Guru Gobind Singh) was contravened by me, and this is the punishment for that." All these factors might have worked against Banda, but for which he should perhaps have succeeded in ultimately destroying the already tottering Mughal power in India. Yet taking into consideration the victories he got and the seeds of a revolution which he sowed, we cannot deny that his achievements as a General were great.

He was extremely daring and brave in the field, even to the extent of recklessness. He was the most cruel to the cruel, and the training which he gave to the Sikhs in the battle-fields of Samana and Sarhind etc., instilled in his soldiers a will for emancipation and a confidence for success. An expert marksman as he was, the confidence with which he wielded his sword elicited a praise even from the bitterest of his foes.

Nor was he second to anybody in his zeal and love for the Sikh faith. Whatever important work Banda undertook, he started only with an *ardasa* or prayer to the Almighty. Whosoever came in contact with him, Banda told him to repeat *Name* and remember that they were all humble instruments in the hands of the Almighty Lord. He converted a large number of Hindus and Muslims to his faith, but there is no evidence that he used any force in doing so.

Despite all Banda’s shortcomings and failures, till the last of his breath he remained only humble in his attitude and honest of heart. His letters show that he never appropriated to himself the position of a *Guru*. His coins and seals bore only the names of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. In the midst of all the temptations which his position offered, he never touched a stranger woman. He was a strong lover of justice, who heard complaints of the poor and helpless and punished the tyrants and oppressors. Despite all the allegations against him, he differed seriously only with Binod Singh and none else of the important Sikhs, and that too only on tactics of war and not on religious principles. If he remained throughout his life a vegetarian, that was no anti-Sikh practice at all.

He strengthened among the people the will to resist tyranny from wherever it came, whether from the State or from capitalists or *Zamindars*. And the coolness with which he got his skin torn into pieces, and resolution of mind with which he resisted all the temptations of a princely life after accepting Islam, will always give him a prized position in the Indian history, the position of an illustrious hero whose memories any nation would be proud to own.
CHAPTER XXI

THE DARK PERIOD

Banda died in 1716, and the period between that year and 1733 is considered to be the darkest period of the Sikh annals. Abdul Samad Khan, a Turani nobleman, was the governor of the Punjab, and he was determined to annihilate the Sikhs. Nor was Farrukh Siyar, the Emperor of Delhi, kind in this respect. After the execution of Banda, thus writes Forster: "An edict was issued by Farruck Sir, directing that every Sicque falling into the hands of his officers, should, on a refusal of embracing the Mohametan faith, be put to the sword. A valuable reward was also given by the emperor, for the head of every Sicque; and such was the keen spirit that animated the persecution, such the success of the exertions, that the name of a Sicque no longer existed in the Mughal dominion. Those who still adhered to the tenets of Nanock, either fled into the mountains at the head of the Punjab, or cut off their hair, and exteriorly renounced the profession of their religion." Abdul Samad himself fulfilled the terms of the Emperor's orders to such an extent in the Majha, that he "filled that extensive plain with blood as if it had been a dish." And he thus earned the title of "sword of the state." When he became old, he was transferred in 1726 to the governorship of Multan, and his vigorous and youthful son Zakariya Khan Bahadur was now appointed to the viceroyalty of Lahore.

Zakariya Khan was no less a tyrant than his father, and he continued the policy of the Sikh persecutions more vigorously. He introduced a departure from the old policy of his father, of taxing the people heavily and throwing them into the Sikh folds. The policy followed by him now was

1. Forster, op. cit., i, pp. 312-313.
dual: whereas on the one hand he ordered Sikh persecutions to be carried out yet more vigorously, on the other hand he showed kindness towards those plundered by them and repaired the ravaged areas to make the Sikh friendship less desirable to the people.

On the other side, for a number of years after the death of Banda, the Sikhs had no temporal leader who could be of a stature high enough to unite all of them together. The Sikhs were divided among themselves. Of several parties and sects among them, the one was the **Gangu Shahi**, or the followers of Gangu who had been blessed by Guru Amar Das. The incumbent of his **Gaddi**, at the time, was Kharak Singh who considered himself to be a spiritual leader. His followers quarreled with the **Khalsa**, and the most important point of difference between the two was, that whereas the **Gangu Shahis** believed in the old system of baptism in which water was touched by the Guru's toe and administered to the disciples; the **Khalsa** considered the baptism of sword of Guru Gobind Singh to be now the only valid method of admitting one into the Sikh faith. Kharak Singh, however, is said to have suffered in a duel of miracle, and his prestige was on the decline.

Another sect was known as **Handalias**, later on called **Niranjanias**. This sect had been founded by one Handal of Jandialas, a devoted Sikh of Guru Amar Das. Bidhi Chand, the grand son of Handal, took to himself a Muslim mistress. The sect became independent, and they were rather known to have helped the Muslims against the Sikhs.

The third was the **Ajit Singhis**. A boy Ajit Singh had been adopted by Guru Gobind Singh's wife, **Mata Sundri**. This boy, when he grew up at Delhi, began to imitate the late Guru. He entertained a retinue, held court and called himself the 11th Guru of the Sikhs. He was sharply reproved and cursed by **Mata Sundri**. Once for his passing of some derogatory remarks against Islam, he was ordered by the Emperor to cut off his hair, or bear the proper punishment. He did the former, and lost thus much of his former
prestige. Shortly after this, however, he lost his life, when having killed a Muslim faqir he was arrested, was tied to an elephant’s tail and dragged through the city when at a turning the elephant trod on his head and his brains oozed out to bring about an inglorious end to his life. His son, Hathi Singh, was taken to Mathura, but he too growing-old, abstracted hymns from the Granth and making certain changes, began to pass them as his own, with the result that Mata Sundri abandoned him and came back to Delhi. He had his own followers who were known as Ajit Singhis after the name of his father, and they considered Ajit Singh and Hathi Singh as Gurus.

Among the old sects, the Minas, the Dhirmalias and the Ramraiyas, though now ineffective, still continued their existence.

The sect of Udasis also continued its existence. But they Udasis instead of being harmful, proved to be very helpful to the Sikhs. Being unbaptised, they escaped persecution at the hands of the Mughal authorities; and when every Sikh was hunted down as a wild beast, and many of them fled from the plains, these Udasis helped them as the custodians of their temples and kept the torch of Sikhism alight. The Nirmala Sadhus who did not marry, and whose activities were confined to the Malwa which was not a very much disturbed area, also continued their help to the Sikhs in the missionary activities.

The most serious challenge to the Khalsa, however, came from the Bandeis. Although for some time Banda does seem to have become proud of his position, as is obvious from his introduction of new salutation ‘Fateh Darshan’; yet there is no strong evidence to prove that Bandeis became a separate sect in the time of Banda himself. Nor is there any strong evidence to show that at the suggestion of Farrukh Siyar, Mata Sundri addressed any circular letter to the Sikhs condemning the activities of Banda, as it is alleged. It is a historical fact that Baba Kahn Singh and Baj Singh who

had been staunch followers of Guru Gobind Singh to accompany Banda as his companions, remained with Banda till the very end. If Banda had founded some sect of his own different from the Khalsa, these Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh should have definitely dissociated themselves from him.

Yet it is a fact that though not encouraged by Banda, some suca development was taking place during his very life time itself. The incessant successes of Banda had created an impression in some minds that Guru Gobind Singh himself had taken the garb of Banda, and come to avenge the execution of his sons. When Banda had come into the Sikh folds, he had brought in with him intact, many of his old beliefs of a Bairagi. He was a strong vegetarian, and it is possible that those who came into a closer contact with him also became so, and were distinguished from the rest of the Sikhs as such. Such persons began to be called Bandeis in the very life time of Banda. But this was a spontaneous development, and the Bandeis and the Khalsa remained two brothers to live and die together.

After the death of Banda, however, there developed serious differences between the Bandeis and the Khalsa. The former believed in Banda as the eleventh Guru after Guru Gobind Singh, used red livery as against the blue of the Akalis, and were vegetarian. After some years of Banda’s death when Abdul Samad Khan’s attention was directed towards the rebellion of Isa Khan and the Sikh persecutions were slackened for some time, both the Bandeis and the Tatwa Khalsa—those who believed in Guru Gobind Singh as the last Guru in the physical body—met at Amritsar, under their respective leaders Mahant Singh and Kahn Singh and the Bandeis began to claim one half of the offerings of the Har Mandar. They actually occupied the Har Mandar as the Tat

1. The Bandeis in the present century believe Ranjit Singh, Banda’s son to be their twelfth Guru, and Ranjit Singh’s sons Jujhar Singh and Jorawar Singh to be the thirteenth and the fourteenth Guru respectively. These four names are included by them in the Sikh prayer, ardas, after the name of Guru Gobind Singh.
Khalsa took possession of Sri Akal Takht. The differences between the two became more serious on the Baisakhi of 1721, and Mata Sundri sent Bhai Mani Singh to restore peace between the two. On Bhai Mani Singh's suggestion it was agreed that on one piece of paper Fateh Darshan, and on another Wahe Guru ji ki Fateh, should be written, and that the both should be cast in water near the Har ki pauri, which soever of the two floated first on water, the party to which it belonged would win. This having been done, the Bandeis lost the game. After this a duel was also fought on a similar condition between a Bandei and a member of the Tatwa Khalsa, and in this again the Bandeis had to face a discomfiture. The Bandeis thereafter had to withdraw their claims, and thus peace was restored. Still, however, it took quite some time before the Bandeis and the Tatwa Khalsa could come completely together.

Sikhs Kept Their Spirits Alive.

Such divided state of affairs among the Sikhs and the Government's policy of annihilating them continued making the Sikh life utterly difficult for a pretty long time. After Abdul Samad Khan, his son Zakariya Khan continued sending flying columns to capture the Sikhs and to butcher them. And the Sikhs had to take refuge in the Malwa desert, the lower spurs of the Himalayas and the Lakhi jungles, where they lived on wild vegetables and flesh of the jungle animals. But such was the spirit and strength of heart among them that they bore all these privations very cheerfully. As years of persecutions passed by, the constant fear of death made them bold, and the suffering rather lost its meaning to them. Many a Sikh was born during the life of such turmoil and privations, and the children who grew up to manhood under such circumstances, had learnt to embrace the sufferings and privations as their very life companions, without which there was no significance of their existence.

Besides, they had before them the vivid memories of the sacrifices made by Guru Arjan, the confinement of Guru Hargobind in the Gwalior fort, the execution of Guru Teg
Bahadur, and the sacrifices made by Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Bahadur. The tenets of Nanak and Gobind had "taken root in the hearts of the people; the peasant and the mechanic nursed their faith in secret, and the more ardent clung to the hope of ample revenge and speedy victory." The daily prayer in which the sacrifices of their ancestors were recounted, gave them inspiration and they were determined not to lapse into the old state of the things from which their forefathers had dragged them out at a heavy cost of the lives of several generations. Trained in the school of Guru Gobind Singh, they were past-masters in self-sacrifice, and kept constantly before their mind the words of the founder of the Khalsa that "when my end approaches, I desire to die in the battle-field." If in idleness they had more chance to be killed, why not then die fighting heroically in the battle-field? They had their Guru Granth and Guru-Panth. They sat round the first and obeyed the decisions and orders of the second. Once a decision had been taken in the presence of the Guru Granth, it had to be obeyed even at the cost of their lives. And the decisions which they took collectively in congregations, were always the decisions of heroic deeds and selfless service.

And then they had a faith in the righteousness of their cause. They claimed only a right to live an honourable life, and this had been denied to them by the Mughal Government. The Mughal tyranny had to be destroyed, and for this they had a faith in their future. Every morning they repeated in their prayer that a time would come when the Khalsa would become a ruler. And their internal strength and external organization gave them confidence, that just as after Guru Gobind Singh they got leadership from Banda, after the latter some leader was bound to come who would save the work of the ten generations of their Gurus from destruction.

Moreover, though outlawed by the Government, they were yet helped secretly by the common man among the

2. Chandi Charitra.
3. Panth means an organization. Here it means the Sikh Sangat or congregatio**, more, particularly the elect 'Five'.

Rceounted
daily
3. Gobind's
words

Granth and
Panth

Must be
obeyed

5 Righteous
cause

A faith

6. Secret
help
Hindus. Many Hindu Zamindars sympathized with them, and gave them whatever assistance they could give.

Then of the negative causes which helped the Sikhs in keeping their spirits, and later on led to their re-emergence, the most important was the dissension among the courtiers at Delhi itself, who would let the Emperor go to the dogs than a rival succeed in his mission. The viceroys in the Punjab had more to be cautious and heedful of the political developments in Delhi, than pay their full attention towards the Sikhs problem in the Province. There was disruption all over the country, and disintegration in all the departments of the political life. Within a generation after the death of Aurangzeb, Mohammedan "adventurers had established separate dominations in Bengal, Lucknow, and Hyderabad." The Marathas established their authority in the Deccan, and the Afghan colonists of Rohilkhand and the Hindu jats of Bharatpur had raised themselves to importance as substantive powers.¹ In the Punjab itself, the scant means of communication made it impossible for the Government to deal with the Sikhs successfully. And all these were the causes which helped the Sikhs to keep their spirits alive.

Stirred to Action

The life of extreme poverty and utter helplessness in the jungles and deserts rather taught them new arts of existence, and the Sikhs took to adventures which helped them in plundering the enemy camps whenever they got an opportunity to do so. The story of their such adventures started with the martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh. This brave man lived in the Majha, in a village named Dhilwan. He had incurred the enmity of the Lambardar of the village Nowshera, named Sahib Rai, who had driven out from his village some poor Khalsa peasants when they were given refuge by Bhai Tara Singh. A few days after the peasants took refuge with Tara Singh, some of Sahib Rai's mares were stolen away in broad daylight. He suspected these peasants for the theft.

¹ Cunningham, op. cit., p. 91.
and asked Tara Singh to deliver them to be brought to justice. Tara Singh refused to deliver the peasants whom he knew to be innocent. The *Lambdar* lodged a formal complaint with the city Magistrate at Patti, and presented Tara Singh to be a rebel and disturber of peace. The city Magistrate, Mirza Ja'far Beg, taking the *Lambdar*'s statement as gospel truth, marched with a detachment of a few hundred cavalymen under the command of a nephew of his, to take Tara Singh in his *garhi* at night by surprise. But when the detachment reached near Tara Singh's village, one of his companions, Baghel Singh, was incidentally out to perform his ablution. When he saw these Turk soldiers advancing towards the village, he immediately sensed the danger and fell upon them with his small axe like a lion, cutting instantaneously two of the Magistrate’s nephews to pieces. He himself was ultimately killed, but by this time the tumult of the fray had roused his companions who marched swiftly to meet the enemy. The Magistrate, however, had had enough of it, and dispirited at the loss of his two nephews he retreated without giving the Sikhs a battle.

The Magistrate of Patti, after reaching back home, proceeded immediately to approach Zakariya Khan, the Governor, who was soon persuaded to send a punitive expedition consisting of 4,000 strong, under the command of General Moman Khan. On the other hand Bhai Tara Singh, with his men who did not number more than four hundred, ill equipped though, prepared to meet the enemy. The victory of such small number of men, over such large number of the enemy well equipped and well provisioned, was of course out of the question. But they did bring about a havoc in the ranks of the enemy and were finally killed to a man. This happened in 1725.

This event charged the atmosphere. The Sikhs all over the Province burnt with the spirit of avenging the death of Bhai Tara Singh and his companions. Thousands came out with a determination to root out the evil, and joined the *Jatha* of Bhai Darbara Singh. One of these persons was young Kapur Singh who was destined to play a significant
role in the history of the Punjab. The Sikhs gathered in large numbers at Amritsar, and passed a Gurmata to loot the Imperial arms and revenue supply whenever they got an opportunity to do so, and to teach a lesson to the miscreants. Only a few days after this, receiving the information that a revenue amounting to four lakh rupees was being sent under the protection of 200 strong from the Multan territories to the Imperial treasury, about four hundred Sikhs collected and fell upon it near the Khudiyana pargana of Lahore. The entire amount of money, together with a number of horses of the killed and injured among the enemy, and their weapons, were collected and the Sikhs vanished into the swamps of the Ravi.

Just two months after the above incident, the Sikhs under the command of Darbara Singh looted another one lakh rupees similarly going from Kasur to Lahore. In the same year a famous trader of horses, named Murta Khan, who was taking a few thousands of these animals to Delhi, was plundered by the Sikhs under the command of Kapur Singh near Jandiala. The Sikhs made a surprise attack, and each Sikh leaving his thin and lean animal, vanished with an Imperial horse. After this, Mohammed Jaffar Khan, an Imperial officer who was going from Peshawar to Delhi, was dispossessed of several lakhs worth of gold and silver, at the time of his crossing the river Beas. An instance of the high moral character that these Sikhs possessed is available from the fact that once in 1772 they fell upon Pratap Chand, a very rich trader of Sialkot, and dispossessed him of valuable shawls and rugs worth several lakhs of rupees which were meant for the Imperial family. But later on when they learnt that those articles had yet to be paid for by the Government, considering it the personal property of a private trader, the Sikhs returned to him the entire baggage, along with several animals which they had driven away.

2. Mata is a resolution. Congregation of the Khalsa is Guru, hence the mata passed by it is the mata of the Guru, or a Gurmata.
Several other instances of such daring acts performed during this period are known in history.

Zakariya Khan made several efforts to punish the Sikhs. Thousands were butchered yet the number of the Sikhs who occasionally plundered the Imperial treasuries and destroyed the government officials and their agents, continued to increase. Ultimately Zakariya Khan, realizing that it was utterly difficult to annihilate the Sikhs, decided to adopt a policy of conciliation by offering them a Jagir with an annual revenue of one lakh rupees, and the title of Nawab for their leader. "This policy bore its desired fruit. The Sikhs, being tired of their long and tedious life, accepted the Jagir and title. They now took to peaceful pursuits and most of them settled at Amritsar." This happened in 1733, and thus ended the darkest period of the Sikh persecutions and their misery. Although the Sikhs had to face yet worse persecutions in the years to come, any period of their subsequent history was comparatively less onerous and less potent of the factors which should have led to the complete annihilation of the Sikhs, than the one discussed above. Besides the persecutions, the more serious problem for them here was the divided state of affairs among themselves, more so when for the first time after Banda they were left with none to lead them and inspire them. It took quite some time before a universally acceptable leader was born in their midst, and they took once again to well planned and integrated actions.

1. See the next chapter.
2. Governor.
CHAPTER XXII

THE SIKHS UNDER NAWAB KAPUR SINGH, AND THE VICEROYS OF LAHORE

A—Early Life of Kapur Singh, and Zakariya Khan (1726-1745)

The title of Nawab and the Jagir which Zakariya Khan offered were conferred by the Sikhs on their most respectable leader, Kapur Singh. Before we see how it was done, it would be interesting to have a short account of the early life of this hero. Son of Chaudhri Dalip Singh Virk, of the village Kaloke in pargana Sheikhupura, Kapur Singh was born in the year 1697. In his very young age Kapur Singh is said to have been given very keenly to the military tastes, and he was yet young when he became a master in riding, and in wielding the weapons of war, such as sword, spear and bow and arrows. It is said that once in a sham fight with some of his companions, by an accident he got a stroke of a companion's sword on his shoulder. He got seriously wounded and it seemed as if the end of his life had arrived, but although the wound took a long time to heal, he ultimately recovered and was restored to his youthful activities. On the Baisakhi of 1721, when the fate of the Bandeis was decided at Amritsar, Kapur Singh was one of the several young men who received the baptism of sword. After the martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh, he joined the jatha of Dewan Darbara Sigh, together with some of his companions, and in the years that followed he distinguished himself as a man sagacious and prudent beyond his years. He led the Sikhs in several of their adventures and proved himself to be a successful leader and an organizer. In 1726 Zakariya Khan became the viceroy of Lahore with the help of the Prime Minister of Delhi, Qamr-ud-din Khan—whose sister was
married to him. Under Zakariya Khan, as we have already seen, the Government's policy became more vigorous and repressive towards the Sikhs. Kapur Singh headed a band of warriors who, with a view to paralysing the administration and obtaining food for themselves—when they had been driven into jungles and deserts, attacked government treasuries and caravans moving from one place to another. Such was the effect of the Sikh depredations as obliged Zakariya Khan ultimately to seek reconciliation with the Sikhs.

On the suggestion of Zakariya Khan the Central Government decided to withdraw all their repressive measures against the Sikhs. Subeg Singh, a Sikh resident of the village Janbar, near Lahore, who had for a time been a Kotwal of the city under the Mughal government, was sent to the Sikhs at Amritsar to negotiate peace. The Sikhs had been permitted to assemble on a Baisakhi at Amritsar for the first time in several years. When Subeg Singh brought the offer of the title of Nawab and jagir worth a lakh of rupees of annual revenue, the Sikhs after some discussions agreed to accept the offer. Darbara Singh was first chosen for the honour, but having excused himself for his old age, the next choice fell upon Kapur Singh who at the time was waving a hand-fan over the assembly to soften the rigours of a hot day. Kapur Singh first showed some reluctance, but ultimately agreed to accept it. The role of honour which consisted of a shawl-turban, a jewelled plume, a pair of gold bangles, a necklace, a row of pearls, a sword, a brocade garment; was first placed, at the suggestion of Kapur Singh, at the feet of the 'Five Beloveds', and then given over to him who now looked very magnificent in his new accoutrements.

Kapur Singh who now became Nawab Kapur Singh, however, did not permit himself to lose his native humility, and requested the Khalsa to permit him continue serving in the community kitchen. The first job of Kapur Singh after receiving this unique honour was to send an information about the new development to all the Khalsa who had been hiding themselves in remote deserts and jungles and
make them all assemble at Amritsar. In the year 1734 in order to consolidate the entire disintegrated fabric of the Sikh commonwealth, he divided them into two parts: the one was named Budha Dal, or the army of the old gentlemen which was to consist of all the Sikhs of or above the age of forty years, and the other was named Taruna Dal which was to consist of youthful Sikhs below the age of forty.

The Budha Dal was entrusted with the duty of looking after the Sikh holy places and of propagating the Sikh faith. And Kapur Singh himself was to be in charge of it. The Taruna Dal was to be a more active body, and was to undertake the defence of the Sikhs as its main duty. Personally enjoying universal respect for his humility and strength of character, Kapur Singh worked as a common link between the two wings of the one body that was known as the Dal Khalsa.

Soon after this when the strength of the Taruna Dal grew to as many as 12,000 members, for efficiency and convenience of administration the Nawab split this Dal into five sections each led by Baba Dip Singh, Karam Singh, Baba Kahn Singh and Binod Singh, Dasonda Singh, and Vir Singh and Jiwan Singh respectively. Each of these sections had its own drum and banner, and to avoid conflict and confusion the territories conquered by each were entered into its respective papers at the Akal Takhat. These papers were known as Misl, and this later on—seven more such sections being added to it—led to the establishment of twelve Misl, of which we shall have much to say in the following chapters.

In the same year 1734, Jussa Singh Ahluwalia who had been brought up under the care of Mata Sundri, was entrusted for his training and future career to the Nawab. This young boy soon made a mark of his personality and capabilities on the Sikhs, and was destined to take charge of the leadership of the Khalsa after the Nawab.

It had never been hoped by the Sikhs that the peace established between them and the government would last long. Neither the Sikhs could contain their ambitions within
the small Jagir that was granted to them, nor was the government likely to continue suffering a tremendous increase in the number of the Sikhs and their efficient organization on warlike footings. Just before the harvest of 1735, Zakariya Khan sent a force and occupied the Jagir granted to the Sikhs on the pretext that the Sikhs had violated their promise of remaining peaceful. The Budha Dal, after this, was driven away to the Malwa by Lakhpat Rai, the Dewan of Lahore, where it was received with a welcome by Ala Singh, the founder of the Phulkian Misl, who also availed himself of the opportunity and received baptism at the hands of Kapur Singh. Nawab Kapur Singh here occupied himself for some time in the propagation of the Sikh faith, and also baptised Hamir Singh, the ancestor of the Faridkot house. The Nawab also helped Ala Singh in the consolidation of his territories, and conquered for him some new one's such as Sunam. He also led an attack against Sarhind, and pillaged it once again.

In the meantime Zakariya Khan resorted once again to the old practice of persecutions. Eight moving columns of one thousand light cavalry each were raised, and they were ordered to capture the Sikhs. A proclamation was issued declaring that anybody who produced Sikh heads would be rewarded at the rate of fifty rupees each head. For presenting an alive Sikh, again, the reward was fifty rupees; for giving an information regarding a Sikh, the reward would be ten; for helping in an arrest, rupees fifteen; and anybody could plunder or a Sikh's house without any fear of being brought to justice. On the other hand, punishments were fixed for failure of the people to cooperate in this respect. Hundreds of Sikhs were thus captured and they were killed in the most cruel manner, the most popular method being crushing the victims on the wheels. Other methods were equally barbarous. The victim would be buried half under ground, and the upper half would be blown away from the mouth of a cannon. Their eyes were taken out, and sometimes tying each foot with an elephant's leg, the two elephants were made to walk toward opposite directions, and the victim was torn into two
pieces. Rattan Singh writes thus:

बही चरार के बही हामी भागे।
बही धेरा बही बुधी बटाहे।
बही धेरा मित्र भुजाली बुझे।
बही धेरा बही बाणोऱ मृते।
बहे बरे बैंतुरा सरे भाग।
बैंत जटे में भे जमाह।
पांड पांड बरी नकल माह।
सम अंजल बही पवन फुंडाहे।
भे धेरा बौ में टेंडा बटाहा॥

The Sikhs once again fled to jungles and deserts, and the life of utter poverty and homelessness started. The Sikhs, however, never lost their hearts. During this period they seem to have remained in very high spirits and bore their privations very cheerfully, as it is obvious from the new terms, of the available humble articles of consumption, of contemptuous expressions for the enemy, and of other such things that they invented. About nine hundred of such terms have been discovered, some of which may here be given. During this time, a blind man began to be known as a wide-awake hero, death was an expedition to the other world, hungry man was considered as mad in prosperity, to speak was to roar, passing stool was supplying provisions to Qazi, when they saw night soil they said Mughal was lying there. Rupiya was known as empty crust, grams known as almonds, cooked meat as Mahaprasad, Sag as green plao, onions as silver pieces, one man was known as one and a quarter lakhs, to fight a battle was to play hola, a sword was Sri Sahib and a gun called Ram junga. One man was also known as army and several men as armies. To make water was to conquer Chittorgarh, one eyed man was

hundred eyed hero, shoe was a mare and a cottage a shish-mahal.

With the approach of the winter the Nawab decided to come back from the Malwa and celebrate his Diwali at Amritsar. As he approached Amritsar with his Budha Dal, the Imperial force under the command of Haibat Khan, Diwan Lakhpat Rai, Salabat Khan and Kutb-ud-Din Khan fell on him at Basarka Bir. It was a surprise attack, yet the Budha Dal fought so valiantly that it remained a drawn battle.

The next morning when the Budha Dal reached near Khem Karan, it was joined by the Taruna Dal. On the other hand a reinforcement under Samad Khan also reached the Imperial army at Basarka Bir. When Kapur Singh heard of the movement of the Imperial army, he moved to Hujra Shah, and here the Sikhs were once again attacked by the Imperial soldiers. Here a decisive battle was fought in which the Imperial army were utterly routed and they fled after suffering a great loss, leaving the battle-field in the hands of the Khalsa. Several thousands of the Imperial soldiers are said to have lost their lives, and those of a nephew of Lakhpat Rai, a son of Jaspat Rai, Tatar Khan, Jamal Khan and Duni Chand may specially be mentioned. This battle was fought in 1736.¹

It seems that while the activities of clearing particularly the Majha country of the general mass of the Sikhs went apace, there were some more venerable personalities among them who because of their influence with the Muslim authorities, or otherwise because of some other reasons, were left unmolested. One such personality was Bhai Mani Singh who was in charge of the Amritsar temple which remained open during this time, although ultimately he too could not escape execution at the hands of the Muslims, for a different reason though. A short account of the fate this one of the

¹ See Gian Singh, Gian, Shamshir Khalsa, ii, p. 218; Narang, op. cit., pp. 120-123; Gian Gian Singh, Bhai, op. cit., p. 57d.
most venerable figures of the time among the Sikhs met, may here be given.

For an introduction to his early career, we learn that the Bhai was born in the Malwa, at a village known as Kobewal. He was only seven years of age when his father, a Jat by birth, took him for a visit to Guru Teg Bahadur at Anandpur. Here for sometime Mani Singh remained in the company of the boy Gobind Rai, and got so much attached to him that he refused to part company. At the request of Guru Teg Bahadur, therefore, Mani Singh’s father left him to remain there, and to share with Gobind Rai the same board and lodging under the loving custody of Mata Gujri, and even same teachers who imparted education to the prospective Guru. When after the evacuation of Anandpur, the Muslim forces fell upon the Guru on the bank of the Sarsa, it was Bhai Mani Singh who in the confusion thus caused, took Guru Gobind Singh’s two wives, Sahib Kaur and Sunder Devi in the male disguise, to Delhi; and after this when the news of the Guru having reached Damdama arrived, he took them thither. Bhai Mani Singh also accompanied the Guru to the Deccan, where from he was sent back to attend upon the Guru’s wives at Delhi. Later on, as we have seen, when a quarrel arose at Amritsar between the Bandeis and the Tat Khalsa, Sunder Devi deputed him to go there and settle the dispute. There after the Bhai remained at Amritsar as in charge of that temple.

As a result of the relentless policy of Zakariya Khan’s persecutions, when the Sikhs stopped visiting the Amritsar temple as in the times of peace they used to do, the Bhai tried to mollify the authorities with gold, and made a proposal to Abdur Razak the local magistrate that if the Sikhs were permitted to come at a fair at Amritsar, the authorities would be paid a sort of fee of Rs. 10,000. The proposal was forwarded to Zakariya Khan, and the latter permitted the Sikhs to assemble. The Bhai’s purpose seems to be that it might soften the Government’s policy of ruthless persecutions, and the Sikhs might be permitted to resume their worship in
the temple. But Zakariya Khan was perhaps determined to deceive the Bhai, and secure an opportunity of making a surprise attack upon the Sikhs. Bhai Mani Singh sent messages far and wide and the Sikhs did gather in large numbers, and the forces of Zakariya did fall upon them. But this was not unexpected, the Sikhs were ready for it and they vanished once again before the Mughal soldiers could wreak a vengeance upon them.

After the event had occurred and the Sikhs had dispersed, the stipulated amount was demanded from the Bhai, but he showed his inability to pay it because of the violation of the promise by the authorities resulting into poorer proceeds of the offerings. No reason or arguments, however, could be listened to. The Bhai was forthwith arrested and brought to Lahore, the alternative between Islam and death was offered to him, he of course accepted the latter and his limbs were publicly torn off. This happened in 1737, and an officer Samad Khan played a significant role in bringing about this execution, for which he had later on to pay with his life.

After the above incident Zakariya Khan called a conference of some important civil and military officers, in which Qazi Abdul Rehman advised that since the main source of inspiration for the Sikhs was the temple of Amritsar it should be taken possession of and guarded by army to prevent the Sikhs from visiting it. This advice was accepted and Abdul Rehman himself was entrusted with this job. During all this period Kapur Singh remained a guiding spirit for the Sikhs and from their abodes in jungles and deserts he continued sending occasionally bold riders in disguise or openly to assert their right to have a dip in the Amritsar tank. Once, it is said, Bhai Sukha Singh of Mari Kamboh came along with Braj Singh, a nephew of Bhai Mani Singh, he dashed to the tank and after having a dip the two fled on their horses to join several hundred Sikhs awaiting outside. Abdul Rehman supposing that they were only two, took only a few soldiers along and followed the Sikhs, but to his surprise when he saw them joining the others awaiting outside, he found himself in a position that was simply desperate. The
fight ensued and the expected happened. The Muslims suffered a heavy loss, Abdul Rehman himself counting among the dead.

Such heroic tales of the Sikhs terrifed Zakariya Khan, and he sent a large force under Samad Khan to seek out Kapur Singh. Once Samad Khan did succeed in engaging the Budha Dal, but he, as it was his habit, remained in the rear relying on his deputies to fight the battle. This Samad Khan had been responsible for the tortuous death of Bhai Mani Singh, and Kapur Singh determined to draw him out into the open, had a recourse to strategy. He divided his men into two sections, one of which was sent to face the enemy. After some fight this section began to withdraw, Samad Khan taking it as a flight ran up in pursuit. But as soon as Samad Khan left his position, another section waiting in a hiding under Kapur Singh fell upon him. Samad Khan was captured, tied behind four horses and was dragged to death. Thus did Samad Khan pay the price of being instrumental in the execution of Bhai Mani Singh.

After this Nawab Kapur Singh decided to kill Zakariya Khan himself, who because of the Sikh terror remained for most part of his time inside the fort. Kapur Singh got an intelligence that Zakariya Khan was to attend a prayer at the Shahi Mosque at Lahore. With two thousand of his picked men, all dressed in green, their hair streaming in air after the manner of the disciples of the priests of Uch, and a Hydari flag to lead them, Kapur Singh entered the city shouting Alla-hu-Akbar. Incidentally, however, the governor being indisposed, did not stir out that day, and the Nawab had to return disappointed. Before however the Sikhs left Lahore, they threw off their disguise and shouting Sat Sri Akal they marched on and vanished into their forest retreats.

After this Kapur Singh marched once again towards the Malwa. Crossing the Sutlej he proceeded towards Delhi, and on his way he realised tributes from the chieftains of Jhajjar, Dadri, Dojana and Pataudi; and he overran the territories of Faridabad, Ballabgarh and Gurgaon. After
reaching the vicinity of Delhi, the Dal marched back.

B—Invasion of Nadir Shah and the Sikh Opportunity

From January to May 1739, there was a complete confusion at Delhi and Lahore. During this period Nadir Shah led an invasion into India. Born in 1688, in a castle fifty miles north of Mashhad the capital of Khorasan, Nadir Kuli belonged to a Turkoman tribe known as Afshars. From a petty freebooter Nadir was destined to become a terror for the whole of Asia. After several years of his daring and adventurous life, Nadir Kuli was saluted the king of the Persians under the name Nadir Shah in 1736. He soon conquered Kandhar, Balkh and Bokhara, and being invited by Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sadat Khan the two disaffected nobles of the Mughal court at Delhi, he invaded India with an army of 1,25,000 horse—the Kazil-bashis, the Georgians, the Turks, the Khorasanis and the Balkhis etc. all inured to fatigue and hardships. He captured Jallalabad and Peshawar, and crossing Jhelum and Chenab proceeded towards Lahore. Zakariya Khan with his 25,000 horse was completely routed in a battle, and he implored the invader’s clemency. On the payment of a tribute of twenty lakhs of rupees, Lahore was saved from the horrors of a massacre. Zakariya Khan was confirmed in his government of Lahore, Nadir Shah struck a gold coin at Lahore on the obverse of which was the inscription “Nadir, the Sultan,” and on the reverse: “Struck at the capital of Lahore, 1151, May God preserve his reign!” And thereafter the Shah proceeded towards Delhi. On the 14th February, 1735 Nadir reached the plains of Karnai where Mohammed Shah the Emperor of Delhi had already reached two days earlier with his 150,000 horse, exclusive of his irregular cavalry. The attack was led by the Indian army, and the battle started, but the effeminate Indian army soon proved itself quite unable to cope with the valour of the hardy Turkomans, and were defeated with a heavy slaughter of one hundred nobles and officers of distinction, and thirty thousand soldiers.

The Indian Emperor, thereafter begged for clemency and agreed to pay an indemnity of twenty-five crores, and also
Begged for clemency  

At Delhi  

to Nadir's troops remaining in the capital to recover from the fatigue of the campaign until such time as the money should be paid. The two Emperors then marched to Delhi where the treasury was stripped of its most valuable articles, and Khutba was read in the name of Nadir. Every thing was going on peacefully when an unfortunate incident occurred. A Persian soldier forcibly tried to seize some pigeons exposed for sale, a mob collected and in a fit of frenzy and rage rushed upon the Persians in different parts of the city, killing about three thousand of them. Nadir Shah himself was fired at in the mosque of Raushan-ud daula where he had repaired. The shot which came from a neighbouring turret, missed him, and killed one of his immediate attendants. The fierce spirit of the Shah was roused to fury, and unsheathing his sword he ordered general massacre of the inhabitants of the city. Guns were now ordered out and the streets swept with grape shots. "The bloody scene extended from Sarafa Ardu, in front of the fort, to Idgah, which is three Kos distant, and from Chitti Kabar as far as the tobacco market and Pul Mithai. The whole of the Dariba Bazar ran red with the blood .....Neither sex nor age was spared. Before two o'clock in the afternoon, it is computed, between 120,000 and 150,000 were slaughtered". Nobles approached the Shah requesting him to spare the city, saying: "Not a soul has been spared by the avenging sword. If it be thy wish to carry on the work of destruction any further, infuse life into the dead and renew the slaughter." Nadir granted the request.

Regalia of the Mughal Emperor was seized, citizens put under contributions, contributions were levied on the Governors of provinces and Nadir started from Delhi on his journey back home with immense wealth which included gold, silver, jewels, the famous Kohinoor and the other rich stuff. He married his son Nasrullah to the daughter of Aziz ud-din the grandson of Aurangzeb, and himself wanted to marry the beautiful daughter of another noble, Muzaffar, but was prevented from doing so by one of his wives. At the time of his departure, he sent a messenger to Zakhriya Khan

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to pay another crore of rupees which the latter collecting from his nobles and merchants of the city, paid. Before starting on his journey back home, Nadir also collected a large number of “elephants, horses, camels and valuable furniture, and the most skilful workmen and artisans, numbering several hundreds.”

In the confusion that was caused as a result of this invasion of the unfortunate country, the Sikhs were fortunate in having the leaders like Kapur Singh, Bagh Singh and Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Taking an advantage of the situation the Sikhs spread all over the north-east of the Punjab, and carried out their exploits. They built during this period a mud fortress at Dallewal to act for them as a place of refuge and retreat. Situated on the Ravi within dense forests, and commanding a rich and fertile tract, Dallewal offered an excellent situation to the purpose for which it was to be used. The whole of the Upper Bari Doab where Banda had been arrested, was laid under contribution. And when Nadir’s soldiers passed through the Punjab on their journey back home, over-loaded with booty, and walking slowly under the terrible heat of May; the Sikhs fell upon them several times, dispossessing them of a large amount of wealth and setting at liberty many of the Indian artisans and others being carried away as captives.

The Sikhs made their first attack on the Nadir’s rear on a dark night when it was heavily raining, on the bank of the Chenab before Nadir crossed it. And these attacks continued to be made on every second or third night, from different directions, till Nadir left the Indian soil. Being deeply annoyed, Nadir demanded from Zakariya: “Whence come those long-haired barbarians who dare to molest me?” “They are a group of faqirs who visit their Guru’s tank twice a year, and bathing in it they disappear”, came the reply. “Where do they live?” “They live on the saddles of their horses”, was the reply. “Then be careful,” Nadir

1. Ibid, pp. 206-207.
Zakariya Khan took Nadir’s warning to heart, and added a four-fold vigour to his policy of persecutions. Strict orders were issued to officials and headmen not to give refuge to Sikhs, and Adina Beg was specially appointed to exterminate them from the Jullundur Doab. A vigorous campaign was started to hunt them out from the hideouts to which they had been driven. And the governor’s persecutions went to such an extent of fantasy that even the use of the word Gur (molasses) was forbidden lest it should remind one of the Sikh Gurus.

A special mention may here be made of some of the more important sacrifices made by the Sikhs during this time. As a result of the new and more vigorous policy of destroying the Khalsa, every village, every hamlet and every town began to serve as a slaughter house “where God’s innocent creatures were butchered. Every tree served as a gibbet and every dark, neglected well became a Drug into which people, professing the Khalsa faith, or men, suspected of being in sympathy with them, were thrown indiscriminately, and were then left to die of hunger, or be stifled by the foul and poisonous stench. In a surprisingly brief period, the whole land was cleared of the Khalsa.”

One, Bhai Bota Singh, a Sikh belonging to the Majha country, suffered such fate, and homeless he wandered about in jungles to save his life from the persecuting bands. He, however, occasionally visited human habitation in order to get some food. On one such occasion he was noticed by some Zamindars who suspected him to be a Sikh. Bota Singh over heard of them saying that he must be a Behrupia, otherwise a Sikh could not be so coward as to

2. “A dark well where into criminals were thrown to die.”
4. A person following the profession of appearing before people disguised differently, and thus realizing from them petty sums of money as a mark of their appreciation.
move like as he did in disguise. Cut to the quick, Bota Singh immediately decided to do away with his game of hide-and-seek, and occupying a dilapidated inn built by Nur-ud-din near Tarn Taran, he repaired it with the help of a companion and began to work as an inn-keeper. Here, during the day, the two Sikhs supplied food and water to the way-farers, and also levied a tax of one anna for every carriage and a pie for every donkey load that passed by. Besides they received complaints from the Hindu parents regarding forcible snatching away of their children, and other such atrocities visited by the Muslims upon them, and during the night they carried out raids on the Muslims, punished the miscreants and restored the children to their parents.

They, however, could not carry on such activities for long. The matter having been reported to the Lahore governor, a regular regiment was despatched to teach the two Sikhs a lesson. The inn was besieged, but from behind the parapet these two Sikhs are said to have pierced by their arrows many to death, and wounded several others. The account may be exaggerated, but there is no doubt that these two Sikhs put up a valiant fight, and the inn had ultimately to be taken by an assault, the two Sikhs being killed in the fight. This happened in 1739, and the Mughal soldiers returned beating the drums of victory, in their effort to conceal that such large operation had been carried to deal with mere two Sikhs.

Another daring deed was performed by Mehtab Singh and Sukha Singh. After Abdul Rehman had been killed at Amritsar, one Massa Ranger Mandyalia was appointed as the Kotwal of the city. Massa sat inside the temple, and there, with dancing girls to pacify his passion, and wine to quench his thirst, he defiled the sanctity of the place where scriptures used to be read and God used to be praised. The blood-curdling details of such deeds reached the Sikhs in their hide-outs, and sent thrills of horror into their nerves.

The news of this also reached one Mehtab Singh, who during the days of utter persecutions, having left his village Miran Kot near Amritsar, had taken up a service at Bikanir. His spirit revolted within him, and taking with him Sukha Singh of Kamboho Mari he prepared the steeds and galloped towards Amritsar. They purchased a few bags, filled them half with stones and half with coins, and dressing as revenue collectors presented themselves at the gate of the temple demanding permission to enter and present the revenue to Massa. The permission was forthwith granted, and the Sikhs entering Massa’s presence made their obeisance. As Massa bent to receive the money, down came a falchion, and like a flash of lightning Mehtab Singh severed Massa’s head from his body, and the two Sikhs rode back brandishing their swords and leaving behind a mass of terror-stricken attendants and people looking aghast.

