PART II
MEDIEVAL INDIA

Book I

THE MUSLIM CONQUEST AND THE DELHI SULTANATE
CHAPTER I

THE ADVENT OF THE MUSLIMS

The Arabs in Sind

We have seen in a previous chapter how the Arabs, roused to energy and enthusiasm by a new creed, effected the conquest of Sind and carried on operations in some of the neighbouring provinces.

With the decline of the Caliphs or Khalifahs of Baghdād, supreme leaders and rulers of the greater part of the Islamic world, the Muslim governor of Sind became virtually independent. In A.D. 871 the Khalifah practically handed over the province to the famous Saffarid leader, Ya‘qūb-ibn-Lais. On the latter’s death, the Muslim territories in Sind were divided between two independent chiefs, those of Mansurah (near Bahmanābād) and Multān. Neither of these ever attained to great power, and both had to live in constant dread of their Indian neighbours, particularly the Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauj.

The Arab conquest of Sind did not immediately produce any far-reaching political effect, and it has been described by Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole as “an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results”. But it is significant from the cultural point of view. Besides helping the exchange of ideas, it facilitated the dissemination of the seeds of Indian culture in foreign lands. The Arabs acquired from the Hindus some new knowledge in Indian Religion, Philosophy, Medicine, Mathematics, Astronomy and Folklore, and carried it not only to their own land but also to Europe. We know definitely from Mas‘ūdī and Ibn Hauqal that Arab settlers lived side by side with their Hindu fellow-citizens for many years on terms of amity and peace, and Amīr Khurāv mentions that the Arab astronomer Abū Ma’shar came to Benares and studied astronomy there for ten years.

The Ghaznavids: Sultān Mahmūd

From the political point of view, the conquest of the Punjab by the Sultāns of Ghazni, to which reference has already been
made, was of far greater importance than the establishment of Arab principalities in the lower Indus valley.

Sultân Mahmûd, who carried to fruition the policy of his father, Sabuktîgin, was undoubtedly one of the greatest military leaders the world has ever seen. His cool courage, prudence, resourcefulness and other qualities make him one of the most interesting personalities in Asiatic history. In addition to his victorious expeditions in India he had to his credit two memorable campaigns against hostile Turks in the course of which he routed the hosts of Hâk Khân and the Seljuqs. Great as a warrior, the Sultân was no less eminent as a patron of arts and letters.

But in spite of all this, to the historian of India he appears mainly as an insatiable invader. He was neither a missionary for the propagation of religion in this country nor an architect of empire. The main object of his eastern expeditions seems to have been the acquisition of the "wealth of Ind" and the destruction of the morale of its custodians. The annexation of the Punjab was a measure of necessity rather than of choice. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that his invasions had no permanent political results in India. He drained the wealth of the country and despoiled it of its military resources to an appalling extent. The Ghaznavid occupation of the Punjab served as the key to unlock the gates of the Indian interior. Big cracks were made in the great fabric of Indian polity, and it was no longer a question of whether but when that age-old structure would fall. Neither the Arabs nor the Ghaznavid (Yamini) Turks succeeded in adding India to the growing empire of Islam, but they paved the way for that final struggle which overwhelmed the Gangetic kingdoms some two hundred years later.

Muhammad of Ghûr

The empire of Ghazni began to fall to pieces under the later successors of Sultân Mahmûd, who were too feeble to maintain their position at Ghazni and in North-West India in the face of the rising power of the princes of Ghûr, a small obscure principality in the mountainous region of Afghanistan to the south-east of Herat. The petty chiefs of Ghûr, of eastern Persian extraction, were originally feudatories of Ghazni, but, taking advantage of the weakness of their suzerains, they steadily rose to power and entered into a contest with them for supremacy. In the course of this contest, Qutb-ud-dîn Muhammad of Ghûr, and his brother Saîf-ud-dîn, were cruelly executed by Bahrâm Shâh of Ghazni.
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'Alā-ud-din Husain, a brother of the victims, took a terrible revenge on Ghazni by sacking the city and giving it to the flames for seven days and nights. This action earned for 'Alā-ud-din the title of Jahānsūz, "the world-burner". Bahrām's son and feeble successor, Khusraw Shāh, was driven from Ghazni by a horde of the Ghuzz tribe of Turkmāns and fled to the Punjab, then the sole remnant of the wide dominions of his ancestors. Ghazni remained in possession of the Ghuzz Turkmāns for about ten years, after which it was occupied by the princes of Ghūr. Saif-ud-din Muhammad, son and successor of the "world-burner", was killed in fighting against the Ghuzz Turkmāns; but his cousin and successor, Ghirajīs-ud-din Muhammad, drove the Ghuzz Turkmāns from Ghazni in 1173 and appointed his younger brother, Shihāb-ud-din, also known as Mu'izz-ud-din Muhammad bin Sām or popularly called Muhammad of Ghūr, governor of that province. Very cordial relations existed between the two brothers, and Muhammad of Ghūr began his Indian campaign while still a lieutenant of his brother.

The first Indian expedition of Muhammad of Ghūr (A.D. 1175), directed against his co-religionists, the Ismā'īlī heretics of Multān, was attended with success, and he soon captured the strong fortress of Uch by a stratagem. But his invasion of Gujarāṭ in A.D. 1178 proved a failure; the rājā of Gujarāṭ inflicted a terrible defeat on him. Nevertheless, he occupied Peshāwār in the following year and established a fortress at Sirāḵūt in A.D. 1181. By allying himself with Vijaya Dev, the rājā of Jammu, against Khusrav Malīk, son and successor of Khusraw Shāh and the last representative of the dynasty of Sabuktīgīn and Sultān Mahmūd, then in possession of Lahore only, he captured the Ghaznavīd ruler and took him prisoner to Ghazni. Thus disappeared the rule of the Ghaznavīds in the Punjab. Its occupation by Muhammad of Ghūr opened the way for his further conquest of India, which, however, made inevitable a conflict with the Rājputs, particularly with his neighbour, Prithvirāj, the powerful Chaúhān king of Ajmer and Delhi.

The political condition of Northern India had changed considerably since the days of Sultān Mahmūd. Though a part of Bihār was in the possession of the Buddhist Pālas, Bengal had passed under the control of the Hindu dynasty of the Senas. Bundelkhand remained under the rule of the Chandellas, but the Pratihāras in Kanauj were displaced by the Gāhādavālas. Delhi and Ajmer were under the Chaúhāns. Jaiśhānda or Jayaśchandra, the Gāhādavāla ruler of Kanauj, who lived mostly at Benares, was considered
by the Muslim writers to be the greatest king of India at the time; and, if Tod is to be believed, he was jealous of Prithviraj's proud position. His beautiful daughter is said to have been carried away by the Chauhan hero, and the story of this romance has formed the theme of many of the bardic songs of the time. This is said to have added to the bitterness of their relations so that Jaichand did not ally himself with Prithviraj when Muhammad of Ghur appeared on the scene. There is no reason, however, to believe that Jaichand invited Muhammad of Ghur to invade India. The invasion of this country was an almost inevitable corollary to Muhammad's complete victory over the Ghaznavids in the Punjab.

When, in the winter of 1190-1191, Muhammad of Ghur marched beyond the Punjab, Prithviraj, the bold and chivalrous hero of the Rajputs, who were in no way inferior in bravery and courage to the invaders, advanced to oppose him with a large army, including, according to Perishta, 200,000 horse and 3,000 elephants. Prithviraj had the support of many of his fellow Rajput princes, but Jaichand held aloof. The Ghur invaders stood in the middle of his army with two wings on two sides and met the Rajputs at Tarain near Thanesar in A.D. 1191. Fighting with their usual vigour, the Rajputs greatly harassed the Muslim troops, who were soon overpowered, and their leader, being severely wounded, retired to Ghazni. But Muhammad did not become disheartened at this initial failure. He soon raised a strong army with a view to avenging his defeat, and with adequate preparations, invaded India once again in 1192 and met his Rajput adversary on the same field. By superior tactics and generalship, the invading army inflicted a severe defeat on the Rajputs. Prithviraj was captured and put to death, and his brother was also slain. This victory of Muhammad was decisive. It laid the foundation of Muslim dominion in Northern India; and the subsequent attempts of the relatives of Prithviraj to recover their lost power proved to be of no avail.

Different parts of Northern India were conquered in the course of a few years by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the most faithful of Muhammad's Turkish officers, and Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad.

Qutb-ud-din Aibak was originally a slave of Turkestân. In his childhood he was brought by a merchant to Nishapur, where its Qazi, Fakhr-ud-din 'Abdul 'Aziz Kufi, purchased him and provided for his religious and military training along with his sons. After the Qazi's death, he was sold by the Qazi's sons to a merchant, who took him to Ghazni, where he was purchased by Muhammad of Ghur. Thus Qutb-ud-din began his career as a slave, and
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the dynasty founded by him in India is known as the "Slave dynasty."\(^1\)

Qutb-ud-din was "endowed with all laudable qualities and admirable impressions" though "he possessed no outward comeliness". His qualities gained for him the confidence of Muhammad of Ghūr, who soon raised him to the post of Amīr-i-Ākhar (Lord of the stables). He rendered valuable services to his master during his Indian expeditions, in recognition of which he was placed in charge of his Indian conquests after the second battle of Tarān in 1192. He was left "untrammeled not only in his administration of the new conquests, but also in his discretion to extend them."

To strengthen his own position, Qutb-ud-din contracted matrimonial alliances with the powerful rival chiefs; thus while he himself married Tāj-ud-din Yildiz’s daughter, his sister was married to Nāṣir-ud-din Qabācha and his daughter to Ilutmish. Qutb-ud-din justified the confidence which his master had reposed in him. In 1192 he captured Hānsi, Meerut, Delhi, Ranthambhor and Koil. In 1194 he helped his master in defeating and slaying Jaichand, rājā of Benares and Kanauj, at Chandwār on the Jumna in the Etawah district. In 1197 he chastised Bhumdev II of Gujarāt, for his having caused him some trouble, plundered his capital and returned to Delhi by way of Hānsi. In 1202 he besieged the fortress of Kālinjar in Bundelkhand, overpowered its defenders and captured vast booty from them. Fifty thousand people, male and female, were made prisoners. He next marched to the city of Mahoba, took possession of it and returned to Delhi by way of Bādāūn, one of the richest cities of Hindustān, which also was occupied. Meanwhile, Bihār and a part of Western Bengal had been added to the empire of Ghūr by Ikhtiyār-ud-din Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyār Khaljī, who had driven Lakshmana Sena from Nadiā possibly to Eastern Bengal,\(^2\) to a place near Dacca, where the Sena

\(^1\) This description of Qutb-ud-din’s dynasty is inaccurate. None but three kings (Qutb-ud-din, Ilutmish and Bakhan) of this dynasty were slaves, and even those three were manumitted by their masters. Qutb-ud-din received a letter of manumission and a canopy of state from Sultan Ghayāt-ud-din Mahmūd, the nephew and successor of his master, Muhammad of Ghūr, before his elevation to the throne of Delhi (Bavery, Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī, pp. 624–5); and Ilutmish was freed before his master (ibid., pp. 605–6). Bakhan, who belonged to the “forty Turkish slaves of Ilutmish”, got his freedom along with them (Zia Berdi, Ta’rīkh-i-Furūs Shihāb). It is also incorrect to describe the dynasty as the “Pathān” or “Afghan” dynasty, because all these rulers were neither “Pathān” nor “Afghan” but Turks.

\(^2\) Authorities differ in their opinions regarding the date of the capture of Nadiā by the Muslims. According to Bavery, it was effected in A.H. 600 = A.D. 1193 (op. cit., Vol. I, p. 588 f.n.) but this date was rejected
power survived for more than half a century, and had made Gaur or Lakhnauti, in the modern Maldah district, the seat of his government. Thus by the beginning of the thirteenth century, a considerable part of Hindustān, extending from the Indus in the west to the Ganges in the east, had been conquered by Muslim arms. But the consolidation of Muslim rule required a few years more.

On the death of his elder brother Ghīyās-ud-dīn Muhammad in February, 1203, Muʿīz-ud-dīn Muhammad became the ruler of Ghazni, Ghūr and Delhi in name, which he had been so long in reality. But soon his position was endangered by some disasters. In 1205 he sustained a defeat near Andkhūi in Central Asia at the hands of 'Alā-ud-dīn Muhammad, the Shāh of Khwārazm, which dealt a severe blow at his military prestige in India and stirred up revolts and conspiracies in different parts of his kingdom. He was refused admittance to Ghazni; Multān was seized by a Ghāzni officer, and his old enemies, the Khokars, created troubles in the Punjab. But with great zeal and promptitude, Muʿīz-ud-dīn Muhammad marched to India, suppressed the rebellions everywhere, and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khokars in November, 1205. His days, however, were numbered. On his way from Lahore to Ghazni, he was stabbed to death at Damyak on the 15th March, 1206, by a band of assassins whose identity has not been precisely determined. Some writers attribute the deed to the Khokars, who had been so recently deprived of their homes, while, according to others, he was killed by some Muslim enthusiasts of the Ismāʿīlī sect. A legend of the Rajputs, mentioned also by a Muslim historian, attributes his death to their hero, Prithvirāj, who, according to it, had not been slain at the second battle of Tarāin but was blinded and remained a captive. The body of the murdered Sultān was taken to Ghazni and buried there.

by Blochmann with cogent arguments (J. A. S. B., Pt. I, pp. 275-7). The views of Edward Thomas that Nadiā fell in A.H. 699 = A.D. 1202-1203 (Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, p. 110) and of Charles Stewart (History of Bengal, p. 47) that it was captured in A.H. 600 = A.D. 1203-1204 are in conflict with the facts of contemporary history. A recent writer considers the theory of Blochmann that Nadiā was captured in A.H. 694-695 = A.D. 1197-1198, to be “the most plausible one” (Indian Historical Quarterly, March 1936, pp. 148-51).
CHAPTER II

THE SO-CALLED SLAVE DYNASTY AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF MUSLIM POWER IN NORTHERN INDIA

1. Qutb-ud-din Aibak and Aram Shah

Muhammad of Ghur left no male heirs to succeed him, and his provincial viceroyds soon established their own authority in their respective jurisdictions. Tāj-ud-din Yildiz, Governor of Kirmān, ascended the throne of Ghaznī, while Qutb-ud-din Aibak assumed the title of Sultān and was acknowledged as the ruler of the Indian territories by the Muslim officers in India like Ikhtiyār-ud-din of Bengal and Nāsir-ud-din Qabācha, Governor of Multān and Uch. Qutb-ud-din Aibak's rise excited the jealousy of Tāj-ud-din Yildiz, who entered into a contest with him for the mastery over the Punjab. Qutb-ud-din defeated Yildiz, drove him out of Ghaznī and occupied it for forty days. But the people of Ghaznī, disgusted with his excesses, secretly invited Yildiz to come to their rescue. Yildiz did not fail to avail himself of this opportunity, and on his sudden and unexpected return to Ghaznī, Qutb-ud-din fled away precipitately. This destroyed the chance of a political union between Afghanistan and India, which was not achieved till Bābur's occupation of Delhi, and Qutb-ud-din became a purely Indian Sultān. He died at Lahore, early in November, A.D. 1210, in consequence of a fall from his horse while playing Chaugān or polo, after a short reign of a little more than four years.

Qutb-ud-din was, remarks Minhāj-ud-Sirāj, a "high-spirited and open-hearted monarch". Endowed with intrepidity and martial prowess, he rarely lost a battle, and, by his extensive conquests, brought a large part of Hindustān under the banner of Islam. His "gifts were bestowed by hundreds of thousands"¹, and, for his unbounded generosity, he has been styled by all writers as Lakh bakhsh, or giver of lacs. Hasan-un-Nizāmī, the author of Tāj-ul-Ma'āsir, who is full of praise for Qutb-ud-din, writes that he "dispensed even-handed justice to the people, and exerted himself to promote the peace and prosperity of the realm". But the

¹ His contemporary, Lakshmāna Sena of Bengal, was also known for his lavish generosity.
Sultān felt no hesitation in having recourse to stern measures in his conquests and administration when necessary. His devotion to Islam was remarkable. Thus Hasan-i-n-Nizāmī remarks: "By his orders the precepts of Islam received great promulgation, and the sun of righteousness cast its shadow on the countries of Hind from the heaven of God's assistance." He gave proof of his zeal by building one mosque at Delhi and another at Ajmer.

On the sudden death of Qutb-ud-din at Lahore, the Amirs and Malikā of Lahore set up Arām Bakhsh as his successor with the title of Sultān Arām Shāh, "for the sake of restraining tumult, for the tranquillity of the commonalty, and the content of the hearts of the soldiery". The relationship of Arām with Qutb-ud-din is a subject of controversy. According to some, he was Qutb-ud-din's son, but Minhāj-us-Sirāj distinctly writes that Qutb-ud-din only had three daughters. Abul Fazl has made the "astonishing statement" that he was the Sultān's brother. A modern writer has hazarded the opinion that "he was no relation of Qutb-ud-din" but was selected as his successor as he was available on the spot. ¹ In fact, there were no fixed rules governing the succession to the Crown in the Turkish State. It was determined largely by the exigencies of the moment and the influence of the chiefs and the nobles. Arām was ill-qualified to govern a kingdom. The nobles of Delhi soon conspired against him and invited Malik Shams-ud-din Ilutmish, then Governor of Badāūn, to replace Arām. Ilutmish responded to their call, and, advancing with all his army, defeated Arām in the plain of Jūd near Delhi. What became of Arām is not quite certain.

2. Ilutmish

Ilutmish belonged to the tribe of Ilbāri in Turkestan. He was remarkably handsome in appearance, and showed signs of intelligence and sagacity from his early days, which excited the jealousy of his brothers, who managed to deprive him of his paternal home and care. But adversity did not mar his qualities, which soon opened a career for him. His accomplishments attracted the notice of Qutb-ud-din, then Viceroy of Delhi, who purchased him at a high price. By dint of his merits, Ilutmish raised his status step by step till he was made the Governor of Badāūn and was married to a daughter of Qutb-ud-din. In recognition of his services during the campaign of Muhammad of Ghūr against the Khokars, he was, by the Sultān's orders, manumitted and elevated as Amir-ul-Umarā.

¹ Indian Historical Quarterly, March, 1937, p. 120.
Thus the choice of the Delhi nobles fell on a worthy man. But on his accession in the year A.D. 1210 or 1211, Iltutmish found himself confronted with an embarrassing situation. Nāṣir-ud-dīn Qābācha had asserted his independence in Sind and seemed desirous of extending his authority over the Punjab; and Tāj-ud-dīn Yıldız, who held Ghaznī, still entertained his old pretensions to sovereignty over the Indian conquests of Muhammad. ‘Ali Mardān, a Khalji noble, who had been appointed Governor of Bengal by Qutb-ud-dīn after the death of Ikhṭiyār-ud-dīn in A.D. 1206, had thrown off his allegiance to Delhi after Qutb-ud-dīn’s death and had styled himself Sultān ‘Alī-ud-dīn. Further, the Hindu princes and chiefs were seething with discontent at their loss of independence; Gvāhir and Ranthambhār had been recovered by their rulers during the weak rule of Arām Shāh. To add to Iltutmish’s troubles, some of the Amirīs of Delhi expressed resentment against his rule.

The new Sultān, however, faced the situation boldly. He first effectively suppressed a rebellion of the Amirīs in the plain of Jūd near Delhi, and then brought under his control the different parts of the kingdom of Delhi with its dependencies like Badāin, Oudh, Benarēs and Siwālik. The ambitious designs of his rivals were also frustrated. In A.D. 1214 Tāj-ud-dīn Yıldız, being driven from Ghaznī by Sultān Muhammad, the Shāh of Khwārazm, fled to Lahore, conquered the Punjab up to Thānesar and tried to establish his independent power and even to assert his authority over Iltutmish. This was what Iltutmish could hardly tolerate. He promptly marched against his rival, and defeated him in a battle fought near Tarāin in January, A.D. 1216. Yıldız was taken prisoner and sent to Badāin. Nāṣir-ud-dīn Qābācha, who had in the meanwhile advanced to Lahore, was expelled from that city by Iltutmish in A.D. 1217. He was completely subdued in February, A.D. 1228, and was accidentally drowned in the Indus, Sind being annexed to the Delhi Sultānate. About a year later, Iltutmish received a robe of honour and a patent of investiture from Al Mustansir Billaḥ, the reigning Caliph or Khalīfah of Baghdād, confirming him in the possession “of all the land and sea which he had conquered” as Sultan-i-Āzam (Great Sultān). This added a new element of strength to Iltutmish’s authority and gave him a status in the Muslim world. Further, “it fastened the fiction of Khalīfah on the Sultānate of Delhi, and involved legally the recognition of the final sovereignty of the Khalifah, an authority outside the geographical limits of India, but inside that vague yet none the less real brotherhood of Islam”. On his coins Iltutmish
described himself as the lieutenant of the Caliph. His coins, remarks Thomas, "constituted the veritable commencement of the silver coinage of the Delhi Pathâns".

Meanwhile, Ranthambhor had been recovered by Itutmish in A.D. 1226 and a year later Mandâwar in the Siwâlik hills was captured by him. The Khalji Maliks of Bengal were reduced to complete submission in the winter of A.D. 1230–1231, and 'Alâ-ud-din Jâni was appointed Governor of Lakhnauti. Gwâlior, which had regained its independence since the death of Qutb-ud-din, was recaptured by the Sultân towards the end of A.D. 1232 from its Hindu Râjâ, Mangal Deva. The Sultân invaded the kingdom of Mâlwa in 1234, and captured the fort of Bhilsa. He next marched to the famous city of Ujjain, which was also captured and sacked. An image of the famous Vikramâditya was carried off to Delhi. The last expedition of Itutmish was directed against Bânian1, but on his way he was attacked with such a severe illness that he had to be carried back to Delhi in a litter. This disease proved fatal and he expired on the 29th April, 1236, after a reign of twenty-six years.

It was during the reign of Itutmish, in the year A.D. 1221, that the Mongols appeared for the first time on the banks of the Indus, under their celebrated leader Chingiz Khân. Chingiz was born in A.D. 1153 and his original name was Temuchin. He was not merely a conqueror. Being trained in the school of adversity during his early days, he developed in himself the virtues of patience, courage and self-reliance, which enabled him to organise in an empire "the barbarous tribal communities of Central Asia and to found laws and institutions which lasted for generations after his death". He overran the countries of Central and Western Asia with lightning rapidity, and when he attacked Jalâl-ud-din Mangâbarâm, the last Shâh of Khwârezm or Khiva, the latter fled to the Punjab and sought asylum in the dominions of Itutmish. The Sultân of Delhi refused to comply with the request of his unwelcome guest. Mangâbarâm entered into an alliance with the Khokars, and after defeating Nâsir-ud-din Qâbûchâ of Multân, plundered Sind and northern Gujarât and went away to Persia. The Mongols also retired. India was thus saved from a terrible calamity, but the menace of Mongol raids disturbed the Sultân of Delhi in subsequent times.

1 Situated, according to Raverty (p. 623, f.n. 8), in the hill tracts of the Sind-Sâgar Doâb, or in the country immediately west of the Salt Ranges, Badûnî (Ranking, Vol. I, p. 95), and Ferihta (Briggs, Vol. I, p. 211), borrowing from Nizâm-ud-din, write Multân, but they are wrong.
Ilutmish may justly be regarded as the greatest ruler of the Early Turkish Sultanate of Delhi, which lasted till A.D. 1290. To him belongs the credit of having saved the infant Muslim dominion in India from disruption and of having consolidated the conquests of Qutb-ud-din into a strong and compact monarchy extending at his death over the whole of Hindustān, with the exception of a few outlying provinces. An intrepid warrior and a stern chastiser of foes, he was busy till the last year of his life in military conquests. He was at the same time gifted with brilliant qualities as a man and extended his patronage to arts and letters. The completion of the structure of the famous Qutb Minār at Delhi by the Sultan in A.D. 1231-1232 stands as an imperishable testimony to his greatness. The column was named not after the first Turkish Sultan of Delhi, as some writers wrongly hold, but after Khwāja Qutb-ud-din, a native of Ush near Baghdadhād, who had come to live in Hindustān and was held in much esteem and veneration by Ilutmish and others. It was out of gratitude that Ilutmish caused the names of his patrons, Sultan Qutb-ud-din and Sultan Mu'izz-ud-din, to be inscribed on it. A magnificent mosque was also built by the Sultan's orders. He was intensely religious and very particular about saying his prayers. "Never has a sovereign," writes Minhāj-us-Sirāj, "so virtuous, kind-hearted and reverent towards the learned and the divines, sat upon the throne." He is described in some contemporary inscriptions as "the protector of the lands of God", "the helper of the servants of God", etc.

3. Raziyya

Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd, the eldest son of Ilutmish, died in April, A.D. 1229, while governing Bengal as his father’s deputy. The surviving sons of the Sultan were incapable of the task of administration. Ilutmish, therefore, nominated on his death-bed his daughter Raziyya as his heiress. But the nobles of his court were too proud to bow their heads before a woman, and disregarding the deceased Sultan’s wishes, raised to the throne his eldest surviving son, Rukn-ud-din Fīrūz, who had been in charge of the government of Badāūn and, after a few years, of Lahore, during his father’s lifetime. This was an unfortunate choice. Rukn-ud-din was unfit to rule. He indulged in low tastes, neglected the affairs of state, and squandered away its wealth. Matters were made worse by the activities of his mother, Shāh Turkhān, an ambitious woman of humble origin, who seized all power while her son remained

1 She was originally a Turkish handmaid.
immersed in enjoyment. The whole kingdom was plunged into disorder, and the authority of the central government was set at naught in Badāūn, Multān, Hānsī, Lahore, Oudh and Bengal. The nobles of Delhi, who had been seething with discontent about the undue influence of the queen-mother, made her a prisoner and placed Razīyya on the throne of Delhi. Ru'kūn-ud-dīn Fīrūz, who had taken refuge at Kilokhri, was also put in prison, where he met his doom on the 9th November, A.D. 1236.

The task before the young queen was not an easy one. Muhammad Junāidī, the wazīr of the kingdom, and some other nobles, could not reconcile themselves to the rule of a woman and organised an opposition against her. But Razīyya was not devoid of the virtues necessary in a ruler, and by astuteness and superior diplomacy she soon overpowered her enemies. Her authority was established over Hindustān and the Punjab, and the governors of the distant provinces of Bengal and Sind also acknowledged her sway. Thus, as Minḥāj-ṣaḥīḥ has stated, "From Lakhnauti to Debal and Dāmrūlah all the Malik and Amiris manifested their obedience and submission". During the early part of Razīyya's reign, an organised attempt to create trouble was made by some heretics of the Qirā-nītah and Mūshshadah sects, under the leadership of a Turk named Nūr-ud-dīn. One thousand of them arrived with swords and shields, and entered the Great Mosque on a fixed day, but they were dispersed by the royal troops and the outbreak ended in a ludicrous fiasco.

The queen was not, however, destined to enjoy a peaceful reign. The undue favour shown by her to the Abyssinian slave Jālāl-ud-dīn Yāqūt, who was elevated to the post of master of the stables, offended the Turkish nobles,1 who were organised in a close corporation. The first to revolt openly was Ikhṭiyār-ud-dīn Altūnīya, the governor of Sarhind, who was secretly instigated by some nobles.

1 Ibn Batūṭah wrongly states that her "fondness" for the Abyssinian was "criminal". No such allegation is made by the contemporary Muslim chronicler, Minḥāj; he simply writes that the Abyssinian "acquired favour in attendance upon the Sultan" (Raverty, Vol. I, p. 642). Farishta's only allegation against her is that "a very great degree of familiarity was observed to exist between the Abyssinian and the Queen, so much so, that when she rode he always lifted her on horse by raising her up under the arms" (Briggs, Vol. I, p. 229). As Major Raverty has pointed out, Thomas has assailed the character of this princess without just cause in the following terms: "It was not that a virgin Queen was forbidden to love—she might have indulged in a submissive Prince Consort, or revelled almost unchecked in the dark recesses of the Palace Harem, but wayward fancy pointed in a wrong direction, and led her to prefer a person employed about her Court, an Abyssinian: moreover, the favours extended to whom the Turk nobles resented with one accord" (Chronicles of the Pathan Kings, p. 108).
of the court. The queen marched with a large army to suppress the revolt, but in the conflict that ensued the rebel nobles slew Yaqūt, and imprisoned her. She was placed in charge of Altūniya, and her brother Mu'iz-ud-din Bahrām was proclaimed Sultān of Delhi. Raziyya tried to extricate herself from the critical situation by marrying Altūniya, but to no effect. She marched with her husband towards Delhi, but on arriving near Kaithal she was deserted by the followers of Altūniya and defeated on the 13th October, 1240, by Mu'iz-ud-din Bahrām. She was put to death with her husband the next day. Thus the life of the queen Raziyya ended miserably after a reign of three years, and a few royal months.

Raziyya was possessed of remarkable talents. Ferashta writes that "she read the Koran with correct pronunciation, and in her father's lifetime employed herself in the affairs of the Government". As a queen, she tried to display her virtues more prominently. According to the contemporary Muslim chronicler, Minhāj- us-Sirāj, she "was a great sovereign, sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects, and of warlike talent, and was endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for Kings". She marched in person against her enemies, set aside female garments, discarded the veil, "donned the tunic and assumed the head-dress of a man" and conducted the affairs of her Government with considerable ability in open darbār. Thus she endeavoured to "play the king" in all possible ways. But the proud Turkish nobles could not reconcile themselves to the rule of a woman and brought about her downfall in an ignominious manner. The tragic end of Raziyya clearly shows that it is not always very easy to overcome popular prejudice.

The removal of Raziyya was followed by a period of disorder and confusion. Her successors on the throne of Delhi, Mu'iz-ud-din Bahrām and 'Alā-ud-din Ma'sūd, were worthless and incompetent, and during the six years of their rule the country knew no peace and tranquillity. Foreign invasions added to the woes of Hindustān. In A.D. 1241 the Mongols entered into the heart of the Punjab, and the fair city of Lahore "fell into their merciless grip". In 1245 they advanced up to Uch but were repulsed with great loss. During the closing years of the reign of Ma'sūd Shāh discontent grew in volume and intensity. The Amirs and Malikṣ raised to the throne Nasir-ud-din Mahmūd, a younger son of Firuzshah, on 10th June, 1246.
4. Nāṣir-ud-dīn Ṣahāb

Nāṣir-ud-dīn was a man of amiable and pious disposition. He was an expert calligraphist and spent his leisure moments in copying the Quran. He was also a patron of the learned. Minhāj-us-Sirāj, who held a high post under the Sultān and received various costly presents from him, dedicated his Tabaqāt-i-Nāṣirī to his royal patron.