Measures were immediately taken to get hold of these daring Sikhs, but they bore no fruit. This happened in 1740. Shortly after, however, when Mehtab Singh visited the village Jandiala to see his son, somebody informed of it to the authorities and Mehtab Singh was captured. His son, a small boy, was snatched away and dashed to the ground, and his dead body was left to be torn away by vultures and kites. Mehtab Singh himself was taken to Lahore where he was crushed on the wheels. Sukha Singh was also shortly after traced out, and done mercilessly to death.

Another martyrdom was that of a boy named Haqiqat Rai, merely seventeen years of age. Haqiqat Rai was born in 1724, and his father Diwan Bagh Mal, an official in a local court, was a well-to-do Khatri of Sialkot. While still young, Haqiqat Rai was married to the beautiful daughter of one Kishan Singh, a well placed Sikh of Batala in the Gurdaspur district. Although not yet baptised, the boy had a zealous and devoted attachment to the Sikh faith. He had been given for some time to the care of a Muslim teacher who one day is said to have passed some disrespectful remarks against Hindu gods. Haqiqat’s feelings were injured, and he did likewise against the character of the Prophet of Islam. The matter became serious, and it being reported to
the local authorities the boy was snatched away from his parents and put under arrest. Due to the influence of his father in the locality, however, the local authorities thought it prudent to take the case to Lahore where it was given over to the Chief Qazi. The boy's father approached Dewan Jaspat Rai, and then Dewan Lakhpat Rai of Lahore to intervene in his behalf, but both the brothers returned only an evasive reply. An influential deputation consisting of Lala Dargahi Mal, Dewan Surat Singh and Jamadar Qasur Beg then waited upon the governor, but here too nothing came out of the efforts. A proof of the prevailing religious depravity and moral bankruptcy was given by the Chief Qazi who in a mock trial sentenced the boy to death. But the boy was not to be executed without the severest tortures. Being chained to a pillar, he was brutally caned. But such was the valour and strength of the boy's spirit that not for a moment did he show any apologetic look. The caning was continued till the boy bled to unconsciousness. He was then executed on the scaffold, and his body was cremated near the mausoleum of Shah Balawal. This happened in 1742.

The boy's father-in-law and other relatives then approached the Khalsa for a retribution. The reply was prompt, and not long after this incident, one night a surprise attack was made and the Muslim teacher with whom the trouble started, was killed. The Chief Qazi who condemned the boy to death, was likewise punished, and the heads of the miscreants were exhibited in the market-place.

Another such illustrious figure which met a similar end was that of Bhai Taru Singh. Taru Singh was an agriculturist of middle class standard at Poola in the Majha country. His crime was that he dared give refuge to some homeless Sikhs who had been under a ban. For some time he seems to have escaped unmolested, till one Bhagat Nirangni, a khatri of his village, reported the case to the authorities out of some enmity with the Bhai. The case soon reached the governor of Lahore, Zakariya Khan himself, who was given an exaggerated account of the Bhai's activities hostile to the State. The Bhai was ordered forthwith to be captured and brought
to Lahore where he plainly admitted of what he had been doing. The order was given that the head of Taru Singh be clean-shaven. The Bhai was chained, and a barber approached him for the purpose. But with a stroke of his head, the Bhai is said by the Sikh accounts to have sent his assailant away whirling on the ground. A shoemaker was then tried to scrape off his head, but he also met a similar fate. A carpenter then cut off Taru Singh’s head with a stroke of his adze, which after this was exhibited in the market-place. This happened in 1743. The story goes further. Immediately after the Bhai’s death, Zakariya Khan is said to have got a severe attack of pain in his kidney, which was attributed “to his unrighteous persecution of Bhai Taru Singh. He sent messengers to the Khalsa asking for forgiveness. For a time, the Khalsa had some respite and were allowed to return to their homes.” This last part of the story may, however, seem difficult to understand; when we know that Zakariya’s policy of relentless persecutions continued even till after his death. Moreover hundreds of Sikhs were being butchered, some of whom often died only a cruel death on the wheel. If Zakariya Khan could see all this done, it should not have been difficult for him to swallow the execution of Bhai Taru Singh as well.

Zakariya Khan continued to live for two years more after this event. And during these two years there seems to have been no slackness in his stern policy of persecuting the Sikhs. But all accounts agree that despite his spending millions of rupees and sacrificing same best of his officers in an effort to annihilate the Sikhs, he ultimately failed in his mission and died on 1st July, 1745 disappointed and dissipated, bequeathing to his children only chaos and confusion.

C - The Punjab under Yahia Khan (1745-47)

Of the three sons of Zakariya Khan, Yahia Khan, the eldest was married to the daughter of the Delhi Prime Minister Qamar-ud-din. The Wazir was, therefore, naturally anxious that Yahia Khan should succeed his father as the

viceroy of Lahore. Muhammad Shah, the Emperor, however, was against permitting the Punjab to become a stronghold of the Turani party, and seems to have appointed Yahiya Khan as in charge of the government only provisionally. Shah Nawaz Khan, faujdar of the Jullundur Doab and a brother of Yahiya Khan, not liking this development attacked his brother, but finally peace having been patched up, he withdrew. In the meanwhile the Delhi Wazir continued his efforts and finally the Emperor did appoint Yahiya Khan, on 3rd January, 1746, as the Deputy Viceroy of the Punjab. \(^1\) Shah Nawaz Khan was not, however, reconciled to his position. Assisted by Kaura Mal, Adina Beg and Hashmatullah Khan, he made another effort on 21st November, 1746, to secure division of his father’s property, and withdrew only after getting six lakhs of rupees from his father’s treasury. But shortly after this he occupied several districts belonging to his brother. Yahia Khan prepared for another fight, the battle was fought near Lahore on 17th March, 1747, but Yahia was captured and Shah Nawaz became the Viceroy of the Punjab, appointing Kaura Mal as his Diwan in place of Lakhpat Rai.

Meanwhile, during the period of the civil war and strife which lasted from 1745 to 1747, and during which Yahia Khan remained in charge of the Punjab Government, writes Anandram, the "peace given by the......rule of Zakariya Khan was destroyed." \(^1\) The Raja of Jammu stopped paying tribute and revolted against the Lahore authorities. The Jat peasantry of the Majha too began openly to defy the authorities and join the Sikhs. Two reasons are given for this, the first being heavy taxation and the second, the maltreatment of the people at the hands of the military contingents pursuing the Sikhs.

**Chhota Ghallughara.**

The Sikhs also took this opportunity and reorganised themselves. The purpose of this was to defend themselves more effectively, and also to defend their relatives who were leading a peaceful life. They also systematised their plunder with a view to gathering political power and territo-

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\(^1\) Anand Ram, *Tazkira-i-Anandram*, p. 289; see also ibid, pp. 150-151.
rial acquisitions. Some officials; the chaudhars and muqaddams etc. who had been taking a more leading part in the execution of the Sikhs: were duly dealt with, and among those who had to pay with their lives for the acts they had performed in the time of Zakariya, were Rama Randhawa, Sahib Rai; Karma Chhina, Qazi Fazi Ahmed Khan, Harbhagat Niranjaniya and Khokhar Shamsher Khan. Some of the towns which were badly plundered by the leadership of Kapur Singh, were Batala, Jullundur, Bijwara, Dhag, Manjki and Phagwara. Once the Sikhs entered even the city of Lahore under the disguise of Mughal soldiers, killed several muftis and qazis and escaped after looting several shops.

Being tired of these depredations Yahia Khan, the Viceroy of Lahore, ordered his Dewan Lakhpat Rai to deal with the Sikhs strongly. Lakhpat Rai sent some strong detachments and expelled the Sikhs who had been hiding in the swamps of the Ravi. The Sikhs moved from here towards Eminabad and hurriedly visiting the Gurdwara Rori Sahib, they left for the village Budoki. Jaspal Rai, the brother of Lakhpat Rai and the faujdar of Eminabad, according to Ali-ud-din, received a complaint that the Sikhs had forcibly captured some sheep and were now cooking their meat. Jaspal Rai sent a message to the Sikhs that they should vacate the territory immediately. The Sikhs, according to Rattan Singh, replied that they had no enmity with him, and that after they had cooked and taken their food they would move away. But to this Jaspal Rai replied that he had been determined rather to destroy their seed, and that there was no question of there being no enmity between him and the Sikhs. As the Sikhs delayed their departure, Jaspal Rai along with his soldiers fell upon them. The Sikhs leaving their un-cooked food where it was, took up the challenge and during the fight which ensued, a Ranjretta Sikh named Nibahu Singh

climbing up the tail of the elephant on which Jaspal Rai was riding, administered him a blow with his sword and severed his head from his body. The head was later handed over by the Sikhs to Bawa Kirpa Ram of Budoki Gosayian, against the payment of five hundred rupees. It hardly needs be added that seeing Jaspal Rai killed, his men fled the field. This event, according to Karam Singh, took place in March, 1746.

When the news of his brother’s death reached Lakhpat Rai at Lahore, he became mad with fury. He immediately determined to destroy the Sikhs root and branch, and issued orders for general massacre of the Sikhs wherever found. Prices were fixed on their heads, and several of the innocent Sikhs in Lahore and in the adjoining territories were captured and butchered. A deputation consisting of Dewan Kaura Mal, Kashmiri Mal, Dewan Lachhi Ram, Hari Singh, Dila Ram, Pandit Surta Ram, Des Raj, Surat Singh and others including Bhai Prithi whom Lakhpat Rai considered as his Guru, waited upon Lakhpat Rai and requested him to desist from shedding innocent blood, but all this had no affect upon him, and the Dewan’s policy of relentless persecution of the Sikhs continued. Troops were collected from several places such as Multan, Bhavalpur, Kasur, Doaba Jullundur and the Hills, big guns were got ready and the Dewan and Yahia Khan prepared to march against the general body of the Sikhs which had taken shelter in the swamps of the Upper Ravi.

The plight of the Sikhs here, at this time, was deplorable. They were suffering from a general shortage of provisions and ammunition, many among them were wounded, and the wild game getting scarce, the Sikhs suffered from starvation. Hearing of Lakhpat Rai’s relentless order

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4. Gian Singh, Shamsheer Khalsa, Sialkol, 1892 ed. pp. 102-103; Latif, op. cit., p. 213. They must have been only the Sikhs with shaven heads, or the sehjdaris, for the others could not live peacefully and innocently so near the seat of the enemy’s power.
and brutal massacres, several of the booty-lovers among them cut off their hair and deserted their ranks. All that remained behind however was true Khalsa, ready to lay down their lives at the bidding of their leaders; but general lack of provisions among them had made many of them less fit to fight through the situation when the whole governmental machinery had been moved against the Khalsa.

Lakhpat Rai and Yahiya Khan, after making all their preparations, attacked them suddenly. The Sikhs retreated and halted on the spurs of the Basholi hills on the Ravi between Pathankot and Dalhousie. Here the Sikhs were surrounded, on one side of them lay hills to the chiefs of which the orders had been issued not to let the Sikhs escape; on an other side lay the river with a strong current making it very difficult to cross. On the rest of the two sides the soldiers of Lakhpat Rai stood with their naked swords and guns ready to fire. An attack was delivered, many were killed, many taken captives, many fell into the Ravi, many jumped into wells to escape tortures if captured and many shaved their heads and escaped. Of those captured, many were subjected to unspeakable tortures, their hair were pulled and they were crushed on the wheels. Some of the Sikhs had escaped towards the Beas. Even after destroying many thousands of them, Lakhpat Rai's thirst for their blood had not been quenched, and he pursued them thither. The Sikhs, after crossing the river at Goindwal, which was in spate, tied turbans on their feet and crossing three miles of very hot sand entered the Jullundur Doab, and had just halted near a village to cook their food when Lakhpat Rai fell upon them once again. Leaving everything there, the Sikhs fled onwards, and crossing the river Sutlej they entered the Malwa where the Malwa Sikhs sympathised with them and they secured a respite.

This event in which the Sikhs suffered such a heavy loss, is known in their history as Chhota Ghalughara, or the Smaller Holocaust, which is said to have occurred in the beginning of the hot month of May, 1746. According to
Rattan Singh, the total number of the Sikhs destroyed in this holocaust was about 40,000. But this seems to be an exaggeration. According to Dr. Ganda Singh, between nine and ten thousands were martyred, about ten or eleven thousand Sikhs were lost; while about one thousand of them were captured, brought to Lahore, and beheaded near Ghora Mandi outside the Delhi gate the place which later on began to be called Shahid Gunj.

**D—The Punjab Under Shahnawaz Khan and the Sikh Respite (1747–48)**

As we have already seen Yahiya Khan could enjoy the control of the Lahore Government only from 1745 to 1747. In the latter year he was over-thrown by his own brother Shahnawaz Khan who, with the help of Kaura Mal and some other friends, now became the Governor of Lahore, appointing Kaura Mal as his Dewan. Kaura Mal though a Hindu, had a strong sympathy with the Sikhs, and as soon as he came to power the persecution of the Sikhs was slackened, and Kapur Singh got an opportunity to gather the scattered Sikh energy once again and put their house in order. More so when the Punjab was attacked by Ahmad Shah Abdali, resulting in a confusion from which the Sikhs benefited. A short account of the first invasion of Abdali may here be given.

**E—The First Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali**

Ahmad Shah Abdali belonged to the Sadozal clan of Afghanistan, and regarding his exact date of birth not enough is known. The people of his tribe were generally known as Abdalis, or the servants of Ali, as they had formerly embraced the shia faith, though later on they were converted into the Sunni beliefs. Ahmad Shah was the son of Zaman Khan and when his elder brother who was in the service of Nadir Shah, reached a position of eminence, he also secured a job for his younger brother; and Ahmad soon showing a marked personal gallantry, became Nadir Shah's personal slave. After some time

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Ahmad was raised to the command of 1,000 men, and due to his faithfulness and honest disposition, when Nadir Shah invaded India he appointed him the Chief Commander of his personal contingent of 6,000 men. An interesting story is told by some writers; according to whom, when at Delhi, Ahmad happened to meet Asaf Jah, the founder of the Hyderabad State who possessed the faculty of reading men’s faces. He predicted that Ahmad Durrani would become one day a King.¹ It proved correct, and soon after when Nadir Shah was murdered, Ahmad took the opportunity, he collected power and became king. He is said to have been the first Afghan king who laid the foundation of an independent Afghan kingdom in Afghanistan.

Several reasons have been forwarded which led Ahmad Shah to invade India for the first time. Firstly Ahmad Shah Abdali, also known as Durrani, was an upstart and immediately after coming to power he had to divert the attention of the Afghans, lest they should fall on him. Moreover the Afghans have always been considered to be a turbulent mass of humanity; they delighted in adventures in the distant lands. Ahmed Shah had raised large armies the maintenance of which was telling heavily on the State exchequer, and India which was known for her silver and gold, offered prospects good enough to relieve the Shah of his financial worries.

Just when Ahmad Shah himself wanted to invade India as a measure which could solve all his problems, he got an invitation from Shahnawaz Khan, the Governor of Lahore, promising him every help if he invaded. Shahnawaz’s capture of power in the Punjab had not been liked by Qamar-ud-din, the Delhi Wazir who wanted to restore Yahiya Khan, his son-in-law, to the Lahore government. The Wazir threatened Shahnawaz who in turn appealed to Ahmad Shah Abdali for a help and invited him to invade the country.

But as Ahmad Shah entered India, the Wazir prevailed upon Shahnawaz not to be a traitor to his country, and the

¹ Mohd. Saleh Kudrat, Turikh-i-Ali, p. 121.
latter now turned against Durrani. Shahnawaz sent an army against Abdali under the command of Julle Khan Kasuriya, but Kasuriya joined Abdali instead and defeated Shahnawaz's purpose. As Ahmad Shah was marching ahead, Shahnawaz prepared to check him on the Ravi, but failed. Ahmad Shah crossed the Ravi on the 10th and 11th of January, 1748 and started plundering the Mughalpura mohulla of Lahore, while Shahnawaz leaving the city to its fate, fled on the night of 11th January to Delhi.1

Buried in romance, the Emperor Muhamad Shah Rangila came to his senses only now, and he sent his Wazir Qamar-ud-din with two lakh soldiers, to meet Ahmad Shah. The Wazir soon reached Sarhind where in the fort he placed his harem women and his provisions etc. and here now he committed some blunders which proved simply fatal for him. He did not cross the river Sutlej on the direct route at Ludhiana, but moved instead twenty miles north-west of Sarhind and crossed it at Machhiwara, God knows on what considerations. Besides he failed to understand the necessity of maintaining communication with Sarhind, nor did he post any strong guards at Ludhiana. He made no arrangement for the collection of intelligence regarding the movements of the enemy.

On the other hand, the Wazir's enemy was wise. Ahmad Shah crossed the river unopposed at Ludhiana, occupied and plundered Sarhind. When the Wazir learnt of it, he retraced his steps and returned to Manupur, about ten miles north-west of Sarhind. Abdali marched about five miles from Sarhind towards his enemy. For some days there occurred some skirmishes between the two opposing armies, till at last on the 10th of March, 1748 a cannon shot suddenly struck the Wazir, and he died. His son Muin-ul-Mulk, however, took up the command, and placing his father's dead body in a sitting pose, on an elephant, to show his soldiers that he

was still alive, he led the attack. The right wing of the attacking army was under the control of Safdar Jung, the left wing under Ishwari Singh, and the centre under Muin himself. Ahmad Shah here showed a strange tactic of war. Ten thousand Durrani horses appeared suddenly, attacked each wing and then retired yielding their position to a fresh ten thousand. As a result of this the left wing of Muin's army gave way, and a large number of Rajputs met their death. The centre, however, remaining strong the Durrani were driven away by the right wing. Just this time, fortunately for Muin, Abdali's store of gunpowder caught fire, as a result of which about one thousand Afghans are said to have been killed, causing a general confusion in their ranks, and the Durrani fled the battle-field.

Such was, however, the callousness of the Imperial commanders that they took no advantage of the enemy's discomfiture, and buried themselves in pleasures and romance. The credit of this victory was given to Muin ul-mulk, the son of the late Wazir Qamar-ud-din. And on the 13th of April, 1748, he was appointed the viceroy of Lahore and Multan. He was also granted the title of Rustam-i-Hind. Shortly after this, however, the Emperor Muhammad Shah died. ¹

The Sikhs Re-occupy Amritsar

During this time of confusion and chaos in the Panjab, the Sikhs took full advantage of the situation. We have seen how after the execution of Bhai Mani Singh, the Amritsar temple had been placed under the occupation of the Government troops. The first man in charge of this occupation was Qazi Abdul Rehman Khan and the next was Massa Rangar, both of whom had been dealt by the Khalsa to death. After this several other persons had been appointed to this post which now, towards the end of 1747, was occupied by a Rajput Muslim named Salabat Khan. As the opportunity offered itself as a result of the invasion of Abdali, Kapur

Singh called a meeting of the two Dals in which it was decided that Salabat Khan should be attacked. Kapur Singh who now was getting too old, appointed Jussa Singh Ahluwalia as the leader of this expedition, and himself also accompanied him to help in the task. In the month of March, 1748 just as the battle at Manupur was going on, the Sikhs fell upon the Mughal troops at Amritsar. As Salabat Khan himself came out of his garhi to encourage his soldiers in the fight, Jussa Singh proceeded forward and in a moment's time struck his head off his body. Salabat’s nephew Nizabat Khan proceeded to attack Jussa Singh, but Kapur Singh dashing to the spot did the nephew too to death. After this the enemy soldiers fled leaving a large store of their weapons and ammunition of war inside the precincts of the temple which now fell into the Sikh hands. The temple was repaired and now a regular Sikh worship started for the first time after several years.

Sikhs Build the Fort of Ram Rauni

After Amritsar had been re-occupied by the Sikhs, messages were sent to the scattered Jathas of the Sikhs to arrive at Amritsar to celebrate the Baisakhi of 1748. Soon all the Jathas including those of Sham Singh Karor Singhia, Sukha Singh Mari Kamboh, Charat Singh Sukerchakia, Khusal Singh and Hari Singh Bhangi reached, and here it was proposed that the Sikhs must have a fort of their own where from they should be able to face their enemy, instead of running away to jungles and deserts. The proposal was accepted. The next problem was the choice of the site. After some discussions it was agreed that a small fort should be built in Amritsar itself. There were reasons for this. Amritsar was considered to be Guru-ki-Kashi where every Sikh thought it a privilege to die. Moreover Amritsar was the centre of the Majha country, the real home of the Sikhs; and besides it was surrounded by thick forests of Palas trees to which in emergency the Sikhs could retreat. From here they could also watch closely the movements at Lahore. Although the

1. See Griffin, Chiefs of the Punjab, p. 457; Latif, op. cit., p. 315.
2. See Ithas Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, pp. 41-42.
city had a demerit as well, as it lay on the Grand Trunk road, and very near Lahore the seat of the provincial government wherefrom the enemy forces could easily march and attack the Sikhs, yet its merits over-weighed its demerits and the construction of the fort was started forthwith.

There was no need of calling the aid of any architects and masons etc. Several among the Khalsa knew all these arts, as Rattan Singh Bhangu writes:

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'अभिन नाम सिन्ह अभिन भजन।
वंड dibinti रिक वे मुझ ॥१५॥
अभिन जीवन अभिन धाक्के।
ढ़ ढ़ बड़े सत्राङ बजाये।
सोंंट बड़े सिच बड़े बह।
पूर २ बड़े सिम सिम संग ॥१५॥
बड़ी बड़े तृ बिली तली।
बड़ी हर मुलहे छत्र हिम सो बह।
देख पत्रहे टकटक टक।
सिन बेचुर मूं बेचुर धौ। ॥१५॥
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No wonder, it was not long before the fort, which had the capacity of accommodating about 500 soldiers, was completed. According to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, the fort was built in March-April, 1747. But Dr. Ganda Singh forwards some very cogent arguments which are more acceptable, to prove that it was built in 1748 instead. The fort was named Ram Rauni after the name of Guru Ram Das.

**Dal Khalsa Organised**

On the day of Baisakhi, in 1748, yet another important development took place. The Sikhs had by this time developed among them as many as 65 Jathas or sections, each under its respective leader. These Jathas operated separately,
uniting together only very rarely as in the First Holocaust. There was the possibility of mutual jealousies and differences developing among them, and unless they were brought together under a common leadership the Khalsa was bound to scatter to different directions. "Luckily for the Sikhs, a very capable leader who commanded high respect from all the Sikhs and who possessed remarkable power of organisation had appeared among them. This was Jussa Singh Ahluwalia," writes Dr. Gupta, "who had received his training under the famous leader Nawab Kapur Singh. The Nawab was the most venerable Sikh leader. Owing to the constant help and guidance of the Nawab and his own sterling virtues, Jussa Singh Ahluwalia had come to occupy a very prominent position among the Sikh leaders. The Nawab was growing old and he wanted to give the leadership of the warlike Khalsa to somebody else. He had his eye on the promising Jussa Singh and he was on the look-out for an opportunity to do so."

The opportunity offered itself when the entire Khalsa met together on the day of Baisakhi, in 1748. The Nawab appealed to them for solidarity. His proposals were accepted, and all the sixty-five Jathas of the Sikhs were brought together and re-divided into eleven sections, each under its own leader and with its own title and banner. These eleven sections together were named as Dal Khalsa, the Supreme Command of which under the appeal of the Nawab was given to Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. The eleven sections or Jathas thus organised were: 1. Ahluwalia Jatha; under Jussa Singh Ahluwalia; 2. Bhangi, under Hari Singh Bhangi; 3. Dallewal, under Gulab Singh of village Dallewal; 4. Faizullahpura or Singhpuria, under Nawab Kapur Singh himself; 5. Kanheya, under Jai Singh Kanheya; 6. Karor Singlia, under Karora Singh; 7. Nakai under Hira Singh Nakai; 8. Nishanwala, under Dasaudha Singh; 9. Ramgarhia, under Nand Singh Sanghania; 10. Shahidi, under Dip Singh; 11. and Sukerchakia, under Nodhi Singh.

Rules and constitution were drafted for the conduct of their affairs and it was laid down that the entire Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh were the members of the Dal, but that none could be admitted into an active service unless he possessed a horse of his own. Each person had a freedom to join any of the eleven Jathas. When all the eleven Jathas came together to fight, the body would be known as Dal Khalsa and would be led by Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. The entire Khalsa under the eleven sections, would assemble at least twice a year at Amritsar, when the assembly would be called Sarbat Khalsa.

The Sarbat Khalsa, or the entire body of the Sikhs, was to be the central body, meetings of which would be called by Akalis at Amritsar. The Sarbat Khalsa was to pass the resolutions and lay down a general policy to be followed by the Khalsa. Another of its duties was the propagation of the Sikh faith. Disobedience to the rules and the constitution of the Dal was to be punished by the Sarbat Khalsa.

Leader of the Dal Khalsa was the head of the Sikh Church and State. In each of the sections its chief was to be supreme who was to be obeyed by its members though not against the interests of the Khalsa as a whole. It was the duty of each chief to look after and fulfil the requirements of his followers.

The entire Dal was to fight as a body, all the booty which fell to its hands was to be equitably distributed among the eleven sections in proportion to their strength. The chief of each section was then to distribute the booty further among his men. When a section carried out some exploit separately, the booty falling into the hands of its chief was likewise to be distributed by him among his followers.

The organisation of the Dal Khalsa is a landmark in the history of the Punjab. Besides giving the Sikhs an efficient organisation, it was destined to clear the way to Sikh political power, as the study of the subsequent chapters will reveal.
This also marked almost the end of the career of the great Sikh hero Nawab Kapur Singh. Although he continued to live till the year 1753, yet he now retired from the active leadership of the Khalsa, leaving it entirely in the young hands of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Before starting the new chapter of this history, which will be marked by the daring deeds of the Ahluwalia Sardar who led the Khalsa from victory to victory, and ultimately to a Sikh political power; it would be appropriate to have a short review of the activities of the illustrious Nawab who brought his community from the leaderless state to a glorious future of national integrity and pride.

F—An Estimate of Kapur Singh.

Latif writes about him: "The Dal of the Khalsa, or the army of the theocracy of Singhhs......reached the height of their power under the leadership of Kapur Singh, who really organised this Dal......He was undoubtedly the most distinguished of the Sikh leaders who paved the way for the greatness of the nation as an independent ruling power......He converted a large number of people, Jats, carpenters, weavers, Jhivers, Chhahiris and others to the persuasion of Govind, and the religious respect in which he was held was so great, that initiation into the Pahal of the Guru with his hands was considered a great distinction. He used to pride himself upon having killed 500 Moham-medans with his own hand......He was certainly the most illustrious and most dreaded of the Sikh Sardars before the days of Jassa Singh, Ahluwalia, and Ala Singh of Patiala. Nawab Kapur Singh died at Amritsar in 1753......He called Jassa Singh to him on his death bed and, making over to him the steel mace\(^1\) of Govind......hailed him as the future leader of the Khalsa, and as his successor to the influence which he exercised over the community of the Khalsa.\(^2\)

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2. Which he got from Sundari, the wife of Guru Gobind Singh, and which is said yet to be seen in the Akal Bunga at Amritsar.
Handsome, tall and possessing a vigorous personality, there was not a part of the Nawab’s body two inches wide which did not bear a scar or mark of a wound. Kapur Singh was a great organiser who by organising the Sikhs first into Budha and Taruna Dals, and then into the great Dal Khalsa, brought all the sections together, but for which the Khalsa should have scattered into petty groups unable to come together and carve out a national glory. As a preacher too, as Latif has been quoted above, the Sikhs have much to be obliged to him. It was a privilege to be baptised at his hands, and thousands were the persons who were brought by him into the Sikh faith. It was Kapur Singh who brought the Sikhs out of a state of confusion and disorganisation and under a life of utter poverty and want it was he who gave them a new language in which the most humble of the articles of use became the most privileged of a Sikh’s possessions. And above all, the greatest service rendered by him to the Khalsa at the time was, that although he ruled their destiny in the most effective manner, yet he did not permit its leadership to become personal and hereditary. He left their command into the most capable hands of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, and paved the way for their further glory and greatness.

CHAPTER XXIII

MUIN-UL-MULK, DURRANI AND THE SIKHS
(1748—53)

With the year 1748 a new chapter begins in the history of the Punjab. Prior to this the contest in the Punjab lay between two powers, namely the Mughal government and the Sikhs. With the year 1748, however, the invasions of Ahmad Shah Durrani brought one more power into the field and the contest now became triangular, in which ultimately the Sikhs came out victorious. In 1748 the Sikh leadership passed into the hands of the youthful Ahluwalia Sardar, Jussa Singh; Ahmad Shah led his first invasion of India and Muin-ul-Mulk better known as Mir Mannu became the Governor of the Punjab.

A—Against the Sikhs.

When Muin became Governor of the Punjab in April, 1748 after he had secured from Abdali a victory for the Emperor of India, as discussed in the last chapter, there were several problems that awaited him to be solved. The civil war which preceded him, had denuded the Lahore treasury. The Durrani invasion brought in confusion and insecurity, much so when Shahnawaz Khan the preceding Governor had fled to Dehli, leaving the Punjab to its fate. Nor did Muin have a peace on his front towards Delhi. Safdar Jang, the new Wazir of Delhi, was determined to ruin the influence of the Turani party, and was the last person to permit Muin to rule the Punjab in peace.

On the other hand, the most serious challenge came to his authority from the Sikhs. The Sikhs, during the confusion caused by the Durrani invasion, had re-occupied Amritsar; they had given to themselves a fort named Ram Rauni;
and they plundered the Bari and the Rechna Doabs making themselves masters of a considerable part of the province. The Sikhs also fell upon the retreating Durrani forces from March 18 to March 26, 1748, and dispossessed them of much of their valuable possessions. They had given themselves a more efficient and an effective organisation, and their rising power was a serious problem for Mir Mannu to face.

Almost the first thing, therefore, after Mannu became the Governor of the Punjab, was that he should prepare to annihilate the Sikhs to a man. Latif writes: "He then stationed detachments of troops in all parts populated by the Sikhs with stringent orders to shave their heads and beards wherever they might be found.......Mir Mannu issued strict orders to the Hill Rajas to seize the Sikhs and send them in iron chains to Lahore. These orders were obeyed and hundreds of Sikhs were brought daily to Lahore and butchered at the Nakhas, or Shahid Ganj, outside the Delhi Gate, in sight of multitudes of spectators. The young Mannu became an irreconcilable foe of the Sikhs and was determined to extirpate the nation."¹

At the time of his becoming the Governor the Sikhs had evacuated the Bari Doab and entered the Jullundur Doab. Adina Beg the Faujdar of the latter Doab was ordered to march against them, but this man had his own political axe to grind, for which he wanted to use the Sikhs as a tool.² Soon, however, having received strict orders to do the job he had been assigned, Adina attacked the Sikhs but suffered a terrible loss, though among the Sikhs too not less than 600 were killed. Adina applied to Lahore for a reinforcement, but in the meanwhile the operations had to be suspended due to the rains; the Sikhs too during this period becoming peaceful.

In the month of October the Sikhs met for Dewali at Amritsar, but lest they should be taken by surprise they put five hundred men in the Ram Rauni fort, and some

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¹. Latif, op. cit., p. 221.
². See chapter xxvi of this book.
hid in the neighbouring jungle. The expected soon happened. The fort was suddenly surrounded by Adina Bag and Sadik Beg; and Mannu also issued prompt orders to Dewan Kaura Mal, Mirza Aziz Khan Bakhshi, Sarir Ali Khan Jullundri and some Hill chiefs to bring their forces and help Adina. Inside the fort were only 500 Sikhs, while outside of it many thousands of the enemy stood. The siege continued for four months, during which small groups of Sikhs occasionally sallied out causing a havoc in the enemy ranks. Their number however thinned, and they were now left with only 300 men. Before their fight with Adina Beg in the Jullundur Doab had commenced, several Sikhs under the leadership of Jussa Singh Thoka (Ramgarhia) had joined the services of Adina as a result of his appeals. Now one night just as the remaining three hundred Sikhs were preparing for a 'do or die', seeing his co-religionists in this plight Thoka deserted Adina and entered the fort. From inside the fort Thoka appealed to Kaura Mal who had at his heart only friendly feelings for the Khalsa, to save the Sikhs.

In the meanwhile some more serious developments took place elsewhere. Shahnawaz Khan encouraged and helped by Safdar Jung, the Delhi Wazir, marched on Multan and occupied it, and now prepared to march on Lahore. On the other hand the news regarding the second invasion of Abdali also began to reach Lahore just as the Ram Rauni was put under a siege. Under these circumstances, though a little more effort and the Sikhs inside the fort could have been taken, Kaura Mal persuaded Mannu to raise the siege and rather help the Sikhs with the grants of Jagirs to settle them as peaceful citizens of the State. The Mughal forces were thus withdrawn from Amritsar, and preparations started to meet the challenge from Shahnawaz and the Durrani.¹

Under the advice of Kaura Mal, Mannu granted the Sikhs 1/4 of the revenue of the pargana of Patti. The confiscated revenue of the twelve villages of Guru

¹. Khushwakat Rai, Tarikh-i-Sikhan, pp. 67-68; Sohan Lal, Umdat-ut-Tarikh, i, p. 129; Tarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana, p. 248.
Chak¹ was also restored to them, and thus peace reigned among the Sikhs for some time again.

B—The Second Durrani Invasion

The second invasion of the Durrani has been placed by Dr. Hari Ram Gupta between December, 1749 and February, 1750.² But this does not seem correct. According to Umdat-ut-Twarikh³ which is a more reliable account, Durrani invaded the Punjab just eight or nine months after his first invasion, which means the second invasion took place towards the end of 1748, or just in the beginning of 1749. This is also supported by the Tarikh-i-Sulatin Afghana.⁴

Abdali crossed the Indus for the second time and encamped his soldiers at Kopra. Mannu also marched from this side and encamped at Sodhara, four miles east of Wazirabad. Abdali addressed Mannu a letter, demanding the assignment of the parganas of four Mahals to him, and also claiming the arrears of their revenue since Nadir Shah's invasion of India. The letter was forwarded by Mannu to Delhi, and he sought thereby time to make himself ready to meet the invader. In the meanwhile he also wrote for a reinforcement from the Centre. But to his utter surprise, the Emperor actually granted what the Durrani had demanded. Revenue of four Mahals was yielded and to meet the demand for the arrears, Mannu was ordered also to yield the revenue of Pasur, Gujrat, Sialkot and Aurangabad which amounted to fourteen lakhs of rupees. And thus after forming an estimate of the strength of Mannu, Durrani retired but to come back again.

If the account and the date of the Durrani's second invasion as given above, is accepted,³ Dr. Gupta's claim⁴ that the Sikhs plundered and burnt down some outer

2. Gupta, op. cit., i, p. 64.
5. And we find no reason why it should not be accepted.
portions of Lahore during the second invasion, will automatically fall to the ground. The Sikhs were yet under a siege at Amritsar, which was raised only during the time when negotiations with the Durrani should have been going on. At this time it would naturally be too much to expect the Sikh to have invaded Lahore. Moreover, the fact that after the siege was raised the Sikhs continued for some time to have friendly relations with Mannu seems to be accepted by Dr. Gupta himself when he agrees that the Sikhs helped Mannu against Shahnawaz Khan, an account of which follows.

After the invasion of Abdali Mannu had to face two more problems. Shahnawaz Khan the ex-Governor of Lahore was appointed as a result of Safdar Jung's effort, as we have seen, to the Governorship of Multan where the former already had a considerable influence due to his old contacts at the place. Shahnawaz marched his forces and occupied Multan. On the other hand Nasir Khan, the ex-Governor of Kabul, was also encouraged by Safdar Jang to revolt. Nasir Khan had been expelled from the Governorship of Kabul during the first Durrani invasion, but had been helped by Mannu and made the Governor of the four Mahals. Instigated by Safdar Jang who is also said to have promised him his appointment as the Governor of Lahore if he could defeat Mannu, Nasir Khan collected about eighteen thousand cavalry soldiers and began to plan an invasion. He also seduced one thousand of Mannu's soldiers with a promise to give them emoluments higher than what they were getting.

Deciding to meet first the challenge of Nasir, Mannu marched with Adina Beg, Mir Mehdi Ali Khan, Mohammad Moman Khan, Dewan Kaura Mal, Mir Bhikhari Khan, Razi Beg Khan and Mir Nehmat Khan and encamped at a distance of about seven miles from Sialkot. Nasir also proceeded thither but in the battle that ensued he was defeated and he fled towards Delhi. In September, 1749 Kaura Mal and Mirza Asmat Khan, formerly the

Dewan and the Bakhshi respectively of Shahnawaz Khan, were ordered to march against Multan. In the earlier stages the Dewan not finding it easy to meet Shahnawaz Khan, he took the permission of Mannu and invited the Sikhs to help. The Sikhs had a special consideration for Kaura Mal for the reasons we have already discussed. Ten thousand of them therefore marched under Jussa Singh Ahluwalia to the help of the Dewan; their expenses having already been paid by the Government in advance. The battle was fought, in which Shahnawaz was killed and his head was brought to Lahore where, over-pleased with the services of the Dewan, Mannu appointed him as Subordinate-Governor of Multan. It was during this campaign that the Dewan whose name was Kaura Mal, began to be termed by the Sikhs as the Dewan Mitha Mal.

Thus, for sometime peace continued to rule between Mannu and the Sikhs. But they both detested each other and continued their preparations for a war. Artillery had always been effective against the Sikhs, and Mannu strengthened it during this period. For this purpose a new type of light guns known as Jizaires were manufactured, and 900 gunners were added to the service of the State. The Sikhs also had not been able to reconcile themselves to the changed state of affairs. It is said, whenever they met together they would condemn themselves for accepting doles from the Government which they had been determined to destroy. Moreover, Dal Khalsa had been organised but its full advantage had not yet been taken by the Sikhs. But before the Sikhs themselves could plan any exploit against Mannu, it was the latter who took an initiative and fell upon the former.

Seeing the rising influence of the Sikhs, and having already solved the more serious problems of the State else-

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1. Mitha means sweet, while Kaura signifies something bitter to taste.
where, Mannu ordered once again for the Sikhs to be driven out of every town and every village. The Sikhs moved to the swamps of the rivers Sutlej, Beas and Ravi. They were unwilling to move farther away, because they wanted to remain near Amritsar where they could have an occasional dip and enliven their spirits. But pursued by Mannu’s troops under Mir Amanullah and Mumin Khan, many Sikhs had to retire to the deserts of Malwa and Bikaner, and to the forests of the Eastern Punjab. The Sikhs bore all this, however, with a cheerful resignation, and many Jats rather joined them anew to escape molestation at the hands of the authorities due to non-payment of heavy taxes. Regarding the life of a Sikh during this period, writes G. R. C. Williams: his “endurance and rapidity of movement were quite commensurate with his rapacity, enabling him to baffle, if not defy, superior numbers. At a pinch, he could march some twenty or thirty miles a day on no better fare than a little parched gram washed down with pure cold water. A tent he despised, baggage... he had none. Besides his weapons his whole kit consisted of horse-gear, a few of the simplest cooking utensils, and two blankets, one for himself, and another for his faithful steed... in the strife of men contending hand to hand he was terrible, though helpless against good artillery.”

C—The Third Durrani Invasion

In 1751, due to the non-remittance of the promised revenue to the Abdali the latter sent his agent Harun Khan to Mir Mannu. But before the agent could return, he sent two of his generals, namely Abdul Khan and Jahan Khan to Attock where they started preparing a bridge on the river Attock. Towards the close of November, 1751 Ahmad Shah Abdali himself arrived in Peshawar, and sent a message to Mannu that he should pay him the last three years’ arrears of the revenue of four Mahals which amounted to twenty four lakhs of rupees, on the receipt of which he would retire. Mir Mannu, however, sent him only nine lakhs saying that the four Mahals had remained under his direct control only for

one year, for which the revenue was being remitted. The remaining two years' revenue had been mis-appropriated by Nasir who now had fled to Delhi. Abdali accepted nine lakhs, but still continued his march.

On this side Mannu also made his preparations. He sent his family away to Jammu, and himself crossing the Ravi at the head of 30,000 horse and foot and 40 guns, took up his position on the river at the Shah Daula Bridge which was 22 miles above Lahore. Abdali also reached the place. Here there were some skirmishes, but one day having recourse to a clever strategem, Abdali left his camp within Mannu's sight, but himself cut his rear and walking a long distance suddenly reached Lahore where encamping at the Dera of Shah Bilawal he began to plunder the surrounding areas. When Mannu heard of it, he hastened back and entrenched himself within the city. He was besieged, and the siege continued for four months during which the Durrani soldiers laid waste the entire country within fifty miles' radius around the city. This resulted into such a scarcity of grain and other things that wheat began to sell at two seers for a rupee, and no house was left with a wherewithal to light even a lamp. Kaura Mal once again invited the Sikh to help. And Mannu also addressed himself to them promising rich rewards if they came to his rescue. Thirty thousand Sikhs marched to their aid, but there were dissensions in their ranks due to which about ten thousand immediately went back, and the rest too, with an ill-planned strategy and the lack of a proper leadership, failed to give an account which was expected of them. We do not hear Jussa Singh himself having come to Mannu's aid.

When the provisions failed, Mannu had ultimately to leave his trenches, resulting into an engagement with the invaders on the 5th March 1752. In this Kaura Mal, due to the selfish tricks of Adina Beg, was ultimately killed, which brought about a panic and Mannu was forced to yield himself to Ahmad Shah. This last battle in which Dewan Kaura Mal was killed, was fought near the village Mahmud Buti, on the north-east of Shalimar. Mannu was produced before Ahmad Shah to whom in reply to a question, as according
to some writers, he replied: "If you are a shopkeeper, sell me; if you are a butcher, kill me; but if you are a king, then grant me your grace and pardon." Impressed by the manly build of this youth, and courageous and such brave heart, the Durrani pardoned him and conferring on him the title of Rustam-i-Hind, appointed him in his own behalf as the Governor of Lahore. A letter was sent to Ahmad Shah the Emperor of Delhi asking his approval of the treaty signed between Mannu and the Durrani. The approval was duly given, and thus did Lahore and Multan pass into the hands of the Durrani. This happened on 13th April, 1752.

After this the Durrani sent his forces to conquer Kashmir where the nominee of Delhi was removed and Sukhjiwan Mal the nominee of the Durrani was appointed Governor. Ahmad Shah Abdali now retired to his country.1

The Durrani's invasion gave another long sought opportunity to the Sikhs. The whole of the Bari Doab was sacked by them, and the Mohammedan families of note who had played any part against the Sikhs, were plundered. After this they entered the Jullundur Doab. Adina Beg's departure from Lahore was made a full use of and the Sikhs plundered the country even as far as Thanesar across the Sutlej. The Rechna and the Chaj Doabs also could not escape their depredations.

After the retirement of the Durrani, Mannu once again diverted his attention towards the Sikhs, and this time his retaliation against them was yet more brutal. Prices were once again laid on the heads of the Sikhs, and strict orders were passed against giving refuge to them anywhere. When the Sikhs met for Baisakhi at Makhowal, Adina Beg and Sadiq Beg suddenly fell upon them and did many of them to death. Mir Mumin was sent to drive out the Sikhs from the Lakhi jungles, but he having failed another force was sent under the command of Hussain Khan who was able to engage the Sikhs in an open fight wherein the latter, due

to a shortage of supply and an unequal numerical strength, were defeated.

When all the Sikhs could not be drawn out from their hideouts, orders were issued for the capture of their women and children. Hundreds of them were thus collected and subjected to the unspeakable tortures, great partiality being invariably shown for the young women whom no stone was left unturned to make a victim of the captors' passion. About three hundred of such women and one hundred children were once thus captured and imprisoned in a building outside the Delhi gate of Lahore. Here, according to the Sikh chronicles, frantic appeals were made to them by Mannu to accept Islam. But when not one swerved from her determination, Mannu ordered that each one of the women should be given one and a quarter of maund of grains every day to grind, and if any one did not do her work properly she was to be caned. The children were snatched away from their breasts and thrown up like balls, to fall upon spears and other sharp weapons. They were cut to pieces before their mothers, and their flesh was thrown into the mothers' laps.¹

But such was the iron-spirit of the Sikh women and their men, that harder Mannu grew against them, the bolder they became. During this period of brutal persecutions the membership of Dal Khalsa rather increased, and the Sikhs would repeat the following couplet which means that Mannu was their sickle and the Sikhs his grass blades, the more he cut them, the more they grew in every hamlet and house:

मैं भी भी भी भी भी खुमरी,  
अमृत भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी

फिरू फिरू भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी

मैं भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी भी

The Sikh persecutions at the hands of Mannu, however, could not continue for long. For soon he died a premature death on 3rd November, 1753, as a result of a riding acci-

dent. And when the Sikhs got the news of his death in their retreats, on 9th November, 1753 a strong Sikh detachment appeared in Lahore. "The Khalsa ladies were rescued and escorted to their home. The informers, officials and jagirdars who had helped in the arrest of the ladies, were caught hold of, and were all put to the sword.........The Turks of Pathankot, the Jat informers of Majitha, and Mahant Akil Das of Jandiala, were similarly chastised." And thus did the Sikhs pay the miscreants in their own coins.

Mannu thus completely failed in his policy of annihilating the Sikhs. And there is no doubt that his keeping of a large army for the purpose was itself a very potent cause leading to his failure. His large army entailed upon him a very heavy expenditure, and to meet this he had to squeeze the people of their blood. Not few were thus alienated, and only because of this reason they joined the Sikhs swelling their ranks. Moreover during his time, due to his engagements with Abdali and in some other serious problems, the State failed in giving full protection of law to the people. This was given to the people rather by the Sikhs who heard complaints against the corrupt and ruthless officials and meted out due punishments to them. All this and the daring spirit of the Sikhs and their rich and valorous tradition, made their faith more attractive, and a large number of converts came to join the Khalsa every day; even when they knew that they thus would plunge themselves into a trouble which was only the thickest ever in a career that was the privilege only of the brave.

CHAPTER XXIV

LAHORE GOVERNORS, DURRANI AND THE SIKHS

A—Mughlani Begum and Confusion

Immediately after the death of Mir Mannu, the Land of the Five Rivers was thrown into the trough of such a confusion and chaos of conflicting political claims and nagging governmental interests as had never in the Mughal times been seen before. Mannu died in November, 1753, and from that time to April, 1757, as many as ten Governors changed hands at Lahore. It resulted into an utter weakness of the authorities in the capital so that every man in the street began to develop his own ambition, and centrifugal tendencies began to have their full play.

Although, as we discussed in the last chapter, the Punjab had been annexed to his own empire by Ahmad Shah Abdali during his third invasion, and Mannu had been appointed to the Governorship of the province only in behalf of the Durrani himself, the Durrani hold on the province seems to have been very weak, and there was a complete confusion whether the Punjab Governors held their authority from Delhi or from Afghanistan. Thus, after the death of Mannu, Mahmud Khan, the three-year old son of Ahmad Shah the Emperor of Delhi, was appointed by him as the viceroy of Lahore; while Muhammad Amin Khan, Mannu's two-year old son, was appointed as his deputy. The Mother of Amin Khan, Mughlani Begum, an ambitious and one of the most artful ladies ever born in the Punjab, and Mumin Khan the man who carried on the day to day administration of this province, were not however satisfied with their nomination merely from Delhi. They therefore approached Ahmad Shah
Abdali and felt themselves secure only when they got the confirmation of their appointment from him as well. The first serious trouble for the new government of the baby viceroy came when Bhikari Khan, one of the most trusted lieutenants of Mannu, revolted against their authority. This seems, however, to have been easily crushed by the artful winning over of some of Bhikari Khan's own supporters by the Begum. But it was not long before another serious problem arose. Muhamad Amin Khan died in May 1754, through perhaps a slow effect of poisoning which was believed to have been done through the machination of Bhikari Khan. Mumin Khan after this approached Alamgir II, the new Emperor of Delhi, to give full powers in his hands and appoint him Governor if he really wanted to see peace established in the province. Alamgir granted his request and appointed him as Governor of the province in October 1754. But such a complete exclusion of Mughlani Begum from the political authority was not going to be easy. She seems to have enjoyed the full confidence of the nobles of the Punjab, with whose help she was easily able to negative Mumin's appointment and became the Governor in her own name and authority.

But Mughlani Begum herself was not going to enjoy this authority for long. Proligancy and sexual vice had so far been a part of the life of the gentlemen of the court, but she was perhaps determined to show that, that was no monopoly of men alone. The moment the complete authority came into her hands, she sunk herself completely into the moral decrepitness which belonged to her office. Her immoral relations with an eunuch, Shahbaz, a page Miskin, and Ghazi Beg Khan Bakhshi and others, are notorious in history; and it is said that eunuchs became so important in her time that her Dewan and Bakshi waited outside for an opportunity to see the Begum, while these eunuchs surrounded her inside and acted as her sole medium of administration. These eunuchs had differences among themselves, and while they vied with one another to gain a closer relation with the woman Governor on the one hand, the nobles of the court, on the other hand watched them in utter helplessness and
despondency. The more ambitious of the nobles rather started planning the Begum’s ruin, with a view to capturing power for themselves.

Qasim Khan, a noble of the court—who was said to have been so close a favourite of the Begum that she considered him to be her son—was appointed by the Begum as Faujdar of Patti. Qasim Khan proceeded thither, but on his way the Sikhs attacked him several times and gave such a good account of themselves as to make Miskin—a personal attendant of Mānu, and later of the Begum—who accompanied him, write: “It was my utter astonishment to see that only three of the Sikh cavaliers drove away the whole Muslim troops.” While fighting these brave men, it occurred to Qasim Khan that he himself could by recruiting some hundreds of them, march upon Lahore and then after establishing his authority in the Province he could attack Delhi and become an Emperor! He recruited 8,000 Sikh soldiers forthwith. But he failed in managing the things properly. The Sikhs had joined him for their own purpose, and when his treasury was emptied in giving rewards to them, and when the Sikhs were able to secure from him the much needed weapons of war, they began to desert him; while Qasim’s own soldiers not being paid their salaries regularly, revolted, captured him and brought him to Lahore where the Begum put him in close confinement. This happened about the months of March and April, 1754.

Shortly after this the Begum fell into yet another strait circumstance. Her nobles had been disgusted with her low moral character, her Turkish soldiery began to betray her for the same reason, and as the Lahore administrative fibre seemed to be breaking down on all sides, Khwaja Mirza Khan came to Lahore and with the help of the Mughlia courtiers captured power, and putting the Begum behind the bars he himself became the viceroy. This happened in December, 1754. But the Begum who had exhibited her best

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1. See Miskin, Tazkira-i-Tahmas, pp. 94-97.
2. Ibid, pp. 95-96.
diplomatic talent only from within the four walls, did not
find this challenge too difficult to face. From behind the
bars she sent her maternal uncle, Khwaja Abdullah Khan, to
Ahmad Shah Abdali for help. The Durrani troops came and
restored the Begum to her former position in April, the next
year. Now, however, it was the turn of the Begum’s maternal
uncle himself to revolt. Finding a good opportunity to fish
in the troubled waters, he forgot all her obligations to the
characterless niece and putting her in confinement once again,
he declared himself the viceroy. Just this time Adina
Beg, the Faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, too, matured his
crafty plans and finding such tumult and turmoil as ruled at
Lahore he marched with a strong detachment and occupied
the city. Khwaja Abdullah Khan, the Begum’s maternal
uncle, was driven away and Adina appointed Sadiq Beg
Khan to administer Lahore as his deputy. Soon, however,
the Begum found yet another opportunity to send an appeal
to the Durrani who this time sent his General, Jahan Khan,
and restored the Begum once again to authority. Khwaja
Abdullah Khan was this time appointed as Deputy to the
Begum. Delhi, however, could not watch such developments
unconcerned. Imad-ul-Mulk the wazir of Delhi came to
Lahore, the Begum was arrested and put in confinement once
again, and Adina Beg was appointed the Governor of Lahore
and Multan with Jamil-ud-din as his Deputy and in charge
of the Lahore Government. Soon yet another change took
place. Khwaja Abdullah approached Durrani once again,
and with his help he drove away Jamil-ud-din and himself
became the Governor, appointing Khwaja Mirza as his
Deputy. This happened in October, 1756.

Such confused state of affairs at Lahore encouraged
centrifugal forces, as referred to above, and whole of the
Province was divided into a sort of petty principalities; the
authority of Lahore itself extending only to the immediately
adjoining areas such as Shahdara, Eminabad and Cheema
Ghakhar. The Mahals of Sialkot, Gujrat, Aurangabad and
Pasrur came under the independent control of Rustam Khan
who owed his allegiance direct to the Durrani. Multan
occupied a similar position and became a separate governorship
under Kandhar, Sarhind and Jullundur were under
Adina Beg who recognised neither Delhi, nor Kandhar. Then their were the Tiwanas and Ghakhars in the Sind Sagar Doab, Waraiach chiefs in the Chaj, Bajoh Zamindars and Chathhas in the Rechana, Randhawas in Batala, Afghans in Kasur and Alawalpur. Talwan, Kapurthala and Phagwara were held by Rajputs, and Gurdaspur and Jandiala by some Hindu influential saints who wielded in their territories both spiritual and temporal authorities. Everywhere petty Zamindars and officers and turbulent tribes and people clashed with one another. Peace was completely wrecked, and political ambitions ran amuck.

B—Sikh Opportunity and the Rakhi System.

Here was yet another long sought after opportunity for the Sikhs, from which they drew a full advantage. They helped Adina Beg against Qutab Khan Rohila, and compelled him to grant them a Jagir consisting of the Fatahbad parganas. They developed their strongholds in the Upper Bari Doab, repaired Ram Rauni and strengthened it yet further. They moved about freely punishing the miscreants and helping the helpless. Sarhind was plundered once again, Ambala was sacked; and when they faced a shortage of money and weapons, they tricked Qasim Khan into high hopes of an Imperial power, and vanished away after taking what he possessed in the articles the Sikhs required. The Faujdar of Eminabad, Khwaja Mirza, had to face quite a few bad days at the hands of the Sikhs. And the Sikhs once found an opportunity also to enter Lahore in disguise and subject the city to an utter plunder. The last event took place when Mumin Khan was the Governor.

The Rakhi

The most important development during this period was the system of Rakhi which sowed the seeds of the Sikh political authority in the Punjab. The circumstances which led to the creation of this system have already been discussed. When there was a complete political confusion at Lahore, Governors changing hands every month; when nobody knew whether Punjab was a part of the Indian Empire to be guided
in its administration from Delhi, or that it belonged to the Afghans to be controlled from Kandhar; when the Province was divided into many petty principalities, or Zamindaris and Jagirs—everywhere the turbulent tribes aiming at self-independence and political power; the political jurisdictions conflicted, and if some revenue or a tax was paid to one the others objected, and the poor peasants looked towards the heaven and cursed everybody who squeezed them of their hard-earned money but promised in return only insecurity and lawlessness. There was insecurity everywhere. Insecurity of honour, insecurity of property, insecurity of life and insecurity of work. Economically, these people were being ruined, and politically they had a hope neither of peace nor of justice. Roads were unsafe, and trade had come to a dead stop. Such was the state of the things in the Punjab when it was suggested that the Dal Khalsa of the Sikhs being the only well organised body which could promise security as well as justice, its protection should be extended where the people required it. This was done, and the Rakhi system of the Sikhs began to establish itself in the Punjab.

Rakhi means protection. The Sikhs went to every village, and whosoever of these villages required, to it the protection of Rakhi was extended in return for payment of one-fifth of one's income to the Sikhs, twice every year, after each harvest. Under this system a protection was granted to the people against the exploitation of Zamindars and Government officials, against robbers and against the depredations of the Sikhs themselves. Major J.Browne writes: "Whenever a Zamindar has agreed to pay this tribute to any Sick (Sikh) chief, that chief not only himself refrains from plundering him, but will protect him from all others; and this protection is by general consent held so far sacred, that even if the grand army (of Dal Khalsa) passed through a zamindary where the safeguards of the lowest Sick chief are stationed, it will not violate them."1

This protection, or *Rakhi*, was extended by individual chiefs of the different units of the *Dal Khalsa*. Sometimes under necessity, two or more chiefs combined together to extend their protection, and there is said to have been stationed a reserve force at Amritsar which was to be at the beck and call of these chiefs for the purpose.

Such a protection was the most welcome thing that the people required at the time. Barring perhaps the Sindh Saugar Doab, the large territories in all the rest of them were thus taken under protection by the different Sikh chiefs, and thus were the foundations of the territorial acquisition of the different Sikh Misls laid. According to Sohan Lal thus, Amritsar began to be guarded by Dallewalias and Nishan wallias. Nakka country south of Lahore fell under the protection of the Nakais. Chaj and the Rechna Doab territories came under the protection of Hari Singh Bhangi and Charat Singh Sukerchakia. Some territories north of Amritsar also fell under the *Rakhi* of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Jai Singh Kanheya. Southern bank of the Sutlej came under the protection of Dip Singh and Karor Singh; while Ahluwalias and the Singhpurias occupied some territories on both the banks of the Sutlej.  

Establishment of the *Rakhi* system was a development of far reaching consequences in the history of the Punjab. While on the one hand it offered peace, security and justice to the people, and saved them not only from the corrupt Government officials and ambitious Zamindars and Jagirdars but also from the free-booters of the Sikhs themselves, as also from the doubtful characters of the country; on the other hand it gave to the Sikhs a regular source of income with which to arrange their budget more properly. It also helped in improving the character of the individual Sikhs, for now there was no need of their wreaking their vengeance upon the Muslim families sometimes merely to fulfil their financial requirements. And last but not least, we may say, political power always starts with the extension of military protection and realisation of land revenue. When both of these things

done by the Sikhs under the Rakhi system, unconsciously perhaps, they were laying the foundation of their future political authority, which led ultimately to the establishment of a national monarchy by them under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

C—Fourth Invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali

When once again Mughlani Begum found herself in confinement, this time in Dehli where the Delhi Wazir had taken her, she took one more opportunity of inviting the Durrani, this time writing to him: "Crores worth of cash and goods are buried in my late father-in-law’s house, besides large quantities of silver and gold inside the ceilings, which is in my knowledge. There are serious differences among the Emperor Almgir II, his wazirs and nobles, and if you invade India at this time, you will be able to capture the whole Empire of India with all its riches worth crores of rupees, without incurring any expenditure yourself." It was indeed a very good suggestion which the Durrani accepted without much hesitation. He reached Lahore on 26th November, 1756, and without any opposition marched towards Delhi. In the Imperial capital too, not a single soldier came out to check his progress. There was a perfect helplessness in the capital, and everybody from king to a pauper found himself completely at the mercy of the invader. The plunder of the houses of the nobles now started, in which Mughlani Begum gave the Durrani invaluable assistance, bringing every noble, according to his richness and status, to the notice of the invader. Imad-ul-Mulk, the Delhi Wazir, was relieved of all his belongings, and he was publicly disgraced. Intizam-ud-daula, the ex-Wazir, was called in, and he handed over to the invader everything telling him that nothing now was left on his person, except a ring. But he was threatened with serious consequences if he did not produce more. His face turned white, he revealed that his mother Shupilapuri Begum knew where his father had buried the wealth. The lady was called in, and was threatened to be pierced with iron pins

underneath her finger nails. She fainted, but when she recovered she gave out all the secrets of the buried wealth.\footnote{1}

After this Mathura and Brindaban were sacked, no distinction was made between Hindu and a Muslim, and a contemporary writer mentions that for seven days the water of the Jumna was red, and then it became yellow. At Brindaban, there were heaps of dead bodies, and at one place there lay as many as two hundred dead children, but nobody was found with its head intact.\footnote{3}

Soon, however, nature came to the rescue of the Indian people. Cholera broke out in the ranks of the Durrani, and he was forced to retire. But before he left Delhi, he forced Hazrat Begum, the seventeen-year old daughter of Muhammad Shah, into marriage with himself; and he married the daughter of Alangir II to his son Timur. He appointed Imad-ul-Mulk as the Wazir of Delhi, at Mughlani Begum's suggestion; and Najib-ud-Daulah was appointed as his pleni-potentiary and Bakshi of the country who was to possess the real authority of the Government. He annexed the Subah of Sarhind and appointed Abdul Samad Khan Mohamandzai as its governor.

When Abdali left India, his "own goods were loaded on 28,000 camels, elephants, mules, bullocks and carts, while 200 camel-loads of property were taken by Muhammad Shah's widows who accompanied him, and these too belonged to him. 80,000 horse and foot followed him, each man carrying away spoils. His cavalry returned on foot, loading their booty on their chargers. For securing transport, the Afghan king left no horse or camel in any one's house, not even a donkey."\footnote{2}

\textbf{Sikhs Share the Booty.}

At the face of this invasion of Durrani all that remained of the government authority at Lahore was scattered.

\footnote{1. See Sirkar, J. N., \textit{Fall of the Mughal Empire}, ii p. 100.}
\footnote{2. Indian Antiquary, 1907, p. 62.}
\footnote{3. See Gupta \textit{H. R., History of the Sikhs}, i, pp. 102-103* (Foot Notes).}
Sayyid Jamil-ud-din fled to Delhi, but on his way to that place he was attacked by the Sikhs near Phillaur where he was dispossessed of almost all that he possessed. Adina Beg had fled to the wastes of Hissar and Hansi, leaving the Jullundur Doab completely at the mercy of the Sikhs to wreak their vengeance upon those who had taken any part against them. The Sikhs spread all over the country and thoroughly plundered the houses of their enemies at places outside their Rakhi.

Nor did they spare the Durrani himself on his way back home from Delhi. A division of army under Timur, which was transporting immense wealth of Delhi to Lahore, was attacked by Ala Singh at Malerkot and dispossessed of more than half of its treasures. Rumours were afloat that Timur himself had been captured by this Sardar and put to death, which were of course incorrect and emanated only from the very large measure of success which attended the Sikh exploits. Ahmad Shah himself was similarly dispossessed of a large part of his booty on his way back home from Delhi. In his rage Ahmad Shah bit his arm and when he reached Lahore he sent large expeditions to chastise the Sikhs. A good number of them were captured and put to death. The Sikh temple at Amritsar was razed to the ground, and their sacred tank was filled with refuse. The alliance with Ranjit Dev of Jammu was confirmed in order to deprive the Sikhs of their hill retreats. And leaving this time his own eleven-year old son Timur as the Governor of Lahore, with an assistant, Jahan Khan—the Durrani Commander-in-Chief, ten thousands of the Persian troops and a special army recruited from among the India-born Afghans, Turks and Persians; Ahmad Shah Abdali left for his country.

**D—The Fate of Mughlani Begum.**

Before closing this chapter it would be interesting to have an account of Mughlani Begum's career after the fourth invasion of Ahmad Shah. During his presence in this country, the Durrani was so greatly delighted with the assistance that the Begum rendered him that he once re-
marked to her: "Hitherto I had styled you as my daughter, but from to-day I shall call yon my son and give you the title of Sultan Mirza." At the Begum’s request the Durrani reinstated Imad-ul Mulk, now the Begum’s son-in-law, in the office of the Wazir of Delhi; and granted to the Begum herself, the Jullundur Doab, Jammu and Kashmir as a fief. The Begum made some immediate arrangements for the administration of the territories thus conferred upon her. She invited Adina Beg to take charge of the Jullundur Doab as her deputy, confirmed Raja Ranjit Dev in his possession of Jammu, and appointed Khwajah Ibrahim Khan as the Governor of Kashmir. But before her agents could take charge of the administration of the territories thus conferred upon her, the Durrani changed his mind and appointed his own son, Timur, as the Governor of the Punjab and in charge of all these territories. To her repeated entreaties that the Durrani should keep his promise, she got the simple reply: “Now that your brother Timur Shah is the Viceroy there what will you do with the provinces?” And she had to return to Lahore where she began to live in Seraf Hakim, once so magnificent but now in ruins, having only two rooms intact.

At Lahore the Begum had to suffer a very severe maltreatment at the hands of Jahan Khan, the assistant of Timur. Jahan Khan had reappointed Adina Beg as the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab agreeing to his condition that he would be exempted from personal attendance at his court. But shortly after his appointment Jahan Khan broke away the condition, and called Adina to present himself in his court. Adina sent Dilaram, his agent, to Lahore. Dilaram was imprisoned and Jahan Khan demanded from Adina an immediate payment of six lakhs of rupees as tribute. Mughlani Begum approached Jahan Khan, and standing surety for the tribute demanded secured the release of Adina’s agent; but shortly after, taking pity on him she made him flee from Lahore. This enraged Jahan Khan who called the Begum to his presence, caught her by the hand and laid it on her vigorously with a

rod, till she offered him her jewels worth the amount of the tribute demanded. Her house was plundered, and she was confined in a small room and subjected to the severe most oppression.

Timur and Jahan Khan themselves, however, could not continue ruling the Punjab for long. Soon Adina Beg called the Marathas and the Sikhs to his assistance, and forced these Afghan rulers to flee from the Punjab. The Marathas after their success, appointed Adina as the Governor of Lahore in their own behalf, Adina appointed his son-in-law, Khwajah Mirza Khan, as in charge of the capital, and himself transferred his head-quarters to Batala. The Begum was also removed thither where Adina treated her and her servants with utmost consideration.

Tahmas Khan Miskin, a personal attendant of Muin-ul-Mulk, and of Mughlani Begum his widow after his death, who has left a very valuable account of the life of the Begum during those years, in his Ta'kira-i-Tahmas Miskin, in Persian, tells us that at Batala when liberal grants of money were made to the Begum, she once again began to live a life only of ease and loose character. She is said by Miskin to have once fallen a victim even to his own robust and handsome bewitching youth of eighteen years of age. When Miskin resisted her temptations, she imprisoned him and released him only when the matter became known to all and even Adina sent her a word against subjecting her devoted servant to such ill-treatment.1 There may be an exaggeration in Miskin’s account, but there can be no doubt that the Begum remained a woman only of loose character.

After the death of Adina Beg on the 15th September, 1758, the Begum removed to Jammu where Ranjit Dev treated her with every courtesy and consideration. Here she was approached by some disaffected chiefs of Kashmir to march against Sukh Jiwan the Governor of the valley; with the promise that she would be helped by them in replacing


Under oppression

Under Adina

Begum removed to Batala

Tried to tempt Miskin

But failed

After Adina's death, she moved to Jammu
Sukh Jiwan. The Begum actually made some preparations, but her plans ultimately failed.

The Begum’s sources of income were drying up and when during his next invasion in April, 1760, Ahmad Shah Abdali learnt how she had been reduced to poverty, he granted her the revenue of Sialkot which amounted to Rs. 30,000 a year. Early in 1761 the Begum developed an intimacy with Shahbaz, an eunuch. Soon, “in the whole city of Jammu the notoriety of this intimacy was talked about,” and as the scandal flared up, it became utterly difficult for the Begum to continue living in the city. She therefore retired to Samba, about 30 miles south-east of the city, and here she married Shahbaz and began once again to live the life of a regular wife. And thus she continued till her death.

An ambitious woman who loved power and diplomacy, Mughlani Begum could have proved an effective and an efficient ruler, but for her sexual urge which “instead of proving a great asset developed into a low passion...Her story,” thus writes Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, “is a tale of woe which befell the Punjab and Delhi alike. Born with a silver spoon in her mouth she died a pauper, as the wife of her own household servant.”

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CHAPTER XXV
THE PUNJAB UNDER TIMUR

For complete one year, from May 1757 to May 1758, Timur, the son of Ahmad Shah, remained in the Punjab to govern it as a province of his father's Empire. During this period Jahan Khan, his assistant, made every effort to establish peace in the country and destroy the Sikhs, as he had received strict injunctions from Ahmad Shah Abdali. He sent out strong expeditions to hunt out the Sikhs, and thus drove them away to their retreats in the hills and jungles. But ultimately he too had to face a complete failure in his mission, and flee the country along with the prince for his life. The circumstances which led to the expulsion of the Afghans were, as usual, the determined opposition of the Sikhs to their rule, in which they were joined by Adina Beg as also by the Marathas who introduced a new element into the politics of the Punjab.

An instance of the Sikh determination and courage may here be given. The temple of the Sikhs, as we have already referred to, had been razed by the Durrani to the ground, and the sacred tank filled with refuse. As the festival of Diwali approached, the Sikhs who had taken refuge in Malwa, were inspired by Dip Singh, leader of one of the jathas of the Dal Khalsa, to emerge and march to Amritsar to vacate the city of the Afghan occupation, so as to repair the tank and enjoy the Diwali at that place. Soon between five and six thousands of them collected and reached Taran Tarn where they put festive ribbons on their wrists and saffron-sprinkled turbans on their heads, "as if they were out to fight for and win brides for themselves." Jahan Khan being apprised of it, he marched with a strong army which, according to Bhagat

Lakshman Singh, numbered 20,000 soldiers, but which seems to be an exaggeration. When Jahan Khan reached the village Golewal, about five miles from Amritsar, the Sikhs attacked him and gave him a crushing defeat, the Afghan soldiers from here fled to Ramsar, in the city where they seem to have been re-inforced. Here another battle was fought in which, Jamal Shah, one of the commanders of the enemy troops, is said to have challenged Baba Dip Singh to a duel. This being accepted, both fought bravely till they were fatally wounded. According to the Sikh tradition, a miracle occurred here, when the headless body of Baba Dip Singh went on fighting for some time with the sword in hand. Be that as it may, both the sides suffered here a heavy loss. Some of the important Sikhs who laid down their lives here were, Dharam Singh, Khem Singh, Man Singh, Ram Singh, Sant Singh, Sajjan Singh, Bahadur Singh Hira Singh and Agar Singh. At Ramsar where Dip Singh laid down his life, a monument was raised in his memory¹, and he having met martyrdom for the sake of the Sikh temple, his jatha henceforth began to be known as Shahidi² jatha and its leadership passed on to Karam Singh. This happened in 1757.

According to Bhagat Lakshman Singh, Jahan Khan himself was killed in the battle of Golewal by a Sikh named Daval Singh³. But this seems to be an utterly mis-conceived idea, as it is not borne out by the contemporary writer and an eye witness, Miskin. Moreover Jahan Khan had to play yet more part in the Punjab history before he died, as we shall hereafter see.

Jahan Khan continued his relentless persecutions, and Sodhi Bargbhag Singh of Kartarpur who was in charge of the Gurdwara Tham Sahib, had to suffer a great deal at the hands of the Pathans. This infuriated the Sikhs who watched for an opportunity to pay the government in its own coins, and soon the opportunity did offer itself.

2. Shahid means martyr.
In his efforts to establish peace in the country, Jahan Khan invited Adina Beg who had now taken shelter at Khali Balwan in the Siwalik hills, to resume his administration of the Jullundur Doab. Being afraid of the secret designs of Jahan Khan, Adina, however, refused this offer. When threatened with punishment, Adina did ultimately agree to come back, but on the condition that he would be given an exemption from attending the court. Jahan Khan agreed and Adina returned to the Doab. But soon after this Adina was asked once again to present himself at Lahore, to which he refused. A strong force was sent under Murad Khan to chastise him. But Adina winning over the support of Sodhi Barbag Singh and through him that of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, gave him a crushing defeat at the foot of the hills on the Beas where he had retired. Not however, being confident to meet Jahan Khan himself, he moved on and took refuge in the Nalagarh hills; while Sarfaraz Khan was appointed by Jahan Khan as the Faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, in Adina’s place.

But Adina Beg was not going to remain idle in his hilly retreat. While the Sikhs busied themselves in sacking the Jullundur Doab and the other territories including even the suburbs of Lahore; Adina contacted Raghunath Rao at Delhi, requesting him to march on the Punjab with a promise that the Maratha chief would be paid at the rate of Rs. 1,00,000 a day when he was on the march, and Rs. 50,000 a day when he halted at a place. Raghunath Rao accepted the proposal, and despatched Malhar Rao with one division of the Maratha troops to march towards the Punjab. The Sikhs and Adina Beg soon joined him, and the first thing they did was to attack the city of Sarhind. Abdus Samad Khan, the governor of the province of Sarhind, shut himself up in the fort. Sarhind was invested, and soon Abdus Samad Khan was captured in his efforts to flee. After this the cursed city was subjected to an utter pillage. The two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh having been executed there, the Sikhs had there own reason to go to the utter extremity of

their ruthlessness; while the Marathas, because of their plundering habit, did not lag behind. Every house was sacked and everything, even timber in the roofs, was carried away. This happened in the month of March, 1758.

As the news of this destruction of Sarhind reached Jahan Khan, he prepared with his troops to meet the challenge. He waited for over a month for the Marathas, the Sikhs and Adina to arrive, and when ultimately he did receive the news of their start towards Lahore, his heart gave way and he decided to vacate the city and retire to Afghanistan. He was, however, overtaken by the allies at Sarai Kachi, thirty-six miles north-west of Lahore, but once again he escaped under the cover of a dark night. The allied forces pursued him, and when Jahan Khan and Timur had just crossed the Chenab below Wazirabad, they fell upon their soldiers and the entire baggage which was still on this side of the river. Thus, the fleeing Afghans were easily dispossessed of almost everything valuable they were carrying away. Several of the Afghans were captured alive by the Sikhs, and brought to Amritsar hands and feet bound. Here they were forced to clear the sacred tank once again of all the filth and dust which filled it. Adina Beg and the Marathas, however, continued their pursuit of the enemy right upto the Indus, and even across it upto Peshawar.

Whole of the Punjab was now at the mercy of the Marathas, they, however, decided not to remain there. The Sikh influence had been steadily developing in this province, and they were now a formidable force to reckon with. Already some quarrel is said to have occurred between the Sikhs and the Marathas during the course of their plunder of Sarhind. And the Marathas knew perhaps that at the face of this growing power, they could have a promise neither of a regular income nor of perpetual peace. Moreover the terrible heat of the summer and cold of the winter in the plains of the Punjab, was not in accord with their temperament and disposition. In the Punjab they should have been too far away from there
home, the poor means of communication making it difficult to keep contact with their source of strength and inspiration. And again, the Marathas were known to be the best plunderers without discrimination. In their lust for wealth, they were said to have spared neither Hindu nor a Muslim chief of the northern India, with the result that even the men of their own faith distrusted and detested them. And they knew, with the irregular sources of income that the Punjab offered, dilapidated condition of the Punjab politics and peace and the most turbulent mass of people in the Sikhs, it would be utterly difficult to maintain and support a large Maratha army in the Punjab, which they had to keep if they chose to rule this country to oppose foreign aggression and to suppress the internal uprisings.

The Marathas, therefore, very wisely decided not to remain in the Punjab. On reaching back at Lahore in the month of April, 1758 and after remaining there for a couple of days, they appointed Adina Beg as the Governor of the province, to pay a tribute of Rs. 75 lakhs a year to the Marathas. And thereafter Ragunath Rao retired towards Delhi. Adina Beg appointed Sadik Beg Khan to take charge of Sarhind. He appointed his son-in-law Khwaja Mirza Khan as in charge of the administration of Lahore, with Adina's brother, Khwaja Sayid Khan, to work as his deputy. And he himself decided to retire to Batala which place now became the real capital of the whole Punjab. And thus started the peaceful reconstruction of this unfortunate land once again.
CHAPTER XXVI

ADINA BEG AS A GOVERNOR, AND HIS CAREER

Farly Career

Before discussing the Government of Lahore under Adina, it would be interesting to have a short study of this man’s early career. A man of high ambitions and an intriguing nature, who rising from a very humble position made the tumult and violent commotion that raged in the Punjab—serve him and work him up into the highest of the positions in the province, Adina was born at Sharaqqpur on the bank of the Ravi, eighteen miles below Lahore. His father, Chunnu, was an A rain by caste, and no record is available of the exact date of his birth. Adina’s family faced an utter poverty as he grew from babe to a young boy, and under these circumstances he was forced to seek an employment with a Mughal officer as his domestic servant. But this career of a menial was not going to contain Adina’s ambitions for long. Soon he left that job and enlisted himself in the army, but left that job too and joined a civil service in the Sultanpur district as a petty revenue collector in the village Kang. Here, through the support of his influential friend, Lala Sri Niwas, he rose within a short time and was put in charge of revenue collection for all the villages within his circle; and later, at the death of the district officer of Sultanpur, a more ambitious idea having come to his mind, he took a bold step, went to Lahore, was able to secure an interview with Zakariya Khan who was impressed with the boldness of his manners. Zakariya took the security of Lala Sri Niwas, Adina’s old friend, and appointed Adina as the district officer of Sultanpur.

Soon after, when Nadir Shah invaded India he passed
through Sultanpur on his way from Lahore to Delhi and sacked it along with the adjoining territories. After Nadir retired to his country, Adina employed himself to the task of the reconstruction of his district with such a zeal and energy as made the life of his people normal within a short time, and they busied themselves in their peaceful pursuits of life once again. It was a wonder which Adina achieved. The Jullundur Doab within which the district of Sultanpur lay, had been the worst victim of the Sikh desperados. And when the question of the reconstruction of the whole Doab, greater portion of the population of which consisted of Jats having sympathetic attitude towards the Sikhs, arose, the choice naturally fell upon Adina. Adina Beg was thus appointed in the high position of a Nazim, or Governor of the Doab and was charged with the duty of chastising the Sikhs.

As a Nazim too, Adina was not a less success. Peace was established in the Doab within a short time, but the Sikhs still continued their activities, though with a lesser vigour. The reason for this is said to be the fact that this time it was not an administrator as much as a diplomat which was at work in Adina. Adina Beg had a definite plan up his sleeves. As J. Browne writes: "The force he had with him was fully equal to the execution of that service, but Adina Beg, considering that if he should entirely put an end to all disturbances in that district, there would remain no necessity for continuing him in so extensive a command, carried on intrigues with the chiefs of the Sikhs (Sikhs), and secretly encouraged them to continue their depredations, at the same time pretending to be very desirous of subduing them. From this management the Sikhs became daily more powerful and seized upon several places in distant parts of the Subah of Lahore. They also began to perform public pilgrimages to the Holy Tank at Amritsurg without molestation. 1" Soon, however, Adina received strict orders from Zakariya Khan, the Khan Bahadur, to chastise the Sikhs and drive them away. Adina prepared for the purpose. First he tried to approach the Sikhs peacefully, asking them to accept

Government services and settle down as peaceful citizens. He seems to have proved a perfect success in his diplomacy. Although the entire mass of the Sikhs could not be persuaded to settle down in peace, he was able to seduce a few among them such as Jussa Singh Thoka, with the result that thus dismayed the Sikhs vacated the Jullundur Doab and moved into the Malwa territories.

Soon after, however, Adina himself fell into strait circumstances. His revenue payments to Lahore having fallen into arrears, and his efforts to justify it by forwarding Sikh depredations and destruction at the hands of Nadir as reasons having failed, he was arrested and put in a confinement; Zakariya’s younger son, Shahnawaz Khan, being appointed as the Governor of the Doab. Soon, however, peace between Zakariya and Adina was patched up through the efforts of Dewan Lakhpai Rai, and Adina was appointed now to work under Shahnawaz Khan as his Deputy Governor. It was not long before he was able to win the complete confidence of Shahnawaz, and the entire administration of the Doab fell to his control once again.

After the death of Zakariya Khan in 1745, as we have already seen, a war of succession started between his sons. His eldest son Yahia Khan being the son-in-law of Qamr-ud-din the Delhi Wazir, he succeeded in becoming the Governor of the Punjab; but the younger son Shahnawaz Khan not being content with the Governorship of the Doab alone, was determined to create difficulties. Adina played his part cautiously, keeping the confidence of his immediate master, yet giving no cause to Yahia Khan to suspect his loyalty. Ultimately, however, when he saw the forces in favour of Shahnawaz Khan getting stronger, he openly sided with him and led an attack against his enemy at Lahore in March, 1747, winning him a victory. Yshia was captured, and now Shahnawaz Khan became the Governor of Lahore and gave complete charge of the government of the Doab to Adina.

But as the Delhi Wazir was utterly disappointed at these developments at Lahore, he threatened Shahnawaz

1. Later on known as Ramgarhia.
Khan with the consequences of his forcible capture of power. It was Adina who is said to have advised his master at this critical juncture to contact Ahmad Shah Abdali forthwith, with the proposal of 'Kingship for the Durrani, and Wazirat for Shahnawaz Khan.' In the meanwhile, however, he showed no compunction in trying to stab his master in the back. He secretly informed the Delhi authorities of the impending signs of Shahnawaz. As the Durrani entered the Punjab, the Delhi Wazir approached Shahnawaz in the name of the honour of his family, and held out before him bright future prospects if he dissociated himself from the Durrani. Shahnawaz gave in and prepared to give a battle to the Durrani at Lahore. He was, however, defeated and fled together with Adina to Delhi. As the Durrani marched against Delhi after his stay of about a month at Lahore, Adina joined Qamr-ud-din the Delhi Wazir and waited to meet the invader. And when the Wazir was killed in a battle with the Durrani at Manupur in March, 1748, Adina remained very close to his son Muin-ul-Mulk who defeated the Durrani and was after this appointed the Governor of Lahore.

Adina had already carved out for himself a place in the heart of Muin, better known as Mir Mannu. And when the latter became the Governor of Lahore he confirmed Adina in his faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, with the strict orders that he should destroy the power of the turbulent Sikhs. But once secure in his control of the Doab, Adina was determined to revive once again, his old ambitious plans which he felt could be best realised only through the help of the Sikhs. While outwardly he tried to give the Sikhs a crushing blow, inwardly he had a plan only to exploit the Sikhs for his personal gains. It was with this double-mindedness that he gave a battle to the Sikhs in which although the Sikhs did lose as many as 600 men, the loss Adina suffered was much heavy. After this he asked for a reinforcement from Lahore, but in the meanwhile the rainy season having commenced his operations against the Sikhs had to be suspended.

Shortly afterwards, however, for a time he seems to
have become more serious in his designs against the Sikhs. After the rainy season was over, in the month of October the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar. They put their five hundred picked men in the Ram Rauni and began to celebrate their festival. Mannu taking advantage of the situation ordered Adina to march against them. The Sikhs, however, had taken their precautions, and many hid themselves in the jungles nearby as five hundred of them remained in the Ram Rauni. The fort was invested by Adina. As the time passed the Sikhs occasionally sallied out and created a havoc in Adina’s ranks. But they themselves lost about two hundred companions, and just when the rest of the three hundred found themselves in a hopeless plight and were preparing to march out in a ‘do or die’ bid, Jussa Singh Thoka who had taken service under Adina deserted him and joined the Sikhs in the fort. From there he wrote out to Dewan Kaura Mal—who had a very favourable inclination towards the Sikhs—to make his efforts with Zakariya and try to save the three hundred lives. To the utter chagrin of Adina, Kaura Mal was able to prevail upon Zakariya who granted one-fourth of the revenue of the pargana of Patti to the Sikhs to settle them down as peaceful citizens, and ordered Adina to raise the siege. Forster writes: “It is supposed that their force would then have been annihilated: had not this people found a strenuous advocate in his minister Kauramal, who was himself of the Khulasah sect and diverted Meer Munnoo from reaping the full fruits of the superiority he had gained.”

This was a bitter blow to the self-respect of Adina who found in Kaura Mal more than his equal in diplomacy, and decided to seek an opportunity to bring about his destruction. The opportunity did offer itself soon. Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Punjab for the third time in 1751. And during this time Adina countered the sensible advise of Kaura Mal to Mannu on every occasion, and thus hastened the ruin not only of the Dewan but of Mannu as well. In the battle of Mahmud Buti near Lahore when Kaura Mal faced the enemy and the entire fortune of Mannu depended upon his failure

1. Forster, op. cit., i. p. 431.
or a success, Adina advised Mannu to call back the Dewan together with the detachment of his troops so that a joint attack might be made on the enemy. Kaura Mal, however, refused to leave his position with the argument that if he did so it would be considered a sign of retreat by the enemy and the entire mass of his soldiers would thus be massacred. Mannu, however, as advised by Adina, insisted on his coming back and sent strict orders to the effect. As the Dewan left his position the expected happened. The enemy immediately opened an attack, there was a complete confusion in Kaura Mal’s ranks and he turned to restore order among his men. Encouraged by Kaura Mal’s presence his soldiers gave a determined fight to the enemy and began to push them back. As this process started, by an accident Kaura Mal’s elephant fell on the ground. Adina was watching all this development and not only be prevented any aid from reaching the Dewan when the latter fell down from his elephant and was just trying to mount that of Mir Nehmat Khan, he also gave a signal to Bazid Khan Kasurja who fired at him, and the Dewan with the very first shot fell down dead. Just this time, a Durrani marched forwards and cutting off the Dewan’s head carried it away. After this Mannu could continue to fight only for a short time, and was ultimately defeated and captured.