As a ruler, Nāṣir-ud-dīn’s abilities fell far short of what the prevailing complicated situation demanded. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban, his minister, and later on his deputy, was the real power behind the throne. Balban proved himself worthy of the confidence thus reposed in him. He did his best to save the State from the perils of internal rebellions and external invasions. The attacks of the Mongols were repelled, and several expeditions were led into the Doab and other parts of the kingdom to chastise the rebellious Rājās and Zamindārs. A party of nobles, opposed to Balban, induced the Sultān to exile him in 1253. But his enemies mismanaged the affairs of the State, and he was recalled and restored to supreme authority in A.D. 1255. Nāṣir-ud-dīn Mahmūd died on the 18th February, 1266, leaving no male heir behind him. Thus was extinguished the line of Iltutmish. Balban, a man of proved ability, whom the deceased Sultān is said to have designated as his successor, then ascended the throne with the acquiescence of the nobles and the officials.

5. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban

Like his predecessors on the throne of Delhi, Balban was descended from the famous Ilberi tribe of Turkestān. In his early youth, he was taken as a captive to Baghdād by the Mongols, from whom he was purchased by Khwāja Jamāl-ud-dīn of Bussorah, a man of piety and learning. Khwāja Jamāl-ud-dīn brought him to Delhi in A.D. 1232 along with his other slaves, all of whom were purchased by Sultan Iltutmish. Thus Balban belonged to the famous band of Turkish slaves of Iltutmish, known as “The Forty” (Chāhelgān). He was originally appointed a Khuṇḏār (King’s personal attendant) by Iltutmish. But by dint of merit and ability, he rose by degrees to higher positions and ranks, till he became the deputy of Nāṣir-ud-dīn Mahmūd and his daughter was married to the Sultān in A.D. 1249.

Balban was confronted with a formidable and difficult task on his accession. During the thirty years following the death of
Ilutmish, the affairs of the State had fallen into confusion through the incompetence of his successors. The treasury of the Delhi Sultânate had become almost empty, and its prestige had sunk low, while the ambition and arrogance of the Turkish nobles had increased. In short, as Barni writes, "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory and splendour of all States, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition".

To add to the evil of internal bankruptcy, the Delhi Sultânate was exposed to the menace of recurring Mongol raids. Thus, a strong dictator was the need of the hour.

An experienced administrator, Balban eagerly applied himself to the task of eradicating the evils from which the State had been suffering for a long time. He justly realised that a strong and efficient army was an essential requisite for the stability of his government. He therefore set himself to the task of reorganising the armed forces. "The cavalry and the infantry, both old and new, were placed under the command" of experienced and faithful officers (maliks). He next turned his attention towards restoring order in the Doáb and the neighbourhood of Delhi, which had been exposed, for the last thirty years of weak rule, to the predatory raids of the Râjputs of Mewât (the district round Âîwar) and different robber bands. Life, property and commerce had become unsafe. The Sultân drove away the Mewâtîs from the jungles in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and put many of them to the sword. He also took precautionary steps against any future disturbances by building a fort at Gopâlgir and by establishing several posts near the city of Delhi in charge of Afgân officers. In the next year (1267), Balban suppressed the brigands in the Doáb. He personally rode to their strongholds at Kamalâ, Patialâ and Bhojpur. He built strong forts in those places and also repaired the fort of Jalâli. Thus order and security were restored, and sixty years later Barni remarked that "the roads have ever since been free from robbers". In the same year he punished the rebels in Kotehr (now in Rohilkhand). After a few days he marched into the mountains of Jûd and suppressed the hill tribes there.

In pursuance of his policy of curbing the power of the nobles, Balban tried to regulate the tenure of lands in the Doáb enjoyed by 2,000 Shamâr horsemen since the time of Ilutmish on condition of military service. We know from Barni that most of the original grantees had died or grown infirm by this time, and their descendants had "taken possession of the grants as an inheritance from their fathers, and had caused their names to be recorded in records of
the *Ariz* (Muster-master)

...
rich province of Bengal, the distance of which often tempted its governors to defy the authority of Delhi, especially when it grew weak. This was the rebellion of Tughril Khân, the Sultân’s deputy in Bengal. Tughril was an active, courageous and generous Turk and his administration in Bengal was marked with success. But ambition soon gained possession of his mind. The old age of the Delhi Sultân, and the recrudescence of Mongol raids on the north-west frontier, encouraged him to raise the standard of revolt at the instigation of some counsellors.

The rebellion of Tughril Khân greatly perturbed Balban, who at once sent a large army to Bengal under the command of Alpširin Mu-i-daráz (long-haired), entitled Amir Khân. But Amir Khân was defeated by the rebel governor and many of his troops were won over by the latter by lavish gifts. The Sultân became so much enraged at the defeat of Amir Khân that he ordered him to be hanged over the gate of Delhi. Next year (1280) another army was sent to Bengal under Malik Targhi, but this expedition, too, was repulsed by Tughril. Highly exasperated at this turn of affairs, Balban “now devoted all his attention and energy to effect the defeat of Tughril”. He decided to march in person to Lakhnauti, the capital of Western Bengal, with a powerful army, accompanied by his son, Bughrâ Khân. In the meanwhile, Tughril, on learning of the approach of the infuriated Sultân, had left Lakhnauti and fled into the jungles of Jâjuagar. The Sultân advanced into Eastern Bengal in pursuit of the runaway rebel and his comrades, who were accidentally discovered by a follower of Balban named Sher Andâz. Another of his followers, named Malik Muqaddir, soon brought Tughril down with an arrow-shot; his head was cut off and his body was flung into the river. His relatives and most of his troops were captured. On returning to Lakhnauti the Sultân inflicted exemplary punishments on the relatives and adherents of Tughril. Before leaving Bengal he appointed his second son, Bughrâ Khân, governor of the province, and instructed him not to indulge in pleasure but to be careful in the work of administration.

Soon a great calamity befell the Sultân. The Mongols invaded the Punjab in A.D. 1285 under their leader Tamar, and the Sultân’s eldest son, Prince Muhammad, who had been placed in charge of Multân, proceeded towards Lahore and Dipâlpur. He was killed in an ambush, while fighting with the Mongols, on the 9th March, A.D. 1285. This sacrifice of life earned for him the posthumous title of Shahîd, “the Martyr”. The death of this excellent prince gave a terrible shock to the old Sultân, then eighty years of age.
It cast him into a state of deep depression and hastened his death. The Sultān first intended to nominate Bughrā Khān as his successor, but the latter’s unwillingness to accept the responsibilities of kingship made him nominate Kai Khusraw, his grandson. Balban breathed his last towards the close of the year A.D. 1287 after a reign of about twenty-two years.

As has already been noted, the Delhi Sultānate was beset with danger and difficulties at the time of Balban’s accession, which could not be removed, to borrow Carlyle’s phrase, ”by mere rose-water surgery”. The Sultān, therefore, adopted a policy of sternness and severity to those whom he considered to be the enemies of the State. It must be admitted to his credit that, by his firmness towards ambitious nobles, rebel subjects and unruly tribes, and by his constant vigilance against the Mongols, he saved the Sultānate from impending disintegration and gave it strength and efficiency. But in two cases, that is in doing away with Sher Khān and Amir Khān, suspicion and anger triumphed over prudence and foresight. Referring to the death of Amir Khān, Barni observes that his “condign punishment excited a strong feeling of opposition among the wise men of the day, who looked upon it as a token that the reign of Balban was drawing to an end”.

Balban did his best to raise the prestige and majesty of the Delhi Sultānate. After his accession to the throne, he adopted a dignified mode of living. He remodelled his court after the manner of the old Persian kings and introduced Persian etiquette and ceremonial. Under him the Delhi court acquired celebrity for its great magnificence, and it gave shelter to many (not less than fifteen) exiled princes from Central Asia. The famous poet Amir Khusrau, surnamed the “Parrot of India”, was a contemporary of Balban. The Sultān had a lofty sense of kingly dignity. He always appeared in full dress even before his private attendants. He excluded men of humble origin from important posts.

Balban considered the sovereign to be the representative of God upon earth, but he believed that it behoved him to maintain the dignity of his position by performing certain duties faithfully. These were, according to him, to protect religion and fulfil the provisions of the Shariat, to check immoral and sinful actions, to appoint pious men to offices and to dispense justice with equality. “All that I can do,” he once remarked, “is to crush the cruelties of the cruel and to see that all persons are equal before the law. The glory of the State rests upon a rule which makes its subjects happy and prosperous.” He had a strong sense of justice, which he administered without any partiality. To keep himself well
informed about the affairs of the State he appointed spies in the fiefs of the Sultānate.

Balban's career as a Sultān was one of struggle against internal troubles and external danger. He had, therefore, no opportunity to launch aggressive conquests with a view to expanding the limits of his dominions. Though his courtiers urged him to these, he remained content with measures of pacification, consolidation and protection. He did not embark upon any administrative reorganisation embracing the different spheres of life. In fact, he established a dictatorship whose stability depended upon the personal strength of the ruler.

6. End of the so-called Slave Dynasty: Kaiqubād

The truth of the observation was illustrated by the reign of his weak successor, Mu'iz-ud-din Kaiqubād, son of Bughrā Khān. This young man of seventeen or eighteen years was placed on the throne by the chief officers of the State in disregard of the deceased Sultān's nomination. During his early days Kaiqubād was brought up under stern discipline by his grandfather. His tutors "watched him so carefully that he never cast his eyes on any fair damsel, and never tasted a cup of wine". But his wisdom and restraint disappeared when he found himself suddenly elevated to the throne. He "plunged himself at once into a whirlpool of pleasure and paid no thought to the duties of his station". The ambitious Nizām-ud-din, son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din, the old Kotwāl of Delhi, gathered all power into his hands. Under his influence the old officers of the State were disgraced. Disorder and confusion prevailed through the whole kingdom, and confusion was made worse confounded by the contests of the nobles, representing the Turkish party and the Khaljī party, for supremacy in the State. The Khaljīs, under the leadership of Malik Jalāl-ud-din Fīrūz, gained the upper hand and killed Aitamar Kachhan and Aitamar Surkha, the leaders of the Turkish party. Kaiqubād, now a helpless physical wreck, was done to death in his palace of mirrors at Kilokhri by a Khaljī noble whose father had been executed by his orders. Kaiqubād's body was thrown into the Jumā. Fīrūz ascended the throne in the palace of Kilokhri, on the 13th June, 1290, under the title of Jalāl-ud-din Fīrūz Shāh, after doing away with Kayūmars, an infant son of the murdered Sultān. Thus the work of Balban was undone and his dynasty came to an end in an ignominious manner.
MUSLIM POWER IN NORTHERN INDIA

7. Nature of the Rule of the Ilbari Turks

The Ilbari Turks ruled in India for about eight decades (1206–1290), but under them the kingdom of Delhi "was not a homogeneous political entity". The authority of the Sultāns was normally recognised in the territory corresponding to the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Bihār, Gwālior, Sind and certain parts of Central India and Rājputanā. The Bengal Governors were mostly inclined to remain independent of their control, and the imperial hold over the Punjab was occasionally threatened by the Mongols. The fiefs on all sides of Delhi were indeed nuclei of Muslim influence, but there were many independent local chieftains and disaffected inhabitants always inclined to defy the authority of the central government. The Sultāns of the line, whose deeds are recorded above, certainly did not refrain from acts of severity in their attempt to establish strong government in the newly conquered territory. But the estimate of their character by historians like Smith lacks justification. Several kings including Balban were men noted for their strength of character. Though they were bent upon suppressing the defiant chieftains, many of the original inhabitants who submitted to them were employed in military as well as civil offices. "On the whole it may be assumed," remarks Sir Wolseley Haig, "that the rule of the Slave Kings . . . was as just and humane as that of the Norman Kings in England and far more tolerant than that of Philip II in Spain and the Netherlands."

1 Cambridge Hist., Vol. III, p. 87.
CHAPTER III

THE KHALJIS AND THE EXPANSION OF THE SULTANATE TO THE SOUTH

1. Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz

The people of Delhi did not at first welcome the new Khalji ruler, Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, as they considered him to be of Afgān stock. But the late Major Raverly sought to prove that the Khaljīs could not be classed as Afgāns or Pathāns, and he assigns to them a Turkish origin. The contemporary historian Zīā-ud-dīn Barnī, however, states that Jalāl-ud-dīn "came of a race different from the Turks" and that by the death of Kaiqubād "the Turks lost the Empire". Some modern writers suggest that the Khaljīs were originally of Turkish origin but had acquired Afgān character during their long residence in Afgānistān, and "between them and the Turks there was no love lost". Be that as it may, they took advantage of the political disorders of the time to establish their power.

Jalāl-ud-dīn was at first not much liked by the nobles and the populace of Delhi, and had to make Kilokhī the seat of his government. However, as Barnī writes, the "excellence of his character, his justice, generosity and devotion, gradually removed the aversion of the people, and hopes of grants of land assisted in conciliating, though grudgingly and unwillingly, the affections of his nobles".

The new Sultān was an old man of seventy when he was elected to the throne. "Preoccupied with preparations for the next world," he proved to be too mild and tender to hold his power in those troublous times. Disposed to rule without bloodshed or oppression, he showed "the most impolitic tenderness towards rebels and other criminals". When, in the second year of his reign, Malik Chhajjū, a nephew of Balban, who held the sīf of Kara, rebelled against him with the help of several nobles, he, out of imprudent generosity, pardoned the rebels.

As a natural result of the Sultān's peaceful disposition and leniency, there was a recrudescence of baronial intrigues and the

authority of the Delhi throne ceased to be respected. This made him unpopular even with the Khalji nobles, who aspired after power and privileges during the rule of one of their leaders. One of them, Malik Ahmad Chap, who held the post of Master of Ceremonies, told him plainly “that a King should reign and observe the rules of government, or else be content to relinquish the throne”. There was only one unfortunate departure from this generous policy, when, by the Sultān’s order, Shāhī Maulā, a darēsh, was executed on mere suspicion of treason.

Such a ruler could not pursue a vigorous policy of conquest. Thus his expedition against Ranthambhor was a failure. The Sultān turned away from capturing the fort there with the conviction that it could not be accomplished “without sacrificing the lives of many Mussalmāns”. But he was more successful against a horde of Mongols, numbering about 150,000 strong, who in A.D. 1292 invaded India under a grandson of Hulākū (Hulāgū). Severely defeated by the Sultān’s troops the invaders made peace. Their army was permitted to return from India, but Ulghū, a descendant of Chingiz, and many of the rank and file embraced Islam, settled near Delhi and came to be known as “New Mussalmāns”. This was an ill-advised concession, which produced trouble in the future. The “New Mussalmāns” proved to be turbulent neighbours of the Delhi Government and caused it much anxiety. Even such a peace-loving king could not die a natural death on his bed. By a strange irony of fate he was done to death by his ambitious nephew in 1296.

2. ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī

ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī, nephew of Jalāl-ud-dīn Firūz, was brought up by his uncle with affection and care. Out of excessive fondness for this fatherless nephew, Firūz made him also his son-in-law. On being raised to the throne of Delhi, Firūz placed him in charge of the sīf of Kara in the district of Allahābād. It was here that seeds of ambition were sown in ʿAlā-ud-dīn’s mind. The “crafty suggestions of the Kara rebels”, writes Barnī, “made a lodgement in his brain, and, from the very first year of his occupation of that territory, he began to follow up his design of proceeding to some distant quarter and amassing money”. It might be that domestic unhappiness, due to the intrigues of his mother-in-law, Malikā Jahān, and his wife, also made him inclined to establish power and influence independent of the Delhi court. A successful raid into Mālwa in 1292 and the capture of the town of Bhīṣa, for which he was rewarded with the sīf of Oudh in addition to that of Kara, whetted his ambition.
At Bhilsa, 'Alā-ud-din heard vague rumours of the fabulous wealth of the kingdom of Devagiri, which extended over the western Deccan and was then ruled by Rāmechandra deva of the Yādava dynasty, and resolved to conquer it. Concealing his intention from his uncle, he marched to the Deccan through Central India and the Vindhyan region at the head of a few thousand cavalry and arrived before Devagiri. Contact of Islam with this part of India had begun much earlier, since the eighth century at the latest. Rāmechandra deva was not prepared for such an attack, and his son, Śaṅkaradeva, had gone southwards with the greater part of his army. He was thus taken by surprise, defeated after a futile resistance, and compelled to make peace with the invader by promising to pay a heavy ransom. But as 'Alā-ud-din was about to start marching towards Kara, Śaṅkaradeva hurried back to Devagiri and offered battle with the invaders, in spite of his father's request to the contrary. His enthusiasm brought him initial success, but he was soon defeated and a general panic ensued in his army, which led his followers to run away in different directions in utter confusion. Rāmechandra deva solicited the help of the other rulers of Peninsular India, but to no effect, and he was also greatly handicapped for want of provisions. No way was left for him but to sue for peace, which was concluded on harder terms than before. 'Alā-ud-din returned to Kara with enormous booty in gold, silver, silk, pearls and precious stones. This daring raid of the Khalji invader not only entailed a heavy economic drain on the Deccan, but it also opened the way for the ultimate Muslim domination over the lands beyond the Vindhyas.

'Alā-ud-din had no intention of sharing the wealth with the Sultān of Delhi. Rather it widened the range of his ambition with the throne of Delhi as its goal. In spite of the honest counsels of his officers, especially of Ahmad Chap, the most outspoken of all, the old Sultān, Jalāl-ud-din Firūz, blinded by his affection for his nephew and son-in-law, 'Alā-ud-din, allowed himself to be lured into a trap laid by the latter. Urged on by a traitor at his court, he hurried on a boat to meet his favourite nephew at Kara without taking even the necessary precautions for self-defence, and this mistake cost him his life. The adherents of 'Alā-ud-din proclaimed him Sultān in his camp on the 19th July, 1296. But 'Alā-ud-din, as Barni writes, "did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. . . . Fate at length placed a betrayer in his

1 We have an interesting note about this kingdom in J.R.A.S., Vol. II, p. 398. Eastern Deccan was then ruled by Rudrāmmā Devi, daughter of Rājā Ganapati of the Kākaṭiya dynasty.
THE KHALJIS AND EXPANSION SOUTHWARD

path (Malik Kāfar) by whom his family was destroyed... and the retribution which fell upon it never had a parallel even in any infidel land”.

It was next necessary for 'Alā-ud-dīn to establish himself firmly at Delhi, where the Queen-dowager, Malikā Jahān, had in the meanwhile placed her younger son on the throne under the title of Rukn-ud-dīn Ibrāhīm. Her elder son, Arkāli Khān, dissatisfied with some of her acts, had remained at Multān. 'Alā-ud-dīn, on hearing of this dissension, marched hurriedly for Delhi in the midst of heavy rains. After a feeble resistance Ibrāhīm, deserted by his treacherous followers, left Delhi and fled to Multān with his mother and the faithful Ahmad Chap. 'Alā-ud-dīn won over the nobles, the officers and the populace of Delhi to his cause by a lavish distribution of the Deccan gold. On entering Delhi he was enthroned in the Red Palace of Balkhan on the 3rd October, 1296. The fugitive relatives and friends of the late Sultān were not allowed to remain in Multān. They were captured by 'Alā-ud-dīn’s brother, Ulugh Khān, and his minister, Zafar Khān. Arkāli Khān and Ibrāhīm, with their brother-in-law, Ulghū Khān the Mongol, and Ahmad Chap, were blinded while being carried to Delhi. All the sons of Arkāli were put to death; he and his brother were confined in the fort of Ḥānsī; and Malikā Jahān and Ahmad Chap were kept under close restraint at Delhi.

‘Alā-ud-dīn’s position was, however, still precarious. He had to reckon with several hostile forces, like the refractoriness of the Turks, the defiant attitude of the rulers of Hājpūtāna, Mālwā and Gujārāt, the plots of some nobles, who tried to imitate his example, and the apprehension of the Mongol menace. But quite different from his uncle in temperament and outlook, the new Sultān tried to combat these odds with indomitable energy, and his efforts were crowned with success.

The Mongol raids formed a source of constant anxiety and alarm to the Delhi Government for a long time. Within a few months of 'Alā-ud-dīn’s accession, a large horde of the Mongols invaded India, but Zafar Khān repulsed them with great slaughter near Jullundur. The Mongols appeared again in the second year of the Sultān’s reign under their leader, Saldi. This time also Zafar Khān vanquished them, and sent their leader with about 2,000 followers as prisoners to Delhi. But in the year 1299 Qutlugh Khwāja marched into India with several thousand Mongols. This time their object was not plunder but conquest, and so they “did not ravage the countries bordering on their march, nor did they attack the forts.” They arrived in the vicinity of Delhi with a
view to investing the city, where a great panic consequently prevailed. Zafar Khān, "the Rustam of the age and the hero of the time", charged them vigorously but was killed in the thick of the fighting. His jealous master felt satisfied that "he had been got rid of without disgrace". Probably struck with awe at the valour of Zafar Khān, the Mongols soon retreated. They led another incursion into India, and advanced as far as Anroha in A.D. 1304 under 'Ali Beg and Khwāja Tush, but were beaten back with heavy losses.

The last Mongol invasion during this reign took place in 1307–1308, when a chieftain named Iqbalmand led an army across the Indus. But he was defeated and slain. Many of the Mongol commanders were captured and put to death. The Mongols, dispirited by repeated failures in all their invasions and terrified by the harsh measures of the Delhi Sultan, did not appear again in India during his reign, to the great relief of the people of the north-west frontier and Delhi.

Besides chastising the Mongols, the Sultan, like Balban, adopted some defensive measures to guard effectively the north-west frontier of his dominion. He caused old forts to be repaired and new ones to be erected on the route of the Mongols. For better security, garrisons were maintained in the outposts of Sāmān and Dipālpur, always ready for war, and the royal army was strengthened. Ghāzi Malik (afterwards Ghīyās-ud-din Tughluq), who, as Governor of the Punjab since 1305, was in charge of the frontier defences, ably held the Mongols in check for about a quarter of a century.

The "New Mussalmāns", settled near Delhi, were also severely dealt with by 'Alā-ud-din. They were discontented and restless because their aspirations for offices and other gains in their land of domicile had not been fulfilled, and they actually rebelled when 'Alā-ud-din's army was returning from the conquest of Gujarāt. The Sultan also dismissed all "New Mussalmāns" from his service. This added to their discontent, and in despair they hatched a conspiracy to assassinate him. But this conspiracy was soon discovered and the Sultan wreaked a terrible vengeance on them by issuing a decree for their wholesale massacre. Thus between twenty and thirty thousand "New Mussalmāns" were mercilessly slaughtered in one single day.

The uniform success of 'Alā-ud-din during the early years of his reign turned his head. He began to form "the most impossible schemes" and nourish "the most extravagant desires". He wanted to "establish a new religion and creed" and also aspired to emulate Alexander the Great as a conqueror of the world. In these designs, he sought the advice of Qāzi 'Alā-ud-mulk (uncle of the historian...
Zia Barni), formerly his lieutenant at Kara and then Kotwal of Delhi, who at once pointed out to him the unsoundness of his schemes. As regards the first design, Qazi 'Ala-ud-Mulk remarked that “the prophetic office has never appertained to kings and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some prophets have discharged the functions of royalty”. About the second one, he observed that a large part of Hindustan still remained unsubdued, that the kingdom was exposed to the raids of the Mongols, and that there was no vaizir like Aristotle to govern the state in the Sultán’s absence. The Sultán was thus brought to his senses. He abandoned his “wild projects”, but still described himself on his coins as “the Second Alexander”.

The reign of 'Ala-ud-din witnessed the rapid expansion of the Muslim dominion over different parts of India. With it begins, as Sir Wolsey Haig remarks, “the imperial period of the Sultánate”, which lasted for nearly half a century. In 1207 'Ala-ud-din sent a strong army under his brother, Ulugh Khán, and his vaizir, Nusrat Khán, to conquer the Hindu kingdom of Gujarát, which, though occasionally plundered, had remained unsubdued and was then ruled by Rāj Karna Deva, a Baghela Rājput prince. The invaders overran the whole kingdom and captured Kamala Devi, the beautiful queen of Karna Deva II, while the Rāj and his daughter, Devla Devi, took refuge with King Rāmchandradeva of Devagiri. They also plundered the rich parts of Gujarát and brought away enormous booty and a young eunuch named Kafur. They returned to Delhi with profuse wealth, Kamala Devi, who later on became the favourite wife of 'Ala-ud-din, and Kafur, who rose to be the most influential noble in the State and its virtual master for some time before and after 'Ala-ud-din’s death.

Ranthambhor, though reduced by Qutb-ud-din and Itutmish, had been recovered by the Rājputs, and was then held by the brave Rājput chief Hamir Deva. He had given shelter to some of the discontented “New Mussalmāns”, which offended ‘Ala-ud-din. In a.d. 1299, the Sultán sent an expedition for the reduction of the fortress, under the command of his brother, Ulugh Khán, and Nusrat Khán, who then held the fiefs of Binya and Kara respectively. They reduced Jhāin and encamped before Ranthambhor, but were soon beaten back by the Rājputs. Nusrat Khán was killed by a stone discharged from a catapult (maghrībi) in the fort while he was superintending the construction of a mound (pāshibih) and a redoubt (gargaj). On hearing of this discomfiture of his troops, ‘Ala-ud-din marched in person towards Ranthambhor.

While enjoying the chase with only a few attendants at Tilpat, on his way to the fortress, he was attacked and wounded in his defenceless condition by his nephew, Akit Khān, acting in concert with some “New Mussulmāns”. But the traitor was soon captured and put to death with his associates. Other conspiracies to deprive Ālā-ud-din of his throne were also suppressed. He captured the stronghold of Ranthambhor in July, 1301, with considerable difficulty, after one year's siege. Hamir Deva, and the “New Mussulmāns” who had found shelter with him, were put to death. Amir Khusraw, who gives an interesting account of the siege of the fortress, writes: “One night the Rai lit a fire at the top of the hill, and threw his women and family into the flames, and, rushing on the enemy with a few devoted adherents, they sacrificed their lives in despair.”² Hamir's minister, Ranmal, who had betrayed his master and gone over to the side of the enemy with several other comrades, was paid back in his own coin for his treachery by being done to death by the order of the Sultan. Ālā-ud-din started for Delhi after placing Ulugh Khān in charge of Ranthambhor, but the latter died five months after the Sultan's departure.

Ālā-ud-din also organised an expedition against Mewār, the land of the brave Guhila Rajputs, which, being provided by Nature with sufficient means of defence, had so long defied external invasions. This expedition, as in the case of Ranthambhor, was, in all probability, the outcome of the Sultan's ambitious desire for territorial expansion. It is not explicitly mentioned in any contemporary chronicle or inscription. The Rānā was carried as a captive to the Sultan's camp, but was rescued by the Rājput in a chivalrous manner. A small band of Rājputs under their two brave leaders, Gorā and Bādal, resisted the invaders at the outer gate of the city of Chitor, but they could not long withstand the organised strength of the Delhi army. When further resistance seemed impossible, they preferred death to disgrace, and performed, as Tod describes, “that horrible rite, the jaunar, where the females are immolated to preserve them from pollution or captivity. The funeral pyre was lighted within the 'great subterranean retreat', in chambers impervious to the light of day, and the defenders of Chitor beheld

¹ Ta'rtkh-i-'Alī, Elliot, Vol. III, p. 76. The author of the Hammad Mahākāya gives a different account of Hamir's death. According to him, the defeat of Hamir was due to the defection of his two generals, Ratplāla and Krishnapāla. When on being severely wounded Hamir realised that his end was near, he cut off his head with his own sword rather than submit to the invaders. Ihtwari Prasad, Medieval India, p. 195, footnote.
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in procession the queens, their own wives and daughters, to the number of several thousands. The fair Padmini closed the throng.

... They were conveyed to the cavern, and the opening closed upon them, leaving them to find security from dishonour in the devouring element.”

Amīr Khusrav, who accompanied the Sultān’s army on the Chitor expedition, writes that the fort of Chitor was captured by ‘Alā-ud-dīn on the 26th August, 1303, and that the latter bestowed the government of Chitor on his eldest son, Khizr Khān, and renamed the city Khizrābād before he returned to Delhi. Owing to the pressure of the Rājputs, Khizr Khān had to leave Chitor about the year 1311, and it was then entrusted by the Sultān to Mālidī, the chief of Jālor. But after several years, Chitor was recovered by the Rājputs under Hamīr and his son and became once again the capital of Mewār.

After reducing Chitor to submission, ‘Alā-ud-dīn sent an army to Mālwa. Rāi Mahlak Deva of Mālwa and his pradhān, Koka, opposed it with a large force but were defeated and slain in November or December, 1305. ‘Ain-ul-mulk, the Sultān’s confidential chamberlain, was appointed Governor of Mālwa. This was followed by the Muslim conquest of Ujjain, Māndū, Diār and Chandērī. Thus by the end of the year A.D. 1305, practically the whole of Northern India fell under the sway of Khaljī imperialism, which was then emboldened to embark on its career of expansion in the Deccan.

Although there was an earlier intercourse of the west coast of India with the Muhammadans, chiefly through commerce, the first Muslim conquest of the Deccan was effected by the Khaljīs under ‘Alā-ud-dīn. His southern campaigns were the outcome of his political as well as economic motives. It was but natural for an ambitious ruler like him to make attempts for the extension of his influence over the south after the north had been brought under control. The Deccan’s wealth was also “too tempting to an enterprising adventurer”.