Mannu, however, was pardoned by the Durrani who confirmed him as the Governor of Lahore on his own behalf. Shortly after when the Durrani retired and peace was re-established in the Punjab, Mannu charged Adina once again to proceed against the Sikhs who had subjected the Jullundur Doab to an utter plunder. Adina proceeded in conjunction with Sadik Beg Khan, and to clear himself of the suspicion of treachery in the battle of Mahmud Buti he suddenly fell upon the Sikhs who had assembled for Baisakhi at Makhowal. It was a surprise attack in which a good number of the Sikhs were easily done to death. But writes Malcolm: Adina was an artful chief who “considered this turbulent tribe in no other light than as the means of his

1. Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan, p. 301.
personal advancement. He was careful not to reduce them altogether, but, after defeating them in an action which was fought near Makhowal, he entered into a secret understanding with them, by which, though their excursions were limited, they enjoyed a security to which they had been unaccustomed, and from which they gathered strength and resources for future efforts.\footnote{Malcolm, \textit{Sketch of the Sikhs}, p. 924}

During the confusion that followed after the death of Mir Mannu in November, 1753 and when peace was completely wrecked at Lahore where Governors changed hands one after another and the rivals clashed, Adina Beg took full advantage of the situation and established his independence in the Jullundur Doab, owing his allegiance neither to Delhi nor to Kandhar. When everywhere in the Punjab nothing but a chaos ruled supreme, this Doab under Adina enjoyed the peace of a settled government. Adina strengthened himself to such an extent that when Qutb Khan Rohilla revolted against Delhi and after defeating the Imperial forces at Karnal ravaged the entire province of Sarhind and the baffled \textit{Wazir} of Delhi knew not what to do, Adina gathering the Sikh help and the help of all the \textit{Zamindars} of his territories and the other men of means, prepared about one lakh soldiers, horse and foot, and gave such a crushing defeat to Qutb near Rupar that almost all his important chiefs, including Qutb himself, lost their lives and their soldiers precipitately fled the battlefield. Adina thereafter received the title of \textit{Zafar Jung Bahadur}, and Sarhind and its dependencies too were added to his charge.

Adina was thus moving fast towards the height of his glory and fame. After he had attained to the joint Governorship of the Jullundur Doab and Sarhind, he decided to take yet further advantage of the confusion reigning at Lahore. He marched upon the city, expelled its Governor, Abdullah, and appointed Sadik Beg Khan as his deputy to take charge of its administration. His ultimate designs were
however soon foiled by Mughlani Begum who appealed to the Durrani for help. The Durrani forces came, Sadik fled and the Begum was restored once again to the Governorship of Lahore. Just this time Adina suffered yet another reverse in which in November, 1755, Jussa Singh Ahluwalia gave him a decided defeat at Kaddur and wrested Fatahabad from his control.

Adina was not, however, discouraged. He was confident of having more opportunities for the realization of his highest ambition. And one such opportunity offered itself immediately. The Delhi Wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk, desired to deceive Adina and occupy Lahore. Adina sensed his designs and offered to help him. The Wazir came to Lahore, married Umda Begum the daughter of Mughlani to himself and carried away the mother forcibly to Delhi; appointing Adina as the Governor of Lahore and Multan in return for a tribute of Rs. 30 lakhs a year.

But Adina’s Governorship of Lahore, again, was only short lived. Khwajah Abdulah Khan brought a military help from the Durrani, Sayyid Jamil ud-din—Adina’s assistant who held charge of the administration, fled the city and the Khwajah himself became the Governor.

At the invitation of Mughlani Begum from Delhi Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India once again in November, 1756. Adina, together with Sadik Beg, fled to the waterless lands of Hissar and later on to Khali Balwan in the Siwalik hills. After sacking Delhi, Mathura and Brindabani, before the Durrani retired to his country he put Jummu and Kashmir and the Jullundur Doab under the control of Mughlani Begum, and put the Subah of Lahore under the Governorship of his son Timur. Mughlani Begum invited Adina to take charge of the Doab under her. But before Adina could move, claiming that the entire country up to the province of Sarhind had been conferred by the Durrani on his son Timur, Jahan Khan, the Lahore Wazir, invited Adina on his own behalf to take charge of the administration of the Doab. Adina, however, distrusted the Afghans and
declined the offer. Later when he was threatened with serious consequences, as we have already seen in the last chapter, he resumed the administration on the condition that it would not be obligatory upon him to attend the Lahore court. Peace between the Afghans and Adina, however, could not continue for long, and inviting the help of the Sikhs and the Marathas, he expelled the Afghans from the Punjab and resumed the Governorship of Lahore in return for a payment of Rs. 75 lakhs a year to the Marathas.¹

**Adina, the Punjab Governor under Marathas**

After assuming complete control of the administration of Lahore, in April, 1758, Adina busied himself immediately in restoring law and order in the country. A very large sum of seventy-five lakh rupees had to be paid to the Marathas every year. And besides, the administrative expenses of the country and the reconstruction of the ravaged areas too were to involve a considerable expense to the State. Adina was all powerful, having nothing to fear from the weak Government of Delhi, and having the strong power of the Marathas to rely upon in case of a foreign aggression. He therefore employed himself with vigour to the task of the reconstruction of the ruined country and restoration of confidence among the people. Merchants had to be encouraged to resume their trade and business, and the agriculturists had to be persuaded to employ themselves on land so that they should flourish and pay revenue to the Government. But here the greatest problem for Adina was to remove the danger of the Sikh desperados. He therefore contacted them and advised them to settle down as peaceful citizens. But the Sikhs had their own ambitions to realize, and Adina was bound to face a determined resistance on this front.

Adina decided to crush the Sikhs into subjection, and began to raise a large army for the purpose. Orders were issued to all the important Zamindars and chiefs to assist the Government in this respect, and a great many of them did

¹ As we saw it in the last chapter.
come forward all with the determination to annihilate the Khalsa. A good number of the Sikhs collected near Adina-
nagar to overawe the Government. A strong force was
despatched under Guru Aqil Das Jandialia and Dewan Hira
Mal to meet them. The Sikhs retired to Qadian where a
battle was fought, in which the enemies of the Sikhs were
utterly routed. The Dewan lost his life and his soldiers
precipitately fled.

Adina was utterly shocked. Strict orders were issued to
the Zamindars and the chiefs of the Punjab to take measures
for driving out the Sikhs. They were made to take oaths to
show no consideration towards them. Preparations were
made and a large number of carpenters and others collected
with their sharp weapons to clear away the jungles which
served as places of refuge for the Sikhs. But the Sikhs
rather grew bolder and a good number of them collected
under the leadership of Nand Singh Sanghania to have a dip
in the sacred tank at Amritsar. They also included among
them the important Sardars such as Jai Singh Kanheya. Mir
Aziz was sent by Adina against them. The Sikhs shut them-
selves up in the Ram Rauni fort which was closely besieged
by the Mir. The Sikhs led sorties and inflicted serious losses
on the enemy. But the Mir was as much determined as the
Sikhs within, and ultimately he succeeded in impinging a
large hole in a wall of the fort. The Sikhs dashed out in
small numbers and fell upon the enemy. Many lost their
lives, many got arrested and the rest escaped. The Sikhs
retired to the Malwa country where Sadik Beg Khan, the
Governor of Sarhind, fell upon them near the village
Sanghulan. Here, although Sadik himself suffered a serious
loss, the Sikhs were ultimately defeated and forced to flee.

As Adina’s preparations to annihilate the Khalsa went
pace, fortunately for the latter he suddenly fell ill and
passed away from this mortal world at Batala on the fifteen-
th day of September, 1758. And thus one more Governor of
Lahore died taking with him his fruitless efforts to destroy
the seed of the Khalsa.
An Estate

Adina left behind him an administration better consolidated, but the poor of the Majha poorer yet. Import of the food grains from Malwa into that part of the country had been stopped by Adina as the local supply failed due to the failure of the monsoons during that year. Adina supposed that under these conditions the Sikhs would be forced out of starvation to leave that Doab. But he had completely misjudged the Sikhs. As the prices rose, the poor of the land were the hardest hit. They were forced to migrate thus destroying the country’s economy, while the Sikhs gathered strength by helping them and winning their sympathies.

Adina certainly was a better administrator who consolidated the Lahore administration and subjected all the chiefs and the Zamindars of the State to his effective rule. But he utterly failed to destroy the Sikhs or to tame them into peaceful citizens. Had he lived a few years more, he should have died only a miserable death as some of his predecessors did. Ahmad Shah Abdali was preparing to march into the Punjab and teach Adina a lesson for his crafty success. The Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh was determined to destroy the self-seeking rule of the Mughals which was completely oblivious of the right of the non-Muslims to an honourable and respectable citizenship. Adina was lucky that he died before his fortunes seriously declined.

One of the most deceitful and crafty characters who never passed a day without planning to cheat a friend and be a traitor to his salt, Adina in his self-seeking designs had no compunction in advising Shahnawaz Khan to invite the Durrani and yet secretly reporting against him to Delhi for his impending designs. He invited the Marathas against Prince Timur, and yet wrote to him secretly at the same time that he was joining the Maratha invaders only as a matter of policy and, not out of any conviction. He ate Mir Mannu's salt, yet secretly designed to destroy his Dewan Kaura Mal and to bring about his defeat against Ahmad Shah Abdali. He contracted the Sikh friendship, yet turned against them when they had served his purpose well. Adina was certainly one of those men who in order to get some
material gain seek a guidance neither from any high principle of a truthful life, nor from the pithy dogmas of conscientiousness. Still however when all this is said, Adina was a wise diplomat who knew where his benefit lay, and never failed in carving out the way towards that gain. Born in a humble family and starting his career as a domestic servant, Adina's rise to the highest of the positions in the Province was indeed a proof of his foresightedness, boldness and wisdom. The way he combined threats and favours, and gifts and chastisements together to achieve his end, it proved him to be possessed of a brain only of the best chemist who knows how and in what proportion to bring the different chemicals together to produce the most desirable results.

Adina ruled only for a short period of five months, but during this period he succeeded in establishing a large measure of law and order where only chaos ruled supreme. He maintained a large army to meet foreign aggression and to establish internal peace. But when his revenues seemed to be failing him, and he found it difficult to bear the large expenditure on his administration, he hit upon a wise plan which had never occurred to anybody before. Quoting *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan* in this respect Dr. Gupta writes how Adina divided his army into two sections. He retained the services of the one, while the other half were disbanded. After the expiry of six months the first half were permitted to go home and the second half were kept on an active service. In this manner Adina was able to cut down his military expenditure by fifty percent.1

*Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan* gives an interesting anecdote. Adina was always hard up. Once he learnt that in the hills under his jurisdiction there lived a rich Gosain physician. Feigning illness he called the physician to his camp. But when after feeling Adina's pulse the physician could find nothing wrong with his system, the Governor told him that the worst malady from which he suffered was the shortage of money. And the physician could secure his release only after paying to Adina two cups full of the gold coins.

CHAPTER XXVII

MARATHA EXCLUSION AND THE SIKH RISE

A—After Adina

After the death of Adina Beg the Punjab fell once again into a state of confusion and chaos. Khwajah Mirza Khan tried to handle the administration, but he utterly failed. Imad-ul-Mulk, the Wazir of Delhi despatched Sayyid Jamil-ud-din Khan and Abaidullah Khan Kashmiri, perhaps to take charge of the Lahore Administration. But these two gentlemen had hardly reached Sonipat when Antaji Manakeshwar, sent by Rughunath, reached Delhi, and they retraced their steps. Dattaji Sindhia was despatched by the Peshwa to take charge of the Punjab administration. But after reaching the Sutlej he lost his heart and afraid of the Sikhs he returned to Delhi, sending Sabaji Sindhia instead to Lahore.

Sabaji was a man of sweet nature and a commanding genius. He reached Lahore with a very large Maratha army, and almost the first thing he did was to contact the Sikhs and win their friendship, with the result that shortly after when Jahan Khan marched from Peshawar with a strong Afghan army to occupy the Punjab, the Sikhs joined their forces with Sabaji and gave a crushing defeat to the Afghans; killing Jahan Khan’s son and wounding the latter as well. For a short time at least Sabaji succeeded in establishing peace in the Punjab.

As anarchy prevailed at Lahore before the arrival of Sabaji, the Sikhs made best out of the opportunity which offered itself. They spread themselves all over the country and extended their Rakhi far and wide. They met Bishambhar Das, the Dewan of Adina, at Urmur Tanda, killed him in the battle and dispersed his 25,000 soldiers after inflicting a
heavy loss on them. They conquered territories for the first time and parcelled them out among the chiefs of the different Jathas equitably. The different chiefs and the Zamindars of the Punjab hastened to offer their submission and accept their Rakhi. And when Sabaji came he also found his security only in establishing friendship with the Sikhs. Those who came under the Sikh protection, the Sikhs kept their faith with them and scrupulously restrained themselves from violating their private property, and kept their promises to protect them without distinction from any attack from outside.

Sabaji, however, was not destined to enjoy the Governorship of Lahore for long. A defeat at the hands of the Sikhs and the Marathas only strengthened Jahan Khan’s resolve to occupy Lahore for his master’s son, Timur. Shortly after, therefore, he marched once again into the Punjab with a much larger force than before. It was a critical time for which, his troops in the Punjab being scattered, Sabaji was not prepared. He remained at Batala, and without firing a single shot Jahan Khan reached Wazirabad. The Marathas fled the country leaving it to its fate. Sadiq Beg Khan, the son of Adina, also fled with his mother to Delhi.

B—Fifth Invasion of the Durrani

Ahmad Shah Durrani himself reached Lahore at the head of a very large force in October, 1759. When all deserted the Punjab in an utterly disgraceful haste to save their lives, the Sikhs came forward and the Durrani had to lose as many as about two thousand men during the course of his exploits in the Punjab.

The Durrani appointed Jarchi Karim Dad Khan to take charge of Lahore. And appointing Raja Ghumand Chand of Kangra as the Governor of the Jullundur Doab, he crossed the Sutlej. It was only at Taraori that the Marathas tried to arrest his march, but here they were utterly routed and leaving their 400 killed they fled the battle field on the 24th of December. Abdali reached near Delhi where some Rohilla
chiefs joined him. He continued his march against the Marathas. Datta Ji Sindhia met him at Barari Ghat on the Jumna, but was slain and his soldiers fled. At Sikandarabad Malhar Holkar met him on the 4th March, 1760 but was defeated. Abdali now occupied Delhi, and then left it and reached Anup Shahar on the border of Oudh. Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh joined the Durrani with his forty thousand horse and foot, and the latter now awaited a Maratha force from Puna to arrive.

**The Third Battle of Panipat**

As the news of the repeated Maratha disasters reached Puna, a very large force of the Marathas was prepared by the Peshwa and sent under the command of Sadashiv Bhaun a youth of only 30 summers, to re-establish the Maratha hold on the north. Bhaun marched on Delhi, and the city fell before him on the 22nd of July. Rejecting all reasonable offers of peace and in a fit of his youthful frenzy Bhaun marched towards the north to meet the Durrani. But the Durrani suddenly took advantage of Bhaun’s blunder of not putting the fords in the Jumna under the proper guards, crossed the river and reached Panipat. Bhaun also retraced his steps and reached Panipat.

The two armies encamped before each other at a short distance. The troops under Bhaun, according to Latif, "numbered 3,00,000 men, including the cavalry in their regular pay, which numbered 55,000, predatory horse, regular infantry, and the contingents from the allied states. They had also three hundred pieces of cannon. The troops under the Abdali consisted of 40,000 Afghans and Persians, 13,000 Indian cavalry and 38,000 Indian infantry, with about 70 pieces of cannon borrowed from Indian allies."

Here both the sides tried to cut off the supplies of each other. About 12,000 Marathas under Govind Rao Bundela spread themselves over the country and blocked almost all the Afghan lines of supplies. The utter want of supplies

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1. Latif, op. cit., p. 236.
was just beginning to tell upon the Afghans when Atai Khan Popalzie suddenly fell upon Govind Rao's camp and completely destroyed it. The Afghans thus restored their lines of communication, and it was now the turn of the Marathas to suffer from the want of them. For over three months the opposing armies lay encamped before each other when ultimately the Marathas began to starve for the lack of provisions. "Surrounded by carcasses of animals, dying cattle, hungry followers, and hemmed in their camp, their embarrassments were becoming unendurable...... At length the great Mahratta chiefs, wearied by extreme distress, surrounded the Bhau's tent and entreated to put an end to their miseries by a soudan."  

Bhau was now forced to come out of his entrenchment and lead an attack upon the Afghans. Shouting Har Har Jee Mahadev, the Marathas fell upon the Afghans. In the earlier stages the Marathas seemed to be in a favourable position. But ultimately they were defeated. This happened on 14th January, 1761. Bhau, Wiswas Rao and many other chiefs lost their lives. According to Latif about 2,00,000 of the Marathas were slain, 22,000 were taken prisoners, while 50,000 horses and an immense booty fell into the Afghan hands.

"This great battle, which has been surpassed by few in carnage, with its disastrous issue for the Mahrattas, sealed the fate of that aspiring nation." 2 And there were several factors which led to this Maratha disaster. The first and the foremost factor contributing to the failure of the Marathas was their young and hot-blooded leadership. Despite all the commanding genius that Bhau possessed, he was after all a young man with an inclination towards hasty decisions and incapability of adjusting himself to a situation even when success did attend his ventures. After his first victory at Delhi he perhaps turned mad with enthusiasm and wild plans of defeating the Durrani and establishing his sway all over India. No offers of peaceful settlement could satisfy

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2. Ibid., p. 238.
his reason and ambition. He looked on the advice of the veterans with a disdain. He rather distrusted their intellect and experience and considered himself alone. They were openly condemned, and the result was that everything centred around his own whim, and nobody dared advise him on any subject. Moreover he had perhaps never been to the northern India before. He possessed poor knowledge of the Indian geography, and was ignorant of the habits and life of the people of this part of the country. Nor does he seem to have ever experienced the northern Indian climate. His military strategy, too, was ill conducted and ill-planned. When he left Delhi to meet the Durrani, he committed one of those blunders which ultimately sealed the Maratha fate.

Nothing was done to protect and guard the fords in the river Jumna, and as Bhau marched towards the north the Durrani quietly crossed the Jumna and entrenched himself at Panipat; making the Marathas thus lose one of the best opportunities of their career. Moreover, of the large army as Bhau possessed, only about ten thousand Marathas under Govind Rao were assigned the duty of securing supplies and trying to cut off the enemy’s lines of communication. And the wonder is, when the entire strategy of the battle centred around cutting off each other’s supplies, Bhau failed in keeping a reserve which should remain in touch with Govind Rao and help him in a time of emergency. Their poor intelligence service ill served them, and in a surprise attack Govind Rao’s camp is said to have been destroyed early one morning, thus cutting off the supply lines of the Marathas to force them into a desperate action.

Then, the home authorities at Puna, too, seem to have been completely oblivious of the advantages of a proper planning and taking a regular care of securing supplies to the soldiers on the move. Bhau was ordered to march at a day’s notice, and he was to carry with him heavy artillery, a large train of baggage, and the families of the soldiers and the officers—as if he was going on a picnic; but no arrangement for boats was made and no knowledge regarding any fords
in the river Jumna gathered. Bhaub marched, and it was only when he reached the flooded Jumna that the question of the collection of boats was considered and parties were sent out to look for fords. Full one precious month of June was thus wasted, which being the hottest month of the country could best have been used in an attack upon the Afghans, the soldiers given to the climes of the mountains. At Delhi again, the piteous appeals of Bhaub to the Peshwa for the supply of ration, when Delhi itself had failed to supply their requirements, met only with a failure; for the Peshwa had never prepared himself to cope with such a situation.

And then no effort was made to gather the Sikh help from the Punjab, nor any Hindu chief of the northern India was manoeuvred into rendering an aid to the Marathas. Rather the best Hindu landlords and the chiefs of the Gangetic Doab rose to oppose the Maratha march into their country. And for this the characterless habit of the Marathas to loot and plunder their victims with utter ferocity, without any distinction of creed or belief, was much to blame. The Hindus of the northern India, in fact, had already tasted the Maratha rapine and recklessness.

On the other hand the Marathas had to contend with the fierce Afghans who had come far off from their country. There was no alternative for them but to win. In fact in the face of the early attacks of the Marathas at Panipat when the Afghans began to flee in confusion, the Grand Wazir of the Durrani called them together and addressed them: "Our country is far off, my friends, whither do you fly?" Moreover Ahmad Shah Abdali being out and out a seasoned General knew how to plan and take advantage of the enemy's weaknesses. Whereas the Marathas failed in winning the support of their own countrymen and co-religionists in the northern India, the Durrani invader easily won over to his side the powerful Muslim chiefs of the northern India such as Shujau-ud-daulah of Oudh.

In consequence, the Maratha defeat at Panipat was bound to introduce a drastic change in the future course of the Indian History. Although immediately after his victory at Panipat the whole of India lay at the mercy of the Durrani conqueror, his soldiers were not willing to stay on in this country, and having no confidence and faith in his Indian allies the Durrani was forced to leave this land without reaping any fruit of his victory. After the Durrani had retired, there was no strong power left behind to establish its full control on the entire Indian peninsula. The Mughal power had already been tottering, and the process of its decline continued as before. The difference now made was only with the Marathas. The Marathas had been steadily spreading their influence, and it was hoped that soon whole of India would pass under their control and they would establish a national Maratha Empire. But this was not to be. The blow the Marathas received at Panipat took them full one decade to recover, when after this they re-occupied Delhi. But in the meanwhile much water had flown down the Jumna. English in the east and the Sikhs in the west, both these powers established themselves. On the 12th of August, 1765, Emperor Shah Alam of Delhi ceded in perpetuity the revenue management of the provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to the English. And in the west the Sikhs established themselves too securely in the Punjab to permit the Marathas to realise any wild ambition on that land after they had re-occupied Delhi.

The Sikhs continued to develop their power, and ultimately succeeded in establishing their kingdom on the land of the five rivers. The English continued to expand their hold, and ultimately succeeded in establishing an empire in India. The Maratha power was ousted from the Indian scene, and it degenerated from a national force into petty local principalities.

C—The Sikh Opportunity

Being concerned here only with the Punjab, we will give now an account as to how the Sikhs drew an advantage out of the opportunity that offered itself. Jarchi Karim Dad
Khan had been given charge of the Lahore government by Ahmad Shah Durrani. But soon afterwards as his services were needed on the front, he was recalled by the Durrani who now appointed Sarbuland Khan to take charge of the Lahore administration. Sarbuland himself, however, remained at Jullundur out of the fear of the Sikhs, but sent Sadat Yar Khan to take charge of the provincial capital. Rustam Khan, the Governor of Chahar Mahal, proceeded to chastise the Sikhs, but he was captured and detained by the Khalsa and was released only on the payment of a ransom money amounting to twenty-two thousand rupees. When Sadat Khan, learnt of the fate of Rustam Khan, he was terrified and resigned from his office at Lahore. Finding none else bold enough to take charge of the capital, Sarbuland tried to appoint a Hindu banker of the city, named Surat Singh, to assume its charge. But he too was reluctant, and agreed to do so only so long as a suitable man was not discovered for the post. Soon after, Mir Muhammad Khan took charge of the capital. But he too proved as incapable as anybody else.

In November, 1760, a large number of the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar to celebrate the festival of Dewali. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, Chet Singh Kenhey, Hari Singh Bhangi, Lehna Singh and some other important Sikhs held a conference and decided to march on the capital. A Gurmata was passed to the effect, and the Sikhs soon reached Lahore and surrounded it from all sides. Part of the city outside the city walls was pillaged. Amir Muhammad Khan, the deputy of Sarbuland Khan and in charge of the capital, scared at the Sikh approach shut himself up in the fort. They isolated Lahore by cutting off its communications outside, and demanded a heavy sum of thirty thousand rupees for Karah Prashad. As they started scaling the walls and causing breaches in them, the inhabitants inside the walls were terrified. Their leaders approached Amir Muhammad Khan and persuaded him ultimately to meet the Sikh demand. The Sikhs received the money and retired.

1. The kind of sweetmeat which the Sikhs make with ghi, sugar and flour, and distribute in their gurdwaras.
In the meanwhile Ahmad Shah, after having defeated the Marathas at Panipat, returned to Lahore. But he did nothing to chastise the Sikhs, and after appointing Khwaja Obed Khan as the Governor of Lahore, Sarbuland Khan as the Governor of Multan, Zain Khan as that of Sarhind and Raja Ghumand Chand Katoch of Kangra to take charge of the Jullundur Doab, the Durrani marched towards his country leaving behind strict orders for his officers to leave nothing undone to destroy the Khalsa.

The Sikhs, however, were not going to let the Durrani invader retire to his country in peace. They in fact had started molesting him right from the Sutlej. While crossing the Beas he was dispossessed of a large number of the Maratha and other captives whom he was taking home. After his short stay at Lahore when the Durrani resumed his march towards his country, the Sikh attacks on his rear started once again and continued till he crossed the Indus. The Durrani Chief was, therefore, relieved of much of his booty.

When Ahmad Shah Abdali crossed the Indus the Sikhs returned and spread all over the province. They completely destroyed one thousand soldiers of Khwaja Mirza Khan, the Governor of Chahar Mahal, and did him to death. Over thirty thousands of them then marched towards the Jullundur Doab and defeated Sadat Khan and Sidiq Khan Afridi, its faujdars. After this they marched against Sarhind. Its Governor Zain Khan being away at the time, they entered the accursed city and started pillaging it once again. But they were countered in their designs by the troops of Bhikhan Khan, the Malerkotla ruler who happened to be present in the city. Soon Zain Khan also returned and the Sikhs leaving the city fled away. They, however, soon met together and decided to plunder Malerkotla to teach a lesson to Bhikhan Khan for his part against them at Sarhind. Malerkotla then lay defenceless, it was attacked and subjected to a thorough plunder.

In the meanwhile Ahmad Shah Abdali had reached Afghanistan bewailing his losses at the hands of the Sikhs, and his incapability to bring from Lahore much of his baggage
including the famous Zamzama gun which had been prepared at Lahore from a large number of copper and brass vessels collected from the Hindu houses, to be used at Panipat. Immediately after reaching Afghanistan he fitted out a strong expedition of over twelve thousand of his best trained soldiers, and despatched them under the command of a trusted general Nur-ud-din Khan, to chastise the Sikhs. Orders were issued out to the Governors of the Punjab to give Nur-ud-din Khan every assistance they could.

Nur-ud-din marched with fury, bringing in his train havoc and destruction which he spread over every place he came across during his march. But before he could meet the main body of the Sikhs, Charat Singh the Sukerchakia Chief decided to give him a taste of the Sikh arms. Taking the help of some other Sikh Chiefs, he met the Afghans on the banks of the river Chenab and taking a defensive position received their attack in which the Afghans were utterly routed. The Afghans fled the battle-field and hid their heads in Sialkot which was besieged. Nur-ud-din, the commander, lost his heart, and in an utter hopelessness and lack of any spirit of responsibility he escaped in disguise and left his soldiers to their fate. The garrison soon capitulated, and the Afghan soldiers were permitted without any molestation to retire to their country. This was a sensational victory of the Sikhs which besides adding to the power and prestige of the Sukerchakia Chief, filled the Punjab Governors with consternation.

Khwaja Obed the Governor of Lahore being perturbed, after several considerations he decided to meet the challenge of Charat Singh. He raised an army of about ten thousand horse and foot, and also enlisting about one thousand Sikhs of the Jullundur Doab as recruits for his army, he marched to Gujranwala and strongly entrenched himself a short distance from the town. Charat Singh had already made full preparations to meet the situation and had strongly garrisoned his fort. Taking an offensive, he attacked his enemy at their outposts and forced them to flee into their fortified position. As the news of Khwaja Obed's march on Gujranwala in the meanwhile spread, the Sikhs gathered
from all sides of the Punjab under their leaders such as Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, Jai Singh Kanheya and Hari Singh Bhangi, and marched to the assistance of Charat Singh. The Khwaja was now surrounded from all the sides, and the Sikhs in his service were also prevailed upon to desert their Muslim master. The Khwaja getting the intelligence of a proposed combined attack by the Sikhs during a night, found his position utterly hopeless and terror-stricken he fled with his troops. He was, however, overtaken by the Sikhs and relieved of his cannon, a large number of horses, camels and other valuable articles. This was a death blow to the Governmental authorities which besides adding yet further lustre to the prestige of Charat Singh, strengthened the belief of the general mass of the people that their best protection lay only in accepting the Rakhi, and that the days of the Muslim rule in the Punjab were now numbered.

These incessant victories of the Sikhs encouraged them yet further in their ambitious. On 22nd October, 1761 the Sikhs met at Amritsar once again to celebrate the festival of Dewali. By this time they had established their hold on a major part of the Punjab. But they now felt that their victories could not be considered complete unless they had occupied Lahore, the capital of the State. A Gurmata, therefore, was forthwith passed in which the entire Dal Khalsa decided to march against the capital and capture it. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia soon led the Dal Khalsa towards that direction. As the news of their march reached Lahore, the gates of the city were closed and Khwaja Obaid shut himself up in the fort in terror. Jussa Singh besieged the city and threatened to break its walls. The prominent citizens of the capital met in a conference. They had no hope of receiving any protection from the Governor, and the best course they thought was to negotiate with Jussa Singh and throw open the gates of the city to the Sikhs if he promised not to let the Sikhs molest them. The negotiations being successful, the gates were thrown open and the Sikhs entered the city crying aloud Sat Sri Akal.

It was a height of the career of the Sikhs. The entire machinery of the government of the capital fell into the Singh
hands. We do not hear as to what happened to Khwaja Obed thereafter. He perhaps met his death at the hands of the Sikhs. The Sikhs entered the royal mint, and in a flush of victory they struck their coin which bore the following inscription meaning: 'The coin struck by the grace of God in the country of Ahmad captured by Jussa Kalal':

"Sikka zad dar jahan bajazal-i-Akal,
Mulk-i-Ahmad garift Jussa Kalal":

The coin thus struck is not now available anywhere. And some writers doubt whether the coin was struck at all. But we have a strong evidence of some contemporary writers such as Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, the author of Khazana-i-Amira⁴, which supports the view that the coin was actually struck. But as it was struck by the Sikhs in the first flush of their victory, in place of the names of their Gurus they inscribed on the coin the name of their then leader Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. On a second thought, later on, they discovered their mistake and the coin seems to have been withdrawn at the suggestion of Jussa Singh himself. The fact seems to be fully borne out by a contemporary Muslim writer Ahmad Yadgar.² And J. Browne, an English minister in the service of Shah Alam at Delhi, who wrote out his book India Tracts in 1787, also mentions the fact saying "I have several of these rupees in my possession."³

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1. The book was written between 1762 and 1763, and its author gives an account of the Sikh occupation of Lahore.
2. Yadgar Ahmad, Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana, p. 173.
3. Browne, J., India Tracts, ii, p. 27 (footnote).
CHAPTER XXVIII

CONTEST BETWEEN SIKHS AND THE DURRANI, AND THE SIKH ACQUISITION OF TERRITORIES

A—The Sixth Durrani Invasion and the Bara Ghalughara.

Aki! Das, an Udasi Mahant of Jandiala, had been helping the Durrani invader and the Punjab Governors against the Sikhs. After the Sikhs captured Lahore, they decided to march against him, and Aki! Das sent an urgent appeal to the Durrani to come to his rescue. Ahmad Shah Durrani had already learnt of the fall of Lahore into the Sikhs hands, and had started his march towards the Punjab. When the appeal for help reached him from Aki! Das, he made some of those rapid marches for which he was celebrated, and soon reached Lahore, and establishing his head-quarters there he marched towards Jandiala which had in the meanwhile been besieged by the Sikhs. Before, however, the Durrani could reach Jandiala, the Sikhs raised their siege and marched towards Sarhind where they attacked Zain Khan, the Governor of the place.

The Durrani came back to Lahore; and from here he issued orders to the Muslim Jagirdars and the chiefs of Baroch, Malerkotla and other military stations to join Zain Khan immediately at Sarhind. The temporary absence of the Durrani from the field perhaps made the Sikhs to believe that he had entirely abandoned the further prosecution of war against them. And it was an utter surprise to them when marching from Lahore, covering a distance of about 150 miles and crossing two rivers in not more than thirty-six hours, the Durrani suddenly appeared before Malerkotla on 5th February, 1762. The Sikhs estimated at about 50,000, were encamped at this time at the village Kup, about six miles
north of Malerkotla, with their baggage train consisting of their provisions, women and children lying at Pind Garma, a village about four miles distant from that place. On hearing of the Durrani's sudden arrival at Malerkotla, the Sikhs hastened towards the Pind Garma. But here they found the Durrani superior to them in war strategy, whose purpose was to prevent their junction with their baggage train. Zain Khan fell upon them to prevent their march, and pursued them for about a mile. The Sikhs had to turn and fight with Zain Khan who was defeated, and the Sikhs marched once again towards Pind Garma. They had just reached the village, and were going to enter it when the Afghans intercepted them. The Sikhs were surrounded from all the sides and thrown into an utterly hopeless situation in which they were forced to fight the Afghans in a pitched battle, while they had been used only to the methods of attacking and fleeing, a method which was termed by them as the Dhai Phat. The Sikhs sent some of their veteran warriors to guide the baggage train towards Barnala, and the main body of them arranged itself into the shape of a rough square, and they also began their slow march towards that place. It was a terrible job for them: fighting on all the sides; separated from their women, children, arms, ammunition and other provisions regarding the destruction of which they awaited the news at any moment; and moving slowly towards Barnala. The roaring cannons of the enemy wrought a havoc in their ranks; but such was the courage, fortitude and dogged tenacity of these men of an iron-will, that they answered the cannons with their swords and small matchlocks; and only 50,000 fighting with 1,50,000 strong of the enemy, the Sikhs gave a determined fight to the Afghans on the plains of Raipur Gujral.

The Sikh baggage train being separated from them; about eight hundred picked Afghans fell on it and did a short work of the large number of their women, children,

2. This figure is given by Bhagat Lakshman Singh, op. cit., p. 210, according to whom it excluded the local levies from the Punjab. His account, however, should be taken only cautiously.
servants and the soldiers guiding and guarding it towards Barnala. Of the main body of the Sikhs too, a very large number were massacred, till towards the evening they reached the village Qutba. Here there was a large pond of water towards which the Afghans rushed to quench their thirst. By this time the Sikh baggage train having been completely destroyed, they had no women and cry of the children to slow down their pace. They took advantage of the situation and slipped to Barnala in rapid strides. The Durrani himself continued their pursuit right up to Barnala, and inflicted some more minor losses on the Sikhs. But from here he retired.

The Sikhs had by this time already lost heavily, and the Durrani thought it sufficient to establish the superiority of his strength, and supposed that it would deter the Sikhs in future from entertaining any wild ambitions against his government in the Punjab. Moreover the sun had now set. The Sikhs were now a considerable distance ahead of the Afghans. The country around was all sandy in which there was a scarcity of water. His soldiers who had covered besides the distance of twenty-five miles from Kup to Barnala, also the length of about 150 miles from Lahore to Kup in a continuous stride were now tired. All these considerations led him to think advisable not to continue the pursuit any further. Besides, he too had lost heavily during the course of the day's fight, and his soldiers were unwilling to engage into another action with the Sikhs at that time. The Durrani, therefore, withdrew.

The historians have variously estimated the losses of the Sikhs in killed from Kup to Barnala. While the minimum figure of 10,000² given by Sarkar may seem too small for all that the Sikhs suffered and lost; Rattan Singh's figure of 50,000¹ is clearly an exaggeration. Latif accepts the figure of 24,000 given by Rai Kanheya Lal as approximately correct². Whatever be the correct number of the Sikhs killed, there is no doubt that the losses the Sikhs suffered in their killed were very heavy. And the Sikhs called this the Bara

¹ Sarkar, op. cit., ii, p. 486
Ghalughara, or the 'Big Carnage' as compared to the Chhota Ghalughara or the small carnage which they suffered at the hands of Lakhpat Rai.

Barnala being a fortified town within the territories of Ala Singh the founder of the Patiala house, when Ahmad Shah reached there, he expected Ala Singh to come and pay him homage. But after such destruction as the Sikhs had suffered if Ala Singh did so, he was sure to incur the displeasure of his co-religionists, which he could ill-afford to have. He therefore desisted from the action which gave an opportunity to his enemies such as Lachhmi Narain, the Dewan of the Sarhind province, and the Nawab of Malerkotla etc., who were already jealous of his growing power. They poisoned the Durrani's ears who marched on Barnala, and pillaged its surrounding territories. Ala Singh escaped, but later on with the intercession of Shah Wali Khan, the grand Wazir of the Durrani, and Najib ud-daula, he presented himself before the Durrani. According to some writers his hair were ordered to be cut off, but Ala Singh purchased them by paying one and a quarter lakhs of rupees and thus saved them from being removed. According to Latif, Ala Singh's wife, Rani Fattu paid the invader another sum of Rs. 4 lakhs to secure his release. Besides, the king himself is said to have been impressed much with the manly deportment of Ala Singh so much so that he conferred a rich Khilat on him and despatched a firman to the Sarhind Governor, to restore to him his jagirs. The title of raja was also conferred on him, and after promising an annual tribute Ala Singh secured his release and struck a coin bearing the Shah's name as the bestower of the kingdom.∗

After this Ahmad Shah moved to Lahore, and from there to Amritsar where he ordered the Sikh temple to be blown away by gunpowder. Here a missile from the blown up edifice is said to have struck the Shah's knee upon which he ordered a hasty retreat. But before doing that he filled up the sacred tank with refuse, and polluted it with the

1. Latif, op. cit., p. 283. (footnote)
entrails and blood of cows and bullocks; the same being scattered all around by Kalandar Khan, a Durrani chief.

At Lahore too, numerous pyramids of the heads of the Sikhs were made and walls of the important mosques in the city were smeared with the Sikh blood. He remained in the capital for quite a few months, during which the representatives of the Emperor of Delhi, and of the Peshwa paid him homage; and the Shah recognising the latter's position established friendly relations with him.

During this period two expeditions were sent against Sukhjiwan Mal, the Governor of Kashmir who had declared himself independent of the Durrani authority. The second expedition under Nur-ud-din was successful, the Kashmir Governor was captured and the valley was annexed to the Afghan empire.

Ahmad Shah by this time seems to have become completely complacent, feeling that there was now no possibility of the Sikhs rising against him once again after such a crushing blow as had been administered to them. But he was mistaken. The crushing blows only animated the Sikh spirits and when being ill-treated by the Brar Jats of the Malwa desert, they reached the safer places such as Farid Kot and Bhatinda, they called a general conference of the Sikhs in which their position was reviewed. The Sikhs burnt with the spirit of revenge, and assigned their defeat to a surprise attack of Durrani, to the Afghan superiority in their artillery to the Sikhs being weighed down by their heavy baggage and to the failure of their supply of arms. They, therefore decided to break the Shah's pride and complacency while he was still in the Punjab. They passed a resolution and decided to visit Amritsar, re-erect their temple and clear their sacred tank of its garbage. In May, 1762, just three months after their heavy losses at Kup, they attacked Sarhind and made Governor Zain Khan secure peace after a payment of fifty thousand rupees. In August they visited Amritsar and started repairing their temple etc. Ahmad Shah was at this time at Kalanaur where he had retired to escape from the terrible heat of Lahore. From there he sent out several expeditions against the Sikhs, but
to his exasperation they all came back fleeing after having tasted the Sikh arms.

Jussa Singh Ahluwalia brought the entire membership of the Dal Khalsa together, and in August the same year he spread all over the Jullundur Doab, subjecting to pillage those who had shown any hostility towards them in the days of their troubles. The envoys of the Delhi Emperor proceeding towards the Durrani had to go back from Panipat, because of the fear of the Sikhs who were plundering the territories nearby. In October, 1762, the Sikhs came to Amritsar once again to celebrate their Dewali. Ahmad Shah Abdali had by this time come back to Lahore, still very much confident that the Sikhs would not be so daring as to gather at Amritsar only thirty miles distant from him, after their reverses at Kup. An important part of his army had gone away to conquer Kashmir, and he did not have a very large number of soldiers stationed with him at Lahore. He was, therefore, taken completely unawares when the Sikhs gathered so near him to celebrate their festival.

Apprehending a sure trouble at the hands of the Sikhs, and finding his position desperate, he sent an envoy to the Sikhs to negotiate peace. But the envoy being beaten away by the Sikhs, the Shah felt insulted and taking with him whatever of the soldiers he had, he marched against Amritsar. The Sikhs were fighting this time from their religious centre where to die was a privilege and a sure passport to heaven. Moreover the memory of the losses that they had suffered at Kup was still fresh in their minds, and they had been anxiously seeking an opportunity to avenge themselves on the enemy. They therefore showed such a fierceness of action in the battle that followed, as the Shah had perhaps never seen before. A very heavy loss was inflicted upon the Afghans, till due to the approaching darkness of the night both the sides retired to their respective camps, and taking advantage of which the Shah fled to Lahore. It was a great victory for the Sikhs; and having beaten away the greatest general of Asia, they felt satisfied in having retrieved to a great extent the loss of their prestige at Kup.
Ahmad Shah having returned to Lahore now awaited the arrival of his troops from Kashmir, which soon reached him after having achieved a success. In the meanwhile his Indian friends also began to send their troops to his assistance. But he was able to fight only one action with the Sikhs near the Lakhi jungle. An insurrection having broken out in his own country, he appointed a Hindu named Kabuli Mal as the Governor of Lahore, recognized Shah Alam as the Emperor of Delhi and the Peshwa as that of the Deccan; and confirming Zain Khan to the Governorship of Sarhind and Sadat Yar Khan to that of the Jullundur Doab, the Shah hastened back to Kandhar.

**B—The Sikhs Rise Again**

Forster writes about what happened after Abdali retired to his country. Soon he writes, the Sikhs "were seen descending from their various holds on the Punjab, which they rapidly laid waste and after several desultory actions, in which the Afghans were defeated, they besieged, and what seems extraordinary, they took the city of Lahore; where wildly indulging the enmity that had never ceased to inflame them against these severe scourges of their nation, they committed violent outrages. The mosques that had been ever rebuilt or restored to use by the Mahometans, were demolished with every mark of contempt and indignation; and the Afghans, in chains, washed the foundations with the blood of bogs. They were also compelled to excavate the reservoir at Amritsar. The Sicques, however, keenly actuated by resentment, set at a bond to the impulse of revenge and though the Afghan massacre and persecution must have been deeply imprinted on their minds, they did not, it is said, destroy one prisoner in cold blood." The Sikhs divided themselves into two Dals. The Budha Dal under the leadership of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia spread all over the Punjab, punishing those who had worked against them. The Taruna Dal under the leadership of Hari Singh Bhangi remained at Amritsar to repair the Sikh temple. The former consisted, besides the Ahluwalia misl, of the Dallewalias,

the Karor Singhias, the Nishanwalias, the Shahids and the Singhpurias; while the latter included the Bhangis, the Kanheyas, the Nakais, the Ramgarhias and the Sukerchakias.