The existing political conditions in India beyond the Vindhyas afforded ‘Alā-ud-dīn an opportunity to march there. It was then divided into four well-marked kingdoms. The first was the Yādava kingdom of Devagiri, under its wise and efficient ruler, Rām-chandradeva (1271–1309). The tract known as Telingāna in the east, with its capital at Warangal (in the Nizām’s dominions), was under Pratāparudradeva I of the Kākatya dynasty. The Hoysalas, then under their ruler, Vira Ballāla III (1292–1342), occupied the country now included in the Mysore State with their capital
at Durasamudra, modern Halbīd, famous for its beautiful temples. In the far south was the kingdom of the Pandyas, stretching over the territory called Mabar by the Muslim writers and including the modern districts of Madura, Ramanad and Tinnevelly. It was then ruled by Maravarman Kulasekhara (1268-1311), who greatly contributed to its prosperity by encouraging commerce. There were also some minor rulers like the Telegu-Choda chief, Manma-Siddha III, ruling in the Nellore district, the Kalinga-Ganga king, Bhānu-deva, reigning in Orissa, the Kerala king, Raviwarman, ruling from Kollam (Quilon), and the Alupa chief, Bunkideva-Álupendra, ruling from Mangalore. There was no love lost among the Hindu kingdoms of the south. During Áḷā-ud-din’s raid on Devagiri in 1294, Rámachandradeva received no help from any of them. Hoysala kings at times attacked Rámachandradeva of Devagiri. Internal dissensions among the States of the south invited invasions from the north.

In March, 1307, Áḷā-ud-din sent an expedition under Káfür, now entitled Malik Nāib (lieutenant) of the kingdom, against Rámachandradeva of Devagiri, who had withheld the payment of the tribute due on account of the province of Ellichpur, for the last three years, and had given refuge to Rāi Karnadeva II, the fugitive ruler of Gujarāt. Assisted by Khwāja Hāji (deputy ariz-i-mamālik), Káfür marched through Mālwa, and advanced to Devagiri. He laid waste the whole country, seized much booty and compelled Rámachandradeva to sue for peace. Rámachandradeva was sent to Áḷā-ud-din at Delhi, where the Sultān treated him kindly and sent him back to his kingdom after six months. Rámachandradeva continued to rule thenceforth as a vassal of the Delhi Sultānate and regularly remitted revenue to Delhi. Rāi Karnā’s daughter, Devalā Devī, was captured by the invader and taken by Alp Khān, governor of Gujarāt, to Delhi, where she was married to the Sultān’s eldest son, Khizr Khān.

An expedition sent by Áḷā-ud-din against Kākatiya Pratāparudradeva in A.D. 1303 had failed. But the humiliation of the Yādavas encouraged him to make a second attempt in 1309 to bring the Kākatiya king under his authority and fleece him of his wealth. The Sultān had no desire to annex the kingdom of Warangal, the administration of which from a great distance would prove to be a difficult task. His real object was to acquire the vast wealth of this kingdom and make Pratāparudradeva acknowledge his authority. This is clear from his instruction to Káfür, who commanded the invading army: “If the Rāi consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants and horses,
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and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, Malik Nāib Kāfūr was to accept these terms and not to press the Rāi too hard". On reaching Devagiri, the Delhi army was assisted by the now humble Rāmechandradeva, who also supplied it with an efficient commissariat, as it marched towards Telīgāna. Pratāparudradeva tried to resist the invaders by shutting himself up in the strong fort of Warangal. But the fort was besieged with such vigour that, being reduced to extremities, the Kākatiya ruler had to open negotiations for peace in March, 1310. He surrendered to Kāfūr a hundred elephants, seven thousand horses, and large quantities of jewels and coined money and agreed to send tribute annually to Delhi. Kāfūr then returned to Delhi through Devagiri, Dhūr and Jhāūn with an immense booty, carried, as Amir Khusrav writes, "on a thousand camels groaning under the 'weight of treasure'".

After these successes, 'Alī-ud-din soon determined to bring under his authority the kingdoms in the far south, renowned for the enormous wealth of their temples. On the 18th November, 1310, a large army under the command of Malik Nāib and Khwāja Hājī marched from Delhi against the kingdom of the Hoysalas, and passing by way of Devagiri reached Dorasamudra. The Hoysala king, Vīra Ballāla III, was taken by surprise in the first attack on his capital. Taking into consideration the overwhelming strength of the invaders, he submitted to them and surrendered all his treasures. The victors further captured thirty-six elephants and plundered a vast quantity of gold, silver, jewels and pearls from the temples. Malik Nāib despatched to Delhi all the captured property and also a Hoysala Prince. The Prince returned to Dorasamudra on the 6th May, 1313, amidst the great rejoicings of the people there. But the Hoysalas became vassals of the Delhi Sultan.

After twelve days' stay in the city of Dorasamudra, Malik Nāib turned his attention towards the country of Ma'bar, extending over nearly the whole of the Coromandel Coast and along the western coast from Quilon to Cape Comorin. The Pāṇḍyas then ruled over this territory. A fratricidal war between Sundara Pāṇḍya, a legitimate son of the Pāṇḍya ruler, Kulasekhara, and Vīra Pāṇḍya, his illegitimate but favourite son, gave an opportunity to Malik Nāib for his meditated invasion of Ma'bar. Sundara Pāṇḍya, enraged at his father's partiality for Vīra Pāṇḍya, who had been nominated as his successor, murdered the king towards the end of May, 1310, and seized the crown for himself. But he was defeated in an engagement with his brother about the month of November of the same year, and thus, hard pressed, sought Muslim help.
Malik Nasīb marched to the Deccan at the head of a large army. On the 14th April, 1311, he reached Madura, the capital of the Pandyas, which he found empty, for, on hearing of his advance, Vira Pandy a had left the city "with the Rānis". But he sacked the city and captured an immense booty, which, according to Amir Khusraw, consisted of five hundred and twelve elephants, five thousand horses and five hundred maunds of jewels of various kinds, such as diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies. If Amir Khusraw is to be believed, Malik Nasīb advanced as far as Rameswaram. He returned to Delhi on the 18th October, 1311, carrying with him vast booty consisting of 612 elephants, 20,000 horses, 96,000 maunds of gold, and some boxes of jewels and pearls. Thus the "country of Ma'bar came under the control of the imperialists" and remained a dependency of the Delhi Sultanate till the early part of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign. In 1312 Sankaradeva, son of Rāmechandradeva, withheld the tribute promised by his father to the Delhi Sultān and tried to regain his independence. At this, Malik Nasīb again marched from Delhi, and defeated and killed Sankaradeva. Thus the whole of Southern India had to acknowledge the sway of the Delhi Sultān.

But the raids of Malik Nasīb, associated with the sack of cities, the slaughter of the people, and the plunder of temples, "made an immense impression" on the indigenous inhabitants of South India. They had no other course but to submit, for the time being, to the mighty forces of the invader, but they must have harboured a feeling of discontent in their hearts, which ultimately found expression in the rise of Vijayanagar as its political fruit.

In his conception of sovereignty, 'Alā-ud-din departed from the ideas of his predecessors. He had the courage to challenge for the first time the pre-eminence of the orthodox church in matters of State, and declare that he could act without the guidance of the Ulemas for the political interests of his Government. Thus he spoke to Qāzi Mughis-ud-din of Bīrāna, who often visited his court and was an advocate of ecclesiastical supremacy: "To prevent rebellion, in which thousands perish, I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the State, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands; I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience. I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the State, or suitable for the

1 This is known from Ibn Batūtah and some coins. J.R.A.S., 1909, pp. 869-70.
2 Sewell, Hist. Ins., etc., p. 177.
emergency, that I decree.” It would be, however, wrong to surmise from this outlook of Ḍūlā-ud-dīn that he disregarded the religion of Islam. Outside India, he was known “as a great defender of Islam”. In India, there was a difference of opinion on this point. While the supporters of clericalism like Barnā and his followers “emphasise his disregard of religion”, Amir Khwāraz, who was a man of culture and a shrewd observer of things, considered him to be a supporter of Islam. ‘Alā-ud-dīn himself said to the Qāżī: “Although I have not studied the Science or the Book, I am a Mussalnān of a Mussalnān stock.” The inscriptions on ‘Alā-ud-dīn’s monuments also show that he had not lost faith in Islam.

‘Alā-ud-dīn acted according to his conviction, and followed a policy of “thorough”, calculated to help the establishment of a strong Government at the centre. The rebellion of Ākat Khān, the revolt of the Sultān’s sister’s sons, Amir ‘Umar and Mangū Khān, in Bādānūn and Oudh, the conspiracy of Hājī Maulā and the plots of the “New Mussalnāns”, all of which were effectively suppressed, led him to believe that there were some defects in the administrative system. After consulting his intimate advisors, he attributed these to four causes: (i) Disregard of the affairs of the State by the Sultān, (ii) the use of wine, (iii) intimacy and alliances among the nobles, which enabled them to organise themselves for conspiracies, (iv) abundance of money, “which engenders evil and strife, and brings forth pride and disloyalty”.

With a strong determination to stamp out these evils and make himself secure against rebellions, the Sultān framed a code of repressive regulations. He first assailed the institution of private property. All pensions and endowments were appropriated to the State, and all villages held in proprietary right (mulk), in free gift (inām) and benevolent endowments (waqf) were confiscated. “The people,” writes Barnā, “were pressed and anerced, money was exacted from them on every kind of pretence. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting maliks and amirs, officials, Mulkāns, and bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash.” Secondly, the Sultān established an efficient body of spies, who were enjoined to report to him everything, even the most trivial matters like the gossip and transactions in the markets. “The system of reporting went to such a length that nobles dared not speak aloud even in the largest places, and if they had anything to say they communicated by signs.” Thirdly, the use of spirituous liquor and drugs, and dicing, were strictly prohibited. The Sultān himself showed an example by giving up drinking, and all his wine vessels were broken to pieces. Fourthly,
the Sultān prohibited social gatherings of the nobles, who could not meet without special permission from him. This ordinance was so strictly enforced that "feasting and hospitality fell into total disuse. Through fear of spies, the nobles kept themselves quiet; they gave no parties and had little communication with each other".

Some of the other measures adopted by the Sultān were equally drastic. Large sections of the people had to pay to the State half of their gross produce and heavy pasturage taxes on cattle. The Sultān wanted to reduce them to such a state of misery as to make it impossible for them to bear arms, to ride on horseback, to put on fine clothes or to enjoy any other luxury of life. Indeed, their lot was very hard. None of them "could hold up his head, and in their houses no sign of gold or silver, tankās or jitalas, or any superfluity was to be seen. . . . Driven by destitution, the wives of the khāts and magaddams went and served for hire in the houses of the Mussalmāns". For revenue collection, all hereditary assessors and collectors of revenue were made subject to one law, and it was enforced with such great rigour by Sharaf Qāi, the nāib wazir of the Sultān, and his staff, that "men looked upon revenue officers as something worse than fever. Clerkship was a great crime, and no man would give his daughter to a clerk".

"Alā-ud-din rightly realised that a strong army was an indispensable requisite for the system of government he had been trying to build up. But its efficient maintenance required a huge expenditure at a time when the influx of wealth from the south had caused a fall in the value of money and augmented the prices of articles. The Sultān fixed the pay of a soldier at 234 tankās a year and 78 tankās for a man maintaining two horses. He did not want to increase the pay of the soldiers as that would have caused a heavy strain on the resources of the State and of the people, who had already been taxed to the utmost limit of their capacity. But to enable the soldiers to live on a moderate pay, he issued some edicts regulating the prices of all articles from the absolute necessaries of life to things of luxury like slaves, horses, arms, silks and stuffs and adjusting the laws of supply and demand.

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1 The value of a tankā was a little more than that of a rupee.
2 The prices of articles were thus fixed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>7½ jitalas per man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>4 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice in husk</td>
<td>5 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maah</td>
<td>5 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhud (pulse)</td>
<td>5 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moth</td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>1½ jitalas per seer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown sugar</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>2½ seers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil of sesamum</td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>2½ mans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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as well as possible. The land revenue from the Khālsa villages around the capital was to be realised in kind, and grain was to be stored in the royal granaries in the city of Delhi, so that in times of scarcity the Sultān could supply the markets with his own grain. No private hoarding of grain was to be tolerated. The markets were controlled by two officers, the Divān-i-Riyāsah and the Shāhāna-i-Mandī, and a body of spies were entrusted with the task of reporting to the Sultān the condition of the markets. The merchants had to get themselves registered in a State daftar and to engage themselves to bring all goods for sale to the Sarāi ‘Adl, an open place inside the Bādāin gate. They had to furnish sufficient securities for their conduct. Severe punishments were provided against the violation of the Sultan’s regulations. To prevent the shopkeepers from using short weights, it was ordered that the equivalent of the deficiency would be cut off from their flesh. The regulations worked according to the Sultan’s desire so long as he lived, and enabled him to maintain a large standing army at a cheap cost. Barni remarks that the “unvarying price of grain in the markets was looked upon as one of the wonders of the time.” But he does not definitely state the effects of these devices on the economic condition of the country as a whole.

‘Alā-ud-din reached the apex of his career by the end of the year 1312. But the tragedy of his life was at hand, and he began henceforth to live by the light of a star that had paled. As Barni puts it: “Success no longer attended him. Fortune proved, as usual, fickle, and destiny drew her poniard to destroy him.” His excesses had undermined his health, his intellect became dwarfed and his judgment defective. He became a mere puppet in the hands of his favourite eunuch, Kāfur, whom he made the commander of his army and vazir, and indiscreetly removed the old and able administrators. Rebellion broke out in several quarters, and palace-intrigues supervened due to the machinations of Kāfur, who caused the Sultān’s wife and son to be alienated from him. The attack of dropsy, from which the Sultān had been suffering for some time, proved fatal. He expired on the 2nd January, A.D. 1316, at the height of his troubles and was buried in a tomb in front of the Jāmi-Masjid, Delhi. According to some, “the infamous Malik Kāfur helped his disease to a fatal end”.

‘Alā-ud-din was a self-willed ruler, whose ambition knew no

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Thomas, Chronicles of the Pathan Kings, etc., p. 160; Elliot, Vol. III, p. 192. A jital (copper coin) was 1/4 of a silver tanka of 175 grains and corresponded in value to 1½ farthing. One Delhi man was equal to 28.8 lbs. avoirdupois and 40 seers made a man. Thomas, Chronicles, etc., pp. 190-2.
bounds and brooked no restraint, and whose methods were unscrupulous. "He shed more innocent blood," writes Barní, "than ever Pharaoh was guilty of."1 The tragic end of Jalâl-ud-din Firûz, the treatment meted out to the deceased Sultan's relatives, the severe measures against the "New Mussulmans", not excepting even women and children, are clear proofs of the Sultan's harsh nature. Extremely suspicious and jealous, he was sometimes ungrateful even to those from whom he had received most valuable services. Thus on being established on the throne, he deprived many of those nobles who had helped his cause of their wealth and establishments, threw them into prison, and caused some of them to be blinded and killed. The remarkable bravery of the Sultan's own general Zafar Khân excited his jealousy, and when he was killed by the Mongols, his master was satisfied that he "had been got rid of without disgrace". Barní writes that 'Alâ-ud-din had "no acquaintance with learning"; but, according to Ferishta, he learnt the art of reading Persian after his accession.

There flourished during the reign of this Sultan eminent scholars and poets like Amir Khusraw and Hasan. The Sultan was fond of architecture. Several forts were built by his orders, the most important of these being the circular 'Alâî Fort or Koshak-i-Siri, the walls of which were made of stone, brick and lime and which had seven gates.2 "All the mosques," writes Amir Khusraw, "which lay in ruins were built anew by a profuse scattering of silver." In 1311 'Alâ-ud-din undertook the extension of the Qutb Mosque and the construction of a new Minâr (tower) in the courtyard of the mosque of twice the size of the old Qutb Minâr. The building of the new Minâr could not be completed in his lifetime owing to the troubles during his last days. In 1311 he also caused a large gate to be built for this mosque of red sandstone and marble, with smaller gates on four sides of the large gate.

'Alâ-ud-din is, however, known to history for his imperialistic activities. He was a brave and able soldier, and the military exploits of his reign were almost uniformly crowned with success. He carried the militaristic ideal of Balban to its logical conclusion. As an administrator also, he showed remarkable vigour in the early part of his reign. To him belongs the credit of governing the State for the first time independent of the authority and

1 Elliot, Vol. III, p. 156.
3 This fort was built in A.D. 1303. Sher Shâh pulled down the fort of Siri and built a new city near Old Delhi. The site of the fort of Siri is now marked by a village named Shàhbad. Asâr us-Sanâdîd, by Sir Syed Ahmad Khân.
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guidance of the priestly hierarchy. He was determined to strengthen his government at any cost.

The foundation of the military monarchy that he tried to build up was, however, laid upon sand. His severity enabled him to strengthen it apparently, but it generated a feeling of discontent in the minds of the suppressed baronage and the humiliated chiefs, who naturally remained waiting for opportunities to regain their lost position and power. The great defect of his system was that it could not win for itself the willing support and goodwill of the governed, which is essential for the security of any Government. Its continuance depended on the strong personality of the man who had erected it. As a matter of fact, symptoms of its breakdown appeared during the last days of the Sultan and became fully manifest, to the utter undoing of his work, within a short time after his demise. A just retribution fell upon his family for his ungrateful conduct towards his uncle, and its power and prestige were undermined by one in whom the Sultan had reposed profound confidence—his own favourite, Malik Kāfur.

3. Undue Influence of Kāfur

As unscrupulous as his master, Kāfur now tried to establish his influence as the supreme authority in the State. On the second day after the death of Alā-ud-din, he produced a will of the deceased Sultan, which, if authentic, had been secured from him through undue pressure, disinheriting Khizr Khan and giving the throne to Shihāb-ud-din 'Umar, a child of his master, five or six years old. The minor son was enthroned, Kāfur being his regent and the virtual dictator of the State. Goaded on by the ambition of seizing the throne, Kāfur perpetrated most horrible crimes. He caused the elder sons of Alā-ud-din, Khizr Khan and Shāhīd Khan, to be blinded, and the queen-mother was deprived of her wealth and imprisoned. He also kept Mubārak, the third son of Alā-ud-din, in confinement in the Hāzar Sultan (the palace of a thousand pillars) and intended to deprive him of his eyesight. The youth, however, managed to escape. Kāfur further sought to remove all the nobles and slaves who were supporters of the Khaljis. But he was soon paid back in his own coin for his atrocities by being murdered, after a "criminal rule" of thirty-five days, by some attendants of the late Sultan 'Alā-ud-din. The nobles then brought Mubārak out of his confinement and made him the regent of his minor brother. But after sixty-four days of regency, Mubārak blinded the child in April, 1316, and ascended the throne under the title of Qutb-ud-din Mubārak Shāh.
4. Qutb-ud-din Mubarak and Fall of the Khaljis

The early years of the new ruler’s reign were marked by success, and he rescinded the harsher edicts of his father. Political prisoners were set free, some of the lands and endowments confiscated by the late Sultán were restored to their original grantees and the compulsory tariff was removed. This no doubt gave satisfaction to the people, but, as Barní writes, “all fear and awe of royal authority disappeared”. Further, the Sultán soon plunged himself into a life of pleasure, which naturally made him indolent to the great prejudice of the interests of the State. His example affected the people also. “During (his reign of) four years and four months,” writes Barní, “the Sultán attended to nothing but drinking, listening to music, pleasure, and scattering gifts.” He fell completely under the influence of a low-caste (Pardarí) convert from Gujarât, whom he styled Khusrav Khán and made the chief minister of his kingdom. This favourite shamelessly pandered to the low tastes of his master with the ulterior motive of seizing the throne for himself.

Fortunately for Hindustán, the Mongols made no attempt to invade it, nor was there any serious disturbance in any quarter, during this reign. There broke out only two rebellions, one in Gujarât and the other in Devagiri (in the Deccan). The Gujarât revolt was effectively suppressed by ‘Ain-ul-Mulk, and the Sultán’s father-in-law, who had received from him the title of Zafar Khán, was placed as governor there. The Sultán marched in person at the head of a large army against Devagiri. Harapála Deva of Devagiri fled away on the Sultán’s approach, but he was pursued, captured, and flayed alive. Thus the whole kingdom of the Yadavas fell under the control of the Musliims and the Sultán appointed Malik Yaklaki governor of Devagiri. He also deputed Khusrav Khán to lead an expedition to Telingána, which was attended with success. After one year’s stay at Devagiri, where the Sultán built a great mosque, he marched back to Delhi.

These triumphs made Mubarak worse than before. Many members of the imperial family were killed. Mubarak made a departure from the practice of the preceding Sultáns of Delhi by shaking off the allegiance to the Khalifát and proclaiming himself “the supreme head of the religion of Islam, the Khalifah of the Lord of Heaven and Earth”, and assumed the pontifical title of ‘al-Wásiq-billâh.1

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The regime of this ruler did not, however, last long. Khusrav planned his overthrow, but out of excessive infatuation for him the Sultan did not listen to the warning of his friends. He soon fell a victim to the conspiracy of Khusrav, one of whose Parvârî associates stabbed him to death on a night of April, A.D. 1320. Such was the end of the dynasty of the Khaljîs after it had ruled for about thirty years.

5. Usurpation of Khusrav

Khusrav then ascended the throne of Delhi under the title of Nasîr-ud-din Khusrav Shâh and distributed honours and rewards among his relatives and tribesmen, who had helped him in the accomplishment of his design. He squandered away the wealth of the State in trying to conciliate those nobles who had been forced to acquiesce in his usurpation. He inaugurated a veritable reign of terror by massacring the friends and personal attendants of the late Sultan and by putting the members of his family to disgrace. According to Barnâ, Yâhiyâ bin Ahmad Sarhindî and Ibn Ba'tûtah, Khusrav favoured the Hindus, and his brief regime of four months and a few days was marked by the ascendency of the Hindus. Whatever it might have been, the conduct of Khusrav was enough to offend the 'Alî nobles, who soon found a leader in Ghâzi Malik, the faithful Warden of the Marches. Marching from Dîpâlpur, Ghâzi Malik, with the support of all the nobles except 'Ain-ul-Mulk, the governor of Multân, who bore a personal grudge against him, defeated Khusrav at Delhi on the 5th September, 1320. Khusrav was beheaded and his followers were either killed or routed. Though master of the situation, Ghâzi Malik did not occupy the throne at once. Rather, he at first made "a decent profession of reluctance". But as no male descendant of 'Alî-ud-din was living, the nobles persuaded him to accept the throne in September, 1320, under the title of Ghîyân-ud-din Tughluq. It is significant to note that the Muslim nobles, without manifesting any jealousy towards Ghâzi Malik, who had been equal to them in rank, now welcomed him to the throne of Delhi.
CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSE OF TUGHLUQ AND THE BEGINNING OF DISRUPTION

1. Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq

The dynasty of Ghāzi Malik may be regarded as an indigenous one. His father came to Hindustān in the time of Balban and married a Jāt girl of the Punjab. From a humble position, Ghāzi Malik gradually rose to the highest position in the empire by dint of his merit. We have already noted how ably he guarded the frontiers of the Delhi Empire against Mongol invasions till Providence placed him on the throne at an advanced age.

The choice of Ghāzi Malik as the ruler of Delhi by the nobles was amply justified. The situation on his accession was one of difficulty, as the authority of the Delhi Sultānate had ceased to command obedience in its outlying provinces, and its administrative system had disintegrated during the period of confusion following the death of ‘Alā-ud-dīn. But he proved himself equal to the occasion. Unlike his predecessors, he possessed strength of character, largely due to his early training in the school of adversity. A devout and god-fearing man, he had a mild and liberal disposition. He “made his court more austere than it had ever been except probably in the time of Balban”. He acted with moderation and wisdom. Amir Khusraw thus praises him:

“He never did anything that was not replete with wisdom and sense.

He might be said to wear a hundred doctors’ hoods under his crown.”

Soon after his accession, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq set himself to the task of restoring administrative order by removing the abuses of the preceding regime. The extravagances of Mubārak and Khusraw had brought the finances of the State to a deplorable condition. Ghiyās-ud-dīn therefore ordered a strict enquiry to be made into all claims and jāgīrs. Unlawful grants were confiscated to the State. The little unpopularity that he incurred by this measure was soon removed by his wise liberality and beneficent
measures for the welfare of his subjects. He appointed upright
governors in the provinces, and considerably lightened the burden
of revenue by limiting the dues of the State to one-tenth or one-
eleventh of the gross produce and providing against official incapacity
and extortion. Agriculture, the main industry of the people in
this land, received special encouragement. Canals were excavated
to irrigate the fields, gardens were planted and forts were built
to provide shelter for husbandmen against brigands. But some of
the regulations of the Sultân were not marked by the same spirit
of benevolence. We know from Barni that certain sections of
the people were to “be taxed so that they might not be blinded
with wealth, and so become discontented and rebellious; nor, on
the other hand, be so reduced to poverty and destitution as to
be unable to pursue their husbandry”.

Reforms were introduced in other branches of administration,
like justice and police, so that order and security prevailed in the
country. The Sultân devised a system of poor-relief and patronised
religious institutions and literary men; Amür Khusrav, his poet
laureate, received from the State a pension of one thousand tankás
per mensem. The postal system of the country was reorganised
to facilitate communications and the military department was made
efficient and orderly.

Ghiyâs-ud-din was not unmindful of asserting the authority of
the Sultanate over its different provinces. He pursued the Khaljí
policy of military domination and imperialism, a reaction against
which began in fact with the failure of his successor, Muhammad
bin Tughluq. This is strikingly illustrated by what he did in the
Deccan and Bengal.

In the Deccan the Kâkatiya ruler Pratâparudradeva II of
Warangal, who had increased his power during the period of dis-
order following the death of ‘Alâ-ud-din, refused to pay the stipu-
lated tribute to the Delhi Government. So Ghiyâs-ud-din sent,
in the second year of his reign, an expedition against Warangal
under his eldest son and heir-apparent, Fakhir-ud-din Muhammad
Jauna Khân. The invaders besieged the mud fort of Warangal,
which was, however, defended by the Hindus with strong determina-
tion and courage. Owing to intrigues1 and the outbreak of pestilence

1 According to Barni and Yahiyâ bin Ahmad, who have been followed by
later Muslim writers like Nizâm-ud-din Ahmad, Badâi‘ and Forisha, these
intrigues were due to some traitors in the army. But Ibn Badâi‘ (Vol. III
pp. 208–10) writes that the Crown Prince Jauna, who intended to seize
the throne, was responsible for these. Thomas (Chronicles, etc., p. 108) and
Sir Woleseley Haig (J.R.A.S., 1922, pp. 231–7) accept the opinion of Ibn
Badâi‘, but Dr. Ishwari Prasad (History of Qarawunah Turks, pp. 30–2) has
pointed out the unsoundness of the latter view.
in the army, Prince Jauhar had to return to Delhi without effecting anything. But again, four months after Jauhar's return to Delhi, the Sultan sent a second expedition against Warangal under the same prince. The second attempt met with success. After a desperate fight the Kakatiya ruler surrendered, with his family and nobles, to the enemy. Prince Jauhar sent him to Delhi and subdued the whole country of the Kakatiyas, Warangal being renamed as Sultānpur. The Kakatiya kingdom, though not formally annexed by the Delhi Sultan, soon lost its former power and glory.

A civil war in Bengal among the sons of Shams-ud-din Firuz Shāh, who died in A.D. 1318, led Ghiyās-ud-din Tughrul to intervene in the affairs of that province. Among the five sons of Shams-ud-din Firuz Shāh, Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur, who had ruled independently in Eastern Bengal with Sonārgān as his capital since 1310, Shihab-ud-din Bughrā Shāh, who had succeeded his father on the throne of Bengal with his capital at Lakhnauti, and Nāṣir-ud-din, contested for supremacy in Bengal. In 1319 Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur defeated Shihab-ud-din Bughrā Shāh and seized the throne of Bengal, which was also coveted by Nāṣir-ud-din, who thereupon appealed to the Delhi Sultan for help. The Sultan availed himself of this opportunity to bring under his effective control the distant province of Bengal, the allegiance of which to the Delhi Sultānate was always loose. He marched towards Lakhnauti in A.D. 1324, captured Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur, who was sent as a prisoner to Delhi, and placed Nāṣir-ud-din on the throne of Western Bengal as a vassal ruler. Eastern Bengal was also made a province of the Delhi Sultānate. On his way back to Delhi, Ghiyās-ud-din reduced to submission the Rājā of Tirhut, which became henceforth a sief of the Delhi Sultānate.

But the days of Ghiyās-ud-din were numbered. On returning from Bengal he died in February-March, 1325, from the collapse of a wooden structure which his son, Jauhar, had built at Afgānpur, at a distance of five or six miles from Tughluqābād, the fortress-city founded by Ghiyās-ud-din near Delhi. He was interred in the tomb which he had built for himself at Tughluqābād. There are two accounts about the Sultan's death. Barni attributes the collapse of the structure to a crash caused by lightning striking it; and Yāhiyya bin Ahmad Surīndī also writes that the structure gave way "by divine preordination". But according to Ibn Batūtah, the death of the Sultan was due to a premeditated conspiracy of his son, who got the pavilion so constructed by the royal architect (Mir 'Imārād), Ahmed, son of Ayāz, that it would collapse on being touched by
elephants. Some later writers like Abul Fazl, Nizām-ud-din Ahmad and Badāūnī suspect such a conspiracy, and most of the modern writers consider the evidence of Ibn Batūtah’s statement to be conclusive, as his informant, Shaikh Rukn-ud-din, was in the pavilion on the occasion of the Sultan’s tragic death. Barni’s account is evidently partial, and his reticence is due to his desire not to displease Firūz Tughluq, who had a great regard for Jauna and during whose reign he wrote his work.

2. Muhammad bin Tughluq

Prince Jauna declared himself as the Sultan three days after his father’s death in February–March, 1325, under the title of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Forty days later he proceeded to Delhi and ascended the throne without any opposition in the old palace of the Sultāns, amidst a profuse display of pageantry. Like ‘Alā-ud-din, he lavishly distributed gold and silver coins among the populace and titles among the nobles.

For studying the history of Muhammad bin Tughluq’s reign we have besides the admirable history of a contemporary official, Zā-ud-din Barni, who wrote his work in the time of the Sultan’s successor, Firūz Shāh, several other Persian works of his near contemporaries like the Ta’rikh-i-Firūz Shāhī by Shams-i-Siraj ‘Afīf, the Fatūkāt-i-Firūz Shāhī, an autobiographical memoir of Sultan Firuz Shāh, the Munshāt-i-Māhrū of ‘Ain-ul-Mulk Mūltānī, the Tughluqnamah of Amir Khusraw, and the Ta’rikh-i-Musṭārak Shāhī of Yahiyyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi, a comparatively late work, which contains much supplementary information. The work of the African traveller, Ibn Batūtah, is also of great importance for the history of this period. He came to India in September, A.D. 1333, and was hospitably received by the Delhi Sultan, who appointed him Chief Qāzī of Delhi, which office he continued to hold till he was sent as the Sultan’s ambassador to China in July, A.D. 1342. His account bears on the whole the stamp of impartiality and is remarkable for profuseness of details. The coins of Muhammad bin Tughluq are also of informative value.

Muhammad bin Tughluq is indeed an extraordinary personality, and to determine his place in history is a difficult task. Was he a genius or a lunatic? An idealist or a visionary? A bloodthirsty tyrant or a benevolent king? A heretic or a devout Musalmān? There is no doubt that he was one of the most learned and accomplished scholars of his time, for which he has been duly praised by Barni and others. Endowed with a keen intellect, a wonderful
memory and a brilliant capacity of assimilating knowledge, he was proficient in different branches of learning like logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and the physical sciences. A perfect master of composition and style, he was a brilliant calligraphist. He had a vast knowledge of Persian poetry and quoted Persian verses in his letters. The science of medicine was not unknown to him. He was also well skilled in dialectics, and scholars thought twice before opening any discussion with him on a subject in which he was well versed. An experienced general, he won many victories and lost few campaigns.

In his private life the Sultān was free from the prevailing vices of the age, and his habits were simple. Possessed of remarkable humility and generosity, he was lavish in distributing gifts and presents. Ibn Batūtah, who has characterised him "as the most humble of men and one who is most inclined towards doing what is right and just", writes that "the most prominent of his qualities is generosity". Writers like Barni, Yahya bin Ahmad Sarhindi, and, on their authority, Badā'uni, Nizām-ud-din Ahmad, and Ferishta, have wrongly charged the Sultān with irreligiosity and the slaughter of pious and learned men, scribes and soldiers. Ibn Batūtah asserts that "he follows the principles of religion with devotion and performs the prayers himself and punishes those who neglect them". This is corroborated by two other contemporary writers, Shihab-ud-din Ahmad and Badr-i-Chāch, and even Ferishta has to admit it. Muhammad bin Tughluq's chief offence was that, probably inspired by the example of the Khaljis, "he ignored the canon law as expounded by learned Doctors and based his political conduct on his own experience of the world.

But the Sultān lacked practical judgment and common sense, and, rather obsessed with his theoretical knowledge, indulged in lofty theories and visionary projects. His schemes, though sound in theory, and sometimes showing flashes of political insight, proved to be impracticable in actual operation, and ultimately brought disaster on his kingdom. This was due to certain grave defects in his character. Hasty and hot-tempered, he must have his own way and would brook no opposition. The growing sense of the failure of his policy made him charge the people with perversity and enhanced his severity. Foiled in his aims, the Sultān lost the equilibrium of his mind. "Embarrassment followed embarrassment, and confusion became worse confounded." In course of a talk with Barni, he exclaimed: "I visit them (the people) with chastisement upon the suspicion or presumption of their rebellious and treacherous designs, and I punish the most
trifling act of contumacy with death. This I will do until I die, or until the people act honestly, and give up rebellion and contumacy. I have no such vazir as will make rules to obviate my shedding blood. I punish the people because they have all at once become my enemies and opponents. I have dispensed great wealth among them, but they have not become friendly and loyal."

These measures of the Sultan, as compared with his brighter qualities, have led some later writers to describe him as "a mixture of opposites." But others again have pointed out that he was not really an "amazing compound of contradictions" and that the charges of "blood-thirstiness and madness" were wrongly brought against him by the members of the clerical party, who always thwarted him in his policy. The Sultan's defects might have been exaggerated, but it cannot be denied that he was devoid of the keen insight of a statesman and thus could not adapt his policy to the sentiments of the people. His daring innovations were not welcome, as these entailed great hardships. He was, in short, a poor judge of human nature, who failed to realize that administrative reforms, however beneficial these may be, cannot be easily imposed on the people against their will and that repression generally breeds discontent if the vital interests of the people are affected. Thus, as Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole observes, "with the best intentions, excellent ideas, but no balance or patience, no sense of proportion, Muhammad Tughlūk (sarc) was a transcendent failure."

Like Philip II of Spain, Muhammad bin Tughluq set himself assiduously to looking into the details of administration from the beginning of his reign. He first ordered the compilation of a register of the land revenue on the model of the register already kept, and the revenue department then worked smoothly. But soon he tried an ill-advised financial experiment in the Doab, the rich and fertile plain between the Ganges and the Jumna. He enhanced the rate of taxation and revived and created some additional abqābās (cesses). It is not possible to determine accurately the actual amount of additional assessment, owing to discrepancies and vagueness in the accounts of contemporary and later Muslim writers. Some modern writers suggest that the enhancement was not "fundamentally excessive" and did not exceed the maximum of 50 per cent that it had reached under

1 Bāṁ (Ta'rīkh-i-Firdūs Shāhī, Biblioth. Ind., p. 473) writes ten or twenty times more, which is wrongly translated by Elliot (Vol. III, pp. 182-3) as 10 or 5 p.c. According to Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī (p. 103), the increment was twofold and to this was added gharī (house-tax) and the chārdhī (pasture tax). Badānī (Rahāng, Vol. I, p. 396) writes that the taxes were doubled.
Alā-ud-dīn. They also hold that the Sultān’s object in levying extra taxes on the people of the Doāb was not “intended to be both a punitive measure (against the refractory inhabitants of the Doāb) and a means of replenishing the treasury”, as Badāūnī and, in modern times, Sir Wolseley Haig have suggested, but to “increase his military resources and to organise the administration on an efficient basis”. Whatever it might have been, there is no doubt that the measure entailed great miseries on the people of the Doāb, who had already been feeling the burden of heavy taxation since the time of the Khaljīs, especially because it was introduced at a very inopportune moment when a terrible famine visited the land. The State did not relax its demands in view of the famine, but its officers exacted taxes with rigour; and it also took no immediate steps to mitigate the hardships of the toiling peasantry. The Sultān’s relief measures, like advancing loans to the agriculturists, sinking wells and “bringing the uncultivated lands under the plough by means of direct state management and financial support”, came too late. Agriculture suffered terribly and the impoverished peasantry of the Doāb left their holdings and shifted to other places. In great fury, the Sultān adopted severe reprisals to bring back the reluctant ryots to their work, which produced disastrous consequences for the house of Tughluq.

Muhammad bin Tughluq’s decision to transfer the capital in 1327 from Delhi to Devagiri, renamed by him Daulatābād, was another ill-calculated step, which ultimately caused immense suffering to the people. This project of the Sultān was not, as some modern writers have suggested, a wild experiment tried with the object of wreaking vengeance on the people of Delhi, but the idea behind it was originally sound. The new capital occupied a central and strategic situation. The kingdom then embraced within its sphere the Doāb, the plains of the Punjab and Lahore with the territories extending from the Indus to the coast of Gujarāt in the north, the whole province of Bengal in the east, the kingdoms of Mālwa, Mahoba, Ujjain and Dīhr in the central region, and the Deccan, which had been recently added to it. Such a kingdom demanded close attention from the Sultān. Barni writes: “This place held a central situation; Delhi, Gujarāt, Lakhnauti, Sātāgāon, Sonārgāon, Telang, Mābar, Dorasamudra, and Kāmpīla were about equidistant from thence, there being but a slight difference in the distances.” Further, the new capital was safe from Mongol invasions, which

1 This date has been established by Dr. Inshārī Frasād (History of the Qaradāghan Turks, pp. 82–3) on a comparison of contemporary accounts and study of coins.
constantly threatened the old one. The Sultan also did his best to make the new capital a suitable abode for his officers, and the people, by providing it with beautiful buildings, the splendour of which has been described by Ibn Batuta, 'Abdul Hamid Lahori, the court historian of Shah Jahan's reign, and the European travellers of the seventeenth century. All facilities were provided for the intending immigrants. A spacious road was constructed for their convenience, shady trees being planted on both sides of it and a regular post being established between Delhi and Daulatabad. Even Barni writes that the Sultan "was bounteous in his liberality and favours to the emigrants, both on their journey and on their arrival". In all this, the Sultan acted reasonably.

But when the people of Delhi, out of sentiment, demurred at leaving their own homes which were associated with memories of the past, the Sultan's harsh temper got the better of his good sense, and he ordered all the people of Delhi to proceed en masse to Daulatabad with their belongings. We need not believe in the unwarranted statement of Ibn Batuta that a blind man was dragged from Delhi to Daulatabad and that a bed-ridden cripple was projected there by a ballista. Nor should we literally accept the hyperbolic statement of Barni that "a cat or a dog was left among the buildings of the city of Delhi, in its palaces or in its suburbs". Such forms of expression were common among the medieval writers of India. Complete destruction or evacuation of the city is unthinkable. But the sufferings of the people of Delhi were undoubtedly considerable in a long journey of 700 miles. Worn out with fatigue, many of them died on the way, and many who reached Daulatabad followed suit in utter despair and agony like exiles in a strange land. Such were the disastrous results of the Sultan's miscalculated plan. "Daulatabad," remarks Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole aptly, "was a monument of misdirected energy."

The Sultan, having at last recognised the folly and iniquity of his policy, reshifted the court to Delhi and ordered a return march of the people. But very few survived to return, and Delhi had lost its former prosperity and grandeur, which could not be restored until long after, though the Sultan "brought learned men and gentlemen, tradesmen and landowners, into the city (of Delhi) from certain towns in his territory, and made them reside there". Ibn Batuta found Delhi in A.D. 1334 deserted in some places and bearing the marks of ruin.

Muhammad bin Tughluq tried important monetary experiments. Edward Thomas has described him as "a Prince of Moneyers"
and writes that "one of the earliest acts of his reign was to remodel the coinage, to readjust its divisions to the altered values of the precious metals, and to originate new and more exact representatives of the subordinate circulation". A new gold piece, called the Dinár by Ibn Batūtah, weighing 200 grains, was issued by him. He also revived the Adali, equivalent in weight to 140 grains of silver, in place of the old gold and silver coins weighing 175 grains. This change was probably due to a "fall in the relative value of gold to silver, the imperial treasury having been replenished by large quantities of the former metal as a result of the campaigns of the Deccan".

But the most daring of his experiments was the issue of a token currency in copper coins between A.D. 1329 and 1330 for which there had been examples before him in China and Persia. Towards the close of the thirteenth century, Kublai Khān, the Mongol Emperor of China, introduced a paper currency in China, and Gāz Khātū, the ruler of Persia, tried it in A.D. 1294. Muhammad bin Tughluq also issued a decree proclaiming that in all transactions copper tokens should pass as legal tender like gold and silver coins. The motives of the Sultān behind this measure were to replenish his exhausted exchequer and find increased resources for his plans of conquest and administration. So he cannot be accused of any device or design to defraud the people.

This "carefully organised measure", however, failed, owing chiefly to two causes. Firstly, it was far in advance of the time and the people could not grasp its real significance. Secondly, the Sultān did not make the issue of the copper coins a monopoly of the State, and failed to take proper precautions against forgery. As Thomas writes, "there was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the Royal Mint and the handiwork of the moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper tokens, and no limit to the power of production of the mass at large". The result was that large numbers of counterfeit coins obtained circulation. We are told by Barni that "the promulgation of this edict turned the house of every Hindu into a mint, and the Hindus of the various provinces coined krores and lacs of copper coins. With these they paid their tribute, and with these they purchased horses, arms and fine things of all kinds. The raita, the village headmen and landowners, grew rich and strong upon these copper coins, but the State was impoverished. . . . In those places where fear of the Sultān's edict prevailed, the gold tankā rose to be worth a hundred
of (the copper) tankās. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his own workshop, and the treasury was filled with these copper coins. So low did they fall that they were not valued more than pebbles or potsherds. The old coin, from its great scarcity, rose four-fold and five-fold in value. Trade and industries were in consequence severely affected, and confusion reigned supreme. The Sultān recognised his error and repealed his edict about four years after the introduction of the currency. He paid for every copper coin brought to the treasury at its face value in gold and silver coins, and the public funds were thus sacrificed without any corresponding benefit to the State. So many copper coins were brought to Delhi that heaps of them were accumulated at Tughluqābād, which could be seen a century later in the reign of Mubārak Shāh II.

The Delhi Sultānate was not absolutely free from external danger during this reign. In A.D. 1328-1329 the Chaghātai chief, Tarmāshirīn Khān, of Transoxiana invaded India. He ravaged the plains of the Punjab and reached the outskirts of Delhi. The change of the capital from Delhi, and probably the weak defence of the north-west frontier by the Delhi rulers, gave him the opportunity for his ambitions. According to Yahiyā bin Ahmad and Badānī, Muḥammad bin Tughluq defeated him and drove him out of the country, while Firishta writes that the Sultān bought him off by paying large presents in gold and jewels, which he describes “as the price of the kingdom”. Be that as it may, “the invasion was no more than a raid, and Tarmāshirīn disappeared as suddenly as he had come”.

Like Alā-ud-dīn, Muḥammad bin Tughluq cherished extravagant visions of universal conquest. Encouraged by some Khurṣān nobles, who had come to the Sultān’s court, being tempted by his lavish generosity, and had their selfish motives to serve, the latter formed, during the early years of his reign, the ambitious design of conquering Khurṣān and Irbīk and mobilised a huge army for this purpose. Barni writes that 350,000 men were enrolled in the Diwan-i-farz or master-master’s office and were paid by the State for one full year. It is indeed true that Khurṣān was then in a state of disorder under its profligate monarch Abū Said, which might be taken advantage of by any external enemy. But its conquest was certainly an impossible task on the part of the Sultān of Delhi, whose authority could hardly be regarded as being established on a secure basis throughout his own kingdom, especially in the Deccan. There were also geographical and transport difficulties of no insignificant nature. To mobilise a large army through the passes of the Hindukush or the Himalayas, and arrange for its
provisions in distant lands, were tasks of gigantic magnitude. It is also worthy of consideration how far it was possible for the Delhi soldiers, who had so long gained success against the weak and divided Indian powers, to measure their strength successfully with the hardy hordes of Central Asia. Further, Tāmūshirīn Khān the Chaghātai chief, and the Sultan of Egypt, both of whom coveted the eastern and western frontiers of the distracted Persian Empire, were insincere allies of the Delhi Sultan, more determined to serve their own interests than help him in his projected invasion. Thus the Delhi Sultan's "scheme was impolitic in the highest degree" from every point of view. "It had to be abandoned, probably for lack of money. Barni writes: "The coveted countries were not acquired... and his treasure, which is the true source of political power, was expended."

Muhammad bin Tughluq never entertained the fantastic idea of conquering Tibet and China. But Barni, a contemporary officer, and Ibn Batūtah clearly refer to his design of "capturing the mountain of Kara-ja... which lies between the territories of Hind (India) and those of China". Evidently the expedition was directed against some refractory tribes in the Kumān-Gurhāl region with the object of bringing them under the control of the Delhi Sultan. A large army was sent from Delhi in the year A.D. 1337-1338 under the command of an able general.

But after an initial success, the Delhi troops suffered terribly owing to geographical difficulties, setting in of the rains, and lack of provisions. Only a few of them (ten according to Barni, three according to Ibn Batūtah) survived to relate the story of the tragic fate of the expedition. Its immediate objective was, however, gained, as the hillmen came to terms and agreed to pay tribute to the Delhi Sultan.

But the cumulative effect of all the fantastic projects of Muhammad bin Tughluq proved disastrous for him. They caused immense miseries to the people of his kingdom, who were afflicted at the same time by the ravages of famine, and finally exhausted their patience. Popular discontent found expression in open revolts against the Sultan's authority, and his whole reign was distracted by repeated rebellions, which increased the severity of his temper, undermined his prestige and authority, and accelerated the dismemberment of his vast empire.

The two early rebellions were put down with comparative ease, and the insurgents were given exemplary punishments. Bahā-ud-din Gursāsp, sister's son to Ghūyās-ud-din Tughluq and so first cousin to Muhammad bin Tughluq, who held the sief of Sāgar, situated about
ten miles north of Shorapur in the Deccan, refused to recognise the Sultān’s authority and rebelled against him in a.d. 1326 or 1327. But he was captured by the imperialists, and sent to Delhi. He was flayed alive there, his dead body was paraded round the city, and his execution was proclaimed by way of warning to others: “Thus shall all traitors to their king perish.” A more serious rebellion, which broke out in the next year, was that of Bahram Aiba, surnamed Kishā Khan, who held the fiefs of Uch, Sind and Multān. Muhammad bin Tughluq, who was then at Devagiri, marched to Multān by way of Delhi and inflicted a crushing defeat on the rebel in a fight in the plain of Abuhar.1 The Sultān was inclined to order a general massacre of the inhabitants of Multān, but was restrained from doing so by the saint Rukn-ud-din. Bahram was captured and beheaded and his head was hung up in the gate of the city of Multān by way of warning to persons of rebellious disposition.

But the suppression of these two rebellions did not in any way strengthen the Sultān’s position. Rather, from a.d. 1335, his fortunes began to wane and his authority to be openly defied by Hindu chiefs and Muslim governors of provinces, who were even emboldened to assert their independence. Taking advantage of the Sultān’s engagements in Northern India, Jalil-ud-din Ahsan Shāh, governor of Ma’bar, proclaimed himself independent in a.d. 13352 and struck coins in his own name. The Sultān marched in person against him, but on reaching Warangal was forced by an outbreak of cholera in his camp to retreat to Daulatabad. Thus came into existence the Independent Muslim kingdom of Madura, which existed till a.d. 1377–1378, when it fell before the rising State of Vijayanagar. This kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded according to tradition in a.d. 1336.

In the north, Fakhr-ud-din Mubārak Shāh, governor of the province of Bengal, the loyalty of which to the Delhi Sultānate had been always dubious, soon threw off his allegiance to it in a.d. 1338 and struck coins in his own name. The Sultān of Delhi, then preoccupied with other troubles, could do nothing to subdue him, and Bengal thus became an independent province. Rebellions followed in quick succession also in other parts of the Empire, the most formidable one being that of ‘Ain-ul-mulk, the governor of Oudh and Zafarabād, in a.d. 1340–41. All these were indeed

1 Now a small town situated in Fazilka tahsil, Firozepore district, on the South Punjab Railway. For topographical details vide Major Raverty’s article on The Mithān of Sind and its Tributaries, in J.A.S.B., 1892, Vol. 1.
2 This date has been established by Dr. E. Hultsch on numismatic evidence. Vide his article on The Coinage of the Sultānes of Madura, in J.R.A.S., 1899.
put down by the end of the year A.D. 1342, but they badly affected the resources of the State, exhausted the energy of the Sultán and damped his spirits.

In this extremely embarrassing situation, the Sultán sought pontifical recognition to strengthen his waning authority by obtaining a patent from the Abbásid Khalifah of Egypt. The desired patent came and Muhammad bin Tughluq caused his name to be replaced by that of the Khalifah on the Kharda and the coins. But his object was not fulfilled. The loyalty and confidence of his people had been too rudely shaken to be restored by the force of the Khalifah's patent. In fact, no one had questioned the Sultán's title to the throne; but it was his policy and measures which were not to the liking of his subjects.

Additional difficulties were staring him in the face from different quarters in all their grimness. In the Deccan, rulers like the Karkotiya prince, Krishna Nâyaka, son of Pratâpurudradeva II, Hariharâ I of Vijayanâgar, the Hoysala king Vira Ballâla IV, son of Ballâla III, and Prohaya Vema, the Reddi chief of Konâdâ, organised a confederacy against his domination in A.D. 1344 and succeeded in bringing Warangal, Dornamudra, and the country along the Coromandel Coast, out of his grasp. The Sultân's persecution of the "Centurions" (amirân-i-sadah) aggravated his troubles and "insurrection followed upon insurrection". The foreign Amirs revolted in Devagiri and the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom was laid by Abul Muzaffar Ala-ud-din Bahman Shâh, early in August, 1347. When the Sultán proceeded to quell a disturbance in one part, another broke out in a different quarter. While thus occupied in chasing the rebels in Sind, he was attacked with fever near Tattah and died on 20th March, A.D. 1351. "And so," remarks Badûni, "the king was freed from his people and they from their king." In fact, the whole reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq dragged on through baffled aims to a pathetic end, marked by the dismemberment of his vast empire of twenty-three provinces. There can be no doubt that the Sultán himself was largely responsible for this tragedy. Endowed with extraordinary intellect and industry, he lacked the essential qualities of a constructive statesman, and his ill-advised measures and stern policy, enforced in disregard of popular will, sealed the doom of his empire.

3. Firûz Shâh, Son of Rajab

The sudden death of Muhammad bin Tughluq near Tattah threw his leaderless army, already embarrassed by the presence of women...
and children in the camp, into great confusion and disorder. For
two days it was harassed and plundered by the rebels of Sind
and the Mongol mercenaries, who had been hired to help the Sultān's
army against the rebel Tughlā. In this extremity, the nobles urged
Fīrūz to ascend the throne and save the dispirited army from destruc-
tion. Fīrūz after some hesitation to accept the crown, in which
he was probably sincere, submitted to the choice of the nobles,
and was proclaimed king, at the age of forty-six, on the 23rd
March, 1351. He succeeded in restoring order in the army and set
out for Delhi with it. But hardly had he come out of Sind before
Khwāja-i-Jahān, the Deputy of the late Sultān, had proclaimed
at Delhi a boy as the son and heir of Muhammad bin Tughluq
and raised him to the throne. The situation was indeed a critical
one for Fīrūz, who, on reaching Multān, held consultations with
the nobles and the Muslim jurists. The former refused to admit
the existence of any son of Muhammad bin Tughluq and the latter
considered Khwāja-i-Jahān's candidate disqualified on the ground
of minority. The question was not considered from the legal point
of view. It was irrelevant to do so, for in Muslim law sovereignty
was not considered to be a matter of "inherited right". As the cause
of the boy king was hopeless, Khwāja-i-Jahān soon submitted to
Fīrūz, who pardoned him in consideration of his past services
and ordered him to go to the hie of Sāmāna to spend his last days
there in retirement. But on the way he was beheaded by a follower
of Sher Khān, the commandant of Sunān and Sāmāna, at the
instigation of his master and other nobles and chiefs of the army.
Fīrūz showed weakness in allowing the old officer, of whose
innocence he was convinced, to fall a victim to the vengeance of the
nobles.

The question as to whether Fīrūz's accession was regular
or not is a disputed one. Fīrūz was Muhammad's first cousin,
the son of Ghiyās-ud-din's younger brother Rajab by his Bhāttī
wife, who was the daughter of Rānā Mall, the chief of Abuhar.
He was trained in the art of government by Ghiyās-ud-din
Tughluq and Muhammad bin Tughluq, and the latter, according to
the contemporary chronicler, Barnī, had left a testament nominating
him as his heir-apparent. But the authenticity of this testament
has been questioned by Sir Wolseley Haig, who is of opinion that
the child whom Khwāja-i-Jahān raised to the throne was not
"a supposititious son" of Muhammad bin Tughluq but was an issue
of his blood. This view is not shared by some scholars. Whatever
it might have been, there is no doubt that the nobles and the jurists
selected Fīrūz partly on the ground of necessity. His succession,
according to some, "asserted once more with great force the right of election that had been gradually receding in the background without, however, denying the right of the son to rule. The case also emphasised fitness against merely close relationship to the sovereign".

The task before Firuz was indeed a difficult one,—that of raising the Delhi Sultanate from the state of decrepitude and demoralisation into which it had fallen since the closing years of his predecessor's reign. But the new Sultan was ill-fitted for it. He was weak, vacillating and incapable of sustained efforts, and lacked the essential qualities of good generalship. He made no serious attempts to recover the lost provinces of the Empire, and his military enterprises were mostly unsuccessful. In critical moments during his campaigns, he withdrew from them when almost on the point of victory, to avoid shedding the blood of his co-religionists. "His generalship in his two campaigns to Bengal and his eventual reduction of the Thatta, seems," remarks Thomas, "to have been of the lowest order; and the way that he allowed himself to be deluded into the deserts of Cutch, or the defiles of Jâjnagar, seems to savour of positive fatuity."

In the east Háji Iliyas, the independent ruler of Bengal, who had styled himself Shams-ad-din Iliyas Sháh, was engaged in extending the frontiers of his kingdom in various directions and "ravaged" those of the Delhi kingdom. Firuz thereupon marched from Delhi, at the head of 70,000 horse, in November A.D. 1353 to repel him. On hearing of his advance, Iliyas retreated into the fort of Ikdâla, situated probably at a distance of ten or twelve miles from Pândua. But he was attacked there by the Delhi troops and defeated. Firuz, however, did not reap the full advantage of his hard-earned victory, because without annexing Bengal, which was urged by his commander, Târtár Khán, he came back to Delhi on 1st September, 1354. There are two different versions regarding the cause of his undignified retreat. According to Shams-i-Sirâj 'Añif, the official historian of Firuz's reign, the Sultan retreated, being moved by the shrieks and wailings of the women in the besieged fort. But some later writers have attributed it to his apprehension of disasters at the commencement of the rainy season. Whatever might have been the cause of his retreat, one has to agree with Thomas' statement that "the invasion only resulted in the confession of weakness".

1 The exact site of this fort has not yet been definitely fixed. For detailed accounts of it, vide Calcutta Review, 1874; J.A.S.I., 1874; and Tabaqat-i-Nâsur, Bib. Ind., p. 601 footnote.
Firuz made another attempt to reduce Bengal to submission in the course of a few years. He found a pretext for it when Zafar Khân, son-in-law of Fakhr-ul-din Mubarak Shâh of Eastern Bengal, fled from Sonargen to his court via the sea-route and complained to him of the highhandedness of the Bengal ruler. The death of the brave and able ruler, Shams-ul-din Ilîyâs, encouraged Firuz to organise an expedition against Bengal. Brushing aside all previous treaties and assurances of friendship, he marched, at the head of a large army, against Sikandar Shâh, the son and successor of Shams-ul-din Ilîyâs, in A.D. 1359. On his way he halted for six months at Zafarâbâd on the Gunti and founded in its neighbourhood the city of Jaunpur, in memory of his cousin, Fakhr-ul-din Jauna (Muhammad bin Tughluq). At the end of the rainy season, he resumed his march towards Bengal. As he sent no response to the friendly negotiations of Sikandar Shâh, the latter, following his father's example, retreated into the mud fortress of Ikdîla. The Delhi troops besieged this fortress, but its reduction did not prove to be child's play. The Bengal troops bravely defended their stronghold, “until the rains drew near and the floods came to help their cause” against the besiegers. A peace was soon concluded on favourable terms for Sikandar. Thus, the second Bengal expedition of the Delhi Sultân was as abortive as the first one. It merely exhibited once more his weak and vacillating nature.

On his way back to Delhi, the Sultân halted for some time at Jaunpur, and then marched against Jajnagar (modern Orissa). The Râi of this place fled, on the approach of the Delhi troops, towards Telangana, and soon tendered his submission by surrendering some elephants and promising to send to Delhi a number of elephants annually as tribute. Firuz returned to Delhi, undergoing great difficulties and privations, after an absence of two years and a half.

The reduction of the fortress of Nagarkot, which though conquered by Muhammad bin Tughluq in A.D. 1337 had slipped out of Delhi control during the closing years of the Sultan's reign, engaged the attention of Firuz shortly after his return to Delhi. On reaching Nagarkot, he besieged the fortress there for six months, when its Râi submitted to him. Firuz's Nagarkot campaign is interesting because of the fact that he caused 300 volumes of Sanskrit books on various subjects, preserved in the temple of Jwâlamukhi, to be rendered into Persian verse under the title of Dalâ'il-i-Firuz Shâhî, by a court-poet named A'zz-ul-din Khalîl Khânî.

In 1361-62 Firuz resumed the task of conquering Sind, which had been abandoned on the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq about eleven
years back. He marched towards Tattah, the capital of the Jāms of Sind, with 90,000 cavalry, many infantry, 460 elephants, and 5,000 boats. The then ruler of Sind, Jām Bābāniya, decided to meet him and formed a battle army with 20,000 cavalry and 400,000 infantry. The Delhi army suffered greatly, owing to the outbreak of famine and an epizootic disease, which carried off about three-quarters of it. Intending to gather fresh reinforcements, the Sultān retreated to Gujarāt. But being misled by some treacherous guides, he drifted away into the Rann of Cutch, and for six months nothing could be discovered regarding the fate of his army. Additional troops being, however, sent from Delhi by his able minister, Khān-i-Jahān Maqbūl, the Sultān again attacked the Sindians in 1363 and forced them to sue for peace. The Sindians agreed to pay an annual tribute of several lacs of tankās to the Sultān and acknowledged allegiance to his authority. But his expeditions to Sind, like his Bengal campaigns, revealed his lack of military ability and tactical skill.

There were no Mongol inroads during the reign of Firūz. We are told by Yahiyā that the “frontiers of the kingdom were secured by placing them under great armies and the well-wishers of the Emperor”.

But no attempt was made by Firūz to bring the Deccan under the control of the Delhi Sultānate. When his officers asked him to undertake an expedition to Daulatabād, he, as Shams-i-Sirāj ‘Afīf puts it, “looked distressed and his eyes were suffused with tears, and approving their arguments, he said that... he was resolved never more to make war upon men of the Muhammadan faith”.

Firūz’s policy was largely influenced by his religious outlook. He entertained great regard for the Khalifah of Egypt. For the first time in the history of Muslim India he styled himself as his deputy; during the first six years of his reign he twice received a patent of rulership and robes of honour from him; and on his coins his own name was associated with that of the Khalifah. He tried to conduct the affairs of the State according to the theocratic principles of his faith. He encouraged his subjects, belonging to other persuasions, “to embrace the religion” in which he himself found solace, and framed regulations which deviated from the religious policy that had hitherto been pursued by his predecessors.