The first exploit of the Taruna Dal was their sudden march on Kasur, a Pathan settlement, to free a Brahman lady who had been seized by its chief Usman Khan. The town was taken by surprise, Usman Khan offered some resistance with his five hundred men, but they were all instantaneously done to death. The Brahman lady was restored to her husband and the town given to a free plunder.

The Taruna Dal entered the Jullundur Doab and laid waste its entire territory. Sadat Yar Khan, its Governor, dared not stir out, and shutting himself up in the capital he left the people to their fate.

In November, 1763 Jahan Khan the commander-in-chief of Ahmad Shah, marched into the Punjab. But the moment he crossed the Chenab the Sikhs fell upon him in their full fury, and inflicted upon him such a defeat that he was sent fleeing to Sialkot. The fort of Sialkot was thereafter besieged, and Jahan Khan now fled to Peshawar leaving behind him his family which fell into the hands of the Sikhs but was conducted by them to Jammu without any molestation.

After this, Jussa Singh Ahlawalia captured and utterly sacked Malerkotla. Their old enemy Bhikhan Khan, the chief of the place was slain.

These successes elated the Sikhs, and they now decided to march into the Sarhind province. Kheri was first attacked, and Gangu Brahman who had treacherously handed over Mata Gujri and the two of her grandsons to the Sarhind Governor, was put to death together with his entire family. Morandah was next attacked, because two Ranghars, Jani and Mani who also had been instrumental in handing over Mata Gujri, were also the residents of this place. Their families were also destroyed. Here the Sikhs are said to have destroyed almost the entire population of the young Muslims, after they meted out the punishment to the proper,
Zain Khan, the Governor of Sarhind within whose territories these activities were performed by the Sikhs, was terrified. His approaches to the Sikhs for peace having been rejected, the Sikhs joined also by Ali Singh and many jats of the Malwa and numbering about fifty thousand, besieged Sarhind. Zain Khan’s own administration, according to the contemporary writers like Miskin,¹ being irregular and inefficient, he was disliked by some of his own men and officers. He had a hope of immediate help neither from Delhi nor from Kandhar. After some time Zain Khan was obliged to sally forth and attack the Sikhs. The battle between the Sikhs and the Muslim forces was fought seven miles east of Sarhind, at the village Pir Zan Munera in which the Sikhs gave a crushing defeat to the Muslims in which Zain Khan himself and several other Muslim leaders were killed. Sarhind seems to have been besieged towards the close of December, 1763,² but the battle referred to above probably took place in January, 1764.³

After this the Sikhs sacked the town of Sarhind once again. Here the two of Guru Gobind Singh’s sons having been executed, the Sikhs gave full play to their vengeance and every house was either demolished or set on fire. “Not a house was left standing, and custom exists to this day by which it is considered a meritorious act for every Sikh to carry away a brick from the place and throw it into the Sutlej, to mark his detestation and abhorrence of the place.”⁴ It was also at this time that a Gurdwara named Fategharh is said to have been built at the place where the two sons of Guru Gobind Singh were bricked alive. Dr. Gupta’s view that the walls in which these children were bricked alive were pulled down by the Sikhs at this time,⁵ does not seem correct. For, according to Sikh tradition, these walls were blown away by a storm shortly after the event. And even if tradition is

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5. Gupta, History of the Sikhs, i, p. 200.
rejected, we know that Banda Bahadur led his army into Sarhind just after the death of Guru Gobind Singh, and a ruthless retributive justice was meted out to the town on that very occasion, when every Muslim house was plundered and destroyed. The Sikhs attacked this town several times after this, each time levelling its buildings with the ground and taking away even the timber of their roofs. It is difficult to believe that this wall should have been kept intact during all these events.

Be that as it may, after destroying the town the Sikhs spread over the Sarhind province, and eight of the misls, i.e. the Ahluwalia, the Bhangi, the Dallewalia, the Karor Singha, the Nishanwalia, the Phulkian, the Shahid and the Singhpuria parcellcd out the entire territory among themselves. The tradition describes how in a strange manner the Sikhs occupied the territories. A Sikh would ride a horse, visit a village and leave an article of his use with its headman, and then gallop off to another village doing like-wise the whole day and night till he was left with nothing but short breeches on his body. All these villages thus became his property, and such was the discipline among the Sikhs as a village thus visited by a Sikh would not be occupied by another, and thus the entire plains territory between the Sutlej and the Jumna was divided among them. The ruins of the town of Anandpur were unanimously assigned to Budh Singh, an old companion of Guru Gobind Singh who later on sold it away for Rs. 25,000 to Ala Singh of Patiala.

In February, 1764 the Budha Dal entered the Gangetic Doab for the first time, and laid waste the territories of Naji-b-ud-daulah the plenipotentiary of Ahmad Shah and dictator of Delhi, gathering an immense booty. Najib-ud-daulah paid the Sikhs an amount of Rs. 11,00,000, thus purchased peace and the Sikhs retired. In the meanwhile the Taruna Dal entered the Jullundur Doab. Sadat Yar Khan fled this time and his territories were plundered.

The Taruna Dal then entered Lahore and demanded of Kabuli Mal its Governor to surrender to them all the beef butchers of the place. This was of course difficult for the
Governor to do because he did not want to incur the displeasure of his master Ahmad Shah Abdali. Ultimately, however, a compromise was struck. The Governor chopped off the noses and ears of some of the butchers and expelled them from the city. He also paid a large sum of money to the Sikhs, and the Sikhs retired. Before retiring, however, Hari Singh Bhangi, the leader of the Taruna Dal, nominated Tek Chand as a Resident who would advise the Lahore Governor in his administration. And thus the actual administration passed into the Bhangi hands. After this a section of this Dal proceeded under Hari Singh towards Multan.

Just about this time Charat Singh proceeded separately towards Rohtas, and its Governor Sarfaraz Khan having been permitted to leave the place peacefully, his country was occupied by the Sukerchakia chief. Sarbuland Khan the Kashmir Governor having arrived late in the Punjab to assist Sarfaraz Khan, he was attacked by Charat Singh and was captured; to be released later on after a payment of Rs. 2,00,000 as a ransom money. Charat Singh continued his conquests and soon made himself the master of a large territory between the Jhelum and the Indus.

In the meanwhile Hari Singh occupied Multan; Jhanda Singh captured the territories of Khushab, Chiniot and Jhang, and several other territories were occupied by some other members of the Taruna Dal.

In November, 1764 the Sikhs helped Jawahir Singh the youthful raja of Bharatpur in his laying siege of Najib-ud-daulah in Delhi. But just this time getting the news of the seventh invasion of the Punjab by Ahmad Shah Abdali, they deserted the Jat raja and retired to the Punjab.

C—The Seventh Durrani Invasion.

When the news of the Sikh occupation of the Sarhind province, and their devastation and plunder of the rest of the Punjab reached Ahmad Shah, he crossed the Indus for the seventh time in December, 1764 and arrived at Lahore. Soon the search for the Sikhs started. The Sikhs had retired once again into the Lakhi jungles; but when they heard of
the Shah’s search of them, Charat Singh suddenly fell upon the Shah’s scouting party which was soon reinforced by a strong body of troops under Nasir Khan but had to retire after having suffered a heavy loss. The Shah pursued the Sikhs and marched against Amritsar, but the Sikhs retired once again into their hideouts; only about thirty of them remaining in the fort, perhaps purposely, to lay down their lives in the Guru ki Nagri. These Sikhs sallied out, fought the Afghans and all died inflicting a considerable loss on them in proportion to their number.

After this the Shah marched towards Sarhind. The Sikhs suddenly fell upon the Afghans at Jandiala, and in the battle that followed they defeated them killing Rahim Khan Bakshi. The Afghans were defeated in another battle at Batala, in which Sarbuland Khan received some deep wounds. Another action at Adinanagar remained drawn. Shortly after the Afghans entered the Jullundur Doab under the command of Jahan Khan. Here the Sikhs gave another battle to them. As the Shah proceeded slowly and crossed the river Sutlej, the Sikhs continued hovering about his camp and attacked his rear for several times. The Shah now reached Kanjipura. When the Shah reached Sarhind, Ala Singh presented himself before him telling him that he had tried for several times to beat out the Sikhs, but they were made of such elements as the more one killed them, the more they grew. The Shah gave Ala Singh a kind consideration and confirmed him as the Governor of Sarhind to pay three and a half lakhs of rupees as an annual tribute.

By this time the month of March had set in, and the Indian summer and rains were approaching fast when it would make the Afghan life very difficult in the Punjab. And the Shah, therefore, was persuaded by his officers to march back to Afghanistan without chastising the Sikhs. He was not, however, going to have a peaceful journey back home. The Budha Dal having joined the Taruna Dal by this time, the Sikhs gave the Shah a pitched battle when the Afghans had just crossed the Sutlej. The fight continued for seven
days, as the Afghans marched slowly towards their country. And thus the Sikhs inflicted heavy losses on the Afghans. The Sikhs continued their attacks upon the Afghans right up to the Chenab, and even after they had crossed it, after which they retired.

During the time Shah remained in the Punjab, he burnt the standing wheat crops in numerous villages. The property of the Sikhs was destroyed and their temples were plundered and desecrated.

D—The Sikh Opportunity Again

After the Durrani invader had retired to his country, the Sikhs got once again a free opportunity of extending and consolidating their territorial acquisitions. They assembled at Amritsar and started repairing their temple and the fort. The regular prayer was started once again, and the Sikhs exchanged their congratulations.

After the festivities at Amritsar were over, Lehna Singh and Gujjar Singh Bhangi decided to capture Lahore. When Kabuli Mal got this information, according to Latif, he hurried "off to Jammu and claimed the protection of Ranjit Deo, one of the hill rajas";¹ His nephew Amir Singh was left behind to take charge of the administration, but he proved to be inefficient in this. The Sikhs besieged the fort, and then winning over some persons working inside the fort as gardeners, they found their way in through a hole and took Amir Singh by surprise when he was busy enjoying a dance. He was immediately arrested and put under heavy chains, and thus the fort was occupied. Sobha Singh also soon joined them, and the city was parcelled out by the three: Sobha Singh getting the south of Lahore as far as Niaz Beg, its eastern portion including the haveli of Kabuli Mal fell to the share of Gujjar Singh, while the rest including the fort and Badshai masjid was assigned to Lehna.

¹ Latif, op. cit., p. 286; According to Dr. Gupta, however, Kabuli Mal was away in the train of his master (Ahmad Shah). (Gupta, History of the Sikhs, i, p. 201). The Shah had left India at the end of March, 1765, whereas Lahore was occupied in May, the same year.
Charat's reward

Gobindshahi rupee

struck

Singh. Shortly after when Charat Singh the strong Sukerchakia chief also marched to Lahore and claimed a share, the Zamzama gun of Ahmad Shah lying at Lahore was handed over to him.

After assuming the sovereignty at Lahore, now for the second time the Sikhs struck in the royal mint what later began to be known as Gobindshahi rupee. The new Sikh rupee bore the following inscription: Deg Oteh O Fateh O Nusrat Bedirang, yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh; which means the grace, the power and the victory were obtained from Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.

Across the Jumna

Towards the end of September, 1765 the Sikhs deciding once again to plunder the territories of Najib-ud-Daulah, the dictator of Delhi, both the Buddha and the Taruna Dals marched towards that side. Najib's jagirs were sacked and thoroughly plundered. Najib made his preparations, and assisted by Amar Singh the successor and grandson of Ala Singh he met the Sikhs at Shamli. Here a battle was fought in December, in which the Sikhs gave a good account of themselves. But findings it difficult to defeat the superior power of their enemy they escaped in the darkness of the night. Pursued by Najib, the Sikhs entered the territories of Bharatpur and began to plunder them. Jawahir Singh the Jat Raja of the territory had to pay them a heavy sum of seven lakh rupees, before the Sikhs retired from his country. Jawahir Singh, besides, taking this opportunity offered to help the Sikhs if they entered for loot the country of his enemy Madho Rao the Raja of Jaipur. The Sikhs agreed\(^1\) and in concert with Jawahir Singh started ravaging the country of Madho Rao. Soon, however, Madho Rao sought his safety in paying them a heavy subsidy and the Sikhs retired. Marathas also having by this time joined Madho Rao, Jawahir Singh too was obliged to withdraw his forces from the Jaipur territories.

Soon however, Jawahir Singh got yet another opportunity of using these brave soldiery of the Sikhs against his enemies. The Maratha troops under Malhar had carried

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frequent raids into his territories from their camp at Dholpur. Deciding to end this menace, Jawahir Singh got the Sikh heina and marched against them. A battle was fought near Dholpur where the Sikhs, by their peculiar and strange tactics of running away to put the enemy off its guard and then attacking it in surprise, gave a crushing defeat to the Marathas; capturing a large number of their horse and their baggage.

After this the Sikhs marched back towards Delhi, and entering the jagirs of Najib near the capital, began to plunder them once again. Here, however, they had a bad luck awaiting them. Najib attacked their camp lying at a distance of a few miles from Ghat Kutana on the Jumna while they were away on a plundering expedition. The Sikhs soon returned and an action was also fought; but as they had been taken by surprise, they could not give a good account of themselves and were thus relieved of almost all the booty they had so far gathered in their adventures across the Malwa. The Sikhs thus retired empty handed.

E—The Eighth Durrani Invasion

To restore his authority in the Punjab Ahmad Shah Abdali led his invasion into this country for the eighth time in December, 1766. After crossing the Indus, the Shah met about eight thousands of the Sikh horse at Behgy, a few miles from Kohtas. The Sikhs were utterly routed and a great number of them were slain. This time, however, the Shah was convinced of the futility of his policy of annihilating the rising Sikh power. He thought it better to harness the Sikhs into his service, and therefore when he reached Lahore, on getting good reports regarding Lehna Singh's administration of it, he sent an offer of the governorship of Lahore on his own behalf to this Sardar. But the Sardar was not prepared to accept this offer at the cost of losing his credit with his co-religionists, and therefore rejected it outright.

This added to the Shah's fury, and putting his family in the charge of his brother-in-law at Lahore, he proceeded once again to destroy the Sikh power. But just when he had left
for Sarhind, the Sikhs, including Lehna Singh and Charat Singh who had gathered near Chak, fell on his baggage near Lahore and prepared to besiege the city itself. An urgent call was sent out to the Shah, and he had to come back to save the city and his family. The Sikhs retired before he reached Lahore. After coming back to Lahore the Shah sent out a strong force under Jahan Khan to chastise the Sikhs near Chak. The Durrans, however, suffered heavy losses and they were preparing to flee from the battle-field when the Shah himself marched to reinforce them. The Sikhs fought with the Shah for some time but ultimately fled away.

From here the Shah proceeded towards the Jullundur Doab, sending expeditions in all directions to capture and punish the Sikhs. But in almost all these cases the Durrans faced a failure; even Nasir Khan Baluch, one of the most important of the Shah’s generals, being forced by the Sikh’s to flee in disgrace. Marching through Giddah, Patiala and Banur, the Shah reached Ismailabad about twenty miles south of Ambala, where Najib-ud-daulah joined him and advised him not to proceed towards Delhi when his rear was being plundered at every place by the Sikhs who continued hovering around his camp but kept at a safe distance from him. The Shah accepted the advice and determined himself to put his house in the Punjab in order.

The Shah now started his march back towards Lahore. On his way back he was pleased to invest Amar Singh, the successor of Ala Singh, with the title of Raja Rajgan Mahendar Bahadur, and confirmed him as the Governor of Sarhind. He also allowed him to strike a coin in the Shah’s name.

Continuing his march the Shah reached Machhiwara wherefrom several expeditions were sent out against the Sikhs, a good number of them being captured and put to sword. But just as the Shah proceeded by his slow steps on his journey back to Lahore, to his utter exasperation the Sikhs entered the country of Najib once again and started plundering it. Jahan Khan was sent once again against the Sikhs, who this time slew many of the latter and put the rest
flight. But every defeat of the Sikhs made them only to reorganise themselves and get more fierce and revengeful. The more the Durrani tried to destroy them, the bolder they grew. Tact, reconciliation and force, all failed to bring this brave nation to reconcile themselves to the Durrani rule. And Ahmad Shah had ultimately to leave this country in utter hopelessness and disgust.

As the plains of the Punjab burnt with the heat of the summer and the rivers of this land started swelling, Ahmad Shah decided to put a hasty end to his activities in this country, and appointing Dadan Khan as the Governor of Lahore he retired to his own, leaving his power in the Punjab unconsolidated and an easy prey to the ever rising ambition and power of the Sikhs.

P—The Sikh Opportunity

As Ahmad Shah left this country, the three Sikh chiefs Lehna Singh, Gujjar Singh and Sobha Singh marched once again against Lahore and obliging Dadan Khan to retire, they occupied the city. In December, 1767 the Sikhs entered the country of Najib once again and pillaged it far and wide. Najib marched against them and defeated them near Muzaffarnagar. But as he grew old he too lost his heart and vigour, and in a letter to the Queen-Mother of Shah Alam II, he openly confessed his failure to meet the Sikh menace. He wrote thus: “......But now Her Majesty must forgive her servant and not expect what he has no ability to perform. The Sikhs have prevailed and they have written to all the tribes in general to join them, pointing to his weakness and encouraging them to cast him out. Her Majesty will consider him now as one unable to provide for his own security here......”

The Gangetic Doab thus became utterly defenceless. And writes G.K.C. William: “As regularly as the troops were cut, the border chieftains crossed over and levied blackmail from almost every village, in the most systematic manner. Their requisitions were termed Rakhi, sometimes euphemistically Kambli, i.e. 'blanket money' (perhaps equal

1. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, (translated by Imperial Records Department, Calcutta), ii. p. 847.
to the price of a blanket). Each of them had a certain well-known beat or circle, so well-recognized and so clearly defined that it is not unusual for the peasantry at the present day to speak of some places being for instance, in Jode Singh’s Patti, others in Dewan Singh’s or Himmat Singh’s, and so on."

The Sikhs developed their power and influence in the Gangetic Doab and plundered Delhi, and went even to the extent of trying to play as king-makers in which however they failed due to their mutual differences.

C—Ninth and the Tenth Durrani Invasions. Shah’s Death, Estimate and Failure.

In December, 1768 Ahmad Shah Abdali left Kandhar once again to try to re-establish his power in the Punjab. But the times had by now changed and the declining period of his life had commenced. "He had been suffering the most excruciating pain from cancer of the nose ever since 1764, and now old age appeared to be creeping upon him; for the loss of his material spirit and activity were perceptible, and were the common topics of conversation with both his friends and his enemies; the former looking forward with anxiety to the dissolution of their leader, and the latter regarding with great satisfaction the approaching demise of their dreaded chastiser."

Moreover, the disruptions in Afghanistan itself worried the Shah the most. India was slipping away from his hands, the end of his life was knocking at his door, and his own soldiers had completely lost their confidence against the Sikhs. The fatigue of the repeated invasions of India, the prospects of the terrible heat of the Punjab plains and the swelled rivers of this country, all this robbed these soldiers of their old enthusiasm and spirit. The falling revenues of India had disabled the Shah from meeting regularly the salary bills of the soldiers, and they grew refractory. As he marched, between Kabul and Peshawar a tumult arose in his army, which resulted into the death of many of his important officers and

soldiers. A great number of soldiers were dispersed and the Shah marched back to Kandhar in a miserable condition without crossing the Indus.

In December 1769 the Shah decided once again to march into India. He is said to have been led into this decision to divert the attention of the turbulent Afghans. But his soldiers were not prepared to risk a fight with the brave nation of the Sikhs. They accompanied him perhaps to escape from the bitter cold of Afghanistan and spend a few days in the more pleasant climate of Peshawar, at the Shah’s expense. After reaching Peshawar, therefore, they became refractory and the Shah losing his control over them was obliged to march back without crossing the river Indus, once again.

After this he never ventured to lead another expedition into India. As he was growing old, his health failed him and he retired to the Achakzai country where at Murgha, he died on 14th April, 1772, and thus ended the long story of his fruitless efforts to establish his power in the Punjab.

Good, great and a wise prince as Ahmad Shah was, Latif writes of him: “If we compare him with the majority of Asiatic rulers, we find him more lenient and less grasping than those whom he subdued; to his subjects, considerate and just to a degree; to those whom he admitted to his society, affable, hiliarious and free; to those who suffered in his cause, or in any way aided him, bountiful and generous; to the poor and needy, ever friendly and charitable; and to the rebellious more severe than the severest”. It is said that once when the Shah was engaged in the siege of Nishapur, some of his troops who had not been paid their salary mutinied and fell upon his treasury. When the Shah learnt of it he kept his patience and simply remarked that they were equal partners in his fortunes.

His administration in Afghanistan at least, showed a reformer and an efficient organiser in the Shah at his best. He stopped such punishments of the criminals in his country as that of cutting off the limbs. The law permitted the

1. Latif, op. cit.; p. 289.
widows to marry some nearest of their kin, except father or a son. The divorce system is said to have been abolished by him. Domestic servants were given better citizenship rights. The system of prostration before the sovereign was abolished, and priests and Sayyids were given special rights and privileges, as they could sit and dine with the King. Within Afghanistan his taxation was not heavy, the remunerations to the State officers were liberal and they were contented. And this was the reason perhaps that made him oppressive in some other parts of his Empire.

His soldiers were permitted a share in the booty that fell into his hands after a victory. And liberal allowances to them were probably the main cause of his being less considerate in his devastations of the territories of India. He was never satiated, whatever the amount of wealth he gathered.

He shed a lot of blood in India, and the Sikhs of the Punjab were his worst victims. Wherever he went in the Punjab, he carried with him his activities of loot and plunder, and that was done perhaps to thrill his Afghan soldiers, or to please his Indian friends. But we may perhaps excuse him in this, as Latif does, on the score that that was the wont of the conquerors of the time.

The Shah courted the learned society of men, and showed a great respect to the leaders of his religion. “He was himself highly educated, and he encouraged learning in others, wherever he found it practicable. He maintained his dignity in public with all the solemnity and grandeur of an Asiatic potentate, and was very punctilious in all State ceremonials”. Still, however, one could have an easy access to him, and he had some of those qualities of kindness and consideration which could very well be considered as an antithesis of the ferocious Afghan character to which he belonged.

One of the greatest generals and conquerors of Asia, it was he who freed Afghanistan from the shackles of her centuries old political slavery, and established her as an independent and one of the strongest empires of the time. His sceptre extended from Khorasan to Sarhind, and from the

Oxus to the Persian Gulf. "His enemies trembled and his friends took fresh courage at the mention of his name."

Yet, however, he utterly failed in establishing his complete hold on the Punjab, there being several reasons for this. One of the most potent causes of his failure was his growing age and failing health. He had a cancer in his nose which grew with his growing age, and ultimately became incurable. The weakness of his old age, coupled with the painful and incurable disease, made his last years so miserable that at moments he is said to have cried out looking towards heaven, that earlier the death came to him the better. Then his generous policy of toleration, high salaries and light taxation in his own country, though gave him the reputation of a kind-hearted liberal King in his early years; proved for him to be ultimately ruinous. His income from revenue within his country was low, while the ever increasing number of soldiers in his army increased his expenditure. The only hope of meeting the deficit was the large amount of booty which fell into his hands as a result of his exploits in India. But as the time passed the booty grew scarce, and the revenues from India fell as a result of the chaotic conditions which prevailed in this country. Najib-ud-daulah his plenipotentiary at Delhi, for instance, paid him only two lakhs of rupees in seven years, in place of about two crores which he was expected to pay. It was thus growing ever more difficult to meet salary bills of the soldiers, with the result that they now became refractory and unreliable, and sometimes they actually mutinied, as it happened when he planned his ninth invasion of India.

Nor did his Indian friends and allies remain faithful to him till his last years. Almost all of them were opportunists, and they helped him so long as it suited their purpose. But when they became convinced that the Durrani would not be able to establish his rule in the Punjab, and that the Sikhs in that country were getting too strong for him to deal with successfully, they turned their backs towards him. Thus, during his siege and the last campaign in India, only Najib-ud-daulah is said to have presented himself before him, while the rest deserted perfectly. Four ears to his calls.

1. Latté, op. cit., p. 299
And then opposed to him were the Sikhs, a nation of warriors, the men of iron-will, the people determined to protect their national honour and self-respect. In this connection we may well quote Qazi Nur Muhammad, the well known bigoted author who accompanied the Shah in his invasion in 1764. While having no friendly feelings towards their religion and beliefs, the Qazi seems to have been compelled to recognise certain qualities in the Sikhs. And he says: "Do not call Sikhs "dogs," because they are lions and are brave like lions in a battle-field...... If you cherish a desire of learning the art of war, come before them in the field...... You may know that their title is Singh (lion) and it is injustice to call them dogs. O youth! If you are ignorant of the Hindi language, (I can tell you that) the meaning of Singh is lion. In fact they are lions at the time of battle and when in festivities they surpass Hatim (in generosity). When they take hold of the Indian sword in hand they gallop from Hind (Gangetic Doab, invaded in February, 1764) up to the country of Sind. Nobody, however strong and wealthy, dares to oppose them. When they fight with a spear, they bring defeat to the army of the enemy. When they hold the spear-head upward they break to pieces even the Caucasus Mountain. When they bend a bow they set in it the foe-killing arrow. When they pull it up to the ear, the body of the enemy trembles like a cane. If their hatchet strikes a coat of mail, then this coat of mail itself on the body of the enemy becomes a shroud. The body of each of them looks like a hillock and in grandeur excels fifty men. Bahram Gor (a Persian hero) killed wild asses and could frighten tigers. If Bahram Gor comes before them he also would admit their superiority."

"O hero! if their troops take to flight, do not consider it a defeat. It is a trick of their mode of war. May God forbid the repetition of such a fraud! They resort to this deception in order to make the angry enemy grow bold and run in their pursuit. When they find them separated from their main body and away from help and reinforcement, they at once turn back and give them the hardest possible time."

"Besides their fighting, listen to one thing more in
which they excel all other warriors. They never kill a coward and do not obstruct one who flees from the field. They do not rob a woman of her gold and ornaments, may she be a queen or a slave-girl. Adultery also does not exist among the "dogs." None of them is a thief." And little wonder, therefore, such a people as the Sikhs were, were bound to have the victory ultimately kiss their feet.

The Sikhs had Amritsar as the source of their inspiration, and the more the Durrani tried to destroy their temple and tank, the bolder and the more revengeful they grew. Amritsar to the Sikhs, in fact, was a symbol of their national unity and independence, and when they sat inside it and repeated the heroic tales of their Gurus and ancestors, their spirits were touched with a living enthusiasm and courage to fight and lay down their lives. Many a Sikh rather sought ardently an opportunity to have the privilege of laying down his life at this their Guru ki nagri, and it was a blunder of the Durrani indeed that by trying to destroy their temple and tank he rather aroused the most dormant of their energy into a vigorous action.

Besides their courage and bravery, and their religious spirit as a source of inspiration, the other factor which contributed towards the ultimate victory of the Sikhs and the failure of Ahmad Shah Abdali was the triangular contest for power in the Punjab for some time between the Mughals, the Marathas and the Afghans. Whenever there was a clash between the Afghans and the Marathas, between the Afghans and the Mughals, or between the Marathas and the Mughals, the parties clashed and exhausted themselves, and the political confusion which resulted gave the best opportunity to the Sikhs to fish in the troubled waters. When the Marathas and the Mughals had been excluded from the Punjab, and now when the contest lay only between the Sikhs and the Afghans, the latter occupied only a disadvantageous position, as discussed above, while the Sikhs being the inhabitants of the Punjab knew its geography and hideouts to

which they retreated at the time of emergency, which were utterly difficult for the Afghans to approach. The Lakh jungles and the hills such as those of Jammu, provided the Sikhs thus with their best retreats.

Then, the Sikhs had very capable leaders such as Nawab Kapur Singh and Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Their organisation, the Dal Khalsa, gave them unity and discipline, their leaders showed them the path to march upon, and the Sikhs marched from one victory to another, and ultimately to independence and self-government.

And lastly we may say, the Afghan rule could be a success in this country only if they won the willing sympathies of the general mass of its people. But in this they utterly failed. Thanks to their lust for booty, while plundering the Indian houses they made no distinction of caste, creed and religion. Of the Afghan atrocities, writes Mustafa who translated Siyar-ul-Mutakharin: “Their method of carrying away a male prisoner is this, although not even themselves would use it to carry an ox or an ass. They bore a hole in his shoulder, under the clavicular bone so remarkable in it, and passing a thong or rope through it, make the end of it fast to their saddle, and then mount and trot away;........................
The women abused by them in an abominable manner, fled from them, and always preferred a well to an Afghan. Girls of twelve and fourteen have become unmarriageable in their diabolical hands.”1 The fear from the Afghans is well expressed in a proverb of those days which is still remembered by the people:

काफ़ा फूज़ साय झा।
लिञ्छा अफगान मरपे साय॥

meaning, “What we actually eat and drink is our own; the rest is all Ahmad Shah’s.” Ahmad Shah, according to the popular belief, left nothing for the people: “except what was actually in their mouths, but swallowed up everything himself.”2

1. Latif, op. cit., p. 301.
2. Ibid.
The Indian government had failed the people. The foreign invaders plundered them and showed towards them a barbarous treatment. The safety of the people lay only in the hands of the Sikhs. And it is no wonder that the Sikhs succeeded where both Mughals and the Durrans failed.

For the sake of their country's independence and the freedom of their people's conscience, all the glory and honour to the heroes who laid down their lives but said not a word of plaint and to those who suffered and died so that the coming generations of their nation may live and flourish.
CHAPTER XXIX

THE SIKH MISLS OR CONFEDERACIES

The Sikhs were organised by Nawab Kapur Singh in 1733, and re-organised in 1748. After the last invasion of the Punjab by Ahmad Shah Abdali the Sikhs got their opportunity. They developed their strength and territorial acquisitions, and divided the entire Punjab among themselves. In the beginning the Sikhs divided themselves into 65 groups, which later merged into one another and their number was reduced to twelve. These twelve jathas among the Sikhs established themselves in the different parts of the country and developed into twelve different territorial powers known as misls, or confederacies. One of these misls, namely the Phulkian, was established on the east of the Sutlej, while the rest developed their power on its west.

Misl is an Arabic word which means equal, and according to some writers, since there was perfect equality of rights between the different misls and within the misls themselves, the jathas began to be called misls. According to another view, however, for the twelve jathas, twelve different account books were kept at Amritsar, in which the territorial acquisition of each was entered separately to avoid confusion. These account books were known as misls and from this the jathas got their names. And as according to Griffin: "The Sikh misls were, in popular estimation, twelve in number, and although this enumeration is misleading, and several of the included confederacies were hardly of sufficient importance to warrant their being placed in the list, yet it may for convenience be here adhered to."1 We may give here a short account of the history and development of these misls.

1. The Ahluwalia Misl

This misl was founded by a jat who was Kalal, or a distil-

1. Griffin, op. cit., p. 78.
ler by caste and was known as Sadao Singh. Sadao Singh lived about seven miles east of Lahore in a village known as Ahlu, from which the misi derived its name. Sadao Singh had four sons, Gopal Singh, Hammu, Sekandar and Chaka. From Gopal Singh, Dewa Singh was born. Of the three sons of Dewa Singh, namely Gurbux Singh, Sadr Singh and Badr Singh, the last named married the sister of one Bhag Singh who had received the baptism of sword from the hands of Nawab Kapur Singh and had developed a considerable wealth and influence among the Sikhs. Bhag Singh’s sister presented Badr Singh with a son in 1718. This newly born baby was the famous Jussa Singh Ahluwalia who was destined to play a significant role in the history of the Punjab, leading the Khalsa from victory to victory and clearing for them a path towards national glory and political power.

Jussa Singh was only five years old when his father Badr Singh died. The widowed mother of Jussa Singh took the child to Mata Sundri, the widow of Guru Gobind Singh. Mata Sundri pleased with the appearance of the child, presented him with a silver mace, and predicted that he would grow to a glorious future and would spread his name and fame far and wide. The widowed mother came back with the child and began now to live with her brother Bhag Singh at Jullundur “Once,” Latif writes, “when Kapur Singh went to Bhag Singh’s house he was greatly pleased at seeing the latter’s widowed sister playing on the rubab with her long loose hair dishevelled, singing ballads in adoration of the Guru, her beautiful little son, Jassa Singh playing by her side. Kapur Singh blessed her for her devotion to the faith, and asked her to give him the little boy, whose features gave promise of a brilliant future. The mother, acceding to the wishes of the Sikh Chief, gave him charge of the boy, and from that moment Kapur Singh treated Jassa Singh as his own son.”

Soon after this Bhag Singh died fighting against the Imperial forces at Hariana, and he having left no son of his own, his wealth and power devolved as an inheritance on

1. Latif, History of the Punjab, p. 314
his nephew, Jussa Singh. With such a rich inheritance, and under the able supervision and guidance of the greatest of the contemporary Sikh leaders, Jussa Singh soon grew to be an enterprising and intrepid young man. And his "political talents, religious zeal and lofty aspirations combined, rendered him one of the most powerful federal chiefs of the Punjab." It was Jussa Singh who founded the reigning family of Kapurthala. The Sikhs thought it a privilege to take the baptism of sword at his hands; and many such as Amar Singh, the son of Ala Singh of the Phulkian family, were administered the Pahul by him.

India was attacked by Nadir Shah in 1739, who spread a terror in the country and carried away an enormous amount of money as his booty. While Nadir Shah was proceeding back towards his country, his rear was plundered at several places by the Sikhs. And the Ahluwalia Sardar is said to have played an important part in this. Shortly after this Jussa Singh built the fort of Dallewal on the bank of the Ravi, and in 1743 he attacked and carried away a large treasure being conducted from Emnabad to Lahore. Zakaria Khan the Lahore viceroy was shocked when he received this news, and he ordered Adina Beg the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab to march against the Sikhs and punish the Ahluwalia Sardar. Jussa Singh, however, fled to the Sutlej, while barbarous persecution against the Sikhs continued. Hundreds of them were captured and brought to Lahore where at Shahidganj they were tortured to death.

In the meanwhile Jussa Singh appeared on the Sutlej, punished the miscreant Muslim officers and captured an extensive territory. In 1747 he attacked Kasur, but just this time Ahmed Shah Abdali appeared in the Punjab and the Sikhs had to suffer heavily at his hands in the neighbourhood of Sarhind. After the Durrani chief had retired from the Punjab, Jussa Singh fell upon Gurdit Mal, the deputy of the new Lahore Governor Muin-ul-Mulk, near Hoshiarpur, but failed in plundering his camp. Shortly after this he attacked Salabat Khan who had been given the charge of

Amritsar, and after slaying him seized a good portion of that district. In the meanwhile the circumstances at Lahore changed. Safdar Jung, the new Wazir of Delhi, was determined not to let Muin rule at Lahore in peace. He secured from the Emperor the Governorship of Multan for Shahnawaz Khan, and assisted the latter in occupying that province. It was a direct challenge to Muin whose officers at Multan were expelled and the territory occupied. Muin-ul Mulk ordered his Dewan Kaura Mai to march on Multan. The Dewan who had a soft corner for the Sikhs, recommended to Muin that his success against Shahnawaz Khan could be best secured if the Sikh help was requisitioned. Jussa Singh Ahluwalia having succeeded Nawab Kapur Singh in the supreme leadership of the Dal Khalsa in 1748, he was requested for help against Shahnawaz Khan. Jussa Singh willingly offered the help, and co-operated with Kaura Mai in 1748, in reducing Multan to Muin’s submission. Shahnawaz Khan was killed in the battle, and Jussa Singh received a rich share of booty and honours for himself from Muin.

Soon after, however, the Lahore Government began to follow the policy of persecutions against the Sikhs once again. In 1753 Aziz Khan was sent at the head of a large force which was utterly routed by Jussa Singh. In 1755 the Ahluwalia Sardar defeated Adina Beg at Kadr, and wrested from him the territory of Fatehabad. Just about this time the Sardar slew Umed Khan, an eunuch Commander of the Lahore troops, in a battle. And shortly after this he defeated Aziz Khan who had been sent by Adina Beg to have yet another trial with the Ahluwalia chief.

During the third battle of Panipat in 1761 when Ahmad Shah Abdali was engaged with the Marathas and there was a complete political break down at Lahore, the Sikhs under Jussa Singh got yet another opportunity to spread their plundering activities all over the province, and to occupy the different territories themselves. Sarhind was sacked once again, and the Sikhs occupied Dogar and Nypal in the Ferozepur district. Jagraon and Kot Isa Khan on the left side of the Sutlej, together with Hoshiarpur, Bhieroz and Naraingarh were seized by Jussa Singh. A contribution was
levied from Rai Ibrahim Bhatti, the ruler of Kapurthala. And efforts were made to capture Jhang from Ahmad Khan Sial, the chief of the place, in which however Jussa Singh bitterly failed.

When Ahmad Shah Abdali retired from India after being victorious against the Marathas at Panipat, he left Khwaja Obed as the Governor of Lahore. Jussa Singh fell upon this city immediately after this and subjected the Governor to his rule. Sarhind was pillaged once again just about this time. And the territories of Laliana, Goindwal, Saliala, Bhopala and Taran Taran were seized. Across the Beas, Sultanpur and Talwandi were also occupied likewise.

When the news of the Sikh depredations all over the Punjab reached Ahmad Shah Abdali, he crossed its borders once again and on 10th February, 1762 engaged a large concourse of the Sikhs at Barnala, in which thousands of the Sikhs were killed and many who were captured were later on tortured to death. The losses suffered by the Sikhs in this battle were so great that they called it Bara Ghalughara or the ‘big holocaust’ as compared to the Chhota Ghalughara or the ‘small holocaust’ which they had suffered at the hands of Dewan Lakhpai Rai. Jussa Singh, however, to the disappointment of the Durrani, effected his escape once again and fled to the Kangra hills.

The spirit of the Ahluwalia chief was yet not blunted. Just after the Durrani had departed he called the Ramgarhia, the Bhangi and the Kanheya misls to his assistance and pillaged Kasur, after defeating its Pathan Chief Ali Khan; and handed over the territory to the Bhangis who held it till 1774. The combined forces of the Khalsa, numbering about 23,000, then fell upon Sarhind once again and slaying Zain Khan its Afghan governor, sacked this cursed city and razed it to the ground. This was a very important victory for the Sikhs, after which they spread over all the surrounding territories and subjected them to their rule. Jussa Singh now marched to Amritsar where he helped in restoring the Sikh temple and the tank, and laid in the city the foundations of a new bazar known as the Ahluwalia Bazar.
the Sutlej in 1768, Jussa Singh sacked Ghaziud-din-nagar and Anup Shahr in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and routed the troops of Mirza Sukhan, a Mughal General who had been sent against him. He captured Raikut in 1771 and wrested Kapurthala from Rai Ibrahim Bhatti in 1778.

By this time the flood of the Afghan invasions having been dammed up, the Muslim authority in the Punjab having been destroyed and Delhi having been thrown into a complete political confusion; the Sikhs who had parcelled out the major portion of the Punjab among twelve of their divisions called the misls, now entered into a period of mutual warfare and jealousies which was so natural when they changed their character from men of religion into political rulers and Zamindars. There was a clash between the Ahluwalia and the Ramgarhia misls. In 1776 the Ahluwalia Chief invited the Sukarchakias, the Kanheyas and the Bhangis to his assistance, and in a war that was declared against the Ramgarhias, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had to face a discomfiture and flee to the Hariana country leaving his possessions north of the Sutlej in the hands of the allies.

Jussa Singh died at Amritsar in 1783 when he was 65 years of age, and a monument to his memory was erected in Dera Baba Atal just near the Sikh temple. Tall and handsome in person, it was indeed “his noble features and attractive looks which, in his infancy, captivated Nawab Kapur Singh who brought him up as his own son, which helped him on throughout his future career. His arms were of unusual length, and he was a good marksman with matchlock and bow. His liberality to the poor made him extremely popular. It is said that he never wore a suit of clothes a second time, but gave it to his attendants. Once, when Ahmad Shah was returning to Kabul, he took with him a body of two thousand Hindu women from the Punjab to serve as slave girls for his countrymen. Prompted by a sense of duty to his fellow countrymen, he fell on the Shah’s troops one night and rescued the innocent creatures from the clutches of the hardy Afghans. He then liberally provided them with money and sent them all under proper escort to their respective homes.
This act of courage and patriotism won for Jassa Singh the affectionate regard of all his countrymen, and tended to increase his influence and popularity among all classes of the people."

A man of courage, fortitude and kind qualities of heart, from 1748 onwards Jassa Singh acted as a paramount leader of the Sikhs, and guiding them through one of the darkest periods of their history brought them out of a trough of political chaos into the sun-shine of freedom and self-government. If we compare the year 1783 when Jassa Singh died to the year 1748 when he was handed over the destiny of the Khalsa by Nawab Kapur Singh, if we imagine the trials and emotions through which the Sikh nation passed and the ultimate success which attended their exploits, and if we consider how the persecuting hands of the Muslim authorities in the Punjab were restrained and crushed and the flood of the Durrani invasions was rolled across the Indus; it would be a wonder if we did not reach a conclusion that a sort of revolution had been effected during this period in the fortunes of the Sikhs and the destiny of the Punjab as a whole. And all this happened under the leadership and guidance of this Ahluwalia Sardar,

Jassa Singh was called Badshah (king) "by his dependants and followers, though not by the Sikhs generally". And the esteem in which he was held by the general mass of the Sikhs is clear from the coin which was struck in his name when the Sikhs occupied Lahore, as previously discussed.

Jassa Singh died without leaving a male issue, and he was succeeded in the leadership of his milt consisting of territories lying chiefly in the tract of country between the rivers Sutlej and Beas, by his second cousin Bhag Singh. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia joined by Sansar Chand Katotch of Kangra attacked the Ahluwallas under Hamir Singh. Bhag Singh ran to Hamir Singh's rescue, but suddenly fell ill. Being carried back to Kapurthala, he died shortly after this in 1801.

1 Latif, op. cit., pp. 316-17.
Bhag Singh was succeeded by his only son, Fateh Singh who had been born in 1784. He was quite young of age when Ranjit Singh conquered Lahore. Fateh Singh is said to have hurried to Ranjit Singh and promised him his full support in the young Maharaja’s efforts to consolidate the Sikh raj in the Punjab. In 1802 he exchanged turbans with the Maharaja as a mark of perpetual friendship between the two, and after this as Metcalfe wrote in 1809: “The quiet character of Fateh Singh, who was the equal, if not the superior, in rank and power, of Ranjit Singh, has yielded to the bold commanding spirit of the other, and he has been the ladder by which Ranjit Singh has mounted to greatness”. Fateh Singh died in 1836, and was succeeded by his eldest son Nehal Singh.