Probably with a view to consolidating the nobles and the officials, Firūz revived the jāyūr system, which had been abolished by ‘Alā-ud-din, and farmed out the whole kingdom among them besides granting them increased salaries and allowances. Though these
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measures apparently strengthened the position of the new Sultân, they ultimately served to engender a tendency to decentralisation, which undermined the authority of the central government.

But with all the above-mentioned defects, Firûz has a record of some benevolent measures to his credit, and his long reign of about thirty-seven years was a period of comparative prosperity and happiness for the people. He abolished many vexations and unjust cesses, which had been levied upon the people during the previous reigns, and devised taxation according to the spirit of the Quranic Law. He allowed the imposition of four kinds of taxes sanctioned by the Quran—the khâtâb or tenth from cultivated lands, the zakêt or alms, the jizya or poll-tax on the non-Muslims and other heretics, and the khams or one-fifth of the spoil and of the produce of mines. In consultation with the canonists, he also levied an irrigation tax (shârb) at the rate of 10 per cent of the produce of the fields. The spoils of war were to be shared by the State and the soldiers, as prescribed by the Quran, the former getting one-fifth of the spoil and the latter four-fifths. The merchants were relieved from the payment of some irregular and oppressive octroi duties, which obstructed free circulation of merchandise from one part of the country to another. The State officers were strictly warned against demanding anything more than the prescribed dues, and were punished for unjust exactions. The results of these measures were indeed beneficial for trade and agriculture. Shams-i-Sîrâj 'Affi, though a panegyrist of the Sultân, with whose court he was frequently associated, writes with much truth that, as a result of these regulations, the ryots grew rich and were satisfied.

"Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good beds and draňas. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The State did not suffer from financial bankruptcy during this reign. The revenues of the Daôb amounted to eighty lacs of tankâs and those of the territories of Delhi to six crores and eighty-five lacs of tankâs." Prices of the articles of common consumption also became low.¹

The construction of a system of irrigation canals contributed greatly towards the improvement of agriculture. Two streams are mentioned by Shams-i-Sîrâj 'Affi to have been excavated under the orders of Firûz—one from the Sutlej and the other from the

¹ The prices of articles have been thus stated by Shams-i-Sîrâj 'Affi:

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Jumna. But Yahiyā, who, as an inhabitant of Sirhind, had a
better knowledge of the canal system, writes of four canals being
constructed during this reign: (a) one from the Sutlej to the Ghaughar,
(b) a second opened in the vicinity of the Mandavi and Sirmur
hills, and joined by seven creeks, was extended as far as Hansi,
and thence to Arasani, where the foundation of the fort of Hissar
Firūzā was laid, (c) the third flowing from the Ghaughar by the
fort of Sirsuti went up to the village of Hirani-Khera, (d) and the
fourth being excavated from the Jumna was extended to Firūzābād
and then passed further beyond it. Firūz employed skilled engineers
to superintend the canals, and especially to examine and report
on them during the rainy season. Another beneficial step on his
part was the reclamation of waste lands, the income accruing
from which was spent for religious and educational purposes.

Firūz’s building and gardening activities indirectly benefited the
people. He had a great passion for building new cities and renaming
old ones. He himself says: “Among the many gifts which God
bestowed upon me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect
public buildings. So I built many mosques and colleges and monas-
teries, that the learned and the elders, the devout and the holy,
might worship God in these edifices, and aid the kind builder with
their prayers.” He founded the town of Jaunpur, Fatehābād,
Hissār, Firūzpur near Badāin, and Firūzābād, at a distance of
ten miles from his capital. During his Bengal campaigns, he
renamed Ikdāla “Azādpur” and Pāndua “Firūzābād”. He con-
structed or restored a number of mosques, palaces, sarais, reser-
voirs, hospitals, tombs, baths, monumental pillars and bridges.
The chief architect of the State was Malik Ghāzi Sakana, who
was helped by ‘Abdul Huq. The Sultan’s interest in gardening
led him to lay out 1,200 new gardens near Delhi and restore thirty
old gardens of ‘Alā-ud-dīn. He also removed two inscribed monoliths
of Aśoka to Delhi—one from a village near Khizrābād on the
upper Jumna and the other from Moerut.

While conforming to the principles of the Quranic law in the
administration of justice, Firūz tried to make the judicial system
more humane than before. We have in his own words: “In the
reigns of former kings . . . many varieties of torture were employed.
Amputation of hands and feet, ears and noses; tearing out the
eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of
the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving
iron nails into the hands, feet, and bosom, cutting the sinews,
sawing men asunder; these and many similar tortures were practised.
The great and merciful God made me, His servant, hope and seek
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for His mercy by devoting myself to prevent the unlawful killing of Mussalmans, and the infliction of any kind of torture upon them or upon any men." Some benevolent measures were also adopted by him for the general welfare of the people, who, according to all contemporary writers, held him in great respect. He tried to solve the unemployment problem by starting an employment bureau, and providing employment for as many as possible after a thorough enquiry into each man's merit and capacity. He further established a charity bureau (Diwan-i-Khaidi), through which pecuniary help was distributed for the marriage of girls of needy Muslims, chiefly of the middle class, and for the benefit of widows and orphans. He founded a charitable hospital (Dar-al-Shafi), where medicines and diet were supplied by efficient physicians at the cost of the State.

Firuz did not issue absolutely new varieties of coins. The coins prevalent during his reign had already been in circulation in the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Even the Mashghani or six-jital piece, which is especially attributed to him by 'Alif, has been referred to by Ibn Batuta. But credit must be conceded to him for having introduced two fractions of mixed copper and silver coinage—half and quarter jitals, described as adba (half) and bikh respectively. These mixed pieces facilitated the transactions of the common people and gave the coinage considerable metallic strength. But much of their utility was spoiled by fraud and speculation in the working of the mint.

The army of the State was organised on a feudal basis. The regular soldiers of the army received grants of lands, sufficient for their comfortable living, and the irregulars (ghairuagh) were paid direct from the royal treasury. Those who did not get their salaries in either of these ways, were supplied with transferable assignments on the revenue. The last method of payment proved to be a source of great abuse. The assignments were purchased in the capital by some middle-men at one-third of their value, and they sold them to the soldiers in the districts at one-half. Thus a class of people made clandestine gains, without any labour on their part, at the expense of the soldiers. The State army consisted of eighty or ninety thousand cavalry, which could be reinforced by the retainers of the nobles. But it is doubtful if the army was really efficient. Its strength must have been greatly undermined by the Sultan's unwise generosity towards the soldiers. He passed a new regulation to the effect that when a soldier became incapable of service in the field through old age, his son, or son-in-law, or slave, should step into his place. The recognition of this
hereditary claim in military services, irrespective of any consideration of fitness, was undoubtedly a pernicious practice.

The reign of Firúz was marked by an unprecedented rise in the number of slaves, for whom the State maintained a separate establishment. The feief-holders in different parts of the kingdom made presents of slaves to the Sultán, for which corresponding deductions were made from the taxes payable by them to the Government. Thus the institution of slavery entailed a heavy loss on the central exchequer.

Though generally opposed to gorgeous display, Firúz, like his predecessors, maintained a magnificent and luxurious court, which was, as Shams-i-Sirāj 'Aṣīf says, especially decorated during the Id and Shabrāt festivals. There were also thirty-six royal establishments, each having a separate staff of officers to look after its affairs. The expenses for the maintenance of the court and the household establishments of the Sultán must have been considerable.

Firúz's minister, Khān-i-Jabān Maqbul, exercised a potent influence in the affairs of the State. He was originally a Hindu of Telangāna but subsequently embraced Islam and had an official career under Muhammad bin Tughluq before he rose to this eminent position in the reign of Firúz. He died in A.D. 1370 and was succeeded in his office and emoluments by his son, Jūna Shāh, who also received his title. On the death of Zafar Khān, the governor of Gujārat, in the next year, his son, Daryā Khān, succeeded him in his office. Later the Sultán received a severe shock from the death of his eldest son, Fath Khān, on the 23rd July, 1374. This gravely affected both his mind and body.

As was the case with most of the Sultāns of Delhi, the last days of Firúz were far from peaceful. His judgment failed as he advanced in age, and the efficiency of the government declined. He committed a blunder in trying to share authority with his eldest surviving son, Muhammad Khān, an incompetent youth, who gave himself up to pleasures instead of looking after the administration of the State. A civil war ensued even during the lifetime of the Sultán, and Muhammad Khān fled towards the Sirmār hills. Firúz then conferred the royal title and the position held by Muhammad Khān, on his grandson, Tughluq Khān, son of the deceased Fath Khān, before he died on the 20th September, 1388.

Contemporary Indian writers are unanimous in admiring the virtues of Firúz Shāh. In their opinion, no king, since the time of Nāṣir-ud-din Mahmūd, had been “so just and kind, so

1 According to Shams-i-Sirāj 'Aṣīf the number of slaves in the capital and the provinces rose to 180,000. Elliot, Vol. III, p. 341.
courteous and God-fearing, or such a builder” as Firūz was. Firūz indeed possessed excellent qualities of heart, such as affection and benevolence; and his reign was marked by peace and prosperity. But his indiscriminate generosity and concessions contributed in no small degree to the dismemberment of the Delhi Sultanate in the long run. His revival of the jagir system also produced a tendency towards decentralisation to the prejudice of the integrity of the State.

4. The Successors of Firūz Shāh, Son of Rajab

The immediate successor of Firūz was his grandson, Tughluq Shāh, who assumed the title of Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq Shāh II. He soon fell a victim to a conspiracy of some officers and nobles on the 19th February, A.D. 1389. The nobles at Delhi then acclaimed his cousin, Abu Baqr, as the Sultan. At the same time the partisans of Firūz’s son, Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad, proclaimed him king at Sāmāna on the 24th April, 1389. Abu Baqr was forced to surrender to his rivals, and was deposed, in December 1390. Largely owing to the strain of his struggle against various difficulties, the health of Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad declined and he died in January 1394. Then came the brief reign of his son, Humāyūn, who died on the 8th March following. The next and the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty was Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd, the youngest son of Muhammad. His rival, Xusrat Shāh, a son of Fath Khān, the eldest son of Firūz, made an attempt to gain the throne at the instigation of some nobles but it proved futile and he was treacherously put to death.

All the successors of Firūz were weaklings and utterly incompetent to save the Delhi Sultanate from disruption, the symptoms of which had already appeared. They were mere puppets in the hands of some unscrupulous nobles, whose selfish intrigues largely fomented the civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne of Delhi. These told heavily upon the prestige and resources of the State, with the result that its authority began to be defied almost everywhere by the Muslim governors and Hindu chiefs. The eunuch Malik Sarvar, who had persuaded Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd to bestow upon him the title of Malik-us-Sharq, or Lord of the East, founded the independent kingdom of Jaunpur; the Khokars revolted in the north; the provinces of Gujarāt, Mālwa, and Khāndesh became independent States; Muslim principalities were established in Bijāna and Kalpi and a Hindu principality in Gwālior; the chief of Mewāt transferred his nominal allegiance from one prince to another at his own sweet will; and the Hindus of the Doāb were almost constantly in revolt.
5. Invasion of Timur

Such was the distracted and chaotic condition of the kingdom of Delhi when Amir Timur, one of the most terrible military leaders known to history, invaded India. Amir Timur, son of Amir Turghay, chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlaa Turks, was born at Kesh in Transoxiana in A.D. 1336. He ascended the throne of Samarcand in 1369 and then launched on a career of aggressive conquests in Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. The wealth of India naturally excited the temptation to invade this land, for which the disintegration of the Delhi kingdom afforded him a suitable opportunity. He used his championship of the faith as a pretext to win the support of the nobles and warriors, who were not in favour of his meditated invasion of this distant land.

Early in 1398 Pir Muhammad, a grandson of Timur, besieged Multan and captured it after six months. Timur left Samarcand in April, 1398, at the head of a large army, and having crossed the Indus, the Jhelum and the Ravi in September, appeared before Talamba, situated about seventy miles to the north-east of Multan, on the 13th October of the same year. He sacked Talamba and massacred or enslaved its inhabitants. After capturing several places on his way and massacring many of their inhabitants, he advanced to the outskirts of Delhi by the end of the first week of December, and butchered there about 100,000 adult male captives in cold blood. Sultan Mahmud and Mallu Iqbal endeavoured to oppose him there on the 17th December with a large army consisting of 10,000 cavalry, 40,000 infantry and 120 elephants, clad in armour. But they were hopelessly defeated and took to their heels, Mallu fleeing to Baran and Mahmud to Gujarat.

On the next day Timur entered the city of Delhi, which was given up to pillage and rapine for several days. Many of the inhabitants of this unfortunate city were either brutally massacred by the ferocious Turk soldiers or made captives, and the artisans among them were sent to Samarcand to build there the famous Friday Mosque which Timur himself had designed. Thus a tragic fate overtook the capital city of the Sultans of Delhi.

Timur had no desire to stay in India. After halting at Delhi for fifteen days, he returned through Firuzabad (1st January, 1399), stormed Meerut (9th January,) on the way and advancing further north defeated two Hindu armies in the neighbourhood of Hardwarr in January. Marching along the Siwalik Hills, he captured Kangra (16th January) and sacked Jammu, the inhabitants of those places being slaughtered in large numbers.
He appointed Khizr Khan Sayyid to the government of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur, and recrossed the Indus on the 19th March, “after inflicting on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single invasion”.

Nature also proved cruel to the people of Delhi at this critical time and added to their miseries caused by the ravages of bloody wars and devastations. “At this time,” writes Badani, “such a famine and pestilence fell upon Delhi that the city was utterly ruined, and those of the inhabitants who were left died, while for two months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi.” Timur, in short, completed the dissolution of the Tughluq kingdom, the vitality of which had already been sapped by internal cankers. Bengal had long been independent; Khwaja Jalal had been ruling over an independent kingdom comprising Kanauj, Oudh, Kara, Dahman, Sandila, Bahraich, Bijapur and Jaunpur; in Gujarat, Muzaffar Shah owed no allegiance to anybody; in Malwa, Dilawar Khan exercised royal authority; the Punjab and Upper Sind were held by Khizr Khan as Timur’s viceroy; and Ghulib Khan had established his power in Sana’ana, Shams Khan Auhadi in Bayana, and Muhammad Khan in Kali and Mahoba. To make confusion worse confounded, the decay of political authority in Delhi emboldened the unscrupulous nobles and adventurers to indulge more and more in base intrigues. Some of them helped Nasrat Shah, who had been so long lurking in the Doab, to take possession of Delhi in 1399, but he was defeated and expelled from that city by Mallu Iqbal. On returning to Delhi in 1401, Mallu Iqbal extended an invitation to Sultân Mahmud, who had found shelter at Dihar after experiencing many bitter humiliations in Gujarât, to return to Delhi. He thought that the “prestige of the fugitive Mahmud Shah would be useful to him”. Sultân Mahmud returned to Delhi only to remain as a puppet in the hands of Mallu Iqbal till the latter’s death in a fight with Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan, Dipalpur and Upper Sind, on the 12th November, 1405. Being a weak king, Mahmud could not make proper use of his restored position. He died at Kaithal in February, 1413, after a nominal sovereignty of about twenty years, and with him the dynasty founded by Ghiyâs-ud-dîn Tughluq came to an ignominious end.
CHAPTER V
DISINTEGRATION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

1. Delhi: The Sayyids and the Lodis

A. The so-called Sayyids

After the death of Sultan Mahmud, the nobles of Delhi acknowledged Daulat Khan Lodi, the most powerful of their number, as the ruler of Delhi. But he was destined to hold power only for a few months. In March, A.D. 1414, Khizr Khan, governor of Multan and its dependencies on behalf of Timur, marched against him and took possession of Delhi by the end of May of the same year. Daulat Khan was sent as a prisoner to Hissar Firuz. Some historians represent Khizr Khan as a descendant of the Prophet, and the dynasty founded by him has accordingly been styled the Sayyid Dynasty. But the arguments in favour of this claim seem to be very doubtful, though Khizr’s ancestors might have originally hailed from Arabia. Khizr did not assume the insignia of royalty but professed to rule as a viceroy of Timur’s fourth son and successor, Shah Rukh, to whom he is said to have sent tribute. His tenure of power for seven years was not marked by any striking event. The extent of the old Delhi kingdom had then been reduced to a small principality, and the authority of its ruler was limited to a few districts round Delhi. Even in those parts, it was frequently challenged by the Hindu zamindars of Etawah, Katehr, Kanauj, Patiala and Kampila. Khizr Khan and his loyal minister, Taj-ul-mulk, who was also an intrepid fighter, struggled hard against these chronic disorders till the latter died on the 13th January, 1421, and the former on the 20th May, 1421. Ferishta extols Khizr Khan as “a just, a generous and a benevolent prince”, but he was not a strong ruler. Owing to the efforts Khizr Khan made, “there were, of course, the ordinary concessions to expediency... submission (by the insurgents) for the moment in the presence of a superior force, insincere professions of allegiance, temporising payments of tribute, or desertion of fields and strongholds easily regained; but there was clearly no material advance in public security or in the supremacy of the Central Government”.

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Mubārak Shāh, whom his father, Khizr Khān, had nominated as his heir on his death-bed, ascended the throne of Delhi on the very day of the latter's death, with the consent of the Delhi nobles. It was during his reign that Yalīyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi wrote his Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī, which is a valuable source-book for the history of this period. But his reign is as uneventful and dreary as that of his father. There is nothing of importance to record except some punitive expeditions to suppress disorders, which compelled the Sultān to accompany his armies. He was able to subdue the rebellions at Bhātinda and in the Doāb and recover balances of tribute from a limited area. But the brave Khokars grew more and more powerful and harassed him more than once. Their chief, Jasarat, confidently aspired to the establishment of their supremacy on the ruins of the Delhi kingdom. The Hindu nobles enhanced their influence in the Delhi court itself. On the 19th February, 1434, the Sultān fell victim to a conspiracy, organised by some Musulim as well as Hindu nobles under the leadership of the discontented wazīr Sarvar-ul-mulk, when he proceeded to superintend the construction of a newly planned town, called Mubārakābād, on the Jumna.

The nobles of Delhi then raised Muhammad, a grandson of Khizr Khān and the heir-designate of the late murdered Sultān, to the throne of Delhi. But he also became "the victim of factions and the sport of circumstances". Even when he had the opportunity to display his capacity for rule after the death of the unscrupulous wazīr Sarvar-ul-mulk, he abused it in such a manner as to forfeit the confidence of those who had delivered him from the hands of his enemies. Buhūlī Khān Lodī, the governor of Lahore and Sirhind, who had come to help the Sultān when Mahmūd Shāh Khalji of Mālwa had advanced as far as the capital, soon made an attempt to capture Delhi. Though it failed for the time being, the condition of the Sayyids gradually passed from bad to worse. As Nizām-ud-din Ahmad writes, "the affairs of the State grew day by day more and more confused, and it so happened that there were nobles at twenty krohs from Delhi, who threw off their allegiance (to the tottering Empire) and engaged themselves in preparations for resistance to it". After the death of Muhammad Shāh in A.D. 1445, the nobles declared his son to be the ruler of the shattered kingdom, which now consisted only of the city of Delhi and the neighbouring villages, under the title of 'Alā-ud-din 'Alam Shāh. The new ruler was more feeble and inefficient than his father. He made over the throne of Delhi to Buhūlī Lodī in

1 There are differences of opinion regarding this date.
1451 and retired in an inglorious manner to his favourite place, Badāūn, where he spent the rest of his life, absorbed in pleasure, probably without any regret for his surrender of the throne, till his death.

B. The Lodīs

Buhlūl Khān belonged to the Lodī tribe of Afghanāns. He was a nephew of Sultān Shāh Lodī, who had been appointed governor of Sirhind with the title of Islām Khān after the death of Mallū Iqbāl. On the death of his uncle, Buhlūl became the governor of Lahore and Sirhind. When 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālam Shāh voluntarily abdicated the throne of Delhi, he seized it on the 19th April, 1451, with the support of the minister Hamid Khān. Thus, for the first time in the history of India, an Afghan ruler was seated on the throne of Delhi.

Buhlūl was called upon to rule over a mere fragment of the Delhi kingdom, which again was then in a highly distracted condition. But he was made of a different stuff from that of his immediate predecessors. Born of a fighting clan, he was active, warlike, and ambitious, and was determined to restore the strength of the Sultānate. He got rid of the influence of the old minister Hamid Khān by cleverly throwing him into prison with the help of his Afghan followers. He also frustrated an attempt on the part of Mahmūd Shāh Sharqi of Jaunpur to get possession of Delhi, and reduced to submission some provincial fief-holders and chieftains who had enjoyed independence for several years. Thus Ahmad Khān of Mevāt, Dariyā Khān of Sambhal, 'Isa Khān of Koīl, Mubārak Khān of Suket, Rājā Pratāp Singh of Mainpurī and Bhongāon, Qutb Khān of Rewārī, and the chiefs of Etāwah, Chandwār and other districts of the Doāb, were compelled to acknowledge the authority of the Sultān, who, however, treated them with leniency so that they might be reconciled to his rule. His more significant achievement was the successful war against the neighbouring kingdom of Jaunpur, the independence of which was extinguished.

He appointed his eldest surviving son, Bārbak Shāh, viceroy of Jaunpur in 1486. While returning from Gwālīor after chastising its Rājā, Kirat Singh, the Sultān fell ill; and in the midst of intrigues for succession to the throne among the partisans of his sons, Bārbak Shāh and Nizām Shāh, and grandson, A'zam-Ḥumāyūn, he breathed his last by the middle of July 1489, near the town of Jalālī.

As a ruler, Buhlūl was incomparably superior to those who had preceded him on the throne of Delhi since the time of Firūz of the house of Tūghlūq. Possessed of courage, energy and tact, he
restored the prestige of the Muslim power in Hindustān and infused some vigour into the government of his kingdom. Averse to display of royal splendour, he was kind to the poor, and though not a learned man himself, was a patron of scholars. He enjoyed the love and confidence of his near relatives and fellow tribesmen, who were allowed to share with him his power and prosperity.

After Buhārī's death, his second son, Nizām Khān, was proclaimed king at Jālālī, under the title of Sultān Sikandar Shāh, on the 17th July, 1489. His succession was disputed, as some of the nobles suggested the name of Bārbak Shāh; but their proposal came to nothing as Bārbak was then at a distant place. Endowed with considerable energy and vigour, Sikandar amply justified the choice of the minority among the nobles. He made earnest efforts to increase the strength of the kingdom by removing the disorders and confusion into which it had been thrown during the preceding reigns, due largely to the refractoriness of the provincial governors, chieftains, and zamindārs. He took care also to check the accounts of the leading Afgān jāgīrdārs, much against their will. Marching to Tirhut and Bihār, he asserted his authority as far as the confines of Bengal; appointed Dariyā Khān to the government of Bihār; compelled the Kājā of Tirhut to pay him tribute; and concluded a treaty with 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh of Bengal, by which both agreed not to encroach on each other's dominion. The chiefs of Dholpur, Chanderī, and some other places, also tendered submission to him. With the object of controlling the chiefs of Etawah, Biyāna, Koll, Gwalior and Dholpur in an effective manner, he founded a new town in 1504 on the site where the modern city of Āgra stands. Striving till his last days to enforce obedience from the hostile chiefs, the Sultān breathed his last at Āgra on the 21st November, A.D. 1517.

Sikandar was undoubtedly the ablest of the three rulers of his dynasty. He has been highly praised by contemporary as well as some later writers for his excellent qualities of head and heart. A firm, vigilant, and upright ruler, he entertained kind feelings in his heart for the poor and the needy, patronised learned men, and himself wrote some Persian verses. He dispensed justice with strict impartiality and personally heard the complaints of even the poorest of his subjects. The efficiency of his government chiefly contributed to the prevalence of peace and prosperity in his kingdom, and the prices of the articles of prime necessity became excessively low. He was, however, not free from religious intolerance, which led him to commit some impolitic acts.

After the death of Sikandar, his eldest son, Ibrāhīm, was elevated
to the throne at Agra on the 21st November, 1517. A faction of
the nobility advocated a partition of the kingdom and set up
Ibrāhīm’s younger brother, Jalāl Khān, on the throne of Jaunpur.
But Ibrāhīm frustrated their attempt, whereupon Jalāl fled from
Jaunpur but was captured on the way and assassinated by the
Sultān’s orders. The new Sultān possessed military skill, but
lacked good sense and moderation, and this ultimately brought
about his ruin. With a view to securing strength and efficiency, he
unwisely embarked upon a policy of repression towards the powerful
nobles of the Lohānī, Formuli and Lodi tribes, who constituted the
official class of the State. By his stern measures he alienated
the sympathies of the Afghān nobility and drove them to disloyalty,
which manifested itself in absolute defiance of his authority.
This embittered the Sultān more and more and increased the
severity of his measures towards the nobles. But the latter lost
their patience; and soon those of Bihār declared their independence
under Darīyā Khān Lohānī. The discontent of the nobles was
brought to a head by Ibrāhīm’s unsympathetic treatment of
Dilwār Khān, son of Daulat Khān Lodi, the semi-independent
governor of Lahore. Daulat Khān Lodi and ‘Alam Khān, an uncle
of Sultān Ibrāhīm and a pretender to the throne of Delhi, invited
Bābur, the Timūrid ruler of Kābul, to invade India. Thus revenge
and ambition, persecutions and disaffection, brought about the
final collapse of the decadent Delhi Sultānate and paved the way
for the establishment of a new Turkish rule in India.

Indeed, the fall of the Delhi Sultānate was inevitable under the
conditions which had their birth in the last days of Muhammad
bin Tughluq. The indiscretions of that Sultān brought on a process of
disintegration, which was accelerated by the weakness and impolitic
measures of his immediate successor, Firūz Shāh, such as the
revival of the jāgīr system, the extension of the institution of
slavery, the imposition of jizya on the non-Muslims and persecution
of the heretical Muslim sects. This process could not be checked
by the weak Sayyids and unstatesmanlike Lodos. In spite of
some military successes to their credit, the Lodos failed to introduce
any wholesome and strong element in the administrative structure,
and committed a fatal blunder by making an attempt to suppress
the military and official nobility by a policy of repression. An
external calamity, which might very well be regarded as a symptom
of the growing decline of the Delhi Sultānate, hastened its end.
While internal dissensions had been eating into its vitality, the
invasion of Timūr destroyed its coherence and increased the selfish
intrigues of the nobility, who, like the feudal baronage of later
medieval Europe, plunged the whole kingdom into disorder and confusion which it was beyond the capacity of the weak rulers of Delhi to remove by prudent measures. Further, the Tughluqs, and their successors, did nothing to introduce such reforms as could lead to the growth of a unified State in a country like India, where, during the Middle Ages, the sense of social solidarity or of territorial and political unity had hardly grown. Thus the military anarchy of the Turks and the Afghāns could enforce obedience among the governers and peoples of the different provinces only so long as it could retain its vigour. As soon as the central authority grew weak, the centrifugal tendencies, so common in the history of India, made headway, and a number of independent kingdoms arose on the ruins of the Delhi Sultānate. Their history may now be studied in brief.

2. Bengal

The control of the Delhi Sultāns over Bengal was always dubious, and it was one of the earliest provinces to assert its independence. Its distance from Delhi, and its profuse wealth, often tempted its governers to rebel against the central authority, which, as has already been noted, caused much trouble to Iltutmish and Balban. Under the descendents of Balban it was virtually independent of the Delhi Government, whose control was again asserted only in the time of Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq, who defeated Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur Shāh and divided the province into three independent administrative divisions with their capitals at Lakhnauti, Sātgāon, and Sūrāgāon respectively. Soon after his accession, Muhammad bin Tughluq appointed Qadr Khān to the government of Lakhnauti, ‘Iẕẕ-ud-din A’ẕam-ul-mulk to that of Sātgāon, and restored Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur Shāh to the government of Sūrāgāon but associated with him his own foster-brother, Tāṯār Khān, better known as Bahram Khān. This partition of Bengal did not, however, serve to remove the chronic troubles in that province. Ghiyās-ud-din Bahādur soon revolted and issued coins from the mints at Sūrāgāon and Ghiyāspur. But he was soon defeated and killed, and Bahram Khān became the sole governor at Sūrāgāon. Bahram Khān died in A.D. 1336, whereupon his armour-bearer, Fakhr-ud-din, immediately proclaimed himself ruler of Sūrāgāon under the title of Fakhr-ud-din Mubārak Shāh. Shortly ‘Alā-ud-din ‘Āli Shāh (A.D. 1339-1345) made himself independent in Northern Bengal, and removed his capital from Lakhnauti to Pândua. It has been asserted on the evidence of some coins that Fakhr-ud-din Mubārak Shāh died a natural death after an unbroken reign
of ten years\(^1\) and was succeeded on the throne of Sonārgāon by İkhtiyār-ud-din Ghāzī Shāh, who was most probably his son.

Ultimately Hājī Ilyās, foster-brother of ‘Alā-ud-din ‘Āli Shāh, made himself the independent ruler of the entire province of Bengal, about A.D. 1345, under the title of Shams-ud-din Ilyās Shāh. Soon after his accession he extended his power in different directions. It appears that after annexing the eastern kingdom of Sonārgāon in A.D. 1352 he exacted tribute from the kingdoms of Orissa and Tirhut and went as far as Benares. Thus his activities proved to be a menace to the Delhi kingdom on its eastern frontier, and it was during his reign that Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq made an attempt to recover the lost province of Bengal, which, however, ended in failure. Ilyās died at Pāndua in A.D. 1357. His reign was marked by peace and prosperity, which “are attested by the inauguration of a national and typical coinage, and by the growth of a taste for the arts of peace, especially architecture”.

Ilyās was succeeded by his son, Sikandar Shāh, early in whose reign the Delhi Sultān made a second attempt to recover Bengal but had to return disappointed. After a prosperous reign of about thirty-six years, Sikandar died, most probably in October, 1393, in the course of a fight with his son, Ghiyās-ud-din A’zam, at Gālpārā near Pāndua. That his reign was prosperous is well attested by his building of the magnificent mosque at Ādina and by the large number, variety, and richness of the designs of his coins. The next ruler, Ghiyās-ud-din A’zam, was a correspondent of the famous poet Hāфиз. He was an able prince, having a profound regard for law. He received an embassy from Yung-lo, rival of the Emperor Hui-ti of China, in A.D. 1408, and in A.D. 1409 sent one in return. Ghiyās-ud-din A’zam Shāh died in A.D. 1410 after a reign of about seventeen years and was succeeded by his son, Saif-ud-din Hamzah Shāh. But about this time, Rājā Ganesh, a Brahmin zamindār of Bhātūrī and Dinājpur, rose to power and Hamza ruled as a nominal king for one year and a few months. According to the Muslim historians, Ganesh ruled Bengal as an independent king and abdicated in favour of his son Jadu, who subsequently embraced Islam and assumed the title of Jalāl-ud-din

\(^1\) Bhattacharji, *Independent Sultans of Bengal*, p. 17. The Muslim chroniclers give different accounts about Fakhr-ud-din’s death. The author of Fīrūz writes that he was killed by ‘Alā-ud-din ‘Āli Shāh; Badā’īnī states that Muhammad bin Tughluq went to Sonārgāon, took Fakhr-ud-din to Delhi and killed him; and Shams-i-Sirāj ‘Arif notes that Fakhr-ud-din was killed by Hājī Ilyās.
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Muhammad Shah. A large number of his coins have been discovered, but not a single coin bearing the name of Râjâ Ganesh has hitherto come to light. It has, therefore, been suggested by some that probably Ganesh never assumed full sovereignty but ruled as a virtual dictator in the name of some descendants of Iiyâs Shâh, who were mere puppets in his hands. These nominal rulers were Shihâb-ud-din Bayâzîd Shâh, who succeeded to the throne some time between A.D. 1411 and A.D. 1413, and 'Ali-ud-din Firuz Shâh, son and successor of Bayâzîd Shâh, some of whose coins have come down to us. Dr. Bhattasali has identified Râjâ Ganesh with Danejamardana Deva, some of whose coins, struck in the widely distant mints of Pândua, Suvarnagâma and Chittâgong, and bearing Sanskrit legends in Bengali characters, have been discovered. Some again are of opinion that the two were different persons.

The rule of the dynasty of Ganesh did not last long. Jalâl-ud-din Muhammad died in A.D. 1431 and was succeeded by his son Shams-ud-din Ahmad, who reigned until A.D. 1442. The tyranny of this monarch made him extremely unpopular, and he fell a prey to a conspiracy organised against him by two officers of his government, Shâdi Khân and Nâsir Khân. Nâsir Khân and Shâdi Khân soon became jealous of each other, as both of them aspired to the throne of Bengal, and the former put his rival to death. But he was destined to exercise sovereignty only for a few days, as the nobles, who had been attached to Shams-ud-din Ahmad, soon opposed his authority and slew him. They then placed Nâsir-ud-din, a grandson of Hâji Iiyâs, on the throne, who assumed the title of Nâsir-ud-din 'Abul Muzaffar Mahmûd Shâh, as appears on his coins. Thus was restored the rule of the Iiyâs Shâh dynasty.

As is proved by some coins, Nâsir-ud-din Mahmûd reigned peacefully for about seventeen years. He is credited with the construction of some buildings at Gaur and a mosque at Sâtgâon. On his death in A.D. 1460, his son, Ruqây-ud-din Bârbak Shâh, ascended the throne of Bengal. He was the first ruler in Hindustân to maintain a large number of Abyssinian slaves, some of whom were raised to high positions. According to Ghulâm Husain Salim, Bârbak "was a sagacious and law-abiding sovereign". He died in A.D. 1474, and was succeeded by his son, Shams-ud-din Yusuf Shâh, who is described in his inscriptions as Shams-ud-din Abul Muzaffar Yusuf Shâh. He was a virtuous, learned and pious ruler and reigned till 1481. It has been asserted by some that the Muslims conquered Sylhet during his reign. After his death, the nobles raised his son, Sikandar II, to the throne. But the new ruler, being
found to be of defective intellect, was deposed almost immediately in favour of Jalāl-ud-din Fath Shāh, a son of Nāṣir-ud-din Mahmūd. Fath Shāh was prudent enough to realise the danger that lay in the growing influence of the Abyssinians, but his attempt to check it cost him his life. The discontented Abyssinians formed a conspiracy against him under the leadership of a eunuch, who had him murdered in A.D. 1480 and usurped the throne of Bengal under the title of Bārbak Shāh, Sultān Shāhzāda. But Bārbak was murdered in the course of a few months by Indil Khān, who, though an Abyssinian, was loyal to Fath Shāh and was a military commander of proved ability. Pressed by the widow of Fath Shāh, and the courtiers of Gaur, Indil Khān, after displaying some decent reluctance, ascended the throne of Bengal under the title of Saif-ud-din Frūz. If the author of the Riḥāṣ is to be relied on, the confidence reposed in him as an able administrator and commander was justified by his measures, but he was indiscriminately charitable. He died in A.D. 1489, when the nobles placed on the throne a surviving son of Fath Shāh, under the title of Nāṣir-ud-din Mahmūd Shāh II. But this ruler was done away with in A.D. 1490 by an ambitious Abyssinian, known as Sīdī Bādrī, who seized the throne under the title of Shams-ud-din Abu Nasar Muzaffar Shāh. This Abyssinian's reign of three years and a few months was marked by tyranny and disorder, which caused widespread discontent among the soldiers and the officers, including his wise minister, 'Alā-ud-din Husain, who was an Arab by descent. They besieged him in Gaur for four months, in the course of which he died. The nobles of Bengal then raised 'Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh to the throne (1493), in recognition of his merit and ability.

The accession of 'Alā-ud-din Husain Shāh marks the commencement of the rule of a new dynasty, which endured about half a century and the members of which have various useful measures to their credit. We have numerous inscriptions of Husain Shāh, and his coins, as well as those of his son Nūserat Shāh, are varied and abundant. An enlightened and wise man, Husain Shāh was one of the most popular rulers that ascended the throne of Bengal. With a view to restoring order in the internal administration of his kingdom, he suppressed the power of the palace guards, who had, during the preceding reigns, established a position similar to that of the Praetorian Guards in Rome. He also expelled the Abyssinians from his kingdom, as their increased influence had become a serious menace to the throne. In A.D. 1494 he hospitably received Husain Shāh Sharqi of Jaunpur, who, being driven from his kingdom by Sikandar Lodi of Delhi, had fled towards Bengal. The fugitive
monarch was allowed to live at Colgong (in Bihar near Bhagalpur) till he died there in A.D. 1500. Having established order near his capital, Husain Shâh tried to recover the lost territorial possessions of Bengal. He extended the limits of his kingdom as far as the borders of Orissa to the south, recovered Magadha from the control of the Sharqi of Jaunpur, invaded the Ahom kingdom of Assam, and captured Kâmatâpur in Koch Bihâr in 1498. Assam was soon recovered by its old king. Husain Shâh then applied himself to ensuring the security of the frontiers of his kingdom, and built mosques and almshouses in different parts of it, making suitable endowments for their maintenance. He died in 1518 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nasîb Khân, who assumed the title of Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shâh. Unlike many other Muslim rulers in India, Nusrat Shâh proved generous towards his brothers and doubled their inheritance. He invaded Tirhut, slew its king and placed there 'Alâ-ud-din and Makhdum-i-'Alum, his own brothers-in-law, to look after its administration. He was a patron of art, architecture and literature. He caused two famous mosques, the Barâ Sând Masjid (Large Golden Mosque) and Qâdam Rasûl (Foot of the Prophet), to be constructed at Gaur; and a Bengali version of the Mahabharata was made under his orders. He was eventually assassinated by his palace eunuchs in 1533 and was succeeded by his son, 'Alâ-ud-din Firuz Shâh, who, after a reign of not more than three months, was killed by his uncle, Ghiyâs-ud-din Mahmûd Shâh. Ghiyâs-ud-din Mahmûd Shâh was the last king of the Husain Shâhi dynasty, whom Sher Khân Sûr expelled from Bengal.

3. Independent Sultâmates in the Provinces of Northern and Western India

A. Jaunpur

The city of Jaunpur was founded by Firuz of the house of Tughluq to perpetuate the memory of his cousin and patron, Muhammad Jauna. We have noticed before how, during the period of confusion following the invasion of Timur, Khwaja Jahân threw off his allegiance to the Delhi Sultâmate and founded a dynasty of independent rulers at Jaunpur, known as the Sharqi dynasty after his title, “Malik-ush-Sharq.” He died in 1399, leaving his throne to his adopted son, Malik Qaranful, who assumed the title of Mubarâk Shâh Sharqi. Mubarâk Shâh died, after a short reign, in 1402, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Ibrahim Shâh Sharqi. Ibrahim

1 There are several Muslim tombs at Colgong, one of which is regarded as the tomb of Husain Shâh Sharqi.
ruled for about thirty-four years and was the ablest ruler of the Sharqi dynasty. Being himself a man of culture, he patronised art and literature, as a result of which Jaunpur became an important centre of Muslim learning. This city was also adorned by the construction of beautiful buildings, marked by Hindu influence, and having mosques without minarets of the usual type. The famous Atiqa Masjid which stands now as a brilliant specimen of the Jaunpur style of architecture, was completed in A.D. 1408. Ibrāhīm died in 1436 and was succeeded by his son, Mahmūd Shāh. The new king annexed the greater part of the district of Chunar, but his expedition against Kālpī proved unsuccessful. On making an attempt to occupy Delhi, he was defeated by Buhāl Lodi, who compelled him to return to Jaunpur. Mahmūd died in A.D. 1457, when his son, Bihārī, ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Shāh. But the unscrupulous conduct of this king highly incensed the nobles and his own relatives, who had him murdered and raised his brother, Husain Shāh, to the throne. Soon after his accession, Husain Shāh concluded in 1458 a four years' truce with Buhāl Lodi of Delhi. He utilised this period in suppressing the independent zamindārs of Tīrāt, and in conducting a plundering expedition into Orissa, the Rājā of which purchased peace by paying a vast treasure. He also led an army in 1466 to capture the fortress of Gwāhir, but could not reduce it and retired when its Rājā, Mān Singh, paid him a heavy indemnity. After these initial successes, fortune turned against Husain Shāh in his renewed war with Buhāl Lodi, who expelled him to Bihār and annexed the kingdom of Jaunpur to Delhi. Buhāl appointed his son, Bārbak, governor of Jaunpur, permitting him to use the royal title and coin money. Thus the independence of Jaunpur came to an end. The period of Sharqi rule at Jaunpur, extending for about eighty-five years, was marked by prosperity, development of architecture, and an outburst of a high type of culture, which earned for the city, during Ibrāhīm's reign, the title of "the Shīrāz of India".

B. Mālwa

Annexed by 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1305, Mālwa continued to be governed by Muslim chiefs, under the authority of Delhi, till it became independent, like other provinces, during the period of disorder after the invasion of Timūr. Dilāwar Khān Ghūrī, who had been appointed governor of Mālwa probably by Firūz of the house of Tughluq, made himself independent of the Delhi Sultānate for all practical purposes in 1401, though he did not formally renounce
his allegiance to it or assume the "style of royalty". In 1406 he was succeeded by his ambitious son, Alp Khān, who ascended the throne under the title of Hūshang Shāh. The new ruler was a man of restless spirit, and took a delight in adventurous enterprises and wars, in which he remained constantly engaged throughout his reign. In 1422 he left his capital for Orissa in the guise of a merchant and made a surprise attack on the unsuspecting Rājā of that kingdom, who had to bribe him to withdraw by giving him seventy-five elephants. On his way back to Mālwa, Hūshang captured Kherla and carried off its Rājā as a prisoner. He had to fight against the Sultāns of Delhi, Jampur, and Gujarāt, and had once to measure his strength with Ahmad Shāh Bahamani, who had been offended by his capture of Kherla, the Rājā of which place had been formerly a vassal of the Bahamani kingdom. But most of his campaigns resulted in defeats and disasters for him. He died on the 6th July, 1435, when his eldest son, Ghaznī Khān, was proclaimed king of Mālwa, under the title of Muhammad Shāh. But the new ruler was absolutely unmindful of the affairs of the State. His minister, Mahmūd Khān, usurped the throne in May, 1436. Thus was founded the dynasty of the Khalji Sultāns of Mālwa. Mahmūd frustrated the opposition of a faction of the nobles, and of Ahmad Shāh I of Gujarāt, who had espoused the cause of Mūsūd Khān, a son of Muhammad Shāh of Mālwa.

Mahmūd Khaljī was a brave warrior, who fought against Ahmad Shāh I of Gujarāt, Muhammad Shāh of Delhi, Muhammad Shāh III Bahamani and Rānā Kumha of Mewār. He failed in his contests with the Muslim Sultāns. His war with the Rānā of Mewār seems to have been indecisive. Strangely enough, both sides claimed victory, and while the Rānā of Mewār built the "Tower of Victory" at Chitor, the Sultān of Mālwa erected a seven-storyed column at Māndū to commemorate his triumph. Mahmūd Khaljī was undoubtedly the ablest of the Muslim rulers of Mālwa. He extended the limits of this kingdom up to the Sātpurā Range in the south, the frontier of Gujarāt in the west, Bundelkhand in the east, and Mewār and Harautī in the north. His fame spread outside India. The Khalif of Egypt recognised his position and he received a mission from Sultan Abu Sa'id. He was a just and active administrator. Ferishta thus praises his qualities: "Sultān Mahmūd was polite, brave, just and learned, and during his reign, his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other. Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home, and his resting-place the field of battle. His leisure hours were devoted
to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the earth read." He died at Mándú, at the age of sixty-eight, on the 1st June, 1469, after a reign of about thirty-four years.

Mahmūd's eldest son, Ghiyās-ud-dīn, ascended the throne of Mālwa two days after his father's death. He was a lover of peace and a devout Muslim, "particular in his daily prayers", and abstained from all intoxicants and prohibited articles of food. But his last days were rendered unhappy by quarrels between his two sons, 'Abdul Qādir Nāsir-ud-dīn and Shujā'at Khān 'Alā-ud-dīn. The former at last seized the throne in A.D. 1500. Nāsir-ud-dīn greatly abused his power till he died in A.D. 1510. His second son then ascended the throne under the title of Mahmūd II. To get rid of the influence of the Muslim nobles, Mahmūd II appointed Medīnī Rāī, the powerful Rājput chief of Chandeli, to the office of minister. Medīnī Rāī soon acquired supreme influence in the State and appointed Hindus to offices of trust and responsibility. This excited the jealousy of the nobles of Mālwa, who removed the Rājput minister with the help of Sultan Muzaffar Shāh II of Gujarāt. But Medīnī Rāī was able to inflict a defeat on Māhāmūd II himself with the help of Rānā Sanga of Chitor. The Sultān of Mālwa was captured by the victorious Rājputs. Rānā Sanga, however, treated him with chivalrous generosity, characteristic of the Rājput race, and restored his vanquished foe to his kingdom. But the authority of the kingdom of Mālwa had been by this time greatly reduced, and the days of its independence were numbered. The Sultān, Mahmūd II, incurred the hostility of Rānā Ratan Singh, successor of Rānā Sanga, by raiding his territories; and the Rānā, as an act of reprisal, invaded Mālwa. He also excited the wrath of Sultān Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt by giving shelter to Chānd Khān, the latter's younger brother and a rival for his throne. Bahādur Shāh thereupon captured Māndū on the 17th March, 1531, and the independence of Mālwa was thus extinguished. It continued to remain under Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt, till it was later on occupied for a short period by the Mughul ruler, Humāyūn. About 1535 Malik Khān, formerly an officer of the Khaljī Sultāns of Mālwa, established independent sovereignty in Mālwa under the title of Qādir Shāh, but he was deposed by Sher Shāh, the Afghan ruler of Delhi, in 1542. After being governed by viceroys of the Afghān government, Mālwa was conquered by Mughul generals from Bāz Bahādur in A.D. 1561–1562.
C. Gujarāt

The immense wealth of the province of Gujarāt, due particularly to active commerce through the rich ports of Cambay, Surāt and Broach, often drew upon her external invasions. Annexed to the Delhi Sultānate by ʿAlā-ud-dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1297, it was ruled for a long time by Muslim governors appointed by the Delhi Sultāns. But in 1301 Zafar Khān (son of a Rājput convert), who had been appointed governor of the province in 1301 by Muhammad Shāh, the youngest son of Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq, formally assumed independence. In 1403 Zafar Khān’s son, Tātār Khān, acting in conspiracy with some discontented nobles, rose against his father, imprisoned him at Asāwāl and proclaimed himself king under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad Shāh. He even marched towards Delhi with a view to establishing his authority there, but was put to death by his uncle and regent, Shams Khān. This enabled Zafar Khān to recover his throne and to assume the title of Sultān Muzaffar Shāh. Muzaffar Shāh waged a successful war against Hūshang Shāh, Sultān of Mālwa, and captured Dār. After his death in June, 1411, Ahmad Shāh, his grandson and heir-designate, ascended the throne. Ahmad has been justly regarded as the real founder of the independence of Gujarāt. Endowed with considerable courage and energy, he engaged himself throughout his reign of about thirty years in extending the limits of his kingdom, which had been confined, during the reigns of his two predecessors, to a small territory near Asāwāl. Success always attended his campaigns against the Sultān of Mālwa, and the chiefs of Asīgarh, Rājputāna and other neighbouring territories. He also devoted his attention to improving the civil administration of his kingdom and dispensed justice impartially. In the first year of his reign, he built the beautiful city of Ahmadābād, on the site of the old town of Asāwāl, and removed his capital to that place, which to this day bears witness to his taste and munificence. His only defect was his religious intolerance. He died on the 10th August, 1442, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Muhammad Shāh, who reigned till his death on the 10th February, A.D. 1451. Two weak rulers, Muhammad Shāh’s son, Qutb-ud-dīn Ahmad, and Muhammad’s brother Dāūd, followed him. Through his evil ways, Dāūd alienated the sympathy of the nobles within a few days of his accession. They deposed him, and raised his nephew, Abūl Fath Khān, a grandson of Ahmad Shāh, to the throne, under the title of Mahmūd, commonly known as Begaṛāha.
Mahmūd Begarha was by far the most eminent Sultān of his dynasty. The leading Muslim historian of his country observes that “he added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarāt, and was the best of all the Gujarāt kings, including all who preceded, and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity . . . for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmāns; for soundness in judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age; for power, for valour, and victory, he was a pattern of excellence”. Ascending the throne at a comparatively young age, he at once took the management of the affairs of his kingdom into his own hands, and overpowered his hostile courtiers, who had formed a conspiracy to raise his brother, Hasan Khān, to the throne. He ruled vigorously, without the influence of any minister or of the harem, for about fifty-three years; and being a brave warrior, he gained success in all his campaigns. He saved Nizām Shāh Bahmani from aggression on the part of Mahmūd Khalji of Mālwa, defeated the Sūmra and Sodha chiefs of Cutch, suppressed the pirates of Jagat (Dvārakā), and reduced the strong forts of Junāgarh and Chāmpāner, the latter being named by him Muhammadābād. As a result of his conquests, the kingdom of Gujarāt reached its extreme limits, extending “from the frontiers of Māndā to the frontiers of Sind, by Junāgarh; to the Siwālik Parbat by Jālor and Nāgaur; to Nāsik Trimbak by Baglāna; from Burhānpur to Berar and Malkāpur of the Deccan; to Karkūn and the river Narbada on the side of Burhānpur; on the side of Īdar as far as Chitor and Kūmbhalgarh, and on the side of the sea as far as the bounds of Chaul”. Towards the close of his reign, he tried, in alliance with Qansuha al-Ghaurī, Sultān of Egypt, to check the rising power of the Portuguese in the Indian Seas, who had within a decade, since the discovery of the Cape Route by Vasco da Gama in 1498, almost monopolised the lucrative spice trade from the Red Sea and Egypt at the expense of the interests of Muslim traders and the important sea-ports of Western India, like Cambay and Chaul. The Egyptian fleet, under the command of Amir Husain the Kurd, governor of Jeddah, and the Indian contingent, under the command of Malik Ayāz, a Turk who had found employment in the court of Gujarāt, defeated a Portuguese squadron commanded by Dom Lourenço, son of the Portuguese viceroy, Francesco de Almeida, near Chaul, south of Bombay, in 1508. But the Portuguese inflicted a crushing defeat on the allied Muslim fleet, near Diu, in 1509, and recovered their naval ascendancy on the seacoast. Mahmūd granted them a site for a factory at Diu.

After the death of Mahmūd Begarha on the 23rd November,
1511, the throne passed to his son Muzaффar II, who waged successful wars against the Rājputs and restored Mahmūd Khālji of Mālwa to his throne. Muzaффar's death on the 7th April, 1526, was followed by two short and insignificant reigns of his sons, Sikandar and Nāsir Khān Mahmūd II, till in the month of July of the same year his more daring son, Bahādur, got possession of the throne.

Brave and warlike like his grandfather, Bahādur was a famous ruler in the history of medieval India. He not only defeated Mahmūd II of Mālwa and annexed his kingdom in 1531 but also overran the territories of the Rānā of Mewār, the old enemy of his house, and stormed Chitor in A.D. 1534. Fortune, however, went against him in his wars with Humāyūn, in the course of which he was deprived not only of the newly-conquered province of Mālwa but also of the greater part of his own kingdom. But on the withdrawal of the Delhi troops, Bahādur regained his kingdom and turned his attention towards expelling the Portuguese, whose assistance he had sought in vain against the Mughuls. Failing to persuade the Portuguese governor, Nunho da Cunha, to come to him, he himself proceeded to visit him on board his ship in February, 1537, but was treacherously drowned by the Portuguese, and all his companions were murdered. After the death of Bahādur, anarchy and confusion reigned supreme in Gujarāt under his weak successors, who were mere puppets in the hands of rival baronial parties; so it was easily annexed to the Mughul Empire by Akbar in A.D. 1572.

**D. Kāshmir**

In the year A.D. 1315 Shāh Mirzā, a Muslim adventurer from Swāt, entered the service of the Hindu Prince of Kāshmir, who died shortly afterwards. Shāh Mirzā seized the throne of Kāshmir in A.D. 1339 or 1346 under the title of Shams-ud-din Shāh and caused coins to be struck and the Khusba to be read in his name. He used his newly-acquired power wisely, and died in A.D. 1349.1 His sons, Jamshīd, 'Alā-ud-din, Shihāb-ud-din, and Qutb-ud-din, then reigned successively for about forty-six years. After Qutb-ud-din's death in A.D. 1394, his son Sikandar ascended the throne of Kāshmir.

Reigning at the time of Tīmūr's invasion of India, Sikandar exchanged envoys with him, though the two never met each other. He was generous towards the men of his own faith, and many

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1 The chronology of the Muhammadan Sultāns of Kāshmir is rather bewildering, and the dates of their reigns have to be regarded as being approximate.
learned Muslim scholars flocked to his court from Persia, Arabia
and Mesopotamia, but his general attitude was not liberal. He
died, after a reign of twenty-two years and nine months, in A.D.
1416. His eldest son, ‘Ali Shâh, then reigned for a few years,
after which he was overpowered by his brother, Shâhî Khân,
who ascended the throne in June, A.D. 1420, under the title of
Zain-ul-‘Abidin.

Zain-ul-‘Abidin was a benevolent, liberal and enlightened ruler.
He did much to diminish theft and highway robbery in his kingdom
by enforcing the principle of the responsibility of the village com-
munities for local crimes, regulated the prices of commodities,
lightened the burden of taxation on the people, and rehabilitated
the currency, which had been greatly debased during the reigns of
his predecessors. His public works immensely benefited his subjects.
He was a man of liberal ideas, and showed remarkable toleration
towards the followers of other faiths. He recalled the Brâhmaons,
who had left the kingdom during his father’s reign, admitted
learned Hindus to his society, abolished the jizya and granted
perfect religious freedom to all. He possessed a good knowledge
of Persian, Hindi, and Tibetan, besides his own language, and
patronised literature, painting and music. Under his initiative, the
Mahâbhârata and the Râjâtarangini were translated from Sanskrit
into Persian, and several Arabic and Persian books were trans-
lated into the Hindi language. Thus, for all these qualities, he has
been justly described as “the Akbar of Kâshmir”, though he differed
from him in a few traits of personal character. He died in November
or December, 1470, and was succeeded by his son Haidâr Shâh.

The history of the later Sultâns of Kâshmir is uninteresting and
unimportant. After Zain-ul-‘Abidin’s death, anarchy “ensued
under the rule of nominal kings who were placed on the throne
as a mark for the machinations of the different parties who were
seeking pre-eminence for purposes of self-aggrandisement and
plunder”. Towards the end of A.D. 1540, Mirzâ Haidâr, a relative
of Humâyûn, conquered Kâshmir. He governed it, theoretically,
on behalf of Humâyûn, but in practice as an independent ruler,
till 1551, when he was overthrown by the Kâshmir nobles, who
resumed their intrigues and quarrels. About A.D. 1555 the Chakka
seized the throne of Kâshmir, but with no relief to the troubled
kingdom, which was absorbed into the Mughul Empire in the
time of Akbar.
4. Independent Sultānates in Southern India, including Khāndesh

A. Khāndesh

Khāndesh was a province of Muhammad bin Tughluq's empire in the valley of the Tāpti river. Fīrūz Shāh entrusted its government to one of his personal attendants, Malik Rājā Fārūqī, whose ancestors had been respected nobles of the Delhi court in the reigns of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad bin Tughluq. In the period of confusion following the death of Fīrūz Shāh, Malik Rājā, following the example of his neighbour, Dilāwar Khān of Mālwa, declared his independence of the Delhi Sultānate. He was defeated by Muzaffar Shāh I of Gujarāt in several battles. Being a man of peaceful disposition, he treated his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, with kindness and consideration. He died on the 29th April, 1399, and his son, Malik Nasīr, soon made himself absolute master of Khāndesh by overpowering his brother Hasan. The new Sultān captured the fortress of Asīrgarh from its Hindu chieftain, but Ahmad Shāh, the Sultān of Gujarāt, defeated him when he attacked Nandurbar and compelled him to swear fealty to him. His war against his son-in-law, 'Alā-ud-dīn Ahmad of the Bahmanī dynasty, also ended in disaster for him and he died in the year 1437–1438. Then after the two uneventful reigns of his son, 'Ādil Khān I (1438–41), and grandson, Mubārak Khān I (1441–1457), the throne of Khāndesh was occupied by Mubārak Khān's son, 'Ādil Khān II, who was an able and vigorous ruler and tried hard to restore administrative order in his kingdom, the authority of which was extended by him over Gondwāna. On his death without any issue in 1501, the throne passed to his brother Dāūd, who, after an inglorious reign of about seven years, died in 1508, and was succeeded by his son, Ghaznī Khān. Ghaznī Khān was poisoned within ten days of his accession, and Khāndesh was plunged into disorder due to the faction fights of two rival claimants to its throne, one being supported by Ahmad Nizām Shāh of Ahmadnagar, and the other by Mahmūd Begarha of Gujarāt, till the latter succeeded in raising his candidate to the throne with the title of 'Ādil Khān III. The reign of 'Ādil Khān III was not marked by any event of importance. He died on the 25th August, 1520, and his weak successors had not the courage or ability to save the kingdom from the aggressions of its external enemies. Like Gujarāt, Khāndesh was annexed by Akbar to his empire in 1601.
B. The Bahmani Kingdom

Of all the independent Muslim kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the Delhi Sultānate, the Bahmani kingdom of the Deccan proved to be the most powerful. It came into existence during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq as a challenge to his authority. The nobles of the Deccan, driven to rebellion by the eccentric policy of the Delhi Sultān, seized the fort of Daulatabad and proclaimed one of themselves, Ismā‘il Mulk, the Afghān, as king of the Deccan under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Shāh. Ismā‘il Mulk, being an old and ease-loving man, proved unfit for the office. Soon he voluntarily made room for a more worthy leader, Hasan, entitled Zafar Khān, who was declared king by the nobles on the 3rd August, 1347, under the title of Abul-Muzaffar ‘Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh. The story related by Ferishta about Hasan’s origin, to the effect that he was originally a menial in the service of a Brāhmaṇa astrologer of Delhi, Gangū, who enjoyed the favour of Muhammad bin Tughluq, and later on rose to prominence owing to the patronage of his Hindu master, finds no corroboration in the accounts of the later Muslim chroniclers and is also not supported by the evidence of coins and inscriptions. Hasan, in fact, claimed descent from the famous Persian hero Bahman, son of Isfandiyār, and the dynasty that he founded thus came to be known as the Bahmani dynasty.

Soon after his accession, ‘Alā-ud-dīn Hasan selected Gulbarga as his capital and renamed it as Ahsanabād. But the Hindu rulers of the south, who had not failed to profit by the political disorders in the Deccan at the time of ‘Alā-ud-dīn Hasan’s rise, were not disposed to submit to his authority. He therefore launched on a career of conquest, which was marked by success. When he died on the 11th February, 1358, he left a dominion extending from the Waingangā river in the north to the Krishnā river in the south and from Daulatabad in the west to Bhongir, now in the Nizām’s dominions, in the east. For the administration of his kingdom, he divided it into four tārafs or provinces, Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Berar and Bidar. Each province was placed in charge of a governor, who maintained an army, and made appointments in all civil and military posts under him. The efficiency of administration in the provinces checked the outbreak of rebellions. The author of Burhān-i Ma‘āṣir has thus praised this Sultān: “Sultān ‘Alā-ud-dīn I Hasan Shāh was a just king and the cherisher of his people and pious. During his reign his subjects and the army used to pass their time in perfect ease and content; and he did much towards propagating the true faith.”
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The next Sultān was Muhammad Shāh I, the eldest son of Hasan, who had nominated him as his heir on his death-bed. Soon after his accession, Muhammad Shāh organised the different branches of his government, like the ministry, the household troops and the provincial administration. But throughout his reign, he was chiefly engaged in waging wars against the rulers of Warangal and Vijayanagar. Those rulers offered a stubborn resistance, but both were overpowered by the troops of Gulbarga, and had to conclude peace, after immense losses, on humiliating terms.

Muhammad Shāh’s mode of life was not unimpeachable. The author of Burhān-i-Ma’āṣir distinctly states that the Sultān “showed signs of an irreligious manner of living, which threw him on the bed of helplessness”.