2. The Bhangi Misl

The most important misl on the north-west of the Sutlej was the Bhangi misl which took its name from its leader’s enslavement to Bhang— an intoxicating preparation of hemp. The founder of the confederacy was one Chajja Singh, a Jat who belonged to Panjwar, at a distance of eight miles from Amritsar, and was initiated into the Khalsa faith by Banda Bahadur. Chajja Singh in his turn initiated three of his relations named Bhim Singh who belonged to Kasur, Malla Singh and Jagat Singh to the Sikh religion and all the four co-operating together carried on their plundering activities against the Muslim government of the day. They were joined by numerous Sikhs, and during the opportunities which offered themselves they entered into a career of vast conquests in the Punjab.

When Chajja Singh died he was succeeded in the headship of the misl by Bhim Singh who reorganized the confederacy and after Nadir Shah’s invasion in 1739 he recruited a large number of soldiers for his forces to establish himself as one of the powerful Sikh leaders of the Punjab.

After his death Bhim Singh was succeeded by his nephew Hari Singh who had already been adopted by him as his son. Hari Singh proved to be a man of yet greater energy and an enterprising spirit. Under him the fighting

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strength of the misl rose to 20,000 men. Hari Singh fixed his headquarters at the Gilwali village in the Amritsar district and within a short time he captured Kariai, Mirowal and Sialkot. He also sacked Chiniot and Jhang; and in 1762 he carried away a large magazine from Kot Khwaja Said, about two miles from Lahore. The magazine which contained a very rich amount of the munitions of war belonged to Khwaja Obed the Governor of Lahore. The Bhangis under Hari Singh captured Rawalpindi and subjected many territories of the Majha and the Malwa to their rule. They pillaged even the town of Jammu and made Ranjit Deo, the Rajput ruler of the state their tributary. As a result of all these exploits the Bhangis gathered rich booty, and their misl became the wealthiest of all.

The Ramgarhias, the Kanheyas and the Bhangis under Hari Singh, led a joint attack on Kasur in 1763. In 1764 Hari Singh fought with Amar Singh of Patiala, but unfortunately, was killed in the battle-field.

Of the two wives of Hari Singh, the one had borne him two sons, namely Jhanda Singh and Ganda Singh. The second bore him three, namely Charat Singh, Dewan Singh and Bassu Singh. Of these five sons of Hari Singh, Jhanda Singh succeeded him in the headship of his misl after his death. Under Jhanda Singh the Bhangis achieved yet greater success in their exploits, and reputation of the misl spread among the Sikhs far and wide, providing the Bhangis with a greater number of recruits for their forces.

In 1766 Jhanda Singh marched against Shuja Khan, the Muslim governor of Multan, and against Mubarik Khan the Daudptra chief who had emigrated from Sindh and settled down in Bhawalpur. As a result of the battle that followed, Pakpattan was declared to be the line of demarcation between the Bhangi territories and those belonging to the Muslim chiefs. Shortly after this he subdued the Pathan colony of Kasur, and forgetting his treaty he attacked Multan once again in 1771. He besieged the fort of Multan, but after about a month the resolute resistance of the Muslims obliged him to raise the siege, and the Bhangis returned unsuccessful after having suffered a heavy loss.
Only a year after this event, however, Jhanda Singh did get an opportunity to realise his ambition towards Multan. In 1772 there arose a quarrel between Shuja Khan, Shariff Khan and Shariff Beg, the successive Governors of the place. Shariff Beg called Jhanda Singh to his assistance. Here was a golden opportunity for this Sardar who assisted by his brother Ganda Singh and a Sikh general Lehma Singh, marched upon the city. The enemies of Shariff Beg were defeated in the battle that followed, but to the utter disappointment of this Muslim Chief, Multan, the pride possession, was divided between Jhanda Singh and Lehma Singh, and Shariff Beg was obliged to flee to Khurpur where shortly after this he died grief-stricken.

After this Jhanda Singh sacked the Biloch country and occupied Jhang, Mankera and Kala Bagh. He then visited Amritsar, and in the present Loon Mandi he built a small fort for himself which he named as the Bhangi Killa. After this he attacked Ramnagar, and recovered from the Chatta chiefs of this place the well known gun Zamzama, also known as the Bhangi gun.

The last action that Jhanda Singh fought was against the combined forces of Jai Singh Kanheya, Hakikat Singh Kanheya and Charat Singh Sukerchakia. This event occurred in 1774 when Ranjit Deo the ruler of Jammu wanted to dispossess his eldest son Brij Raj Deo from succession after his death, in favour of his youngest son Mian Daleel. Charat Singh and Jai Singh supported Brij Raj Deo, while Ranjit Deo was joined by the rulers of Chamba, Kangra Nurpur, and Busehar; Jhanda Singh also joining the latter. The two opposing parties met on the Basanti river to fight out the issue. But before the decision could be reached, Charat Singh was killed by the bursting of a matchlock from the hands of one of his own men. It should have yielded a complete victory to Jhanda Singh, but just the next day of the death of Charat Singh he himself was killed by a follower of his own who is said to have been bribed by Jai Singh Kanheya. Leaving thus the issue to the Jammu family itself to decide as best as they could, the two opposing armies dispersed.
Jhanda Singh was succeeded by his brother Ganda Singh who pined for avenging the death of the former which had occurred as the result of the Kanheyas treachery. The opportunity offered itself when the widow of Nand Singh, a Bhangi misldar, gave away Pathankot as jagir to her son-in-law Tara Singh the brother of Hakikat Singh Kanheya. Ganda Singh asked the Kanheyas to return him Pathankot which he said had been bestowed on Nand Singh by his brother Jhanda Singh. The Kanheyas naturally rejected this proposal, and joining all the resources under Gurbakhsh Singh, the son of Jai Singh Kanheya, Tara Singh and Hakikat Singh and assisted by Amar Singh Bhugga they prepared for a war. Ganda Singh, on the other hand, joined by the Ramgarhias and taking with him the famous Zamzama gun, marched against them at the head of a large force. The enemies met at Dinanagar, but after a few days of indecisive fighting Ganda Singh was suddenly taken ill, and died. Desa Singh his son being a minor, Ganda Singh was succeeded by his nephew Charat Singh to the chiefship of his misl. Charat Singh, however, was killed in an action shortly after this, and thus dismayed by their evil destiny the Bhangis fled the battle field.

Desa Singh, the minor son of Ganda Singh, succeeded after this to the Bhangi chiefship. And the decay in the misl which had already commenced, now hastened. Disliking the leadership of a stripling, many Bhangi Sardars such as Bhag Singh declared their independence. The tribute from Jhang was stopped. The effort of Shuja Khan’s son Muzzaffar Khan to recover Multan from the hands of the Bhangis having failed in 1777; Timur Shah, the son and successor of Ahmad Shah Abdali in Afghanistan, marched in person in the winter of 1778-79 to free Multan from the Bhangis, and his expedition proved a success. In the battle that was fought, about 3,000 of the Sikhs are said to have been killed. Timur occupied Multan and bestowed its Governorship on Shuja Khan, the father of Muzzaffar Khan with whom Ranjit Singh had later to fight to re-occupy Multan for the Sikhs. The misl continued to weaken so long as Desa Singh continued to be its chief. Desa Singh was
killed in 1782, after he had ruled the destiny of the Bhangi misl for eight years. This happened while he was fighting an action against Maha Singh Sukerchakia, the father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Besides the main line of descent of the Bhangi misl as detailed above, within the misl there existed some chiefs whose exploits merit a separate account. Gurbux Singh, an associate of Bhim Singh, thus, was a brave general who rendered an important service in several of the expeditions led by Hari Singh against his enemies. Before he died issueless leaving behind his personal property consisting of forty villages, he had adopted Lehna Singh as his son to succeed him. Lehna Singh, the son of Dargaha Singh, a Jat of the village Suddhawalla which lay in the district of Amritsar, was however challenged at the time of his succession by Gujjar Singh the son of Gurbux Singh’s daughter. And Lehna Singh had to agree with his opponent to the division of the property into two equal parts. These two Sardars, namely Lehna Singh and Gujjar Singh developed their power in the due course of time to such an extent that they even fell upon Lahore and wrested it from the hands of Kabuli Mal who had been appointed its Governor by Ahmad Shah Abdali during his last invasion of India. Sobha Singh, a nephew of Jai Singh Kanheya also having helped them in the capture of the city, the city was divided between the three Sardars. And this happened in 1765.

The three joint-Governors of Lahore gave a very good account of themselves as administrators. So much so that when two years later Ahmad Shah Abdali made his final descent into the Punjab, and when the three Sardars left the city and fled to Panjwar, the citizens of Lahore collected together and petitioned the invader to confirm them as the Lahore Governors on his own behalf. Granting the petition the Durrani chief actually invited these Sardars to come back, but they rejected his offer, as we have already seen in our last chapter, and re-occupied the city after the Shah retired to his country.

See Chapter XXVIII.
After this for about thirty years the three joint-Governors of the city continued to reign in peace. But in 1797 they were disturbed once again now by Shah Zaman. Shah Zaman had succeeded to the throne of Kabul in 1793. Deciding immediately to attack the Punjab in December the same year, he marched at the head of a large force and reached as far as Hassan Abdal unopposed. From here he sent Bahadur Khan and Ahmad Khan, the two of his generals, to march with their 7,000 horse and conquer the Chaj Doab. But soon some fresh disturbances having broken out at Herat, he was obliged to abandon his plan for the conquest of the Punjab and returned to his country.

In December, 1795 Shah Zaman marched once again into the Punjab, and having reached Hassan Abdal, from here he sent a large force under Ahmad Khan to occupy Rohtas. After the fall of Rohtas, Ghakars and several other Muslim tribes of the Punjab joined the invaders, and the Shah’s hopes ran high regarding his designs to re-annex the Punjab to the Afghan empire. But unfortunately for him, just this time he received the intelligence regarding the invasion of western Khorasan by Agha Mohamed Khan, the Persian King, and he returned to Afghanistan once again without realising his ambition.

Shortly after this the situation in India took another favourable turn for Shah Zaman. When English and the Marathas developed their power in this country, the effected Mohammedan princes thought it best to appeal to the Shah. Gholam Mohammed from Rohil Khand, and the agents of Nawab Asif ud-daula, the wazir of Oudh, thus, reached Afghanistan in 1796 and requested the Shah to march on India. They assured him that in his venture he would get full support from the entire mass of the Indian Muslims. Thus being encouraged, the Shah collected a large army of thirty thousand men, and towards the close of the year 1796 he set out once again to march into the Punjab. This time he succeeded soon in reaching without much difficulty as far as Shah dara, on the banks of the Ravi, and encamped himself in Jehangir’s mausoleum. From here he sent out his grand
Wazir Hañz Sher Mohamed Khan to reduce Lahore. But before the Wazir could reach the city the joint-Governors of the place handed over the keys of the citadel to Mian Shah Charagh, a prominent Muslim of the city, and themselves retired from the place. The capital of the Punjab thus fell into the Shah’s hands unopposed. This happened on 3rd January, 1797.

After the occupation of Lahore the Shah decided to chastise the Sikhs for their violent activities against the Afghan rule. But the times having by now changed he was wise enough to understand that it was no more possible to subject the Sikhs to his rule merely by the use of sword. The policy of conciliation, where it worked, was thought advisable to follow. And therefore, besides sending light parties from here on all directions to apprehend the Sikhs, he made offers to pardon those who paid homage to him at Lahore. As a result of this some Sikh chiefs of the Punjab did make their submission to him. In the meanwhile contacts were also established by him with Tippu Sultan, Sindha and the Rohillas etc. The Muslims all over India rejoiced at the prospects of the restoration of the Muslim rule in the country once again. From all sides the atmosphere was charged both with high hopes and dismay. But once again an incident occurred in Afghanistan and the Shah was forced to abandon his plans in India. The Shah’s brother, Prince Mahmud, revolted at Herat and the Shah was forced to run back to the scene in his country, leaving behind Ahmad Khan Barakzai in the charge of the country between the Jhelum and the Sind.

Soon after the departure of the Durrani chief, the joint-Governors returned and re-occupied the city. But the same year, 1797, Lehna Sinoh died leaving behind an imbecile son Chet Singh to succeed him, and Sobha Singh died to be succeeded by his son Mohan Singh who was no better than his companion. The citizens of Lahore met together, and to escape the tyrannical rule of the joint-Governors, wrote an application to Ranjit Singh inviting him to come and occupy the city. Another application was addressed to Sada Kaur, the mother-in-law of the young
prince, requesting her to help him in the respect. Ranjit Singh accepted the offer. He marched on the city, and with the help of the citizens he occupied it. Of the joint-Governors, only Chet Singh tried to offer some resistance. But he failed. This happened in the month of July, 1799 when shortly after this Ranjit Singh assuming the title of Maharaja set out to consolidate the Punjab under his own banner.

We now come back to the main line of the Bhangi descent. After the death of Desa Singh the son of Ganda Singh in 1782, his son Golab Singh succeeded him to the chiefship of the misl. Golab Singh remained at Amritsar and enlarged this city. He also subjected Kasur, the Pathan colony, to his rule; but he failed to keep it in that condition for long, as its chiefs Kutb-ud-din Khan and Nizam-ud-din Khan soon re-asserted their independence Golab Singh proved to be an inefficient ruler, and on account of his sensual character and feebleness of purpose, he soon alienated the people against him. At the fall of Lahore into the hands of Ranjit Singh, Golab Singh sensed a danger and formed a cabal against him. The cabal consisted of Golab Singh, Sahib Singh Bhangi, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Nazim-ud-din of Kasur. The troops of these allied chiefs marched to Bhasin, a village which lay a few miles east of Lahore. Ranjit Singh also made his preparations and marched his forces to meet the enemy. At Bhasin the two contending parties lay encamped before each other for about two months But neither of them dared take the initiative till at last Golab Singh died suddenly of illness, and his friends retired yielding a bloodless victory to Ranjit Singh. This happened in 1800.

The unfought battle of Bhasin gave a great victory to Ranjit Singh. And after this never could such a formidable concourse of his enemies be formed against him. The enemies of Ranjit Singh now began to weaken while this young Maharaja gathered strength day after day. Gurdit Singh, a ten-year old son of Golab Singh succeeded to the chiefship of this misl. But he being young, his mother Mai
Sukhan conducted the affairs for him. But the Bhangis could not continue to remain in that state of affairs for long. In 1805 Ranjit Singh invaded and occupied the city of Amritsar, and within a few years after this the rest of the Bhangi territories were also absorbed by him. And thus faded the once-so-glorious Bhangi misc steadily into oblivion.

3. The Ramgarhia Misl

The founder of the Ramgarhia Misl was a Jat named Khoshal Singh who belonged to the Mauza Guga near Amritsar. Khoshal Singh was said to have received his Pahul from the hands of Banda, and through the daring adventures of the latter when the Sikhs all over the Punjab gathered strength, Khoshal Singh also developed wealth and importance. After his death Khoshal Singh was succeeded in the leadership of his band by one Nand Singh who belonged to the village Sanghani near Amritsar. Nand Singh gathered yet more power and influence and expanded the activities and exploits of his band. He, on his death, was succeeded by one Jussa Singh under whom the band developed into the well known Ramgarhia Misl and reached the climax of its career.

A man of humble origin, Jussa Singh was the grand son of one Hardas Singh a carpenter by profession who belonged to the village Sursing which lies about nineteen miles east of Khem Karn in the modern district of Amritsar. Hardas is said to have been initiated into the Khalsa faith by Guru Gobind Singh himself, from whose hands the former received his Pahul. Hardas Singh got himself recruited into the troops of Guru Gobind Singh and also fought in some battles, retiring from the Guru's service only when the latter started for the Deccan. Bhagwan Singh, the only son of Hardas Singh, mastered the Adi Granth of the Sikhs and was called a Gyani. He preached the Sikh faith in the neighbouring villages, and later on shifted his residence from Sursing to the village Ichogil which lay about twelve miles

2. See Narang, op. cit, pp. 152-150; Griffin, Chiefs of Punjab, p. 427.
east of Lahore. Bhagwan Singh had five sons named Jussa Singh, Jai Singh, Khushal Singh, Mali Singh and Tara Singh.

Jussa Singh was the eldest of Bhagwan Singh's sons. We are completely in the dark as regards the date of Jussa Singh's birth. But since he is said to have died in 1803 at the ripe age of eighty, as according to Gian Singh the author of *Raj Khalsa*, we may automatically deduce that he should have been born in 1723. In his childhood Jussa Singh is said to have shown the least of an interest in his ancestral profession of carpentry; with the result that his father little knowing the prospects for which his son was preparing, became disgusted with him.

When Nadir Shah invaded India in 1739, Bhagwan Singh, according to Gian Singh and some other writers, was in the service of Zakariya Khan working as a commander of one hundred horsemen. In the battle that was fought between Nadir Shah and Zakariya Khan at Wazirabad, Bhagwan Singh gave a very good account of himself, but lost his life. According to these writers, Jussa Singh together with his brothers also fought in this battle against the invader. As a result of Bhagwan Singh's service to the Lahore governor, his eldest son Jussa Singh was granted, after the death of the father, the rank of a *risaldar*. Besides, his five sons were granted a *jagir* which consisted of five villages namely Valla, Verka, Sultanwind, Tung, and Chaha. Of these five villages, Valla fell to the share of Jussa Singh who settled down in the village and administered it efficiently.

Shortly after this Jussa Singh together with two of his brothers, Mali Singh and Tara Singh, joined the band of Nand Singh under the Dal Khalsa and within a short time developed the reputation of being the most daring and intrepid among its members; so much so that when Nand Singh died Jussa Singh was acknowledged as the indisputable leader of this band.

Jussa Singh's associations with the Dal Khalsa, however, were interrupted for some time when he joined service under Adina Beg, the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab. The date of his joining this service has been a subject of controversy into which the space here does not permit us to enter. It is however agreed that "Jussa Singh with his two brothers, fought on the side of Adina Beg Khan, when that chief entered into hostilities with the Abdall king, Ahmad Shah, and his gallantry was so conspicuous that Adina Beg gave him the command of his own troops, which, at that time were chiefly Sikhs." According to Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan (anonymous) Adina Beg was very much pleased at the efficiency of Jussa Singh, and appointed him also to take charge of the civil administration of some territory in which, again, the Sardar acquitted himself very creditably. Doing his service under Adina Beg, Jussa Singh was able to develop his acquaintance with some high state officials such as Kaura Mal, which later proved to be of great service to the Sikhs, as we shall shortly see.

In October, 1748 when the Sikhs gathered at Amritsar to celebrate their Dewali, Adina Beg was ordered by Muin-ul-Mulk the Governor of Lahore to march against them. Jussa Singh accompanied Adina when the fort of Ram Rauni at Amritsar was besieged. We have already seen how the siege lasted for a considerable time and out of the five hundred Sikhs who were within the fort, two hundred laid down their lives fighting against the enemy. The three hundred that remained were reduced to a hopeless plight. All the supplies from outside had been stopped by the enemy, and as the provisions within the fort were exhausted the Sikhs saw starvation and death staring them in the face. They were getting desperate and had just decided to march out in a body and instead of dying of starvation to die fighting as brave men in the battle-field, when Jussa Singh in the camp of Adina Beg decided to come to their rescue and save


himself from a complete ex-communiction from the Khalsa brotherhood. He deserted Adina and secretly entered the fort to join the helpless Sikhs. From within the fort he addressed a personal letter to Dewan Kaura Mal at Lahore, and requested him to save the three hundred lives if he could. His appeals to Kaura Mal bore a fruit. The Punjab was just this time threatened by another invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali. This gave an argument to Kaura Mal who prevailed upon Muin to agree to raise the siege and grant the Sikhs a Jagir to enable them to settle down as peaceful citizens.

It was a great service rendered to the Sikhs by Jussa Singh. Jussa Singh had saved three hundred lives and the Ram Rauni from destruction. His reputation among the Sikhs rose high. And when the siege of the Ram Rauni was raised, and later on when the Sikhs marched to assist Kaura Mal against Shahnawaz at Multan, Jussa Singh was left behind in the charge of the fort. After this Jussa Singh's association with this fort developed. He repaired it several times after its destruction, and his "misl took its name from Ram Rauni, or 'Fortlet of God', at Amritsar, converted into Ramgarh, or 'Fort of Lord', by Jussa Singh the celebrated thoka, or carpenter.'"1

As the relations between Muin and the Sikhs deteriorated once again, Adina Beg and Sadiq Beg were sent to besiege the Ram Rauni. Jussa Singh this time was caught inside, together with other Sikhs, but at last rushed out fighting and escaped through the enemy lines. The fort was thereafter demolished by the enemy.

When Muin-ul-Mulk died in 1753, the Punjab was thrown into an utter disorder and anarchy. Jussa Singh took an advantage of the situation and rebuilt the fort. Under Timur, the Durrani governor of Lahore, the fort was destroyed once again. But when Timur was expelled from the Punjab by the combined forces of the Sikhs, Marathas and Adina Beg; the fort was built once again which Jussa Singh played a significant part.

The Territorial Acquisitions
The confusion that followed the death of Muin offered

the best opportunity to the Sikhs to develop their territorial acquisitions. Jussa Singh also took an advantage, and joined by his ally Jai Singh Kanheya, he subjected the territories north of Amritsar and those in the neighbourhood of Batala to his rule. But he could not continue these activities for long. When Adina Beg became the governor of Punjab under the Marathas, he sent Mir Aziz Bakshi who hunted down the Sikhs and butchered thousands of them mercilessly. Ram Rauni was besieged once again, among the besieged, being Jussa Singh Ramgarhia and Jai Singh Kanheya. Many Sikhs were slaughtered. Jussa Singh, however, escaped unhurt once again, and he accomplished this feat with others one night after the walls of the Ram Rauni had been battered down.

"Those who escaped this slaughter were styled Ramgarhias by their fellow-countrymen, as a compliment to the sacred place where they had sought shelter, and this, more appropriately, gave the misl the designation which it bears."¹

Adina Beg, however, died soon in 1758. The Sikhs came out from their retreats and spread once again all over the Punjab. Jussa Singh, with the help of the Kanheyas, occupied several places in the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur such as Kalanaur, Batala, Sri Hargovindpur, Kadian and Ghamman. These possessions yielded to him an annual revenue of between six and ten lakhs of rupees.² Just this time he constructed near Ramgarh at Amritsar the Katra bazar which still stands as a memorial to him. After this Jussa Singh added to his possessions some territories in the neighbourhood of Hoshiarpur. Parganas of Maniwal, Urmar, Tanda, Sarib and Miani in the Jullundur Doab were occupied. And all this brought to him an additional income of about ten lakhs of rupees.

As the contest for occupation of territories between the different misls developed, and as almost all the neighbouring territories were occupied by one or the other among them, the Ramgarhia chief now diverted his attention towards the hill territories. He made Raja Ghumand Chand, the ruler of Kangra, his tributary. Prithvi Singh the ruler of Nurpur and

². Gian Singh, Raj Khalsa, p. 10.
Raj Singh the ruler of Chamba accepted his overlordship. Jussa Singh occupied Dipalpur, Datarpur, Anarpur, Haripur and Jaswan; and now his possessions included almost whole of the hilly country between the Ravi and the Beas, and the vast territories of the Jullundur Doab in the plains. Ramgarh being now no more able to serve the purpose; Sri Har govindpur near Batala on the Beas which was situated in the heart of the Ramgarhia territories, was converted by Jussa Singh into his capital. He built several forts at strategic places within his territories, and extended full protection to his protected states. Chamba was thus protected against Ranjit Deo of Jammu. And Jussa Singh established his reputation as one of the strongest chiefs of the Punjab.

A challenge to the rising power of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia, however, came soon from among the best of his Sikh friends. Jussa Singh had his most cordial relations with the Kanheyas, and they continued to be so till 1763. After that, however, these relations worsened. It is said that the Kanheyas and the Ramgarhias led a joint attack on Kasur. Out of the huge amount of booty that fell into the hands of the allies, Mali Singh the brother of Jussa Singh is said to have concealed a valuable part of it against Jussa Singh's wishes. The fact was later discovered by the Kanheyas and thus was the friendship between these two misls broken.

In 1774 Jay Singh Kanheya occupied the fort of Kangra by a stratagem. This was a direct blow to Jussa Singh's supremacy in the hills. He was in search of an opportunity against the Kanheyas which offered itself soon when, as already discussed, the widow of Nand Singh, a Bhangi misdur, gave away Pathankot as Jagir to her son-in-law Tara Singh the brother of Hakkat Singh Kanheya. Ganda Singh, the Bhangi chief, asked the Kanheyas to return him Pathankot which he said had been bestowed by his brother Jhanda Singh on Nand Singh. Kanheyas rejected the proposal and assisted by Jussa Singh Ahluwalia, they prepared for a war. The Ramgarhia chief came to the assistance of Ganda Singh. The enemies met at Dinanagar, but after a few days of indecisive fighting Ganda Singh was suddenly taken ill, and
he died. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia also met with an accident though he escaped unhurt. The Bhangis fled the battle-field. This failure was a further blow to the prestige of the Ramgarhia and his enmity with the Kanheyas was now extended to an enmity with the Ahluwalias as well.

Till 1766 Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had friendly relations with Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. They fought together against the internal enemies and the external invaders. In 1764 they co-operated with each other against Ahmad Shah Abdali. In 1766, however, they had some boundary dispute and now the differences between the two developed. In 1767 the two failed to come together against Ahmad Shah Abdali. The gulf between the two widened, and on the question of Pathankot the two found themselves in the opposing camps. After Ramgarhia's defeat here, he assisted the Rani of Kapurthala against the Ahluwalias and encouraged her to stop paying tribute to the latter. Here again, however, he failed. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia was wounded by a gun shot of Jussa Singh Ahluwalia in a battle between the two at Zahura on the river Beas. The former retaliated and wounded the latter when he had gone ahunting near Batala. The Ahluwalia chief was taken prisoner by the Ramgarhia chief, but was later released.

As the Ahluwalia Sardar was held in high esteem by the Sikhs, the Bhangis, the Sukarchakias, and the Kanheyas decided to join him and expel the Ramgarhias from the Punjab.

About the year 1776 Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, the son of Jay Singh Kanheya, attacked Batala which was at the time under the charge of Malla Singh the brother of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia. Malla Singh was disliked by his own people who assisted the invader, and Malla Singh fled. Soon after this the Kanheyas took possession of Kalanaur from Tara Singh. After some time Jussa Singh recovered Batala, but he failed in recovering Kalanaur. The fight continued and ultimately the allies were able to drive the Ramgarhias to the other side of the Sutlej. The major portion of their territories was occupied by the Kanheyas.
Thus driven the Ramgarhia chief, however, did not lose his heart. On the other side of the river he soon collected a large number of irregular horse around him, and assisted by Amar Singh—the Phulkian chief—he established himself in the Hissar country. He extended his ravages up to the very walls of Delhi. Once he penetrated into Delhi itself and carried off four guns from the Moghul arsenal. The Nawab of Meerut agreed to pay him Rs. 10,000 a year on his consenting to leave his district unmolested. He sacked Hissar to punish the governor who had forcibly carried away two daughters of a Brahmin. The girls were restored to their father.

Soon the circumstances on this side of the river Sutlej also changed. Differences arose between Maha Singh Sukarchakia and Jai Singh Kanheya. The former invited the Ramgarhia to his assistance. The two fought against the Kanheyas to the complete discomfiture of the latter. And the majority of the Ramgarhia possessions being restored to him, Jussa Singh now led a life of peace for several years. But after the death of Maha Singh, when his son Ranjit Singh succeeded the chiefship of Sukarchakias, the differences between the Ramgarhias and the Sukarchakias developed again. In 1799 Ranjit Singh occupied Lahore and Jussa Singh Ramgarhia joined the Bhangis and Nizam-ud-din of Kasur in a coalition against him. The two forces met at Bhasin, a village lying a few miles east of Lahore. They remained encamped before each other for about two months, but neither of them dared take initiative. In the meanwhile Gulab Singh Bhangi suddenly died of illness, and his friends retired without giving a battle to Ranjit Singh.

Jussa Singh died in 1803, a daring adventurer who played a considerable part in establishing the Sikhs as a political power. After his death his son Jodh Singh succeeded him to the chiefship of the Ramgarhia misl. So long as Jodh Singh lived, Ranjit Singh took no step to capture his territories. But after his death in 1814 Ranjit Singh occupied the Ramgarhia territories, offering a good Jagir to the descendants of Jodh Singh.
4. The Kanheya Misl

The founder of this Misl was Jay Singh who belonged to the Mauza Kanha which lay about 15 miles east of Lahore and from which the Misl got its name. Jay Singh was the son of a poor Sindhu Jat named Khushali, and had two brothers Jhand Singh and Singha. From his early childhood Jay Singh showed a brave disposition and a daring attitude towards life. When he entered into his youth, that was the time by which Kapur Singh had established his reputation as a leader of the Khalsa, and the people craved to be initiated into the Khalsa faith by him. Jay Singh was one of those lucky men who received his Pahul from Kapur Singh’s hands. After receiving Pahul, Jay Singh joined the Dal Khalsa and within a short time established his reputation as a man of ambition and an adventurous spirit.

During the confusion that followed the death of Mian-ul-Mulk in 1753 and during the repeated invasions of the Durrani from Afghanistan, like several other brave Sikh chiefs of the Punjab Jay Singh also made the best use of the opportunity that offered itself, and he brought the productive territory of Riarki under his possession. Shortly after this he also occupied the territories of Mukerian, Hajipur, Pathankot and Gurdaspur. Ahmad Shah Abdali led his sixth invasion of the Punjab in 1761 and in February the same year occurred the incident of the Bara or the Second Ghulughara in which thousands of the Sikhs were killed by the Afghans near Kup. But such was the spirit and enthusiasm of the Sikhs as the Durrani had not yet left the Punjab when they gathered in a large number at Amritsar and started their plundering activities once again. Jay Singh played an important part and joined by some others of his friends he fell on Kasur in 1763, and carried off a very rich booty.

It was at Kasur that the Kanheyas developed differences with Jussa Singh Ramgarhia which later on led to an open clash between the two Misls. In 1774 Jay Singh occupied the fort of Kangra. Kangra being under the protection of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia, the latter felt it as a serious blow
to him. On the question of Pathankot, as we have seen, Jussa Singh Ramgarhia supported the Bhangis against the Kanheyas. But in the battle that was fought at Dinanagar the Kanheyas were able to win a victory.

Shortly after this the Kanheyas developed closer relations with the Ahluwalias, and with their help they determined to crush the rising power of the Ramgarhias. About the year 1776 Gurbakhash Singh Kanheya, the son of Jay Singh Kanheya, attacked Batala which was at the time under the charge of Malla Singh the brother of Jussa Singh Ramgarhia. Malla Singh was disliked by his own people who assisted the invader, and Malla Singh fled. After some time Jussa Singh recovered Batala, but he failed in recovering Kalanaur which was now held by Jaymal Singh, the son of Hakikat Singh a deputy of Jay Singh, who had by now died. The fight continued and ultimately the allies were able to drive the Ramgarhias to the other side of the Sutlej. The major portion of the Ramgarhia territories was occupied by the Kanheyas.

Jay Singh's power thus became paramount in the Punjab. The hill states which were under the Ramgarhia possession, now became tributary to him, and Kot Kangra remained in his possession. Jay Singh, however, was not destined to continue these ambitious activities for long. Soon there was a decline in his fortunes and his rising power was beaten to a halt.

Jay Singh had taken Maha Singh, the young son and successor of Charat Singh, under his care. When Jammu failed to pay its tribute to Jay Singh, he decided to march against it and invited the assistance of Maha Singh for the purpose. Maha Singh, however, had his own ambition to realise. He secretly marched on Jammu, sacked the city and its surrounding territory and gathered a huge booty. This enraged Jay Singh who insulted young Maha Singh when the latter paid him a visit at Amritsar. The spirit of the young man was fired, he called Sansar Chand Kutoch of Kangra

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1. See the account of Ramgarhia Misl
who had already suffered at the hands of Jay Singh, to his assistance. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia was also called back from the other side of the river Sutlej and offered a good opportunity to recover his lost territories. The noted Muslim leader of Batala, Gholam Ghaus, who had suffered indignities at the hands of Jay Singh was also invited to join. When the intelligence regarding these developments reached Jay Singh, he sent Gurbakhsh Singh Duia across the Sutlej to check the Ramgarhia’s advance. In the engagement that took place near Patiala, however, Gurbakhsh Singh was defeated and killed, and Jussa Singh continued his march to join Maha Singh. After several skirmishes a severe battle was fought at Batala between the Kanheyas led by Gurbakhsh Singh the son of Jay Singh on the one side, and Maha Singh joined by the Ramgarhias and others on the other side. Kanheyas were defeated, and Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya lost his life. At his son’s death Jay Singh “burst into tears, emptied his quiver of its arrows, and, dismounting from his horse, exposed himself to the enemy’s fire. Such was the respect for the old veteran that none dared approach him in his grief, and all quietly withdrew. The victorious troops then advanced to Riarki and seized it.”

Thus being defeated and humbled, Jay Singh fled to Pathankot, while his daughter-in-law Sada Kaur—the widow of Gurbakhsh Singh—had to escape barefooted to Saiyan. The loss of Batala² proved to be a heavy blow to the Kanheya power, from which they never recovered again. The city was occupied by Jussa Singh who was now able to acquire all the territories he had lost.

In the meanwhile the war between Sansar Chand of Kangra and Jay Singh continued on the hills. The former occupied a large territory of Jay Singh, including Mukerian and Hajipur. He also attacked the fort of Atalgarh which was, however, bravely defended by a slave girl of Jay Singh and Sansar Chand had to raise the siege. The war, however, continued for a long time, till ultimately Sada Kaur, an

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2. Lachhi Ratt, Jang Batala, p. 42.
ambitious and artful lady, approached Maha Singh the rising star for the restoration of friendship between the Kanheyas and the Sukerchakias. Sada Kaur’s only daughter Mehtab Kaur was betrothed to Maha Singh’s little son Ranjit Singh. And thus being strengthened Sansar Chand was approached by the Kanheyas for a compromise. An arbitrator was appointed who recommended the restoration of Kot Kangra to Sansar Chand, and Mukerian and Hujipur to Jay Singh. Sansar Chand also entered into an agreement to help the Kanheyas against the Ramgarhias in the case of a war.

Shortly after deciding this dispute, Jay Singh now helped by Maha Singh and Sansar Chand, attacked Batala. The city was besieged, but even a continuous effort of the allies for twenty-one days to reduce the city failed. Jussa Singh Ramgarhia had fortified it strongly and had made a due arrangement for its defence. Jay Singh was obliged to raise the siege, and Batala now remained in an undisturbed possession of the Ramgarhia chief.

The friendship between Jay Singh and Maha Singh now continued undisturbed. The latter died in 1792 resulting into utter grief to the former. And six years after this, in 1798, according to Latif, Jay Singh himself departed from this mortal world.¹

Jay Singh was survived by his two sons, Nidhan Singh and Bhag Singh. But neither of them was fit enough to succeed to the Kanheya chiefship. Sada Kaur was, therefore, left alone to lead the 8,000 soldiers of her misl and to do as best to administer her charge as she could. Maha Singh, at his deathbed, had handed over the charge of his young son Ranjit Singh to Sada Kaur. Sada Kaur being an ambitious lady, her plan was to make her son-in-law her stepping stone, and by uniting the strength and resources of the two misls to carve out for herself a kingdom. But in this Ranjit Singh proved to be more than a match for her, and as the future history was to show, she herself played precisely the

¹ It seems wrong that Jay Singh died as late as 1798. Although no exact date can be forwarded it seems definite that he died much earlier, rather before Maha Singh’s death.
same role as she had designed for her son-in-law. Sada Kaur rendered a considerable help to Ranjit Singh in the development of his power. But in 1823 serious differences developed between the two. Ranjit Singh occupied all the Kanheya territories. Sada Kaur died in 1832. And thus ends the history of the Kanheya *misl*:

5. The Fyzulpuria Misli

The Fyzulpuria *misl* was founded by Kapur Singh whose life and career have already been discussed in detail. The *misl* got its name from Fyzulapur, the village which Kapur Singh wrested from its Muslim chief named Fyzullah. After occupying this village Kapur Singh named it as Singhpura, after which the *misl* founded by him was also sometimes known as Singhpura. Kapur Singh was a man of daring habits and an humble attitude towards life. It did not take him long to become popular among the Sikhs. In 1833 he received the title of Nawab on behalf of the Khalsa from the Lahore Governor. And shortly after this he organised the Sikhs into the *Dal Khalsa*. Till 1748 Kapur Singh continued to be the supreme leader of both the *Budha* and the *Taruna Dals*. And during this period when for the first time after the death of Guru Gobind Singh the Sikh community was left to its own resources to raise a leader from among themselves, Kapur Singh being acknowledged as the indisputable leader of the Khalsa led the Sikhs through one of the very dark periods of their history. The oppressive rule of the Lahore Governors and their policy of destroying the Khalsa nation from its very roots, a chain of foreign invasions and internal troubles—all these were the problems which the Sikhs had to face. And Kapur Sidghe led them from one success to another, till ultimately the Sikhs were established as a power to be reckoned with. In 1748 having grown old Kapur Singh handed over the leadership of the Khalsa to Jussa Singh Ahluwalia. Still, however, he continued playing a very active part in their organisation till he died in 1753.

The territories of Kapur Singh lay on the east and the

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1. See Chapter XXII of this book
west of the river Sutlej. He having died issueless, the leadership of his Misl descended on Khushal Singh, his nephew who also played a significant role in the Sikh History, and expanded his territories on both the banks of the river Sutlej. The most important of the possessions of Khushal Singh were Patti, Bharatgarh, Nurpur, Bahrampur and Jullundur. It was he whose follower shot Nawab Zain Khan to death in 1763, yielding to the Khalsa a complete victory over Sarhind. This victory opened up a broad career before the Sikhs, and they spread all over the Punjab destroying their enemies and developing their territorial acquisitions. Khushal Singh also occupied Ludhiana, though he had to divide the district of Banor with Patiala. He died in 1795 leaving behind him his Misl stronger than ever it was, and with territorial possessions far larger than those he had inherited.

Khushal Singh was succeeded by his son Budha Singh. But the latter could not equal his father in talent and bravery. The Fyzulpuria Misl began to decline and ultimately all its possessions on the west of the Sutlej were annexed by the rising star, Ranjit Singh. On his possessions on the east of Sutlej, however, the British protection was extended. And he continued enjoying there the fruits of the victories of his father and his father’s uncle till he died in 1816.

6. The Nishanwala Misl

Nishan means a standard, and the founders of the Nishanwala Misl were the standard-bearers of the Dal Khalsa—when both the Budha and the Taruna Dals came together for the purpose of a military venture. The Misl originated with two Jats named Sangat Singh and Mohar Singh. When the Mughal authority in the Punjab ended, and when Durrani invasions were rolled back by the Sikhs, the two leaders of this Misl carried their exploits across the river Sutlej and sacked the country far and wide. They once pillaged even Meerut from where an enormous booty fell into their hands. The number of soldiers under their command increased to 12,000, and the territory occupied by them included the town of Ambala which was a pride-possession of this Misl.
After the death of Sangat Singh, Mohar Singh succeeded to the leadership of the misl. But when Ranjit Singh established his power on the west of the river Sutlej, he sent his Dewan Mohkam Chand across the river to reduce the Nishanwala territories to his submission. The Nishanwala possessions were thus sacked and their treasures and other belongings came under the Maharaja's possession. The Amritsar Treaty of 1809 fixed the Sutlej as the boundary line between the territories of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and those which were subjected to the British rule. After this only Shahbad which belonged to a subordinate chief of the misl remained as a distinct unit under the protection of the British, the rest of the territories including Ambala lapsing to their direct rule. And thus did the misl suffer its death.

7. The Shahid Misl

The Shahids "were rather religious than a military body, though the priests fought in those days as well as the laymen. The Khalsa was the true embodiment of the church militant. The founder of the Shahid misl was Sudda Singh, the mahant or head of the shrine at Talwandi, where Guru Gobind Singh had made his resting-place (Damdama). He was killed fighting at the Muhammadan governor of Jullundur, and having been struck off, he is reported to have ridden several of the enemy before he fell from his horse. Hence he was known as the martyr (Shahi) and his followers took his name."

The members of this misl were generally Akalis, or immortals, a class of devotees founded by Guru Gobind Singh, who wore "blue chequered clothes, put bangles of steel round their wrists, and a circular, sharpened, bright sword round their head." These Akalis were supposed to be the censors of the public morals. Their leaders were Karam Singh and Gurbaksh Singh, and their possessions lay about Rania, Khari and Jaroli. These Akalis, according to Griffin, used to join themselves to others rather than fight on their own

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1. Griffin, Ranjit Singh, p. 82.
account. Yet these Akalis played a very important part in establishing the Sikh power, both before and under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Most of the European and the Muslim writers do not have very good words regarding these Akalis, and Griffin himself writes at one place: "though little better than drunken savages, they were supposed by the Sikhs to possess a semi-sacred character, and were, moreover, useful when desperate deeds were to be done which the rank and file of the army might have declined.....they were identical in character and in the manner of their onslaught with the Ghazis of Afghanistan and the Soudan, whose fierce and terrible attack shakes the nerves of all but the steadiest and most seasoned troops; but the Sikh soldiers of God drew their courage more from drink and maddening drugs, than from the depths of religious enthusiasm which inspires the wild children of Islam." Steinbach and Latif also forward similar views regarding these Akalis. But all these writers seem to have failed in understanding the real character of the Akalis. Though the Bhang may have been a weakness with the Akalis, yet they, among the Sikhs, were the moralists who kept the faith of the Khalsa alive during the darkest periods of its history. Wherever these Akalis tought, they fought less for a material gain or a worldly honour than for a cause; and but for them it should have been more difficult for the Sikhs to give a death blow to the Mughals in the Punjab and to send the Durrani back weeping aloud for their failure to establish their rule in this country. Under Ranjit Singh too, the Akalis won for the Maharaja many a difficult battle, and thus paved the way for the unification of the Punjab.

8. The Dalewala Misl

The founder of this misl was one Golaba who after receiving the Pahul, became Golab Singh. The misl got its name from Golab Singh’s village which was known as Dale-

wal, and it held a "great portion of the upper Jullundur Doab and the northern portions of Ambala and Ludhiana, with some estates in Ferozepur."\(^1\) After the death of Golab Singh, his chief associate Tara Singh Gheba\(^2\) succeeded to the chiefship of the misl. So long as Tara Singh lived, very friendly relations remained between him and Ranjit Singh. Tara Singh is also said to have helped the latter in many of his expeditions. He accompanied the Lahore troops at the time of their attack on Naraiingarh in 1807, during which he died. And according to Cunningham, "Ranjit Singh hastened back to secure his possessions in the Jullundur Doab. The widow of the aged leader equalled the sister of the Raja of Patiala in spirit, and she is described to have girded up her garments, and to have fought, sword in hand, on the battered walls of the fort of Rahon."\(^3\) Nothing could, however, stop the Maharaja from annexing the Dalewala territories.