After the death of Muhammad Shāh I in A.D. 1377, his son, Mujāhid Shāh, ascended the throne and marched in person against Vijayanagar. But he could not capture that city and soon had to return to his capital after making peace with its Rāya. He fell a victim to a conspiracy organised by one of his near relatives named Dāūd Khān,1 who usurped the throne. The usurper was paid back in his own coin by being murdered in May, 1378, by an assassin at the instigation of Mujāhid’s foster-sister, Rāh Farvar Aghā. The nobles and military officers then raised to the throne Muhammad Shāh, son of Mahmūd Khān, the fourth son of ‘Alā-ud-din Hasan Bahmani.

Unlike his predecessors, Muhammad Shāh II was a lover of peace and devoted to learning; and his reign was not disturbed by foreign wars. He built mosques, established free schools for orphans, and invited learned men from all parts of Asia to his court. But his last days were embittered by the intrigues of his sons, who were eager to get the throne. After his death in April, A.D. 1397, followed the inglorious and troubled reigns of his two sons, Ghiyāsh-ud-din and Shams-ud-din Dāūd, lasting for only a few months, till the throne of Gulbarga was seized in November, 1397, by Firūz, a grandson of ‘Alā-ud-din Hasan Bahmani, who assumed the title of Tāj-ud-din Firūz Shāh.

We are told by the author of Burhān-i-Ma’āṣir that Firūz Shāh “was an impetuous and a mighty monarch, and expended all his ability and energy in eradicating and destroying tyranny and heresy, and he took much pleasure in the society of the Sheikhs, learned men and hermits”. But after a few years’ rule, he became

1 Dāūd was uncle of Mujāhid according to Fariishta but his cousin according to the author of Burhān-i-Ma’āṣir.
addicted to the common vices of his time, which even Ferishta
has noted. He was conversant with various languages and could
talk freely with his wives of diverse nationalities in their own
tongues. He followed the traditional policy of his dynasty in
waging wars against the Rāyas of Vijayanagar and some other
Hindu rulers of the Deccan. He gained success in his two expedi-
tions against Vijayanagar in 1398 and 1406, exacted heavy indemnity
from its Rāya and even compelled him to surrender a princess of
Vijayanagar for his harem. But his third attack in 1420 resulted
in his defeat at Pāngul, to the north of the Krishnā, and his
retreat from the field after his commander-in-chief, Mīr Fazl-ullāh
Injū, had been killed. The Vijayanagar troops soon occupied the
southern and eastern districts of the Bahmani kingdom. This
defeat told heavily on the Sūltān’s mind and body, and he left
the administration in the hands of his slaves, Hūshyār ‘Ain-ul-mulk
and Nizām Bidār-ul-mulk. He was ultimately forced to abdicate
the throne in favour of his brother Ahmad, who, according to the
author of Burdān-i-Ma‘āsir, died away with Firuz Shāh in September,
1422, though some writers believe, on the authority of Ferishta,
that Firuz Shāh died a natural death.

To avenge the losses sustained by the Bahmani troops in his
brother’s reign, Ahmad Shāh carried on a terrible war against
Vijayanagar. The siege of Vijayanagar by the Bahmani troops
reduced it to great distress and compelled its Rāya to conclude
peace by paying a heavy indemnity. This was conveyed to Ahmad’s
camp, on elephants, by the Rāya’s son, who was received there
honourably; and the invaders then returned to their country.
In 1424 or 1425 Ahmad Shāh’s general, Khān-i-‘Azam, attacked the
Hindu kingdom of Warangal and succeeded in capturing its fortress,
with immense treasures, and in killing its ruler. The independence
of Warangal was thus extinguished. Ahmad Shāh also waged war
against Mālwa. The Sūltān of Mālwa, Hūshang Shāh, was defeated
with great losses in men and money. Ahmad’s war with the
Sūltān of Gujarāt, Ahmad Shāh I, ended in failure, and peace
was at last concluded through the intervention of theologians and
learned men of both sides. The Hindu chiefs of the Konkan also
felt the weight of Bahmani arms during his reign, but this pressure
was removed after his death from illness in February, 1435.

Ahmad Shāh transferred the capital of his kingdom from Gulbarga
to Bidar, which was beautifully situated and had a salubrious
eclimate. Though not endowed with much learning, he bestowed
favours on some Muslim scholars. The poet, Shaikh Āzari of Isfārāyin
in Khurāsān, who came to his court, received a huge amount of
money for composing two verses in praise of his palace at Bīdar; and Maulānā Sharf-ud-dīn Māzandarānī was also rewarded with 12,000 tankās for inscribing in beautiful handwriting two verses on the door of that palace.

In the meanwhile, baronial intrigues for position and influence, often resulting in pitched battles and massacres, had begun to affect the homogeneity of the Bahmanī kingdom. There were perpetual feuds between the Deccani nobles with their allies, the Africans and the Mūvallads (issue of African fathers and Indian mothers) on the one side, and, on the other, the foreign nobles, composed of the Turks, the Arabs, the Persians and the Mughuls. Many of the latter had been elevated to high offices in the State, for their hardy and active habits, in preference to the children of the soil, who grew jealous of them. This jealousy was accentuated by religious differences, for while most of the Deccanis were Sunnis, the majority of the rival party consisted of Shī’ahs. Thus the history of the later Bahmanids is a dreary tale of conspiracies and strife, which sucked the life-blood of the kingdom till it finally disintegrated.

Ahmad was succeeded peacefully by his eldest son under the title of ʿAlā-ud-dīn II. Soon after his accession, ʿAlā-ud-dīn II suppressed a rebellion headed by his brother Muhammad, who was, however, pardoned and given the government of the Rūkhīr Dāūb, where he remained faithful during the rest of his life. The Hindu chiefs of the Konkan were next reduced to submission, and the Rājā of Sangameshwar gave his beautiful daughter in marriage to the Bahmanī Sultān. This was not liked by the Sultān’s Muslim wife Malikā-i-Jahān. At her request her father, Nasir Khān, the ruler of Khāndesh, invaded Berar, but was defeated by Malik-ul-Tujjār Khalaf Hasan, governor of Daulatābād and leader of the foreign nobles. In 1443 ʿAlā-ud-dīn waged war against Vijayanagar, the Rāya of which had to conclude peace by promising regular payment of tribute in future. Ferishta writes that at this time the Rāya of Vijayanagar employed Muslim soldiers in his army, admitted some Muslims into his service, and even erected a mosque at the capital city for their worship. Like other Sultāns of the dynasty, ʿAlā-ud-dīn was a zealous champion of Islam and was benevolent towards the followers of his own faith. We know from Ferishta and the author of Burhān-i-Maʿāṣir that he “founded masjids, public schools and charitable institutions, among which was a hospital of perfect elegance and purity of style, which he built in his capital, Bīdar, and made two beautiful villages there as a pious endowment, in order that the revenue
of these villages should be solely devoted to supplying medicines
and drinks . . . so much did he attend to carrying out the orders
and prohibitions of the divine law that even the name of wine
and all intoxicating liquors was abrogated in his jurisdiction. . . .”

‘Alā-ud-dīn died peacefully in April, 1457, and was succeeded
by his eldest son, Humāyūn, who was so cruel as to get the epithet
of “Zālīm” or “the Tyrant”. Examples of his cruelties have been
cited by the author of Barhān-i-Mu‘āsir. Humāyūn died a natural
death, according to some writers, in October, 1461, but the more
reliable authorities write that he was murdered by some of his
servants when he was in a state of intoxication. His death freed
his people “from the talons of his tortures” and the general sense
of relief was thus expressed by the contemporary poet Nazir:

“Humāyūn Shāh has passed away from the world,
God Almighty, what a blessing was the death of Humāyūn!
Oh, the date of his death the world was full of delight,
So, ‘delight of the world’ gave the date of his death.”

According to the chroniclers Humāyūn’s minor son, Nizām Shāh,
was next raised to the throne. The queen-mother, Makhdūmah
Jahān, tried to manage the administration of the State with the
assistance of Khwāja Jahān and Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān. But
the rulers of Orissa and Telengāna were emboldened, during the
rule of the boy king, to attack his kingdom. They were driven back
with heavy losses. But soon a more formidable danger appeared for
the Bahmaniś when Mahmūd Khaljī I of Mālwa led an invasion into
their territories and besieged Bīdar, which was saved only when
Mahmūd Begarha, the Sultan of Gujarāt, sent a favourable response to
the Bahmani Sultan’s appeal for help. Nizām Shāh died very
suddenly, on the 30th July, 1463, and his brother, aged only nine,
ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad III.

Soon after Muhammad’s accession, the old minister Khwāja
Jahān, who aimed at a monopoly of power in the State, was put to
death through the influence of the queen-mother, and the vacant
office was entrusted to Mahmūd Gāwān, who received the title of
Khwāja Jahān. Though possessed of wide powers, Mahmūd Gāwān
never abused his authority. By virtue of his conspicuous ability,
he served the Bahmani State with unstinted loyalty; and, by
skillful diplomacy and successful military operations, he brought
the dominions of the Bahmanis “to an extent never achieved by
former sovereigns”.

In 1469 Mahmūd Gāwān marched with an army to subdue the
Hindu Rājās of the Konkan, and when he succeeded in capturing several forts, the Rājā of Sangameshwar, overpowered with fear, surrendered the fortress of Khelna to his agents. "This unrivalled minister," writes the author of Burhān-i-Maʿāṣir, "seized many forts and towns and captured immense booty, and valuable goods, such as horses, elephants, maidens, and female slaves, as well as precious jewels and pearls, fell into the minister's hands". He also captured Goa, one of the best ports of the Vijayanagar Empire. In the meanwhile, Nizām-ul-mulk Barhi, a commander of the Bahmani kingdom, had seized the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavir. In the year 1474 the Deccan was devastated by a terrible famine due to the failure of rain for two successive years, and many succumbed to its rigours. When rain at last fell in the third year, scarcely any farmers remained in the country to cultivate the land.

But the military enterprises of the Sultān continued unabated. In February, 1478, Muhammad invaded and devastated Orissa, the Rājā of which induced him to withdraw by presenting to him some elephants and other valuable gifts.

The most successful military exploit of his reign was directed, in the course of a war with Vijayanagar, against Kāliche or Conjeeveram (12th March, 1481), a seat of some old temples, which "were the wonder of the age, filled with countless concealed treasures and jewels, and valuable pearls, besides innumerable slave-girls". The besieged soldiers offered a brave resistance but were ultimately vanquished by the Bahmani troops, who captured an immense booty.

The military record of Muhammad Shah II's reign is indeed one of triumph. But his own voluptuousness, and the selfish intrigues of the nobles of his court, stood in the path of his progress in other respects, and ultimately caused his ruin. Being addicted to hard drinking, the Sultān became mentally unbalanced as years rolled on, and took a suicidal step by passing the death sentence on Mahmūd Gāwān on 5th April, 1481, at the instigation of his enemies, the Deccani nobles, who, being jealous of his power and success, produced a forged letter to persuade the Sultān to believe in the minister's treasonable correspondence with the Rāya of Vijayanagar. Thus Mahmūd Gāwān, who had served the Bahmani kingdom as minister in three successive reigns with efficiency and honesty, for which he was entitled to the gratitude of his master, fell a prey to a conspiracy organised by a rival baronial clique, blind to the true interests of the State. With the unjust execution of this old minister "departed," remarks
Meadows Taylor rightly, “all the cohesion and power of the Bahmani kingdom”. In many respects, Mahmūd Gāwān’s character was far superior to that of his contemporaries. Leading a simple and pure life, he was fond of learning and the society of the learned, which led him to maintain a magnificent college and a vast library at Bidar; and his disinterested services as a public officer justly entitle him to our praise. Muhammad III discovered his own folly rather too late, and, seized with grief and remorse, he expired within a year on the 22nd March, A.D. 1482.

The Bahmani kingdom was henceforth thrown into utter confusion, leading to its inevitable collapse. Mahmūd Shāh, the younger son and successor of Muhammad III, had neither the strength of personal character, nor the guidance of an able minister, to enable him to maintain the integrity of his kingdom. The feud between the Deccanis and the foreigners continued with unabated fury and rancour. The provincial governors availed themselves of the prevailing confusion to declare their independence. The nominal authority of Mahmūd came to be confined within a small area round the capital, and he and his four successors remained mere puppets in the hands of Qāsim Barid-ul-Mamālik, a clever noble of Turkish origin, and after his death in 1504, in those of his son ‘Amir ‘Āli Barid, “the fox of the Deccan”. The last ruler, Kalimullah Shāh, secretly tried to secure the help of Bābur to restore the lost fortunes of his dynasty, but was sadly disappointed. With his death in 1527 the Bahmani dynasty came to an end after about one hundred and eighty years’ rule.

The history of the Bahmani dynasty in the Deccan on the whole offers no pleasant reading. Most of its Sultāns employed themselves chiefly in terrible wars, and its internal politics were severely distracted by court intrigues and civil strife. Among the eighteen kings of this dynasty, five were murdered, two died of intemperance, and three were deposed, two of them being blinded. The Bahmani Sultāns should, however, be credited with patronage of learning and education according to their lights, erection of fortresses and buildings, and construction of irrigation works in the eastern provinces, which benefited the peasantry while securing more revenues to the State.

We get a glimpse of the condition of the common people in the Bahmani kingdom from certain observations made by the Russian traveller, Althaniasius Nikitin, who travelled in this kingdom during the years 1470 to 1474 in the reign of Muhammad Shāh III. He writes: “The Sultān is a little man, twenty years old, in the power of the nobles. . . . The Sultān goes out with 300,000 men
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of his own troops. The land is overstocked with people; but those in the country are very miserable, whilst the nobles are extremely opulent and delight in luxury. They are wont to be carried on their silver beds, preceded by some 20 chargers caparisoned in gold, and followed by 300 men on horseback and by 500 on foot, and by hornmen, ten torch-bearers, and ten musicians.

"The Sultān goes out hunting with his mother and his lady, and a train of 10,000 men on horseback, 50,000 on foot; 200 elephants adorned in gilded armour, and in front 100 horsemen, 100 dancers, and 300 common horses in golden clothing; 100 monkeys and 100 concubines, all foreign."

Thus the testimony of a foreign traveller tells us that the lot of the common people was hard as compared with the luxurious standard of living of the nobility. But there is no other positive evidence to enable us to form an accurate picture of the condition of the mass of the people during the whole of the Bahmani period. The accounts of the Muslim chroniclers are full of details regarding military campaigns and wars against infidels, without any reference to the history of the people.

C. The Five Sultānates of the Deccan

Five separate Sultānates arose in the Deccan, one after another, on the break-up of the Bahmani kingdom. These were known after the titles of their founders, as the Imād Shāhī dynasty of Berar, the Nizām Shāhī dynasty of Ahmadnagar, the ‘Ādil Shāhī dynasty of Bijāpur, the Qutb Shāhī dynasty of Golkundā and the Bārid Shāhī dynasty of Bidar. The first to secede was Berar, where Fathullāh Imād Shāh, a Hindu convert, declared his independence in A.D. 1484 and founded the Imād Shāhī dynasty. Berar was absorbed by Ahmadnagar in A.D. 1574.

Yūsuf ‘Ādil Khān, Governor of Bijāpur, asserted his independence in A.D. 1489–1490. He was known during his early days as a Georgian slave, who was purchased by Mahmūd Gāwān, and rose to prominence by dint of his merit and ability. Ferishtha, however, relying on some private information, writes that he was the son of Sultān Murād II of Turkey, who died in A.D. 1451, that he fled from his country, first to Persia, and then to India at the age of seventeen, to save himself from assassination, ordered by his elder brother, Muhammad II, who had succeeded his father on the throne, and that he sold himself as a slave to the minister of the Bahmani Sultān. Yūsuf ‘Ādil Shāh was not a bigot. Religion was no bar to securing offices in his government, and he had a preference for
the Shahi creed, probably due to his sojourn in Persia. Free from vices in his private life, he was mindful of his duties as a ruler. Forishtha tells us that although Yusuf 'Adil Shâh "mingled pleasure with business, yet he never allowed the former to interfere with the latter. He always warned his ministers to act with justice and integrity, and in his own person showed them an example of attention to those virtues. He invited to his court many learned men and valiant officers from Persia, Turkestan, and Rum, and also several eminent artists, who lived happy under the shadow of his bounty. In his reign the citadel of Bijâpur was made of stone".

The reigns of Yusuf 'Adil Shâh's four immediate successors, Ismâ'il 'Adil Shâh, son of Yusuf (1510–1534), Malik, son of Ismâ'il (1534), Ibrâhim 'Adil Shâh I, brother of Malik (1534–1557), and 'Ali 'Adil Shâh, son of Ibrâhim (1557–1579), were full of intrigues and wars. But the dynasty produced another remarkable ruler in Ibrâhim 'Adil Shâh II, nephew and successor of 'Ali 'Adil Shâh, who governed the kingdom with universal toleration and wisdom till he died in A.D. 1626. In the opinion of Meadows Taylor, who wrote with some experience of Bijâpur and its local traditions, "he was the greatest of all the 'Adil Shâh dynasty, and in most respects, except its founder, the most able and popular". The Bijâpur kingdom survived till its annexation by Aurangzeb in A.D. 1686.

The founder of the Ahmadnagar kingdom was Malik Ahmad, son of Nizâm-ul-mulk Bahri, who sprang from the hereditary Hindu revenue officials of Patthri, north of the Godâvari, took a leading part in the conspiracy against Mahmûd Gâwân, and became prime minister after his death. Malik Ahmad was appointed governor of Junnar, but in 1490 he declared himself independent. Some time later he transferred the seat of his government to a place of better strategic position and thus founded the city of Ahmadnagar. After several years' attempts, he captured Daulatâbâd in A.D. 1499, which helped him to consolidate his dominion. He died in A.D. 1508 and was succeeded by his son, Burhân Nizâm Shâh, who, during his reign of forty-five years, waged wars with the neighbouring States and about A.D. 1550 allied himself with the Râya of Vijayanagar against Bijâpur. His successor, Husain Nizâm Shâh, joined the Muslim confederacy against Vijayanagar in 1565. After his death in that year, he was succeeded by his son, Murtaza Nizâm Shâh I, a pleasure-loving youth, unfit to compete successfully with his adversaries. There is nothing of importance and interest in the subsequent history of Ahmadnagar except the heroic resistance offered by Chând Bibi to Akbar's son, Prince Murâd, in 1576, and
the military as well as administrative skill of Malik 'Ambar. The kingdom was overrun by the Mughuls in 1600, but it was not finally annexed to their Empire until 1633 in the reign of Shâh Jahân.

The Muslim kingdom of Golkundâ grew up on the ruins of the old Hindu kingdom of Warangal, which was conquered by the Bahmanîs in A.D. 1424. The founder of the Qutb Shâhi dynasty was Qulî Shâhî, a Turkî officer of the Bahmani kingdom during the reign of Mahmûd Shâh Bahmani. He was appointed governor of Telingâna by Mahmûd Gâwân and remained loyal to his master till, as a protest against the power and insolence of the Barîds, he declared his independence in A.D. 1512 or 1518. He had a long and prosperous reign till he was murdered at the age of ninety in 1543 by his son Jamshîd, who reigned for seven years. Jamshîd's brother and successor, Ibrâhîm, fought against Vijayanagar in 1565 in alliance with the other Muslim Sultânates. He was a good ruler and freely admitted the Hindus to high offices in the State. After his death in 1611, the history of Golkundâ was largely entangled with that of the Mughul Empire till it was annexed to it by Aurangzeb in 1687.

When the distant provinces of the Bahmani kingdom declared their independence, the remnant of it survived only in name under the ascendancy of the Barîds. In 1526 or 1527 Amir 'Âli Barîd formally dispensed with the rule of the puppet Bahmani Sultânâns and founded the Barîd Shâhi dynasty of Bîdar, which lasted till its territory was absorbed by Bîjâpur in A.D. 1618–1619.

The five offshoots of the Bahmani kingdom had some good rulers, notably in Bîjâpur and Golkundâ. The history of these Sultânates is largely a record of almost continuous quarrel with one another and with Vijayanagar. Each aspired to the supremacy of the Deccan, which was consequently turned into a scene of internal warfare, similar to what went on between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas in earlier days, or between Mysore, the Marâthas and the Nizâm in the eighteenth century. The disruption of the Bahmani kingdom, and the dissensions among the five Sultânates that rose on its ruins, seriously hampered the progress of Islam, political as well as religious, in the south, where the spirit of Hindu revival, that had manifested itself since the days of the Tughluqs, culminated in the rise and growth of the Vijayanagar Empire.
5. The Hindu Kingdoms—The Vijayanagar Empire

A. Political History

The early history of Vijayanagar is still shrouded in obscurity. Sewell, after referring to several traditional accounts about the origin of the great imperial city, remarks that "perhaps the most reasonable account would be culled from the general drift of the Hindu legends combined with the certainties of historical fact". He accepts the tradition according to which five sons of Sangama, of whom Harighara and Bukka were the most eminent, laid the foundation of the city and kingdom of Vijayanagar, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra facing the fortress of Anegundi on the northern bank. They got inspiration for their enterprise from the celebrated Brāhmaṇa sage and scholar of the day, Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, and his brother Sāyana, the famous commentator on the Vedas. This tradition is regarded by some as a later fabrication which found currency in the sixteenth century. In the opinion of Rev. Father Horas, the foundation of the city of Anegundi, which formed the cradle of the Vijayanagar Empire, was laid by the Hoysala king Vira Ballāla III, and Harighara, a near relative of the Hoysala ruling family, was a frontier officer with his headquarters there. According to another writer, "the fortification of the city that afterwards became Vijayanagar must be regarded as the deliberate act of the great Hoysala ruler, Vira Ballāla III. It was founded soon after the destruction of Kampili by the army of Muhammad Tughluq, and immediately following the invasion of the Hoysala capital, Dorasamudra". The theory of Hoysala origin has been recently challenged by a writer who, in discussing the question from different sources, has argued that Harighara and Bukka founded the city and that they "shaped the course of their conduct" on the advice of Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, who is described in an inscription of Harighara II as "the supreme light incarnate". According to some authorities, the five brothers were fugitives from the Telugu country included in the Kākatya kingdom of Warangal, the capital of which was captured by the Muhammadans in 1424. In the midst of these conflicting opinions, this much can be said with certainty, that Harighara and Bukka and their three brothers made earnest efforts to organise resistance against the advance of the invaders from the north. (The significance of the Vijayanagar Empire in the history of India is that for well nigh three centuries it stood for the older religion and culture of the country and saved these from being engulfed by the rush of new ideas and forces. It also indirectly
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prevented the extension of the influence of the Bahmani kingdom and its offshoots in the north, where the power of the Delhi Sultānate had been already considerably weakened, by keeping them constantly engaged in the south. In short, “it was Vijayanagar which held the key to the political situation of the time”, characterised by the decline of the Turko-Afghan Sultānate and the rise of important indigenous powers.

The first dynasty of Vijayanagar is named after Sangama. In the time of Harīhara I and Bukka I, the Vijayanagar kingdom brought under its influence many principalities and divisions, including, in the opinion of some, most of the Hoysala territory. But it has been pointed out by some writers that Harīhara I and Bukka I did not assume full imperial titles. In 1374 Bukka I sent an embassy to China and he died in A.D. 1378–1379. He was succeeded by his son, Harīhara II, who undoubtedly assumed the imperial titles of Mahārājādhirāja, Rājaparameśvara, etc. Sewell in his earlier work 1 states on the authority of some Muhammadan historians that Harīhara’s reign was a period of “unbroken peace”. But it is proved by certain inscriptions that there were conflicts between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Muslims during his reign. As a matter of fact, the history of the Vijayanagar Empire, like that of the Bahmani kingdom, is an unbroken record of bloody wars with different powers. In the cold weather of 1398, Bukka II, son of Harīhara II, conducted a raid northwards to the Bahmani territory, with his father’s permission, with a view to seizing the Rāchur Deōb, situated between the Krishnā and the Tuṅgabhadṛā, which formed the bone of contention between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Bahmani kingdom. He was opposed and defeated by Firuz Shāh Bahmani and a peace was concluded by the middle of 1399, Firuz exacting a heavy indemnity. But as several inscriptions show, the reign of Harīhara II saw the extension of Vijayanagar authority over the whole of Southern India, including Mysore, Kanara, Chingleput, Trichinopoly and Conjeeveram (Kāńchī). Harīhara II was a worshipper of Śiva under the form of Virupākṣa, but was tolerant of other religions. He died in August 1406, after which the succession to the throne was disputed for sometime among his sons. Deva Rāya I, however, secured the throne for himself on the 5th November, 1406. He met with some reverses in his wars with the Bahmani Sultāns and died in the year A.D. 1422. His son, Vijaya-Bukka or Vīra Vijaya, reigned for only a few months, then Deva Rāya II, son of Vijaya-Bukka, ascended the throne. Though Deva Rāya II’s wars with the Bahmanis ended in defeat and loss, his reign

1 A Forgotten Empire, p. 51.
was marked by reorganisation of the administration. To compete with the Bahmanis, Mussalmans were admitted by him into the army; and, to control and regulate trade, he appointed his right-hand man, Lakkanna or Lakshmana, to the "lordship of the southern sea", that is, to the charge of overseas commerce. Nicolo Conti, an Italian traveller, and 'Abdur-Razzaq, an envoy from Persia, visited Vijayanagar in 1420 and 1443 respectively; and they have left glowing descriptions of the city and the Empire of Vijayanagar. In fact, the Empire now extended over the whole of South India, reaching the shores of Ceylon, and attained the zenith of its prosperity during the rule of the first dynasty.

Deva Rāya II died in A.D. 1446 and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Mallikārjuna, who repelled a combined attack on his capital by the Bahmani Sultan and the Rājā of the Hindu kingdom of Orissa and was able to keep his kingdom intact during his rule, which lasted till about A.D. 1465. It was during this reign that the Sālūva chief, Narasimha of Chandragiri, whose ancestors had served the Vijayanagar kingdom faithfully as its feudatories, rose into prominence and resisted the aggressions of the Bahmani kingdom and the kingdom of Orissa. But Mallikārjuna's successor, Virūpāksha II, proved to be an incompetent ruler. Confusion and disorder naturally followed, taking advantage of which some of the provinces revolted, the Bahmani Sultan advanced into the Doāb between the Krishnā and the Tungabhadrā, and Rājā Pursottama Gajapati of Orissa advanced as far south as Tiruvannamalai.

To save the kingdom from these dangers, Narasimha Sālūva deposed his worthless master and seized the throne for himself in about A.D. 1486. Thus the Sangama dynasty was overthrown by what has been called the "First Usurpation" and Vijayanagar passed under the rule of the Sālūva dynasty. Narasimha Sālūva enjoyed the confidence of the people. With the interests of the Empire at heart, he recovered most of the revolted provinces during his six years' rule, though the Rāichūr Doāb remained under the control of the Bahmanis and Udayagiri under that of the Rājā of Orissa.

Narasimha Sālūva had the prudence to charge his trusted general, Narasa Nāyaka, who claimed descent from a dynasty which ruled over the Tuluva country, with the responsibility for the administration of the kingdom after him, though he desired that his sons should succeed him. Epigraphic evidence disproves the statement of the Muhammadan historians, and of Nuniz, that Narasa Nāyaka murdered the two sons of his master and usurped
the throne for himself. In reality he remained loyal to the dynasty of his master. He placed the latter's younger son, Immadi Narasimha, on the throne, when the elder died of wounds in a battle, though he ably managed the affairs of the State as its de facto ruler. It was only when he himself died in A.D. 1505 that his son, Vira Narasimha, deposed the last Sāluva ruler and seized the throne for himself. This "Second Usurpation" led to the direct rule of the Tuluva dynasty over the Vijayanagar Empire. Vira Narasimha is described on some copper plates and also by Nuniz as a pious king who distributed gifts at sacred places.

Vira Narasimha was succeeded by his younger brother, Krishnadeva Rāya, by far the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar, and one of the most famous kings in the history of India. A gallant and active warrior, he was always successful in the wars that he waged almost throughout his reign. He first turned his attention towards suppressing the feudatories in the central portion of his empire before trying to meet his great rivals in the north. Leaving his headquarters towards the end of 1510, he marched against the refractory chief of Ummattūr in Southern Mysore. He was defeated and the fortress of Sivassanudram was captured (1511-1512). Other neighbouring chiefs were also reduced to obedience. In 1512 Krishnadeva Rāya moved towards the Bijāpur frontier and took possession of Raichūr. Under the advice of his able and experienced minister and general, Sāluva Timma, he did not now invade the Muhammadan territories but turned against Gajapati Pratāparudra of Orissa in 1513, with a view to recovering the territories that his predecessors had captured from Vijayanagar during the reigns of the last rulers of the first dynasty. Early in 1514 he captured the fortress of Udayagiri and made prisoners of an uncle and an aunt of the Rājā of Orissa, who were, however, treated with honour. By the first half of the next year he had captured the strong fortress of Kondavidū and other fortresses of lesser importance in the neighbourhood, in spite of the fact that the Rājā of Orissa had received assistance from the Sultāns of Golkūndā and Bidar. He also took as captives the Gajapati prince, Virabhādra, and some other Orissa nobles. The prince was appointed by him governor of a province, and this fact, remarks Krishna Shastri, "testifies to the high statesmanship of Krishnārāya". In his third campaign against the King of Orissa, Krishnadeva Rāya encamped at Bezwāda, laid siege to Kondapalli and captured it. The wife and a son (other than Prince Virabhādra) of the Rājā of Orissa and some Orissa nobles and generals fell into his hands on this occasion also. He then advanced north-eastwards as far as Simhāchālam in the
Vizagapatam district and forced his Orissan contemporary to come to terms. The last great military achievement of Krishnadeva Rāya was his victory over Ismā'īl Šāhīd Shāhīd near Rāichūr on the 19th March, 1520, when the latter attempted to recover the Rāichūr Doāb. He is said to have overrun the Bijāipur territory and to have razed to the ground the fortress of Gulbarga. In short, the military conquests of Krishnadeva Rāya enabled him to humble the pride of his northern foes and to extend the limits of his Empire up to the South Konkan in the west, Vizagapatam in the east and the extreme border of the peninsula in the south, while some islands and coasts of the Indian Ocean were within its sphere of influence. During the last few years of his life he devoted his attention to the organisation of the Empire in all respects and to works of peaceful administration.