9. The Nakai Misl

The misl was founded by Hira Singh, a Sandhu Jat, the son of Chaudhri Hemraj who belonged to the mauza Bharwal of the Lahore district. Hira Singh is said to have led his childhood in an utter poverty, but later on when he got himself initiated into the Khalsa faith he started carrying on his exploits in the neighbouring territories and soon became a man of means. The number of his followers increased to two thousand horsemen and he had a few camel-swivels and a small number of guns. The Nakais inhabited the country known as Nakka which lay between Lahore and Gogaira in the direction of Multan, and from which the misl got its name. The territory of the misl, which included Gogaira, Kasur and Sharakpur, brought an annual revenue of nine lakhs of rupees. Hira Singh was killed during his attack on Pakpattan which was held at the time by Shekh Subhan, and his son Dal Singh being minor, he was succeeded by his nephew Nahr Singh. The latter, however, could rule the misl

1. Griffin, Ranjit Singh, p. 82.
2. From the ingenious manner in which he conveyed his flocks across the mountain glens—Latif, op. cit., p. 321.
only for a short time, and was killed on 4 May 1768 during a fight at Kot Kamalia.

Nahr Singh was succeeded by his younger brother, Ran Singh. It was during his time that the misl reached the climax of its power. Kumar Singh of Sayadwala was subdued by Ran Singh, and he died in 1781 to be succeeded by his eldest son Bhagwan Singh. Bhagwan Singh married his sister Raj Kaur to Ranjit Singh, and thus developed his power and reputation. But he was soon killed in an action with Wazir Singh—the brother of Kumar Singh—who recovered Sayadwala from the Nakais. Dal Singh, the son of Hira Singh, attacked Sayadwala and killed Wazir Singh to avenge himself of the death of Bhagwan Singh, though shortly after this he himself was assassinated by a Wazir Singh's man.

Bhagwan Singh was succeeded by his brother Gian Singh who died in 1807 to be succeeded by his son Kahn Singh. By this time Ranjit Singh had established himself in the Panjab. He attacked and annexed the Nakai territories, leaving to Kahn Singh a lavish Jagir worth fifteen thousand rupees a year.

10. The Karora Singhi Misl

The Karora Singhis took their name from Karora Singh, the founder of this misl. Karora Singh belonged to the village Panjgarhia, and the misl was also sometimes known as the Panjgarhia misl. The possessions of the misl lay mainly between the Jamuna and the Makanda rivers. Among the principal members of the misl was the powerful family of Kalsia. When Karora Singh died without leaving a son, he was succeeded by Bhagel Singh who made Chilouldi, about twenty miles from Karnal, his head quarters; and after the fall of Sarhind and the assassination of its governor Zain Khan, he expanded his territories on the east of the Sutlej. He raised the number of soldiers under his command to 12,000, and made himself one of the most daring of the Sikh chiefs.

Bhagel Singh, however, was concerned more with retaining his own power than with the general independence of the Sikhs. In 1778 the Sikhs sacked Sarhind and the

Killed, 1768
Successor Ran Singh
Died 1781
Bhagwan Singh succeeded
Sister to Ranjit
Gian Singh
Kahn Singh
Ranjit annexed
Karora Singh founder
V. Panjgarhia
Possessions
Bhagel Singh
Strength 12,000
Malwa country far and wide. And when the Delhi Emperor Shah Alam sent a large army under the command of Prince Jawan Bakht to punish the Sikhs, the Karora Singhis and the representatives of the Kalsia family both joined the Imperial force and fought against the Sikhs. Later on in 1788 when the Maratha chief Amba Rao joined by the Rohilla chief Gholum Kadar marched into the Punjab, Bhagel Singh was the first Sikh chief who made his submission to him and supported him faithfully in his exploits.

After Bhagel Singh's death Jodh Singh succeeded to the chiefship of the misl. Jodh Singh was the son of Gurbaksh Singh, the founder of the Kalsia family, and a close friend of Bhagel Singh. Jodh Singh was a capable leader who expanded his territories yet further, and added to his possessions Bassi, Dera, Achkak and Lotab. Sahib Singh of Patiala had to save his territories from Jodh Singh by giving his daughter to Hari Singh, the son of Jodh Singh. The marriage is said to have been solemnised in 1803. Jodh Singh had friendly relations with Ranjit Singh, and rendered him a valuable service in his siege of Naraingarh in 1807. He also helped him at the time of his annexation of Multan. Shortly after Ranjit Singh's conquest of Multan, Jodh Singh died, and the territories of the Karora Singhi misl were absorbed by the Kalsia family which continued to be an important chiefship under the protection of the British on the east of the Sutlej.

11. The Sukerchakia Misl

The Sukerchakia misl got its name from the village Sukerchak where Budda, the son of Bara lived. Bara was a man of means, and was the owner of about half of this village. When he died in 1679 he left a dying injunction for his son Budda who was at the time only nine years of age, that he should proceed to Amritsar and receive Pahul. When Budda attained the age of discretion, he did act according to his father's injunction and is said to be one of those lucky men who received baptism at the hands of Guru

Gobind Singh. "He was, however, not a man of peaceful disposition as his father and grandfather had been, but was courageous, enterprising and sagacious." When Buddha received baptism, his name was converted into Budh Singh. Singh means a lion, and in his courage and spirit Budh Singh was actually no less than a lion. On his body Budh Singh had as many as forty scars of swords, spears and bullets. Budh Singh "was good humoured, ready witted and merciful to the oppressed.....He died of apoplexy in 1716. His wife overwhelmed with grief at his death ran a sword through her heart. The bodies of husband and wife were burnt together."

After Budh Singh his son Nodh Singh succeeded to the inheritance of his father. He married the daughter of a wealthy landlord of Majitha, and as his importance and power increased he built in his village Sukerchak a big house of the shape of a small fortress. Soon after this Nodh Singh raised a band of 30 horse-men and thus laid the foundation of the greatness of his house. As his power increased, he spread the field of his exploits and was dreaded from the banks of the Sutlej to Rawalpindi. He joined the Fyzulpuria misi of Nawab Kapur Singh, and at the time of the first invasion of the Punjab by Ahmad Shah Abdali, "by plundering the baggage and the stragglers of the invading army, enriched himself and his associates." In 1747 Nodh Singh received a gun shot wound in the head in a fight against some Afghans, and he died of it in 1752, leaving behind four sons—Charat Singh, Dal Singh, Chet Singh and Mangi Singh.

Charat Singh succeeded to the Sukerchakia patrimony after the death of his father. Payne writes about him as a brave "Jat Sardar, who repeatedly distinguished himself in the early struggles with Ahmad Shah." Charat Singh was more ambitious than his father and grandfather had been. He soon separated himself from the Fyzulpuria misi of Nawab

1. Latif, op. cit., p. 337.
2. See Griffin, The Punjab Chiefs, i. p. 220.
3. Latif, op. cit., p. 337.
4. Ibid.
Kapur Singh, and raised his strength to 150 horsemen. He took forcible possession of some villages, united with another successful leader like himself and formed a misl of which he became the active chief, calling it after the name of his native village Sukerchak. It is said to have been a standing rule with him that no one would be admitted to the membership of his misl unless he received Pahul. As his power developed, Charat Singh married the daughter of Amir Singh of Gujranwala—another brave and famous leader and a man of means with whose help Charat Singh had been carrying on his exploits. And after this he transferred his head-quarters to Gujranwala. Amir Singh's depredations extended from the banks of the river Jhelum to the very walls of Delhi, and he "having acquired large territorial possessions in Gujranwala,... was looked upon as the chief man of the district..." Charat Singh's marriage-tie with him "united the wealth of the two Sardars," and these chiefs under one banner, headed the confederacy, though Amir Singh, on account of his age, was never able to take a prominent part in its affairs.

About this time a Mughal Faujdar ruled at Eminabad, who was a man of very harsh nature and against whose hateful activities the Hindus of the locality often complained to Charat Singh. In the summer of 1761 when Charat Singh received these complaints again, he collected his horsemen and surrounded the fortress of Eminabad. The battle started, but before the fight could prolong Charat Singh fell upon the Faujdar with ten selected horsemen, and cut him to pieces. After this an enormous booty and munitions from the Faujdar's arsenal fell into Charat Singh's hands with which he retired beating the drums of victory.

The victory of Charat Singh spread his reputation far and wide. In the same year of his victory Charat Singh built mud fortress at Gujranwala, in place of the Kasch Sarai he possessed. Khwaja Obed, the Lahore Governor who had for some time been feeling restive at the rising power of

this young chief, marched at the head of a strong force to attack Gujranwala. Charat Singh had foreseen this development and had therefore already made his preparations. In the battle that followed Charat Singh's forces completely routed the invading army. Khwaja Obed had only a narrow escape with his life, and he fled leaving behind his military stores and munitions of war.

Charat Singh plundered the Durrani camp in 1762, and soon after his retreat he captured Ahmedabad, Wazirabad, Rohtas, Dhami, Chakwal, Pind Dadan Khan, Jalalpur, Kot Sahib Singh and Raja-ka-kot etc. These victories of Charat Singh aroused the jealousy of the other Sikh mists. And the Bhangis, especially, began to plan his destruction.

Charat Singh had to march against Jammu in 1774. Ranjit Deo, the ruler of this state wanted to debar his eldest son Brij Raj Deo from succession after his death, in favour of Mian Dalel Singh his youngest son. Brij Raj rebelled against his father, and Charat Singh espoused his cause. Ranjit Deo requested the Bhangis for help, and Jhanda Singh Bhangi soon joined him for the purpose. Chamba, Kangra and Nurpur also joined Ranjit Deo. On the other hand, Kanheyas under Sardar Jai Singh came to the assistance of the Sukerchakias. The rival armies encamped on the Basanti river within a few miles of each other, and the preparations for the battle were being made when Charat Singh was killed by the bursting of a matchlock from the hands of his own man. Had this event not been followed on the next day by the assassination of the Bhangi chief Jhanda Singh, it would probably have given the victory to Ranjit Deo. These events, however, brought about a cessation of the hostilities and the Sikh forces withdrew to their respective territories, leaving Ranjit Deo and his sons to settle their dispute among themselves as best as they could.¹

Charat Singh died in 1774 leaving behind a large territory to his young son Maha Singh then only ten years old.²

2. See Moorcroft, Travels, p. 127; Latif, op. cit., p. 334; Forester, op. cit., i, p. 288; Cunningham, op. cit. It is wrong, as McGregor suggests (History of the Sikhs, i, p. 150) that Maha Singh was born in 1760.
Maha Singh's mother Desan took the charge of the misl during his minority. Sikh "ladies played an important part in the history of these warlike times" and Mai Desan "ruled with vigour and diplomacy." It was only in 1780 that Maha Singh cut his "leading-strings and took the field at the head of his misl, to follow in his father's victorious steps." Maha Singh had married Raj Kaur—the daughter of Gajpat Singh of Jind, who in 1780 bore him a son, the famous Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The first exploit of Maha Singh was against Pir Mohammed, the ruler of the Chatta tribe on the eastern bank of the river Chenab, who was supposed to be a sworn enemy of the Hindus. Assisted by Jay Singh Kanheya, Maha Singh marched at the head of 6,000 troops and besieged Rasul Nagar. Ultimately Pir Mohammed surrendered himself along with his family, and his territory was occupied. Maha Singh appointed Dal Singh, a lieutenant of his, as the governor of the place and came back beating the drums of victory. Maha Singh's reputation spread, and many chiefs who had been dependents of the Bhangi misl, began to transfer their allegiance to him.

Soon after this when the Bhangi power was weakened as a result of the invasion of Timur Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah, Maha Singh took advantage of the situation. He pillaged Pindi Bhattian, attacked Sahiwal, sacked Jhang and captured Isa Khel and Mussa Khel. Desa Singh Bhangi having failed to protect these territories, he invited his brother-in-law Sahib Singh Bhangi for help. Before, however, Sahib Singh could come to Desa Singh's rescue, he fell out with his own younger brother Sukha Singh and became rather suppliant to Maha Singh for help. And thus Maha Singh escaped a trouble at the Bhangi hands.

After this Maha Singh fell on Kotli in the neighbourhood of Sialkot, and realised a heavy indemnity from its inhabitants. Then he marched towards Jammu. Ranjit Deo had died, and after him his eldest son Brij Deo succeeded to power,

4. Ibid, pp. 82-83.
who put his younger brother Mian Dalel Singh behind the bars. Brij Deo, however, proved to be weak and an inefficient ruler. The Kanheyas and the Bhangis took an advantage of the position and occupied some of the Jammu territories. Brij Deo appealed to Maha Singh for help, who eagerly welcomed the chance and marched at the head of his troops towards Jammu. According to Payne, however, the powerful combination of his enemies "was more than Maha Singh could withstand: his forces were defeated, while Brij Raj was compelled to pay tribute to the victorious misls."

Maha Singh, however, got his chance only six months after this incident when Brij Raj refused to pay his tribute to the Kanheyas. The Kanheyas this time invited Maha Singh to join them in raiding Jammu. Forgetting his pledge of friendship with the Jammu ruler Maha Singh willingly availed himself of this opportunity with an eye on the riches of that state. He, however, deceived Hakikat Singh Kanheya who was to accompany him in his march against Jammu, and without informing him he made haste and fell upon that town. The town was thoroughly sacked and the surrounding villages plundered. Hakikat Singh died shortly after this, perhaps out of grief.

Jay Singh, the veteran Kanheya chief who had taken Maha Singh under his protection when he was yet a child, and who had rendered him a considerable assistance in the consolidation of his territories and in making several new conquests, felt enraged. When Maha Singh approached Jay Singh with sweetmeats at Amritsar on the Dewali of 1784, he was insulted by the Kanheya chief with the words: "Go away, you Bhagtiya (dancing boy); I do not want to hear your sentimental talk." "This was too much to be borne in silence by so haughty and impervious a youngchief as Maha Singh was."

The spirit of Maha Singh was fired. He went away and invited Jussa Singh Ramgarhia who had been driven

1. Payne, op. cit., p. 68
2. Latif, op. cit., p. 343.
away by the Kanheyas across the Sutlej. The help of Sansar Chand Kutoch of Kangra, another enemy of the Kanheyas, was also easily secured; and the combined armies of these three chiefs marched against the Kanheyas. The battle was fought at Batala where Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya, the eldest of Jay Singh’s sons was killed; the Kanheyas were completely routed and thus the spirit of the old man was effectually humbled by this double sorrow. The Ramgarhias and Sansar Chand secured their territories from the Kanheya possession. Jay Singh prepared to have yet another trial with Maha Singh. A small action was fought at Naushera, but here again Jay Singh had to face a discomfiture.

After this Sada Kaur, the widow of Gurbakhsh Singh Kanheya and a very prudent and sagacious lady, proposed the betrothal of her only daughter Mehtab Kaur to Ranjit Singh—the young son of Maha Singh. The alliance was struck, and thus the peace between the Sukerchakias and the Kanheyas was restored. This alliance proved very fortunate for Ranjit Singh in his future conquests and consolidation of the Punjab under his standard of monarchy.

In 1792 a dispute arose between the two Bhangi brothers Sahib Singh and Fateh Singh regarding succession to the estate of their father Gujjar Singh who had died. Maha Singh supported Fateh Singh and marched on Gujrat, the town held by Sahib Singh. The Sodhra fort was besieged and the blockade continued for three months. The victory was within sight when unfortunately Maha Singh was suddenly taken ill. As his illness became serious he was removed to Gujranwala and the siege was raised. Shortly after this in 1792, Maha Singh died.

Maha Singh died young at the age of only twenty-seven summers. And he "left to his son and successor a state beset with danger; but he bequeathed to him at the same time the qualities by which dangers are best overcome—courage combined with a natural genius for command, and enterprise tempered by prudence and foresight."

After this Ranjit Singh succeeded to the chiefship of the Sukerchakia misl, who was bound to prove a hero among leaders and a lion among soldiers. Only seven years after the death of his father this young chief occupied Lahore, and set his misl on road to the glory of a consolidated kingdom of the Punjab and an empire of the Khalsa which was bound to give to the Punjab history an era of independence, pride and magnificence.

12. The Phulkian Misl

We have already seen how Guru Har Rai the seventh Sikh Guru laid the foundation of the Phulkian misl. It is said that once when during his preaching tours Guru Har Rai visited Malwa, two brothers Kala and Karam Chand of Manza Marhaj came to him and complained that the people of the Kaura tribe did not permit them to live in peace. Thereupon the Guru sent for Jait Pirana, the leader of the Kaura tribe, and tried to induce him to give the brothers some land for their maintenance. But when he failed in the purpose, the Guru helped the brothers to occupy some land forcibly, and in the fight that followed Jait Pirana was killed.

So long as the Guru stayed in the Malwa, Kala and his friends frequently waited on him. Once during his visit Kala took his two nephews Phul and Sandali, the sons of Rup Chand, to the Guru. Phul was hungry at the time, and out of a compassion for the fatherless child the Guru blessed him, saying that he would become a great, famous and wealthy man. This prophecy proved correct.

Phul, the second son of Rup Chand by his wife Mai Umbi, according to Latif, was the “thirtieth in descent from Jesal, the founder of the family, and the state and city of Jesalmir, in Rajputana, who, like almost all Jats, was a Bhatti Rajput.” When Phul came of age he developed his influence and expanded his landed property. Five miles from Marhaj where he had been born, he founded a village which

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1. Chapter xiii of this Book.
2. Latif, op. cit., p. 325.
he called ‘Phul’ after his own name. As he developed his influence he had to fight with Hayat Khan the Bhati chief of Bhatner, whom he defeated at Phakarsar in Bhatinda. Soon after this, however, he himself was defeated by Isa Khan of the Isa Khan village, who had been assisted by Hussein Khan of Kasur. The Phul village was sacked and Phul had to flee from here to Mathaj. It was not long, however, before Phul gathered his strength once again and recovered the village ‘Phul’. He also once again defeated Hayat Khan the ruler of Bhatner, and shortly after this increased his power to such an extent as even the Imperial governor of Jagtaon was defeated by him and taken prisoner.

Phul, according to Latif, was taken prisoner by the Sarhind governor for his default in the payment of revenue, in whose custody he feigned death by suspending his breath. His body was delivered to his relatives; but his wife who knew Phul’s secret being absent, his body was cremated and thus Phul died in 1652. While we may not say much regarding the circumstances leading to Phul’s death, it seems difficult to believe Latif that he died in 1652 when he was in the seventieth year of his age. If it is agreed that Phul was blessed by Guru Har Rai when he was a mere boy, and if we are sure that the Guru remained in his office from 1645 to 1661 — in which there seems no doubt, then either Phul should not have died in 1652 or he should not have been seventy when he died.

Be that as it may, Phul left behind him seven sons who founded the different Phulkia families, called so after the name of Phul. The more important of these families were those of Patiala, Nabha and Jind.

After Phul his second son Rama succeeded to the chiefship. Rama continued his service to his contemporary Sikh Guru Gobind Singh, and added yet further to his power and prestige. The chief victims of his rising ambition were Hassan Khan, the Chief of the Bhatti tribe, and the territories of Kot and Isa Khan which he plundered and gathered an

immense booty. Rama died in 1714 as a result of his assassination at the hands of one of his own followers, and was succeeded by his third son who is popularly known in the Punjab history as Ala Singh.

The Patiala House — A

Ala Singh was born in 1695, and it was this man, sagacious, brave and prudent, who founded the house of Patiala. The most important of his victories was the one he obtained in 1731 against the combined forces of Nawab Asad Ali Khan the faujdar of the Jullundur Doab, Jamal Khan of Malerkotla and the Rai of Kot. In the battle that was fought, Asad Ali Khan was killed. This victory of Ala Singh spread the awe of his arms far and wide. He repaired Barnala and established his head-quarters at the place. His reputation among the Sikhs developed, and they began to join him in large numbers. The reputation of Ala Singh reached even the Imperial capital Delhi, and Muhammad Shah the Delhi Emperor was obliged to ask Ala Singh to assist him in the management of Sarhind, promising him in return the title of raja.

Ala Singh continued expanding his territories on the east of the river Sutlej. He plundered the Bhatti territories several times, and in 1749, he built himself a fort at Bhawaniagarh. His brother-in-law Gurbux Singh conquered for him the district of Sanawar which included among its eighty-four villages, the village Patiala. Here at Patiala Ala Singh built in 1757 a mud fort Sodhion ki Garki, which later became the capital of the Patiala house. In the same year he conquered a major part of the territory of Samana, and also gave another crushing defeat to the Bhattis who had gathered once again to have a trial with this Sardar.

In 1763 Ahmad Shah Abdali led his sixth in vasion of the Punjab to chastise the Sikhs who had spread their terrorizing activities all over the state. He inflicted upon the Sikhs a signal defeat, in which thousands of them were killed. Ahmad Shah Abdali continued his pursuit of the Sikhs up to Barnala, 25 miles from Kup. Barnala, as we have seen, was the capital of Ala Singh who kept neutral in
the Durrani's fight against the Sikhs. When Ahmad Shah reached Barnala he naturally expected that Ala Singh would come and pay him a homage. But Ala Singh was hanging between two fires, and was anxious not to pay the homage lest he should invite the wrath of his community thousands of whom had been massacred at the Durrani's hands. Abdali was inclined to take a lenient view of the matter, but his jealous neighbours the Nawab of Malerkotla, the Rai of Raikot, and Lachhmi Narayan the Dewan of Zain Khan of Sarhind misrepresented Ala Singh before him, declaring that he had given a secret help to the Sikhs.

Ahmad Shah, consequently, stormed the fort of Barnala and plundered its surrounding territory. Ala Singh, however, slipped away and later on requested Najib-ud-daulah to intercede with the Shah on his behalf. As a result of this he surrendered himself to the Shah who ordered to have his hair cut. Without, however, being dismayed, Ala Singh offered to pay a price for his hair. The bargain was struck at one lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees, by paying which Ala Singh saved his hair. He paid an additional sum of five lakh rupees and secured his release with the promise to pay the Shah an annual tribute. The Shah embraced Ala Singh and conferred on him a dress of honour. A firman was addressed by Shah Wali Khan, the Shah’s Wazir, to Zain Khan the Governor of Sarhind, asking him to respect Ala Singh’s independence. During his next invasion of the Punjab in 1764, the Durrani conferred on Ala Singh the title of raja and created him also the lessee of the Sarhind province; for which Ala Singh agreed to pay the Shah an annual revenue of 3½ lakhs of rupees.

There was a diplomatic move in the Shah’s handing over the charge of Sarhind to Ala Singh. The younger two sons of Guru Gobind Singh having been bricked alive at Sarhind, the Sikhs had a particular grievance against this town, and they were determined to destroy it as often as it was reconstructed. The Shah believed that Ala Singh would be able to keep it on his behalf, and save it from destruction in the future. But his hopes were belied. Ala Singh died in 1765.
After Ala Singh, his grandson Amar Singh succeeded, and he also continued friendly relations with the Durrani chief. During Ahmad Shah's last invasion in 1767, Amar Singh met him at Kara Bowna, about twenty-four miles south of Ambals, and presented him with one lakh of rupees as a *nazrana*. The Shah conferred on him the title of *Raja-i Rajgan Bahadur*, and permitted him to strike a coin in his name.

Amar Singh expanded his territories yet further. He attacked successfully Kot Kapura and Mani Majra. Jamal Khan, the Afghan chief of Malerkotla was killed by him in a battle. He captured Sirsa and Fatehabad, and seized the fort of Sefabad which lay in the north of Patiala. He repulsed the Imperial troops, sacked Faridkot and seized Bhatinda after defeating its chief, Sukh Chen. He died in 1781, to be succeeded by his son Sahib Singh. For a few years the State of Patiala had to suffer under the invasions of the Marathas and against the rising ambitions of Ranjit Singh. But from 1809 the Patiala State came under the protection of the British, and its chief Narindar Singh rendered a valuable service to the British during their wars with the successors of Ranjit Singh, and during the Mutiny of 1857. Pleased with his services, the British Government conferred the following titles on him in 1858:

"Forzandi-Khas Daulat-i-Englishia, Mansuri Zaman, Amirul Omerah, Maharaja Dhiraj, Rajeshar Sri Maharaja-i-Rajagan Narindar Singh Mahandar Bahadur."

**The Jhindi House - B**

The Jhindi House sprang from Gajpat Singh the grandson of Tiloka. After the defeat of Zain Khan the governor of Sarhind in 1763, Gajpat Singh occupied a large territory extending to Panipat and Karnal, and including the important districts of Sahdon and Jhindi. He, however, acknowledged the overlordship of the Delhi Emperor to whom he paid revenue. Once having fallen into arrears, he was arrested and imprisoned, and was able to secure his release only after the payment of the dues. Under the *firman* of the Emperor Shah Alam in 1772, upon Gajpat Singh was conferr-
ed the title of Raja. He thus secured independence, and was permitted to strike his coin. Gajpat Singh married his daughter to Maha Singh, and she became the mother of Ranjit Singh. After his death in 1789 Gajpat Singh was succeeded by his son Bhag Singh who continued friendly relations with Ranjit Singh. In 1809 Jhind came under the protection of the British. Raja Sarup Singh, the sixth in descent from Gajpat Singh, rendered a valuable service to the British during the Mutiny of 1857.

He was granted the following titles: "Farzand Dilband Rasik-ul-itikad Raja Sarup Singh Bahadur Wali Jhind."

**The Nabha House - C**

The house originated with another grandson of Tiloka, named Hamir Singh. Hamir Singh founded the town of Nabha in 1755, and after the defeat and murder of Zain Khan in 1763 he expanded his territories. The troops of Rahim Dad Khan, the Mughal governor of Hansi, were defeated by him in 1776, and from him he wrested Rori. Hamir Singh also had a clash with Gajpat Singh of Jhind who invaded the Nabha territory in 1774 and occupied the town of Sangrur, which ever after this remained a part of the Jhind state.

After his death in 1783, Hamir Singh was succeeded by his son Jaswant Singh who at the time was only 8 years of age. The real charge of the administration was taken up by the boy's mother, Mai Desu who acquitted herself very creditably. She died in 1790, and now Jaswant Singh took the charge in his own hands. As a result of an agreement in 1809, Jaswant Singh put himself under the protection of the British. He continued administering his state till 1840 in which year he died and was succeeded by his son Devindar Singh. The latter was succeeded by his son Bharpur Singh in 1855. Bharpur Singh though still a minor, rendered a valuable service to the British in the Mutiny of 1857, and was duly rewarded.
CHAPTER XXX
THE CIVIL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MISLS

A—Character of the Misl Organisation

The character of the misl organisation has been differently commented upon. According to Cunningham thus, the misl organisation was "a theocratic, confederate feudalism". It was theocratic because "God was their helper and only judge, community of faith or object was their moving principle, and warlike array, the devotion to steel of Gobind, was their material instrument." Regarding how it was confederate, Cunningham explains: "year by year the Sarbat Khalsa, or whole Sikh people, met once at least at Amritsar, on the occasion of the festival of the mythological Rama, when the cessation of the periodical rains rendered military operations practicable. It was perhaps hoped that the performance of religious duties, and the awe inspired by so holy a place, might cause selfishness to yield to a regard for the general welfare, and the assembly of chiefs was termed as 'Gurumatta', to denote that, in conformity with Gobind's injunction, they sought wisdom in unanimity of counsel from their teacher and the book of his word." And further, regarding how it was feudalism, he says: "The leaders who thus piously met, owed no subjection to one another, and they were imperfectly obeyed by the majority of their followers; but the obvious feudal, or military notion of a chain of dependence, was acknowledged as the law, and the federate chiefs partitioned their joint conquests equally among themselves, and divided their respective shares in the same manner among their own leaders of bands, while these again subdivided their portions among their own dependents, agreeably to the general custom of subinfeudation."
But this system, Cunningham writes, existed "with all the confusion and uncertainty attendant upon a triple alliance of the kind in a society half barbarous." And further, "This positive or understood rule was not always applicable to actual conditions..............In theory such men (the Sikhs) were neither the subjects, nor the retainers of any feudal chief, and they could transfer their services to whom they pleased, and acquire new lands for their own use in the name of the Khalsa or commonwealth."\(^1\)

Dr. A.C. Banerjee, however, challenges the view expressed by Cunningham, and asserts that the organisation was "Democratic in composition and religious in its cohesive principles." Explaining the matter Dr. Banerjee writes that the organisation could not be theocratic because the misls were neither governed on the principles of the Sikh religion, nor did the Sikh priests hold a complete sway in their policy. Again he asserts, it could not be feudal, because feudalism cannot exist apart from monarchy. And the subordinate Sikh chiefs too did not owe military or fiscal obligation to their chiefs. They could easily transfer their services from one chief to another.\(^2\)

According to Gordon, the organisation was "an oligarchy based on republican principles."\(^3\) Archer calls it an "ethical and social constitution," which resulted from "Political occasion and incentive combined with religious zeal."\(^4\)

"The whole nation," writes Dr. G.C. Narang without assigning any definite terminology to the system at all, "had a living faith that it was under the special protection of God. Next to God was the Guru who was supposed to be always aiding and guarding his followers. The sovereignty of the nation was vested in the general body of the nation itself.\(^5\) The twelve misls were controlled by powerful chiefs.

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5. Italics are our own.
but these chiefs exercised their sway with the goodwill of their followers, who always went through the ceremony of electing their chiefs. That these elections were not always nominal is shown by the fact that many times the heir-apparent was set aside and a really capable ruler was elected from among the descendants or relations of the deceased chief and sometimes even from among the troops themselves."

Thus different views have been expressed regarding the mist organisation. The reality is that it would be wrong to assign any definite constitution to the organisation at all. The political terminology known to us may perhaps fail in explaining the peculiar system of the Sikhs as it existed. At the best, if we are definitely called upon to define, we may agree with Ibbetson that the mist organisation was a "curious mixture of Theocracy, Democracy and Absolutism."

"The Sikh soldiers and Sardars," as Ibbetson continues, "all fought for the Guru and when they assembled at Amritsar before the Guru Granth, they did what the religions gathering decided. It was democratic because every soldier or member of the mist enjoyed social and political equality. But as there was no regular machinery to check the Sardars, it was virtually an absolutism."1

B—The Gurmatra.

Gurmatra was the central body of Sikhs, which originated after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. When the Sikhs from the different parts of the country assembled at Amritsar on the occasion of certain festivals such as Dussehra, Dewali and Baisakhi; they met at the Akal Takht and in the presence of the holy Granth, discussed their political problems and the common plans of action for the community. These meetings were called the meetings of the Sarbat Khalsa, Sarbat meaning 'the entire'. And the "resolutions passed in the presence of the holy Granth were Gurmatra."2 The word 'Gurmatra' consisted of two words i.e. Guru and

Matta; and combined, it signified the 'Resolution of the Guru'. Originally, the meetings of the Sarbat Khalsa did not establish a definite institution, but with the passage and under the exigencies of the time these meetings evolved themselves into a definite central organisation of the Sikhs, which began to be called Gurmatta after the resolutions it passed to be obeyed by the entire community. The meetings began now to be held regularly twice a year at Amritsar on the occasions of the Baisakhi and the Dewali, in which the Misl dars or the chiefs of the Misls took a prominent part and took their decisions in the presence of their followers. To a superficial observer, therefore, it may look as an aristocracy laying down a plan of action for the community to follow. But the reality is, as according to Forster, that this distinction was only due to military necessity and a 'self-preserving regard, nothing more'.

Functions of the Gurmatta were manifold; the most important being to elect a leader of the Dal Khalsa army. The Gurmatta decided the foreign policy of the Sikhs, and it drew a plan of general military operations against a common enemy of the community. The measures for the spread of the Sikh faith were decided upon. And it also carried on deliberations to end the private feuds of the Sikh chiefs. Sometimes the cases of disputed successions were brought before it, and the Gurmatta gave its decisions as a judicial body.

Regarding the working of the Gurmatta, Malcolm writes: "when the chiefs meet on this occasion, it is concluded that all private animosities cease and that every man sacrifices his personal feelings at the shrine of the general good; and acted by principles of pure patriotism, thinks of nothing but the interests of religion and the Commonwealth to which he belongs."

Further he writes, "when the chiefs and the principal leaders meet, the Adi-Granth and Daswali Padshah Ka Granth are placed before them and they exclaim, Wah Guruji Ka Khalsa." After this the members took their seats. The

prayers were then offered, at the end of which Krah Prasad or the sacred pudding was distributed and then eaten together signifying that they were all one. The Granthi, thereafter, read out the Gurmatta or the Resolution. The discussions were held, and when all the present gave their assent, the Gurmatta was embodied in the prayer and read aloud.

There was no military sanction behind the Gurmatta thus passed, nor did there exist the means to enforce an obedience to it among the Sikhs. Yet, rarely were these decisions flouted. The decisions taken by the Guru Panth in the presence of the Guru Granth had behind them a religious sanction which was greater in force than that which the order of a military dictator could carry. And every Sikh obeyed them even at the cost of his life.

The system of the Gurmatta served the Sikhs during the darkest period of their history. Although we do not know when the first Gurmatta was held, the last was held in 1805, which met to advise Ranjit Singh on the policy he was to follow in regard to the dispute between Holkar and the British. But after 1805 Ranjit Singh having established an absolute government, he dissolved the Gurmatta as a political organisation; though for religious and social matters the Sikhs continued to meet and take their decisions.

C—The Internal Administration of the Misls

The entire Sikh community, as we have seen above, was divided into twelve confederacies or misls, at the head of each of which was a chief who was sort of a petty sovereign who conducted the internal administration and laid down its foreign policy. The character of the internal misl organisation may be called feudal. But the feudalism of the Sikhs differed from that of Europe and from that of Rajputana. Whereas the system of Europe was a product of chance and barbarism, the Sikh feudalism in the Punjab was based on brotherhood and was theocratic in its outlook. In the Sikh feudalism there were no feudal obligations, and no personal services to be rendered by a lessee to his chief. There was no graded society as it existed in the Medieval Europe and in Rajputana; nor there existed in it the patriarchal elements of the
latter place, in which the greater number of the vassals claimed affinity in blood to the sovereign.

"All that a Sikh chief demanded in those days," writes Griffin, "from a follower was a horse and a matchlock. All that a follower sought was protection and permission to plunder in the name of God and the Guru under the banner of the chief. There was no question of pay." And although in theory each chief was a lord paramount exerting an exclusive authority over his "vassals even to the power of life and death," in practice, wrote George Thomas, "there exists much less cause for oppression than in any of the neighbouring States." The Sikh chief, according to Steinbach, "exercised no absolute supremacy over it (his misl), for his followers exacted a share in the land proportioned to the service each had rendered, merely looking upon the Sirdar as the chief in war and arbiter in peace." A follower, when dissatisfied, could easily leave a chief and seek service in another misl. The Sikh chiefs rather vied with one another in attracting followers and in increasing thereby the popularity of their misls.

When a number of the Sikh misldars united together in an action, after a victory they divided the booty among themselves on the basis of the number of the fighting men contributed by each. Each chief further divided his share among his followers on the same basis; and thus every soldier who fought, got his share of the plunder.

The Sikh misls, writes Gordon, were in fact republics, in which "arms more than laws prevailed." The noblest feature of the misl organisation was the Panchayat system which existed in every one of its villages. "The Panchayat," writes Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, "was the assembly or council for determining the village affairs and consisted of most respectable representatives of tried virtue."

1. Griffin, Ranjit Singh, p. 89.
The chief officers of the village were Nambardar, Chaukidar and moquddums, and with their help the "Panchayat maintained perfect justice and equity in the village." T. Fortescue writes: "No instances occur of a proprietor being driven from the village by oppression or violence of one or any number of other shares; on the contrary, it is observable that they render each other the most friendly and essential aids when in distress. They will supply cattle, till the lands themselves, contribute money when a sharer has been really unfortunate, and they will assist him in the disposal of his produce in providing seed, bullocks, and implements, should they be satisfied with him. This feeling......is extended to the widow and necessitous family of a deceased sharer, and its effects scarcely surpassed."

The decisions of the Panchayat were not backed by a physical force. The social pressure was sufficient to make even the most refractory member of a community bear the severest punishment most calmly. "In case of disobedience to the Panchayat's decision the culprit was declared an outcaste and all the members of the village community refused to associate with him for fear of the same punishment. The village functionaries rendered him no assistance, so much so that the menials too refused all service." Panch was Parmeshar (God), and therefore the highest esteem was accorded to the Panchayat. And the Panchayats too worked honestly and efficiently. Misconduct and corruption in the Panchayats were the things unheard of.

Economic Conditions and the Financial Structure—I

From 1739 onwards till a settled government was given by Ranjit Singh, the Punjab experienced the worst type of political confusion established in the country. Yet the Sikh chiefs acquitted themselves much better than could be expected of them. Franklin wrote thus: "The Sikh territories are said to contain prodigious quantities of cattle, horses, oxen, cows and sheep; and grain of various kinds is produced

in abundance." "Though fond of plundering, the Sikhs in
the interior parts of their country preserve good order and a
regular government....."

Trade

Malcolm writes regarding trade in the Punjab: The
great sense of insecurity that prevailed, was responsible for
the fact that the merchants and traders had deserted the
main Punjab route. They did some business, however, by
the mountain route, and Jammu as the "Dar-ul-Aman" or
the "Abode of Peace" profited at the expense of the lower
region. Moreover, even after the establishment of some sort
of order; the presence of so many chiefs, each with a right to
levy a toll on merchandise, was not certainly conducive to
the revival of trade and commerce. "The Sikh chiefs, how-
ever, discovered the injury which their interests have suffered
from this cause, and have endeavoured not without success,
to restore confidence to the merchants; and a great part of
the shawl trade now flows through the cities of Lahore,
Amritsar, Patiala to Hindustan." The foreign merchants
settled in the Punjab were accorded a due protection, though
"foreign traders on their way to other countries were pretty
often plundered."

The Punjab exported during this period to the Deccan,
Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kashmir and other hill regions, and to the
countries west of Attock, the goods such as sugar, rice, wheat,
white cloth, matchlocks, swords, bows and arrows, horses,
camels and salt; while the important imports of the Punjab
from these countries consisted of fruits, spices, sulphur,
indigo, opium, shawls, fruits, iron and other inferior
commodities.

And for this, the "most important trade routes generally
converged from Amritsar by way of Machchiwara; in the
cis Sutlej region via Hansi, Rangeghur, Oricha into west
Rajputana, and via Kythal, Jhind, Karnal into Rajputana."*

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1. Malcolm, Sketch of the Sikhs, p. 126; See also Simha, The rise of the
Sikh Power.
2. Forster, op. cit., i, p. 293.
The Land Tenures

In the land administration four main kinds of land tenure existed in the time of the Misl. One of these was known as Pattidar which was the land held by an associate of a Misl chief. Such holder, though subordinate to the chief, was bound to him only with the tie of mutual defence and protection. The tenure, in this case, could not be sold away, though one could mortgage it freely. The second was the Misaldari, and this represented the land which a Misl Chief allotted to an outsider as a free reward for his cooperation. A Misaldari holder was completely free in the management of his land, and he could even transfer himself with his possessions to some other Misl. The third, the Tabadari land tenure applied to the land held by a retainer, or a tenant-at will. And in this case the land could be forfeited by the chief at any time. And the fourth was the Jagirdari tenure under which the land was allotted by a chief to his dependants or relatives out of his own portion, and hence the holders of this land were entirely under the personal control of the Chief himself.

Besides, at some places such as Jhang there existed the Hathrakhalidar tenure. This was the land which one handed over to another on the condition of paying one's land revenue. The holder of this land paid the land revenue which the first owner of the land owed, and kept rest of the produce from this land as his fee. The first owner was thus freed from the land revenue obligations.

Sometimes a person could acquire some new land by breaking up some waste land in the neighbourhood of a village, of which sufficient was available. In this case, however, the holder of the land could have no say in the management of the village.

The integrity of the land was maintained by the rules such as the one which forbade a person to sell his share of his ancestral land to an outsider. And in case a man was unable to cultivate the whole of his land, he paid his revenue only on the land he cultivated. The rest of his land was cultivated by the community.
Land Revenue Assessment and its Rate

During the time of the Misl rule the Punjab is said to have been in a state of high cultivation. The Land Revenue was paid in kind; except in the case of the crops such as sugar-cane, cotton and indigo, of the yield of which no correct estimate could be made, and thus in this case the revenue was paid in cash. In the case of a cash payment the village money-lenders paid, and they were helped later on by the Kardar in realising the dues from the cultivators.

The methods of assessment did not vary much, and in the most of the cases the Batal system was followed. Under the Batal system the land revenue was assessed on the threshing floor after the harvest was gathered. This method had been borrowed from the Mughals, and under it, from the good quality of land as much as forty percent or even fifty percent of the total produce was taken. In the case of a poor soil, however, the rate could be reduced to one-third, or even to the one-fourth.

In a few cases a fixed rate of revenue was realised on the basis of the average income for some past years, as for instance one rupee for a bigha. And sometime, a weak chief remitted the entire Land Revenue in favour of an influential man of the locality, who realised the revenue according to his whim and helped the chief in the administration.

Besides Land Revenue, another source of income was the Rakhi. The Rakhi system has already been discussed in one of our previous chapters. It was imposed by the Sikhs when disorder became the order of the day. Life in those days was not secure and there was none to protect the rights of the people. So the Sikhs asked the people to pay them one-fifth of their produce, and promised in return to protect them from the internal disorder and the external invasions. This was called Rakhi system, and it existed in some villages even when the Sikhs themselves became the rulers of the country.

1. Chapter XXIV.
And yet another important source of income was the plunder and the booty which fell into their hands after annihilating an enemy. They realised tributes from petty chiefs. Duties were imposed on imports and exports. And another important source of revenue was the income from judicial proceeds, as discussed below.

The Judicial Administration—II

The most important local court of justice under the Sikh Misls was the Panchayat. Panchayats worked efficiently and honestly, and they commanded a great respect among the people. Above the Panchayats was the court of the chief of the Misl which decided all the civil as well as the criminal cases. And when there was a case against the chief himself, or when there was a case in which the community as a whole might be interested, it was taken to the Central Assembly or the Gurmatta.

Justice, as referred to above, was an important source of income, and efforts were made to realise money both from the plaintiff and the defendant at every stage. In the case of theft for instance, a plaintiff was to pay a sum of money equal to one-fourth of the total value of the stolen goods at the time of filling a suit, and when the stolen goods were recovered he paid what was called Nazrana. A man found guilty was to pay a heavy Jurmana or fine, and if acquitted he would pay a gratitude money known as Shukrana. In the event of a case being prolonged, both the parties paid what was known as Taikhana.

"Crimes and trespass, as in the middle ages, are atoned for by money: the fines are unlimited by any rule, and generally levied arbitrarily according to the means of the offender whose property is attached and his family placed under restraint to enforce payment." All officers under the Chief and employed by him in districts and departments follow his example, but if guilty of excesses are ultimately thrown into a Bora (Bhota) or dungeon or required to refund, and when they have satisfied the cupidty of their

1. See Malcolm op. cit., p. 81.
superior they are generally permitted to resume their functions, honoured with the shawl as a mark of favour. Capital punishment was rare, but incorrigible culprits were punished with the loss of nose or ears, or some other part of the body. Mutilation too, however, could be paid for.

In the case of the stolen cattle, if the Surag khoj or track was traced to a village, the chief of the village had either to show the track beyond or to permit his village to be searched, or he had to pay for the stolen cattle. In the case of petty thefts, as discussed above, the sufferer paid one-fourth of the value stolen at the time of his filing the suit. One who turned approver, was pardoned, and his share of the spoils was charged upon the rest of the thieves. And in the case of a highway robbery, the chief in whose territory the crime had been committed, was to trace out the criminals and restore the goods carried away. In case he failed in giving the justice, the chief whose subject thus suffered had a resort to lex talionis. He could attack and drive away some hundreds of the cattle heads.

### Laws of Succession

The cannons of inheritance and succession differed between the territories of the Malwa and those of the Majha. In the Majha territories the succession was either by Bhaiwand or by Choondawand. Under Bhaiwand, the property of the deceased was equally distributed among the sons, reserving in some cases an extra share termed Kharch Sardari for the elder. Under Choondawand an equal division of the property was made among the mothers, in proportion to the number of their respective male issues.

In the case of a deceased having left no male issue, the property was divided among his brothers and nephews, to which his widows became contestans. Widows, according to the Hindu Shastras, held a prior title; but the Sikhs generally excluded the female line from succession, in order to prevent the estates from becoming a part of another family’s possessions. The problem in such cases was solved by what

was known as Chadaranwadi, in which the eldest of the surviving brothers placed a white sheet of cloth on the widow and a *nath* or ring in her nose, and thus converted her into his wife. In case, however, the brother and the nephews both failed, the widows succeeded to the property.

In the Malwa country, however, the right of primogeniture in the male was respected, though proper grants of land or *Jagirs* were always made for the maintenance of the younger sons. With the exception of the Bhai of Kythal, the Malwa Sikhs also admitted the use of *Karewa*, or widow marriage, to avoid a dispute between widow and the brothers. The Bhai of Kythal who did not admit the use of *Karewa*, set aside a part of the property for the maintenance of the widow.

The Mohammedans, both in the Majha and the Malwa, were allowed to follow their own laws of succession.¹

**Boundary Disputes and Bloodshed**

The boundary disputes were generally decided by conventions of the neighbouring *zamindars* who before resuming the work took a solemn oath to act impartially. Sometimes murders took place in the boundary disputes, and the cases became more serious. The bloodshed, however, could be atoned for by giving a daughter in marriage to a near relative of the murdered. And some times they could also be commuted to a payment of Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 or 125 bighas of land. Generally, however, blood-money and taking of a daughter in marriage were considered an inadequate recompense, and a revenge was sought.

**Nuptial Contracts**

The cases of the breach of promise in the nuptial contracts were referred to the *Panchayats* which could award the plaintiff another female from the family of the girl; or in case of there being no girl available, the defendant could be punished to search for a substitute. And sometimes the defendant could be asked to pay for the damages incurred by

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¹ See Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, pp. 172 etc.
D—The Military Administration

Different estimates have been drawn regarding the number of soldiers which the Sikh Misl could field at the time of war. According to Timur Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah Abdali, thus, the Sikhs could field as many as 50,000 well equipped and well dressed horse, besides a large number of the infantry soldiers. The estimate of George Thomas lay at 60,000 horse and 50,000 foot. According to Brown, they had 73,000 horse and 25,000 foot. Forster’s account of 1783 showed the Sikhs having about two lakh soldiers; while according to Franklin, in 1800 their cavalry alone numbered 2,48,000, and they also possessed forty guns. Thus the estimates vary, yet it is certain that the total number of their soldiers must have been sufficiently higher than one lakh.

Among the Sikhs infantry was not an important branch of service. It was only in the time of Ranjit Singh that its importance was realised, and the infantry troops were raised. In the time of the Misl, the infantry soldier was considered inferior to cavalry, and was, says Griffin, in time of war left behind to garrison forts, or to look after the women. The soldiers, in fact, considered it below their dignity to fight without a horse. A great mass of them were cavalrymen, and were famous for their effective use of matchlocks when mounted. The horses, in the Misl time, were generally reared in Lahore jungle in the vicinity of Bhatinda.

Nor did the Sikhs possess a heavy artillery. They had only forty field-guns in 1800, and one of the greatest of the difficulties the Sikhs faced against the Mughals and the Durrani invaders was their inability to meet the heavy artillery of their opponents.

Recruitment in the Sikh forces was entirely voluntary. No records of names, service or payment were kept. There

1. See Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, pp. 238 etc.
were no gradations in the army, and no provision for regular training to the soldiers. The regular drilling system was introduced only later on by Ranjit Singh, and then too it was not liked in the beginning. The soldiers termed it contemptuously as Ruqs Leoluan, or ‘ballet steps’!

Still, however, there was discipline among the Sikh soldiers. As a result of the religious zeal with which the Sikhs fought, the desertions in the battle-field were rare. Disobedience to the officers was punished by war councils of five.

The Sikh soldiers received no regular monthly salaries. The most common mode of payment was in kind at the time of harvest. But sometimes payment in money, or allotment of land was also done. The soldiers also received a share of the booty which fell into their hands at the time of a conquest.

The Sikh weapons of war consisted of swords, spears, sabre, two-edged daggers, lances, muskets, guns, cutlasses, pikes, bows and arrows. Shields of hide or coats of mail were used. The chiefs were distinguished by finer horses. The horses were well trained, and were valued highly by the Sikhs who mourned on their death.

Their national flag was of saffron colour, but the heraldic sign on it is not known. Their war cry was Sat Sri Akal, and their movement swift.

The Sikhs, according to Gordon, were dead-drinkers. Tobacco and snuff being prohibited, they used spirits and bhang (hemp). Their dress varied, but the ‘Akalis always dressed in the sacred blue garments, were heavily armed, and in addition carried several thin sharp-edged quoits round their turbans.”

Regarding their methods of war, George Thomas who fought the Sikhs more than once, wrote thus: “They were usually armed with a spear, a match-lock and a sabre. With the enemy they engage in continuous skirmish. They

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1. See author’s 2nd vol. of this work, p. 176.
advance and retreat until men and horse become tired. They then retreat to some distance where they leave their horse to graze, like a very frugal meal and begin skirmishing again. They have no tents; their cakes of flour serve as dishes and plates. Each horseman has two blankets, one for himself and another for his horse, kept o’erneath the saddle.”

According to Colonel Polier, their “horses were so well trained that they could stop from a full career.” They adopted guerilla tactics, and according to Forster, when they attacked their enemy, forty or fifty of them loaded their guns and rushed towards the enemy; stopping at distance they discharged their guns and rushed back. The guns were loaded again and the practice was repeated. Their aims were always correct, and they caused a confusion in the enemy’s ranks.

The Sikhs rarely fought pitched battles, and when they did fight face to face, often they would run away before the enemy giving an impression that they fled the battle-field. But when the enemy pursued them and was cut off from the main body of its troops they suddenly stopped and attacked and thus inflicted a heavy loss.

“...The burning sun, heavy rains, freezing winter and rough weather exercised no deterring influence on them...... They never allowed their private feelings, desires, loves, sorrows, likes and dislikes to come between them and the good of the Panth.” “On the other hand, their success did not make them lose their head...... They seldom resorted to cold-blooded murder even of their enemies, and respected the chastity of woman as their faith and honour.” “No superiority of his (Sikh’s) enemies in number, no stroke, no shot, no shell could make his heart quail since his Amrit taken at the time of baptism, bound him to fight single-handed against millions. They could ply their swords, pliant as a cane and sharp as a razor, with perfect ease and dexterity, while in the discharge of matchlocks they were invariably dead shots.”

1. See Franklin, Life of George Thomas, pp. 79, 80, 107.
3. Forster, op. cit., 1, pp. 338-34.
Qazi Nur Muhammad, the author of *Jung Namah*, wrote about them: “In fact they are lions at the time of battle and when in festivities they surpass Hatim (in generosity). When they take hold of the Indian sword in hand they gallop from Hind (gangetic Doab, invaded in February, 1764) up to the country of Sind..... when they bend a bow they set in it the foe-killing arrow. When they pull it up to the ear, the body of the enemy trembles like a cane. If their hatchet strikes a coat of mail, then this coat of mail, itself on the body of the enemy becomes a shroud. The body of each of them looks like a hillock and in grandeur excels fifty men. Bahram (a Persian hero) killed wild asses and could frighten tigers. If Bahram Gor comes before them, he also would admit their superiority.”

Such, readers, was the dexterity, courage and spirit which Guru Gobind Singh had infused into his Sikhs. Rarely has a nation suffered so much and sacrificed so much. Sikhs were heroes to a man, who fought and suffered; and today, when we enjoy the best of freedom and the most democratic of rights, let us pay our homage to the sacrifices these heroes made. From Guru Nanak the saint, to Guru Gobind Singh the saint-soldier, Banda Bahadur the valiant fighter; and Bhai Mani Singh, Bota Singh and others, all glories to the heroes who laid down their lives so that their country and its people may flourish.

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1. Quoted by Gupta, *A History of Sikhs*, i, pp. 288-289. Qazi Nur Mod, came in the train of Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1764 to fight the Sikhs. This passage has already been quoted once. It is important, for it comes from the pen of a man who had absolutely no friendly feeling towards the Sikhs. The repetition therefore needs no apology.
Appendix I

THE SOURCES OF THE PUNJAB HISTORY

The information regarding the Punjab History is quite scattered. The best sources of our information are either in Gurmukhi, or in Persian, and the greatest difficulty that an impartial observer comes across while consulting them is that most of these works suffer from bias and prejudice. In many of the cases the writers have religious propaganda as the motivating force, and hence not unfrequently their works have facts mixed up with fables and myth. In such cases only a discerning eye can draw out a correct information and write a history. The available sources of the Punjab History can conveniently be discussed under the following scheme.

A—THE PRIMARY SOURCES

Gurmukhi—I

1. One of the most authentic sources regarding the Punjab History in Gurmukhi is the Adi Granth which was transcribed by Bhai Gurdas and dictated by Guru Arjan in 1604. A detailed study of this work, its contents and character has already been made. Although the work is no book of history, yet some passages in it give us ample historical information. The Tikke Di War in it, written by Satta and Balwand, for instance, gives us some information regarding the life and activities of the first five Gurus. Bhai Jetha’s account regarding the life of Guru Amar Das in Gaui ki War, is another important historical composition. Sach Nam di Bani written by Sunder is yet another important piece from this point of view. Besides, much can be gathered regarding the political, social, economic and religious lives of the people from the verses of the Gurus themselves.

2. Bachitra Natak written by Guru Gobind Singh is another very important source of our information. From this book we get some facts regarding the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur.

1. See Chapter XI of this book.
2. Who later became Guru Ram Das.
the birth of Guru Gobind Singh himself and his activities and the battles such as that of Bhangani. We also get from it some facts regarding the social and religious practices of the people. And whatever information we may get from this book is undoubtedly the most authentic information. Besides, the high taste of poetry that is exhibited in it shows how great and a versatile scholar the Guru was.

3. The *Zafarnama*, a letter written in Persian by Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb, which also is available in the *Gurmukhi* script, gives us some facts regarding the Guru's relations with the Mughals, and is another very authentic source of our information.

4. The *Wars* of Bhai Gurdas written in the time of Guru Arjan and Hargobind, though not very reliable regarding the earlier history, can be depended upon for the information they supply regarding the Gurus who were contemporary of Bhai Gurdas. The total number of these *Wars* is forty, and of these the 1st, 10th, 24th, 25th and the 34th are the most important from the view point of history. The first *War* gives us an information regarding the life and *Udasis* of Guru Nanak. The tenth gives us the names of the important Sikhs and important Sikh places of the time.

The other works which are considered as primary, but which are to be studied only with a discerning eye, are:

5. The *Janamsakhi* of Sewa Dass.
7. Bhai Bala's *Janamsakhi*.
8. The *Janamsakhi* dated 1701 and calligraphed by a Brahmin and
9. The *Janamsakhi* of Mehrban. These works have already been discussed in the Chapter III of this book.¹
10. The *Gur Sobha* of Senapat a follower of Guru Gobind Singh, is a more important work in this respect.

**Persian—II**

1. *Dabistan-I-Mazahib*, by Mohsin Fani who was a contemporary of the fifth, sixth and the seventh Gurus, and a personal

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2. See pp. 59-54.
friend of the sixth Sikh Guru. It is a more balanced account, but the author sometimes believes in myth and colours his account with it.


3. *Tazkara-i-Tahmas Miskin*, by Tahmas Khan Miskin, 1780. Miskin was a personal attendant of Muin-ul-Mulk and Mughlani Begum, and gives a very valuable account regarding their activities.

4. *Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan* by Iradat Khan, gives a valuable account regarding the activities of Banda.

5. *Jang Nama* by Qazi Nur Muhammad, 1765, is an eye-witness account of the seventh invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali.


7. *Muntakhab-i-Akhbar*, (British Museum) are news-letters which give abstracts of daily intelligence from Delhi, and are important more particularly for the time of Shah Alam II.

8. *Ibrat Nama* by Khair-ud-din Muhammad of Allahabad, in three volumes, 1806. The author was the Private Secretary to the son of Shah Alam II, and starting his account with Shah Alam I, ends it with that of Shah Alam II, giving some valuable information regarding Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasions and other occurrences in the Punjab.

9. *Ibrat Nama* by Mohammad Qasim Lahori who was present at the Haidri Flag and other such incidents. He gives a valuable account regarding Banda Bahadur.

10 *Khazana-i-Amira*, by Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami, written between 1762 and 1763. The author gives a good information regarding the Sikh occupation of Lahore.

The other important Persian works are:

11. *Ibrat Nama* by Muhammad Qasim, 1720;
12. *Khulast-ut-Twarikh* by Sujan Rai Bhandari of Batala, 1695;
13. *Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shahi* by Khushal Chand;
14. *Tarikh-i-Alangir Sani*, anonymous;
15. *Tarikh-i-Anand Ram* by Anand Ram;
16. Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi, anonymous;
17. Tarikh-i-Manazil-ul-Fatuh by Muhammad Ja'afar Shamlu, 1761
20. Chahar Gulshan, Ray Chatarman, 1759;
21. Muasir-ul-Umara by Shahnawaz Khan Samsam-ud-daulah, 1758;
22. Tarikh-i-Shah Alam by Munna Lal;
23. Shah Alam Nama by Ghulam Ali, 1788;
24. Intikhab-i-Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mu'alla-wa-Mahadji Sindiha Bahadur, Salar Jang Ms.;
25. Tarikh-i-Kharoj-i-Nadir by Mohd. Baksh Ashub, two volumes, 1785;
26. Bayan-i-Waqi, by Khwaja Abdul Karim Kashmiri, 1784;
27. Ahwal-i-Najib-ud-daulah, by Bihari Lal, 1787;
28. Tarikh-i-Najib-ud-daulah by Sur-ud-din, 1773;
30. Tarikh-Ali, by Mohd. Saleh Kudrat, Ms., 1785;

Marathi—III.

1. Marathyancha Itihasachin Sadhanen, edited by V.K. Rajwada. The work is in 21 Vols. of which Vol. No. XII is very useful.
3. Selections from Peshwa's Daftar, edited by G.S. Sardesai, consisting of 31 volumes. The volumes No. 2, 21, 27 and 29 are useful for the Punjab History.
4. Despatches from Ahalya Bai's Court by D.B. Parasnis, in 2 vols. is also useful for the purpose.

English—IV

1. Sri Guru Granth Sahib (English version), 4 vols., by Dr. Gopal Singh, 1960. Often quoted in this book as G.S.,
2. Adi Granth, by Trumpp (1877). It is another English version of the sacred volume, but comments seem extremely
prejudiced and biased. The work was prepared under the auspices of the India office and tries to miss no opportunity of "defaming the Gurus, the sacred book and the religion of the Sikhs," writes Macauliffe (i, p. vii)

3. *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks in India Tracts*, by Major James Browne who was the English Minister at Shah Alam's Court, 1788, is a valuable account of the Sikh history.


5. *A Journey from Bengal to England*, by Forster, (1782-3). It is a valuable account in two volumes, the first of which is useful.

5. *History of India as told by Its own Historians*, 8 vols. by Sir H. M. Elliot and Prof. John Dowson.


9. Besides one can get some material from the Foreign Department, Select Proceedings, 1779; Political Proceedings, 1792, 1798; Bengal Select Committee Proceedings, 1770; and Secret Proceedings, 1776, 1786 and 1789.


**B—SECONDARY**

Gurmukhi – (I)

1. *Prachin Panth Prakash* by Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu whose account is based on the stories he heard from his father who was present in the Ghalugharas, is a valuable account, though to be read carefully.
2. **Panth Prakash** by Bhai Gian Singh is almost a copy of the above account. But almost all the dates given in this account seem wrong.

3. **Mehma Prakash** by Baba Sarup Das Bhalla. The book deals with Gurus and the activities of the Sikhs. It is a valuable work, though to be perused cautiously.

4. **Suraj Prakash** by Bhai Santokh Singh is another work of great value, but again to be read only with a discerning eye.

5. **Katik ki Baisakh**, by Karam Singh Historian, is a valuable study of the date of Guru Nanak’s birth. It also discusses the authenticity of Bhai Bala’s Janamsakhi.

6. **Nanak Prakash** by Bhai Santokh Singh, which was written in 1823, or about three centuries after Guru Nanak’s death, is not very reliable, though it does give some good information.¹

7. On Guru Nanak one also gets a biography prepared by the followers of Baba Hindal.

8. **Nanak Chandodya** (Sanskrit) by Pandit Ganda Ram.


10. Another biography attributed to Bhai Mani Singh.


12. And another one written at Lahore and completed in 1783.

13. The Biography of Guru Nanak by Vir Singh is an important work.

14. Dr. Mohan Singh refers to six more Gurmukhi manuscript biographies of Guru Nanak, which fell into his hands. He writes: “Two slipped out for ever; one was presented to me by Bawa Budh Singh, who said he had received it from the Poonch State; it was left at Lahore with my other belongings; the other most precious indeed for its numerous paintings of Guru Nanak Dev and his contemporaries, was the personal property of the late Khan Sher Mohammed Khan of Mardan. He had it in the family as an heirloom, received from the head of a Sikh shrine in N.W.F.P.” About the remaining four, the reader is referred to Chapter III of this book.

¹ See p. 52 of this book.
Appendix

17. *Kuj Hor Dharmik Lekh*, Prof. Sahib Singh.
24. *Kabir Shabdavali*.
28. *Dashmesh Chamatkar*.
29. *Banda Bahadur* by Karam Singh Historian is a valuable and objective study of the subject.
30. *Maharaja Ala Singh* by Karam Singh being based on original sources, is a valuable work.
31. *Jusa Singh Binod* by Ram Sukh Rao, is also a good work.
32. *Maharaja Kaura Mal* by Ganda Singh is a good study based on some original sources.

Persian—(ii)

4. *Ahwal-i-Adina Beg Khan*, Anonymous, Ms. It is a biography of Adina Beg and the only work on the subject, probably written in 1806.
5. *Tarikh-i-Slatin-i-Afghana*, by Ahmad Yadgar, Ms., 1835.
8. Mukhtasar Tarikh-i-Kashmir, Ala-ud-din, 1883.
10. Khalsa Nama, by Rattan Chand.
12. Tarikh-i-Punjab, by Ahmad Shah of Batala, 1820.
15. Tarikh-i-Muzaffari, Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, 1787.
18. Tarikh-i-Multan, by Sultan Mohammad Khan, 1881.
19. Holat-i-Multan, Mohammad Yusuf, Ms.
20. Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi, Ms. 1167 Hijri.
21. Tehmas Nama, Tehmas Khan, Ms. 1778.
22. Tarikh-i-Muhammad Shahi, by Khushal Chand gives a good account of the life and career of Banda.

Urdu—(iii)

1. Shamshir Khalsa, by Gian Singh Giani, 1913. It gives history of the Sikhs from 1707 to 1769.
2. Raj Khalsa, by Gian Singh Giani, in two volumes, gives an account of individual chiefs of the 18th century.
3. Gosta-i-Punjab, by Raâha Kishan, 1861, deals with cis-Sutlej Sikh States.
4. Tarikh-i-Patiala, by Mohammad Hasan, 1878, is a good work on the subject.
7. Sawlat-i-Afghani, by Hazi Mahmammad Zardar Khan, 1876.
8. Tarikh-i-Afghani, by Abdul Majid.

English—(iv)

1. History of India under Babur and Humayun, by Erskin, Vol. I.
3. *History of the Punjab*, by Mohammad Latif, 1964. It is a good account, though dates are not always correct.


9. *Evolution of Khalsa*, by I. B. Banerjee. It is one of the very good studies of the Guru Period of Sikh History, in two volumes, though to be examined with care.


20. *Religions of India*, by Barth.


23. *Vaisvaism and Satvism*, by Grierson and Bhandarkar.


27. Tha different back issues of the *Spokesman Weekly*, published from Connaught place, New Delhi. Its special Nos. are sometimes very valuable.


32. The Message of Sikhism, by Harbans Singh.
33. Sikhism, by Teja Singh.
34. The Sikh People, by Dr. Ganda Singh.
36. History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab, by Dr. Leitner.
37. Sikh De Raj Di Vikhia, translation by M. H. Court.
38. District Gazetteers of different Punjab districts.
39. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Punjab, Vols. 2.
41. History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion, by Khazan Singh. 2 Vols.
42. Sri Guru Granth Sahib, by Giani Harnam Singh.
43. A History of Punjabi Literature, by Dr. Mohan Singh.
45. The Sikhs, by Khushwant Singh.
46. Philosophy of Sikhism, by Dr. Sher Singh.
48. The Sikhs, Captain Bingley.
52. Battles of Guru Gobind Singh by Sunder Singh.
54. Army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, by Balwant Singh.
55. Sikhs and Sikh Wars by Sir Charles Gough.
57. Sikh Martyrs, by Bhagat Lakshman Singh.
58. The Land of Five Rivers, by Sir David Ross.
60. The Book of Ten Masters, by Puran Singh.
63. Fall of the Mughal Empire, by J.N. Sarkar. Vols. I & II.
64. Memoirs of George Thomas.
Appendix

73. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress Calcutta Session 1939*.
76. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, translated by Imperial Records Department, Calcutta Vol. ii.
85. *Sankara and His Times*, Krishnaswami Air.
91. *The Scared Writings of the Sikhs*, by Dr. Trilochan Singh and others 1965.


95. Asa Di War, Teja Singh.

96. Jehovah, Beni Prasad.


100. Chattanya, Sir Jadunath Sarkar.


103. Socio-Economic History of Northern India (1030-1194 A.D.), B.P. Majumdar, 1960.


C—The Miscellaneous

The Sikh tradition provides us with yet another source of information. The traditional prayers of the Sikhs, the Ardasa, repeats every morning the important sacrifices of the Sikhs and the names of the Sikh martyrs. There are some proverbs still known among the common folk of the Punjab, such as:

मई अलग से निषिद्ध, आमी मई के सिद्द जाते हैं।

निषिद्ध निषिद्ध मई के सिद्द नहीं, आमी कुछ से नहीं गेंदी हैं।

And:

कसर भीं तीन इसे पी रहे रहे।

वाहिने आलम पर रहे रहे।

And they also throw a light on the Sikh activities during our period of study.

The Sikh historical places such as Anandpur Makhowal, and Kartarpur near Jullundur, still have some buildings of the days of the Sikh Gurus, intact or in ruins, and they can help us in the reconstruction of the History. Then there are the weapons of war and articles of dress which were used by the Gurus or some other Sikh leaders and which are still preserved at places such as Har Mandar, Amritsar; Anandpur Makhowal; Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nander; and Banaras etc.
Appendix II

THE DATE OF GURU NANAK'S BIRTH

Of late, a very interesting controversy has been raised among the scholars of the Punjab History regarding the exact month in which Guru Nanak was born. These days the birth of Guru Nanak is celebrated on the full-moon day, or the Purnima of Kartik, but the writers such as Karam Singh¹ assert that the Guru was born in the month of Baisakh and not in that of Kartik. Macauliffe also forwards a similar view, and says that till the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the birth was celebrated only in the month of Baisakh. It was during his time that the change took place and the birth began to be celebrated in the month of Kartik.

Several reasons are forwarded as to why did this change take place. At Ram Tirath, a few miles from Amritsar, a very big Hindu fair used to be held on every Purnima of Kartik. The Sikhs attended this fair in large numbers. This was not liked by some Sikh religious leaders, and as according to Macauliffe, of these leaders named Bhai Sant Singh who lived at Amritsar, desiring to establish "an opposition fair in Amritsar on the same date and thus prevent the Sikhs from making the Hindu pilgrimage to Ram Tirath," proposed a change, and with the consent of Maharaja Ranjit Singh he started celebrating the birth on the same day as the Hindu fair at Ram Tirath was held. Besides, in the month of Baisakh several other Hindu fairs are also held, to divert the Sikh attention from which it may have been thought essential to celebrate Guru Nanak's birth in the same month.

We have some very definite sources of this history which support the view that Guru Nanak in fact was born in Baisakh. The month of Kartik is also supported by some accounts, the best among which may be Bhai Bala's Janamsakhi. But this Janamsakhi, as we have already

¹. See his book Katik ke Baisakh (in Punjabi)
². See M., l.
seen, is not a very reliable and authentic account. Nor does the Nanak Parkash of Bhai Santokh Singh which was written about three centuries after the death of Guru Nanak, deserve a better attention. According to this account Guru Nanak was born in Karlik 1526 Vikarmi and died Assu 1596, which means that the Guru lived for 69 years and 11 months. But it is generally believed that the Guru lived for 70 years and 5 months, and strangely enough the Nanak Parkash itself forwards that the Guru lived for this period. If we consider Guru Nanak being born in Baisakh 1526, till Assu 1596 it makes exactly 70 years and 5 months, which obviously proves that the date of Guru Nanak’s birth forwarded by Bhai Santokh Singh is a mistake or a misprint.

Moreover the authorities in the favour of Baisakh are more reliable than those in favour of Karlik. Among these authorities is the very respectable one of Bhai Gur Das himself who in his Wars forwards Baisakh as the month of birth. Bhai Mani Singh in his Gyan Ratnavali also forwards the same view. The Janamsakhi of Sewa Dass which is more reliable than any other Janamsakhi, mentions Baisakh as the date of Guru Nanak’s birth. Moreover, we have a definite proof that till as late as 1815 it was in Baisakh that the birth was celebrated by the Sikhs at Nankana the birth place of Guru Nanak. Obviously, therefore, the Guru must have been born in the month of Baisakh and not in that of Karlik.
Appendix III

THE PUNJAB UNDER THE MUGHALS, AND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MUGHALS AND THE SIKH GURUS

The Punjab has always been considered as one of the most important parts of this country. Till very recently the Punjab remained a key to the Indian Empire. Almost all the invaders—except the British in the modern times, or except Muhammad-bin-Qasim in the medieval times—who came to establish their power in this country, entered it through the Punjab. And hence, once a power was established in this country, if it wanted to stem the foreign aggressions it had to make special arrangements for the protection of the Punjab. That was perhaps one of the reasons why the Mughals too took a very keen interest in the administration of this part of the country.

Moreover the Punjab being the home of the stalwart Jats and the other races of martial character, it always formed a good recruiting ground and a reservoir of the fighting men. Thirdly, the Mughals themselves having come only from the north-western side of India and still possessing their vital interests in the countries of Central Asia, they had to have a special hold on the Punjab, in the absence of which there contacts with the countries on the north-west of India should have broken. And fourthly, the Punjab lay on the route to Kashmir the pride possession of the Mughal monarchs. They often visited this valley during the hot months of summer. Akbar and Jehangir were more specially fond of the virgin beauty of Kashmir, and of the nature which appears here in its very naked form. And naturally, therefore, every visit to Kashmir entailed a visit to the Punjab and hence a closer interest in this part of the country.

These were the reasons due to which the governorship of this province was considered under the Mughals to be a privileged position,
and the nobles vied with one another to get this prized post. One of the greatest blunders of his career which ultimately brought about his fall, was committed by Humayun when he handed over the Punjab to his brother Kamran. When Sher Shah Suri defeated Humayun at Chausa and Kanauj, the very first step taken by him was to consolidate his administration in the Punjab. He constructed a fort at Rohtas near the river Jhelum. After his death Sher Shah’s successor Islam Shah continued giving a special attention to this part of his country. But after the death of the latter when peace in the Punjab was destroyed, Humayun got an opportunity and re-conquered this country. It was at Kalanaur in the Punjab that Akbar was proclaimed as the successor to Humayun.

During the time of Akbar too the most serious challenges to his authority came only from this side. If Bairam had to wage a war against Sikandar Sur; or if Bairam Khan himself entered into an intrigue with Hussain Khan, the Governor of the Punjab and raised a standard of revolt against Akbar; it was all a trouble from within the Punjab. After settling his Government some very special measures had to be taken by Akbar to consolidate his power in the Punjab. In 1585, Akbar rather shifted his head-quarters to the Punjab, and till 1598 the whole of the Indian empire continued to be administered mostly from Lahore. The turbulent Afghan tribes formed one of the most serious problems for the safety of the Mughals in India. They claimed many an important Mughal General, and even Bir Bal laid down his life only while fighting on the North West Frontier. All this added to the importance of Lahore, and to handle the N.W.F. problem more effectively Akbar transferred his head-quarters to this city. During Akbar’s stay in the Punjab he took special measures to introduce reforms against Sati system and the Hindu social disabilities etc.

In the time of Jehangir (1606—1627) one of the most serious problems of his career was the revolt of his own son Khusro who entered the Punjab and met Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan’s contacts with Khusro have already been discussed, and we have seen how they contributed towards his execution. Murtaza Khan and Itmad-ud-Daula, the Punjab Governors under Jehangir, undertook several reforms in this country. The construction of a road from Lahore to Agra was undertaken, trees
were planted on roads and new buildings erected. Jehangir visited the Punjab several times on his way to and from Kashmir; and it was in the Punjab at Changiz Hatti that he finally died, being buried at Shahdara arne Lahore in 1627.

Shah Jehan, after Jehangir, continued taking a close interest in the administration of the Punjab and visited it several times, as in 1633 and 1638. When the war of succession started among the sons of Shah Jehan, Dara Shikoh who had already sometime been the Governor of this province, fled towards it and met Guru Har Rai, as we have already discussed.

After Shah Jehan when Aurangzeb came to power, he shifted the centre of the Imperial interests from the Punjab to the Deccan, and this sounded the death knell of the Mughal empire. Rebellions arose in the Punjab. The Sikhs developed their power, the hill chiefs became refractory, and thus the rot entered which ultimately spread and destroyed the Mughal power.

It is clear thus that the Punjab was always one of the most important parts of the Mughal empire. And since for this period the history of the Punjab is mainly concerned with the development of the Sikh religion and the lives and the careers of the Sikh Gurus, it would be interesting to have a brief review of the relations between the Mughals and these Gurus, and see how with the start of the Mughal period the Sikh history started. The Punjab formed to the Mughals a source of strength, and to the Sikhs a source of life. And we will see how when the one failed in giving justice and peace to the country, the other watched and ultimately rose to destroy the evil and re-assert its independence.

The Relations under Guru Nanak

The relations between the Sikh Gurus and the Mughals have in fact already been dealt with in the chapters relating to the individual Gurus. Here we will make only a brief survey, drawing extracts and occasionally referring our readers to the proper chapters inside this book.

With the arrival of Guru Nanak in the Punjab Babur arrived in this country; and strangely enough, with the death of Guru Gobind Singh—the last of the Sikh Gurus—died Aurangzeb—the last of the strong Mughal emperors. After the death of Auranzeb just as the
Mughal power in India and in the Punjab continued to weaken, the Sikh power continued developing and going strong, till ultimately the first was destroyed and the second established itself, converted from religious movement into a political power.

Guru Gobind Singh writes in his *Bachitra Natak*: from one side came Babur and from the other side came Guru Nanak. The clash was imminent, as the Almighty Himself had desired it:

"नव दे, घाटक दे रघु, अप बबे नुमान श्रद्धा"

During his Fifth Udasi, as we have seen (pp. 75-76 of this book), the Guru was imprisoned by the Mughal soldiers at Sayedpur and condemned to manual labour, being asked to carry a load on his head. But the load was noticed to be moving with the Guru one cubit above his head without any support. The incident was immediately reported to Babur who, according to the old-Sikh records, himself came to see and was impressed as a result of a conversation with the Guru. He ordered the Guru’s release, but the Guru refused unless others were released along with him. Thereupon Babur ordered all the prisoners to be set at liberty.

There is no mention of the Guru’s meeting with Babur in the contemporary Mughal records. But there is a possibility that the Guru whose heart ached at the sight of the horrors and destruction brought about by the invader, should have personally interviewed him, though the incident might have been passed over by the Mughals as insignificant.

Babur captured the power in India in 1526 as a result of his battle with the Lodhis at Panipat. But before this he led several invasions into this country and brought about much destruction and bloodshed in the Punjab. In 1520 when the entire garrison at Sayedpur was destroyed by the Mughals in cold blood, and the inhabitants of the place were butchered and carried away into slavery, Guru Nanak wept the tears of blood and wrote: ‘Wealth and beauty of the women proved to be their bane, and they were forcibly taken away and dishonoured’ (See p. 9). And again he said:

"When Babur’s rule was proclaimed, no one could eat his food."
If a powerful person were to attack another powerful person, there shall be no anger in my mind.

But if a ferocious lion falls upon a herd of cattle, the master of the herd should show his manliness. (See p. 110).

Here ‘master of the herd’ signifies Lodhis, and the Guru condemned them in the most naked words when they failed in protecting the people against the invader.

It is clear thus, as the Mughals entered into this country to bring about destructions and religious persecutions, the Sikh Gurus came to resist them and preach the message of peace. The clash between the two was bound to come about.

Guru Angad (1538—1552)

After Guru Nanak, Guru Angad succeeded to the pontificate; and after Babur, Humayun came to power. It is said, after being defeated by Sher Shah Suri when Humayun was obliged to flee from Hindustan, he decided to see the wonder-working Guru on his way out. At the time of Humayun’s visit the Guru was in deep trance and Humayun was kept standing. This enraged him and he tried to draw out his sword to sever the Guru’s head. The sword, however, would not come out of the scabbard, which made the fugitive Emperor repentant of his haste. The Guru reproached him that the sword which should have been used against Sher Shah, Humayun tried to draw it on the priests of God; and despite his reverses the Emperor had not been able to win over his false pride. Dr. Banerjee considers the very fact of the Emperor’s this visit as very doubtful. But there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the story, though we may not give full credit to its details (See pp. 120—21 of this book). It is obvious that had the Guru not kept his patience, the first Sikh martyrdom should have occurred there and then.

Guru Amar Das (1552—1574)

About four years after Guru Amar Das succeeded to the pontificate, Akbar came to power as the Emperor of India. Akbar possessed the spirit of religious toleration, and so long as he ruled India, the relations between the Mughals and the Sikh Gurus remained very cordial and friendly, as we have already seen (pp. 135—137). Guru Amar Das had prayed for the success of Akbar in his expedition against Chittor, and Akbar was successful. During one of his periodical visits to Lahore
Akbar made a détour to Goindwal, and accompanied by a large escort paid a state visit to the Guru. He observed the rule, and before having an interview with the Guru he is said to have partaken of food from the langar. Being pleased with the refuge that the Guru's kitchen afforded to a large number of people, Akbar requested the Guru to ask for the grant of some land. The Guru, however, refused as repeatedly as he was asked for it. Akbar thereupon granted some villages to Bibi Bhani, the Guru's daughter, and subsequently Bhai Budha is said to have been appointed by the Guru to manage the property.

This time Akbar lay encamped along with his large escort at Lahore for a long time. As a result of this the prices in that city and in the adjoining areas arose and the peasants suffered. When the next harvest was ready Akbar prepared to march off, leaving behind a strong possibility of sudden fall in the prices to ruin the peasants. The Guru is said to have sent a request to Akbar who in response to it remitted the whole of the land-tax for the year.

In connection with the Guru's relations with Akbar several other stories are told by the Sikh chroniclers. It is said that at Goindwal the Guru did not have a very peaceful time. The city of Goindwal had been founded by a man named Gonda Marwaha who was a staunch follower of the Guru, and at whose invitation the Guru had settled down at that place. The activities of the Guru at Goindwal were not looked upon with any sympathy by some Khatri and Brahmins of the place who came together and after Gonda's death incited his son to make a petition to the Emperor against an alleged illegal occupation of some land by the Guru. The Emperor invited the Guru to explain his case personally and favour him with the sight of him. The Guru, however, excused himself on account of his old age and sent Jetha to deputise on his behalf. Jetha presented the case effectively and the petition of the opponents was rejected. After this the Emperor took Jetha aside and asked him to request the Guru to make a pilgrimage to the Ganges. He told him that the Guru's activities had administered a blow to the prestige of Brahmins, and some Hindus felt that he wanted to destroy their religion and age-old beliefs and practices. The pilgrimage would divert the wrath of the Hindus. The Emperor also promised to issue orders that no Pilgrim's tax should be levied on the Guru's party.
The most important authority for the above written account is Suraj Prakash which was written about three centuries after the Guru's death. Jetha who later on became Guru Ram Das, has left us a contemporary account that the Gonda's son, "The perverse man sent his servant to slander and backbite others, but the result was that the faces of both were blackened." But he nowhere mentions the authority to whom the petition was made, and the whole story of a petition to the Emperor may therefore be only a concoction on the known acquaintance between the Guru and the Emperor, although it is difficult to understand Dr. Banerjee's arguments against the opponents of the Guru coming together and making a common cause against him (See pp. 135-13; of this book).

After Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das became the new Guru. We have already seen above how Jetha, who later on became Guru Ram Das, visited the court of Akbar. The friendly relations between Akbar and Guru Ram Das continued.

**Guru Arjan (1581—1606)**

Akbar continued being the Emperor of India even when Guru Arjan came to the pontificate. And so long as he lived, his friendly relations with Guru Arjan continued. We have already seen how the enemies of the Guru tried to poison the ears of Akbar against him. Prithia incited both the Kazis and the Brahmans telling them that the Guru had blasphemed both the Muslims and the Hindus in his newly compiled Granth. They both laid a complaint against the Guru and their memorial was duly placed before the Emperor through the influence of Chandu. At the Emperor's order the Guru deputed Bhai Budha and Bhai Gurdas to take the Granth before him, and they were able to convince the Emperor that the complaint against the Guru was groundless; whereafter they were both dismissed by the Emperor with dresses of honour for their Guru and for themselves.

Dr. Banerjee has characterised the above story as doubtful of occurrence in the absence of independent testimony. But although there is no independent testimony in regard to this story which is based only on tradition, there is a similar story told at another place where a complaint was presented in the Emperor's court by Sulekha Khan and Prithia against the Guru, but which was rejected as the Emperor would not interfere in the affairs of the religious men. And regarding this
we have a strong testimony in the shape of the Guru's own words. He says:

"The blind fool told lies in the true court,
And smote his head with his hands.
They who commit sin contract disease.
God Himself sat as the judge.
Prithia is involved in the consequences of his own acts;
All his wealth shall pass away with his life."

This clearly proves that the incidents of the complaints going to the Emperor were by no means improbable, and in regard to the story referred to by Dr. Banerjee, if there is no independent testimony in its favour, there is no definite argument against it as well. A tradition cannot be rejected merely because it is a tradition, when there are no proofs to falsify it.

The tradition continues, the discomfiture of the conspirators became complete when the Emperor not only rejected the complaint, he rather also promised to go to visit the Guru when he was returning from Lahore whither he was then proceeding. And that the Emperor actually paid a visit to the Guru is corroborated by Badauni who according to Macauliffe "states that on another occasion, namely, the thirteenth of the month Azur (Jamadi-ul-sani), Akbar, with a gorgeous military retinue, crossed the Bias and went to Goindwal to visit Guru Arjan, whose teaching and character he appreciated." And the Khulasat-ul-Twarikh writes that a small portion of revenue was also remitted by Akbar at the request of the Guru, though the Sikh tradition says that revenue of the whole of the Punjab was remitted for the year due to the famine conditions that prevailed.

Akbar's visit to the Guru must be regarded as the high water mark of the Guru's career from the secular point of view. This gave him an added prestige and facilitated the further propagation of his faith.

Unfortunately, however, the tolerant Emperor Akbar died soon after this, and was succeeded by his fanatic son Jehangir under whom the conspirators against the Guru got a full chance for their activities which resulted into the Guru's execution. The causes, the facts and the results of the execution of Guru Arjan at the hands of Jehangir have

1. M. iii. p. 34.
already been discussed in detail, and for this the reader is referred to the Chapter X of this book.

The Rest of the Sikh Gurus

After Guru Arjan, Guru Hargobind succeeded to the pontificate. A detailed study of his relations with Jehangir and Shah Jehan has already been made in Chapter XII, and it has been discussed how the Guru assumed the role of a military leader, organised an army, was imprisoned, but later on fought battles with the Mughals in which he was almost always a success.

In the time of Guru Har Rai the friendly relations with Shah Jehan started once again, and it has been discussed (pp. 230—233) how the Emperor approached the Guru for a medicine, which being supplied the Emperor was pleased. Soon, however, the Guru was suspected of having helped Dara against Aurangzeb, and when the latter came to power, bitterness between the two started once again.

When Guru Har Krishan came to the pontificate he was called by Aurangzeb to Delhi. We have seen the circumstances under which the Guru went to Delhi and died during his visit to that place (See pp. 236—238). Teg Bahadur who became Guru after the death of Har Krishan, was also called by Aurangzeb to Delhi where he was ultimately executed (See pp. 239, 244—253). Here was one more turning point in the history of the Punjab which completely transformed the Sikhs from saints into saint-soldiers. Under Guru Gobind Singh the Khalsa faith was founded, and the clash between the Sikhs and the Mughals came into the open (See Chapters XVI, XVII and XVIII). This clash developed in the time of Banda Bahadur, Nawab Kapur Singh and Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, and the Mughal power was ultimately destroyed, and the Sikhs established themselves in the Punjab as a sovereign State.
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