Krishnadeva Rāya maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese and granted them some concessions, since, writes Sewell, "he benefited largely by the import of horses and other requisites". In 1510 the Portuguese governor, Albuquerque, solicited his permission to build a fort at Bhatkal, which was granted after the Portuguese had captured Goa from the Muslims. The Portuguese traveller, Paes, praises him in eloquent terms: "He is the most learned and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receiveth them kindly; asking all about their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to certain fits of rage . . . he is by rank a greater lord than any, by reason of what he possesses in armies and territories, but it seems that he has in fact nothing compared to what a man like him ought to have, so gallant and perfect is he in all things."

The reign of Krishnadeva Rāya not only marked the climax in the territorial expansion of the Vijayanagar Empire, but was also remarkable for the encouragement and development of art and letters. Himself an accomplished scholar, the Rāya was a generous patron of learning. He was "in no way less famous", writes Krishna Shastri, "for his religious zeal and catholicity. He respected all sects of the Hindu religion alike, though his personal leanings were in favour of Vaishnavism . . . Krishnarāya's kindness to the fallen enemy, his acts of mercy and charity towards the residents of captured cities, his great military prowess which endeared him alike to his feudatory chiefs and to his subjects, the royal reception and kindness that he invariably bestowed upon foreign embassies, his imposing personal appearance, his genial
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look and polite conversation which distinguished a pure and dignified life, his love for literature and for religion, and his solicitude for the welfare of his people, and above all, the most fabulous wealth that he conferred as endowments on temples and Brāhmaṇas, mark him out indeed as the greatest of the South Indian monarchs who sheds a lustre on the pages of history.” In fact, the Vijayanagar Empire rose, during his reign, to the zenith of its glory and prosperity, when the old Turko-Afghan Sultānate was almost a shrivelled and attenuated carcass and was soon to be swept away by a fresh Turkish invasion.

But dangers lurked for the Vijayanagar Empire in the ambition of her powerful neighbours in the north and in the attitude of her viceroy, two of whom, the viceroy of Madura and the viceroy who was in charge of the central block of the kingdom, rebelled even during the last days (1528 or 1529) of Krishnadeva Rāya. The former was brought back to submission before the death of Krishnadeva Rāya, but the latter had to be “dealt with only at the beginning of his successor’s reign”.

Krishnadeva Rāya died in a.d. 1529 or 1530 and was succeeded by his half-brother, Achyuta Rāya, who, as epigraphic and literary evidences show, was not “altogether the craven that he is represented by Numiz to have been”. He chastised the rebel viceroy of Madura and reduced to obedience the Rājā of Travancore, who had given shelter to the former. But he soon committed the blunder of relaxing his personal hold on the administration, which fell under the control of his two brothers-in-law, both named Tirumala. This irritated the other viceroy, who formed a rival party under the leadership of three brothers, Rāma, Tirumala and Venkata, of the Āraviṇu dynasty, connected by marriage with the reigning Tuluva dynasty. The kingdom was consequently plunged into troubles which continued throughout the whole course of its imperial history and did not cease till it entirely disappeared. After the death of Achyuta Rāya in a.d. 1541 or 1542, his son, Venkatādri or Venkata I, ascended the throne, but his reign did not last for more than six months and the crown then passed to Sadāsiva, a nephew of Achyuta. Sadāsiva Rāya was a mere puppet in the hands of his minister, Rāma Rāya, of the Āraviṇu dynasty, who was the de facto ruler of the State. Rāma Rāya was endowed with ability and was determined to restore the power of the Vijayanagar Empire, which had sunk low after the death of Krishnadeva Rāya. One important feature of Rāma Rāya’s policy was his active interference in the quarrels among the Deccan Sultānates, in alliance first with one and then with another. His
enterprises were, indeed, successful for the time being. But these made him over-confident and haughty and ultimately proved to be a cause of disaster for the Empire. In 1543 Rāma Rāya formed an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golkundā with a view to attacking Bijāpur. But his object was baffled by the diplomacy of the Bijāpur minister, Asad Khān, who concluded peace separately with Burhān Nizām Shāh and Rāma Rāya, and thus broke up the coalition. A change of alliance took place in 1558, when Bijāpur, Golkundā and Vijayanagar joined against Ahmadnagar and invaded it. On this occasion the army of Vijayanagar alienated the people of Ahmadnagar.

The haughty conduct of the Vijayanagar army kindled the long-standing, though smouldering, hostility of the Sultānates of the Deccan against Vijayanagar, and all, with the exception of that of Berar, joined in a coalition against it, which was cemented by matrimonial alliances. The allied Deccan Sultāns fought against Vijayanagar on the 23rd January, 1565, at a site marked by the two villages of Rāksas and Tagdi. This battle resulted in the defeat of the huge Vijayanagar army with immense losses.

"The victors," writes the author of Burhān-i-Ma'āṣir, "captured jewels, ornaments, furniture, camels, tents, camp-equipage, drums, standards, maidservants, menservants, and arms and armour of all sorts in such quantity that the whole army was enriched." "The plunder was so great," notes Ferishta, "that every private man in the allied army became rich in gold, jewels, tents, arms, horses and slaves, the kings permitting every person to retain what he acquired, reserving the elephants only for their own use." Husain Nizām Shāh killed Rāma Rāya with his own hand and exclaimed: "Now I am avenged of thee! Let God do what He will to me." The magnificent city of Vijayanagar was sacked and deprived of its splendour by the invading army in a manner which has been described by Sewell as follows: "The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Mussalmāns had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital, and from that time forward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy and they carried out their object relentlessly. . . . Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals, and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Viṭṭhalaśvāmī near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars
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and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description.”

The so-called battle of Talikota is indeed one of the decisive battles in the history of India. It destroyed the chance of Hindu supremacy in the south, which was left open to the invasions of the rulers of a new Turkish dynasty, till the rise of the Marātha power in the seventeenth century. Undoubtedly the battle did vital damage to the Vijayanagar Empire, but recent researches have proved that it did not disappear altogether as a result of it. “Talikota,” remarks a modern writer aptly, “was the climactic, but not the grand climactic of the Vijayanagar Empire.” In fact, the Empire continued to exist till the early part of the seventeenth century under the rulers of the Ārāviṇa dynasty, “before it got weakened and dismembered—weakened by the constant invasions from the north and dismembered by the dissatisfaction and rebellion of the viceroys within”.

The victorious Sultānates did not ultimately gain much as a result of this battle. Their alliance was soon dissolved and there was a recrudescence of mutual jealousy. This afforded the Vijayanagar Empire the opportunity for recuperation under Rāma Rāya’s brother, Tirumala. He returned to Vijayanagar after the Muslims had left it, but after a short stay there went to Penugondā, and restored the prestige and power of the Empire to such an extent as to be able to interfere in the affairs of the Muslim kingdoms. Towards the end of his reign, in about A.D. 1570, he dispensed with the phantom of the nominal ruler, Sadāsiva, and usurped the throne for the Ārāviṇa dynasty to which he belonged. His son and successor, Ranga II, continued after him his policy of increasing the efficiency of the Empire. Ranga II was succeeded about A.D. 1596 by his brother, Venkata II, who had his headquarters at Chandragiri and died after a glorious reign in A.D. 1614. He may be regarded as the last great ruler of Vijayanagar, who kept the Empire intact with the exception that in A.D. 1612 Rājā Ceyyar founded, with his permission, the kingdom of Mysore, on the extintion of the viceroyalty of Srirangapatan. His death was the signal for the dismemberment of the Empire. It was followed by a war of succession, and the consequent rise of disintegrating forces. These could not be checked by Ranga III, the last important ruler
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of Vijayanagar, in spite of his best attempts, owing to the selfish attitude of the rebel vassals of the Empire and the ambition of the Muslim States of Bijapur and Golkundā. Thus the Hindu feudatories of the Vijayanagar Empire proved to be her enemies in the long run. Their "insane pride, blind selfishness, disloyalty and mutual dissensions" largely facilitated the conquest of the Hindu Deccan by the Muslim States of Bijapur and Golkundā. Further, subordinate viceroys, like the Chiefs of Seringapatam and Bednār (Keladi, Ikkeri), and the Nāiks of Madura and Tanjore, carved out independent kingdoms for themselves.

B. Splendour and Wealth of Vijayanagar

Foreign travellers who visited India during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have left glowing accounts of the Empire of Vijayanagar. The city of Vijayanagar was encompassed by massive fortifications and was of enormous size. The Italian traveller, Nicolò Conti, who visited it about A.D. 1420 writes: "The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried up to the mountains and enclose the valleys at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms. . . . The King is more powerful than all the other kings of India." 'Abdur Razzāq, who came to India from Persia and went to Vijayanagar in A.D. 1442-1443, observes: "The country is so well populated that it is impossible in a reasonable space to convey an idea of it. In the King's treasury there are chambers with excavations in them, filled with molten gold, forming one mass. All the inhabitants of the country, whether high or low, even down to the artificers of the bazar, wear jewels and gilt ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers." Domingos Paes, a Portuguese, who has recorded a detailed description of Vijayanagar, writes: "Its King has much treasure and many soldiers and many elephants, for there are numbers of these in this country. . . . In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people, because of the great trade which it has and the many precious stones there, principally diamonds. . . . This is the best provided city in the world, and is stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn, and a certain amount of barley and beans, moong, pulses, horse-grain and many other seeds which grow in this country, which are the food of the people, and there is a large store of these and very cheap. . . . The streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count. . . ." Edoardo Barbosa, who was present in India in
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A.D. 1516, describes Vijayanagar as “of great extent, highly populous and the seat of an active commerce in country diamonds, rubies from Pegu, silks of China and Alexandria, and cinnamon, camphor, musk, pepper and sandal from Malabar”.

C. Economic Condition of the Vijayanagar Empire

It is clear from foreign accounts, and also other sources, that unbounded prosperity prevailed in the Vijayanagar Empire. Agriculture flourished in different parts of the realm and the State pursued a wise irrigation policy. The principal industries related to textiles, mining and metallurgy, and the most important of the minor industries was perfumery. Craftsmen’s and merchants’ guilds played an important part in the economic life of the kingdom. ‘Abdur Razzāq writes: “The tradesmen of each separate guild or craft have their shops close to one another.” Paes also observes: “There were temples in every street, for these appertain to institutions like the confraternities you know of in our parts, of all the craftsmen and merchants.”

The most remarkable feature in the economic condition of the kingdom was commerce, inland, coasting and overseas. The most important port on the Malabar coast was Calicut, and, according to ‘Abdur Razzāq, the Empire “possessed 300 seaports”. It had commercial relations with the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Malay Archipelago, Burma, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia and Portugal. The principal articles of export were cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices, and the imports into the Empire were horses, elephants, pearls, copper, coral, mercury, China silks and velvet. The cheap means of transport for inland trade were kōrvas, head-loads, pack-horses, pack-bullocks, carts and asses. Ships were in use for coasting and overseas trade. According to Barbosa, South India got its ships built in the Maldive Islands. Epigraphic evidence proves that the rulers of Vijayanagar maintained fleets and the people there were acquainted with the art of shipbuilding before the advent of the Portuguese. We have, however, no definite knowledge as to how the Vijayanagar Empire “dealt with the important question of ocean transport”.

The coinage of the Vijayanagar Empire was of various types, both in gold and copper, and there was one specimen of a silver coin. The coins bore on them emblems of different gods and animals varying according to the religious faith of the rulers. The prices of articles were low. The accounts of the foreign travellers tell us that the upper classes of the people had a high standard of living;
but we know from inscriptions that the common people groaned under the weight of heavy taxation, collected with rigour by the local governors, who were, however, sometimes restrained by the supreme rulers.

D. Social Life in the Vijayanagar Empire

Accounts of foreign travellers, inscriptions, and literature, contain copious references regarding the different aspects of the social life of the people in the Vijayanagar Empire, of which we can study here only the more striking ones: Women in general occupied a high position in society, and instances of the active part they took in the political, social and literary life of the country are not rare. Besides being trained in wrestling, handling swords and shields, music and other fine arts, some of them at any rate received a fair amount of literary education. Nuniz writes: "He (the King of Vijayanagar) has also women who wrestle, and others who are astrologers and soothsayers; and he has women who write all the accounts of expenses that are incurred inside the gates, and others whose duty it is to write all the affairs of the kingdom and compare their books with those of the writers outside; he has women also for music, who play instruments and sing. Even the wives of the King are well-versed in music. . . . It is said that he has judges, as well as bailiffs and watchmen who every night guard the palace, and these are women." Plurality of wives was a recognised practice, especially among the wealthy classes, and child marriage was the usual custom. The evil practice of exacting exorbitant dowries was greatly prevalent among those who were well placed in life. The State occasionally interfered in social affairs to settle disputes among various communities. The rite of Sati, or women burning themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, was very common in Vijayanagar, and the Brāhmaṇas freely sanctioned it. Being held in high esteem by the rulers, the Brāhmaṇas exercised a predominant influence not merely in social and religious matters but also in the political affairs of the State. Nuniz describes them as "honest men, given to merchandising, very acute and of much talent, very good at accounts, lean men and well formed, but little fit for hard work".

There were no strict restrictions in matters of diet. Besides fruits, vegetables and oil, meat of all kinds, excepting that of oxen or cows, for which the people had great veneration, was taken by the general population; but the Brāhmaṇas never killed
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or ate any "live thing". Nuniz gives the following description about the diet of the Vijayanagar Kings:

"These Kings of Bismaga eat all sorts of things, but not the flesh of oxen or cows, which they never kill because they worship them. They eat mutton, pork, venison, partridges, hares, doves, quail, and all kinds of birds; even sparrows and rats, and cats, and lizards, all of which are sold in the market of the city of Bismaga.

"Everything has to be sold alive so that each may know what he buys—this at least so far as concerns game—and there are fish from the rivers in large quantities."

If the statements of Poes and Nuniz be true, this was, remarks Dr. Smith, "a curious dietary for princes and people, who in the time of Krishnadeva Rāya and Achyuta Rāya were zealous Hindus with a special devotion to certain forms of Vishnu". Most probably rats, cats and lizards were eaten by the lower section of the people, who formed the non-Aryan element in the Vijayanagar population.

The foreign travellers refer to numerous blood sacrifices in the kingdom. According to Poes, the King used to witness the sacrifice of 24 buffaloes and 130 sheep, the animals being decapitated by a single blow of a large sickle. On the last day of the famous "nine days festival" 250 buffaloes and 4,500 sheep were slaughtered.

E. Art and Literature

The Vijayanagar Empire has to its credit brilliant cultural and artistic achievements. The Emperors were patrons of all languages—Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada, and under their fostering care some of the finest pieces of literature were produced. Sāyana, the famous commentator of the Vedas, and his brother, Mādhava, flourished during the early days of Vijayanagar rule and were deeply attached to the State. The reign of Krishnadeva Rāya was of special importance in this branch of activity as in all others. It marked "the dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India. Himself a scholar, a musician and poet, he loved to gather around him poets, philosophers, and religious teachers whom he honoured with munificent gifts of land and money". He wrote his magnun opus, Amuktamiladu, in Telugu, in the introduction to which he refers to five Sanskrit works written by him. This book is not merely of religious interest but also of great historical importance for the reign of Krishnadeva Rāya. In his court "flourished the 'Aṣṭādīpyajjas', 'the eight elephants' (famous poets), who supported the world of (Telugu) literature". His poet laureate, Peddana, enjoyed a wide reputation and held a high
position among Telugu writers. Even the rulers of the Āravidū dynasty patronised poets and religious teachers, and Telugu literature flourished under them with "reinforced vigour". There were also authors among the petty chiefs and relatives of the emperors. Works on music, dancing, drama, grammar, logic, philosophy, etc., received encouragement from the emperors and their ministers. In short, the Vijayanagar Empire was a "synthesis of South Indian culture".

Along with the growth of culture we have a remarkable development of art and architecture. The ruins of the old capital of this

VITTHALASVAMI TEMPLE, VIJAYANAGAR

Empire proclaim to the world that there evolved, in the days of its glory, a distinct style of architecture, sculpture and painting by native artists. The famous Hazāra temple, built during the reign of Krishnadeva Rāya, is, remarks Longhurst, "one of the most perfect specimens of Hindu temple architecture in existence". The Vīṭṭhalasvāmī temple is also a fine example of Vijayanagar style. In the opinion of Fergusson, it "shows the extreme limit in florid magnificence to which the style advanced". The art of painting attained a high degree of excellence, and the art of music rapidly developed. Some new works on the subject of music were produced. Krishnadeva Rāya and the Regent, Rāma Rāya, were proficient
in music. Theatres provided amusement for the people of the kingdom.

Epigraphic and literary evidence clearly shows that the rulers of Vijayanagar were of pious disposition and devoted to Dharma. But they were not fanatics. Their attitude towards the prevailing four sects, Saiva, Baudhha, Vaishnava and Jaina, and even alien creeds, Christian, Jewish and Moorish, was liberal. Barbosa writes: “The King allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without enquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Hindu.”

F. Administration of the Vijayanagar Empire

The Vijayanagar Empire gradually developed a centralised administration with all its branches carefully organised. No doubt, for the task which they set before themselves, its rulers had to maintain a strong army and also to undertake military expeditions, but it does not seem to be correct to describe their State as an essentially military one based on force and condemn it as an organisation which “contained no principle of development; . . . represented no ideal of human progress and therefore could not be lasting”, as a modern writer has done. As a matter of fact, with the expansion of the Empire, its rulers organised the administration with such efficiency as served to remove the disorders that had prevailed during the periods of war and facilitate the pursuit of peaceful activities in various fields.

As in other medieval governments, the King was the fountainhead of all power in the Vijayanagar State. He was the supreme authority in civil, military as well as judicial affairs, and also often intervened to settle social disputes. But he was not an irresponsible despot, neglecting the interests of the kingdom and ignoring the rights and wishes of the people. The Vijayanagar kings knew how to secure the good-will of the people; and by their liberal policy they “conduced towards bringing peace and plenty into the kingdom”. “A crowned King,” writes Krishnadeva Rāya in his Amuktamālyodā, “should always rule with an eye towards Dharma.” He further says that “a King should rule collecting round him people skilled in statecraft, should investigate the mines yielding precious metals in his kingdom and extract the same, should levy taxes from his people moderately, should counteract the acts of his enemies by crushing them with force, should be friendly, should protect one and all of his subjects,
should put an end to the mixing up of the castes among them, should always try to increase the merit of the Brāhmaṇas, should strengthen his fortress and lessen the growth of the undesirable things and should be ever mindful of the purification of his cities . . .”

The King was assisted in the task of administration by a council of ministers, appointed by him. Though the Brāhmaṇas held high offices in the administration and had considerable influence, the ministers were recruited not only from their ranks but also from those of the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas. The office of a minister was “sometimes hereditary and sometimes rested on selection”. Both 'Abdur Razzāq and Nuniz refer to the existence of a sort of secretariat. Besides the ministers, the other officers of the State were the chief treasurer; the custodians of the jewels; an officer who was to look after the commercial interests of the State; the prefect of the police, who was responsible for the prevention of crime and maintenance of order in the city; the chief master of the horse; and subordinate officials like the bhāṣa, who sang the praise of the kings, the betel-bearers or personal attendants of the King, the calendar-makers, the engravers and the composer of inscriptions.

A magnificent court was maintained by the kings of Vijayanagar in the capital city at a huge cost of money. It was attended by nobles, priests, litterateurs, astrologers and musicians, and festivals were celebrated with great pomp and grandeur.

The Empire was divided for administrative purposes into several provinces (rāja, maṇḍala, chāvadi), which had again subdivisions like ōṇhe,1 nādu,2 sima, village and sthala3 in the Karnātaka portion, and koṭțam,4 parru, nādu and village in the Tamil portion. It is very difficult to state the exact number of provinces in the Empire. Some writers relying on Paes write that the Empire was divided into 200 provinces. But the foreign traveller evidently “confounds the tributary kings with the provincial viceroys, and these again with the minor nobles who were merely officials in the government”. According to H. Krishna Shastri, the Empire was divided into six principal provinces. Each province was under a viceroy, nāyaka or nāik,5 who might be a member of the royal house,

1 A territorial division higher than a nādu.
2 A territorial division higher than a village.
3 A portion of land comprising several fields.
4 A territorial division higher than a parru, which again was higher than a nādu.
5 The designation of Nāik was also given to the collectors of customs and military commanders.
or an influential noble of the State, or some descendant of the old ruling families. Each viceroy exercised civil, military and judicial powers within his jurisdiction, but he was required to submit regular accounts of the income and expenditure of his charge to the central government and render it military aid in times of need. Further, he was liable to severe punishment by the King if he proved to be a traitor or oppressed the people, and his estate could be confiscated to the State if he made default in sending one third of his income to the latter. Though the nāiks were generally severe in raising revenue from the people, they were not unmindful of beneficial work like the encouragement of agriculture, the plantation of new villages, protection of religion and erection of temples and other buildings. But they were greatly responsible for the disorders which prevailed in Southern India during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the power of Vijayanagar disappeared for ever.

The Vijayanagar rulers inherited and continued to maintain a healthy and vigorous system of local administration, with the village as the lowest unit. Each village was a self-sufficient unit. The village assembly, like the Panchāyat of Northern India, conducted the administration of the area under its charge—executive, judicial and police—through its hereditary officers like the senateva or the village accountant, the talāra or the village watchman or commandant, the begāra or the superintendent of forced labour, and others. These village officers were paid either by grants of land or a portion of agricultural produce. The heads of commercial groups or corporations seem “to have formed an integral part of the village assemblies”. The King maintained a link with the village administration through his officer called the Mahānāyyakāchārya, who exercised a general supervision over it.

Land revenue, known as dīst, was the principal source of income of the Vijayanagar State. It had an efficient system of land revenue administration, under a department called the athavane. Lands were classified under three heads for the purpose of assessment—wet land, dry land, and orchards and woods; and the assessments to be paid by the tenants were clearly indicated. To meet the heavy burdens of the State, and solve the problem of obtaining men and money to withstand its enemies, the Vijayanagar Emperors gave up the traditional rate of assessment at one-sixth of the produce and increased it to some extent. It is difficult to accept the statement of Nuniz that the “husbandmen had to pay one-tenth of their produce”. The Vijayanagar rulers adopted the “principle of differential taxation”, that is, levied taxes according
to the relative fertility of the lands. Besides the land tax, the ryots had to pay other kinds of taxes like grazing tax, marriage tax, etc. Other sources of income of the State were the revenue from customs duties; tolls on roads; revenue from gardening and plantations; and taxes levied on dealers in goods of common consumption, manufacturers and craftsmen, potters, washermen, shoemakers, barbers, mendicants, temples and prostitutes. Taxes were paid both in cash and kind, as during the days of the Cholas.

There is no doubt that the incidence of taxation was heavy and the provincial governors and revenue officials often practised oppression on the people. But at the same time there are instances to show that the Government redressed the grievances of the people on complaints being made to it and sometimes reduced or remitted taxes, and that the people could appeal directly to the King in time of need. The Empire could certainly not last for about three centuries on a systematic policy of extortion and oppression.

The King was the supreme judge, but there were regular courts and special judicial officers for the administration of justice. Sometimes, disputes were settled by the State officials with the co-operation of the local bodies. The only law of the land was not "the law of the Brāhmaṇas which is that of the priests", as Nūnix would ask us to believe, but was based on traditional regulations and customs, strengthened by the constitutional usage of the country, and its observance was strictly enforced. Severe punishment was inflicted on guilty persons. These penalties were chiefly of four kinds—fines, confiscation of property, ordeal by death. Death or mutilation was the punishment for crimes like theft, adultery and treason. Sometimes the criminals were "cast down before the feet of an elephant, that they may be killed by its knees, trunk and tusks". Official oppression in the sphere of justice was not absent, but the State occasionally granted remedies against it, and it was also "sometimes successfully checked by the united opposition of corporate bodies".

Like the Hoysalas, the rulers of Vijayanagar had a carefully organised military department, called Kandāchāra, under the control of the Dandanāyaka or Dannāyaka (Commander-in-Chief), who was assisted by a staff of minor officials. The State maintained a large and efficient army, the numerical strength of which was not, however, uniform all through. The regular troops of the King were, in times of need, reinforced by auxiliary forces of the feudatories and nobles. The several component parts of the army were the infantry, recruited from people of different classes and creeds, occasionally including even Muslims; the cavalry, strengthened by
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the recruitment of good horses from Ormuz through the Portuguese, owing to a dearth of these animals in the Empire; elephants; camels; and artillery, the use of which by the Hindus as early as A.D. 1368 is proved by the evidence of foreign accounts as well as of inscriptions. The discipline and fighting strength of the Vijayanagar army were, however, inferior to those of the armies of the Muslim States of the Deccan.

With all that has been said above, the Vijayanagar Empire suffered from certain defects. Firstly, the provincial governors enjoyed a good deal of independence, which contributed in no small degree to the weakening of the central authority and ultimately to the disintegration of the Empire. Secondly, the Empire failed to develop a sustained commercial activity in spite of various facilities. “This failure,” remarks Dr. Aiyangar justly, “proved a vital defect in the imperial career of Vijayanagar, and made a permanent Hindu Empire impossible.” Thirdly, in consideration of temporary gains, the Emperors allowed the Portuguese to settle on the west coast and thus “principles of profit” overrode “the greater question of the stability of their Empire”.

The Kingdom of Orissa

Orissa was consolidated into a powerful kingdom by Anantaavarman Choda Ganga during his long reign of more than seventy years (cir. 1076–1148). It appears from several inscriptions that the kingdom then extended from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Godāvari in the south. Choda Ganga’s achievements in the domain of peace were also remarkable. He was a patron of religion, and of Sanskrit as well as Telugu literature. The great temple of Jagannāth at Puri stands as a brilliant monument to “the artistic vigour and prosperity of Orissa during his reign”. The successors of Choda Ganga effectively checked the invasions of the Muslims and maintained the prosperity of their kingdom. The most famous of them was Narasimha I (1238–1264), who, besides achieving a remarkable success against the Muslims of Bengal, probably completed the construction of the temple of Jagannāth at Puri and built the great temple of the Sun-God at Konārak in the Puri district. After the death of Narasimha, the fortunes of the dynasty began to decline, and it was supplanted in about A.D. 1434–1435 by a solar dynasty, which ruled in Orissa for more than a century.

The founder of the new dynasty, Kapilendra, was endowed with considerable ability and vigour, and restored the prestige of the
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kingdom of Orissa, which had sunk low during the reigns of the later Ganges. He suppressed the powerful rebels in his own country, fought successfully with the Bahmani of Bidar and the rulers of Vijayanagar, succeeded in extending his dominions from the Ganges to the Kaveri, and even marched with a victorious army to the vicinity of Bidar in the heart of the Bahmani kingdom. It is stated in the Gopinathpur inscription that he took possession of Udayagiri, the seat of a Vijayanagar viceroyalty, and Conjeevaram. The beginning of the reign of the next ruler, Purushottama (A.D. 1470-1497), was marked by certain disorders during which the kingdom of Orissa lost its southern half from the Godavari downwards. Sahuva Narasimha captured the country to the south of the Krishná and the Bahmanis seized the Godavari-Krishná Doab. But towards the end of his reign Purushottama recovered the Doab and regained a part of the Andhra country as far as the modern Guntur district. It cannot be said with certainty if he recovered any of the Tamil districts of the empire of Kapilendra.

Purushottama's son and successor, Prataparudra (1497-1540), a contemporary and disciple of Chaitanya, inherited a kingdom extending from the Hubli and Mshapur districts of Bengal to the Guntur district of Madras, and including also a part of the highlands of Telingama. But it was not destined to maintain this extent for long owing to the aggressions of Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar and of the growing Qutb Sháhí kingdom of Golkundá on the eastern coast. As a result of three campaigns, Prataparudra had to cede to his more powerful Vijayanagar contemporary that portion of his kingdom which lay to the south of the Godavari. The Sultán Quli Qutb Sháh of Golkundá invaded the kingdom of Orissa in 1522.

Some believe that this political decline of Orissa was a sequel to the loss of martial spirit by her rulers and people due to the effect of Vaishnavism preached by Chaitanya. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the kingdom of Orissa lost its old power from the beginning of the sixteenth century. About A.D. 1541-1542 the dynasty of Kapilendra was supplanted by the Bhoi dynasty, which was so called because its founder, Govinda, formerly a minister of Prataparudra, belonged to the Bhoi or writer caste. Govinda, his son and two grandsons reigned for about eighteen years. The dynasty was ousted, in about A.D. 1558, by Mukunda Harichandana, who did his best to save the kingdom of Orissa from Muslim invasions till his death in A.D. 1568, and whose alliance was sought by Akbar in pursuance of his policy of attacking the
Afghans of Bengal from both sides. The Kararani Sultans of Bengal annexed Orissa in A.D. 1508. The Hindu renegade, Kālāpāhār, who had accompanied Sulaimān Kararani’s son, Bāyazid, to Orissa, is said to have desecrated the temple of Jagannāth and even made attempts to destroy the wooden idols. Then began a Mughul-Afghan contest for the possession of Orissa.

Mewār

Some of the Rājput States were stirred with the spirit of revival on the dismemberment of the Turko-Afghan Empire. The most prominent of these was the Guhila principality of Mewār, where the Rājput genius unfolded itself so brilliantly and which for generations produced a succession of brave generals, heroic leaders, prudent rulers and some brilliant poets. As early as the seventh century A.D. the brave and chivalrous Rājpats of the Guhila clan established their power in this territory. We have already narrated how ‘Alā-ud-din Khalji besieged and captured Chitor, the capital of Mewār, and how Hamir, or his son, delivered it from the hands of
the Muslims and retrieved the lost honour of his race. Hamir died full of years possibly in A.D. 1364 “leaving a name still honoured in Mewar as one of the wisest and most gallant of her princes and bequeathing well-established and extensive power” to his son, Kshetra Simha. Kshetra Simha being killed in the course of a family quarrel in or about A.D. 1382 was succeeded by his son, Lakhā. On Lakhā’s death after 1418 (?), his son, Mokala, ascended the throne of Mewar, but he was assassinated in or about A.D. 1431 by two of his uncles. The next Rānā of Mewar was Kumbha, one of the most famous rulers in the history of India. His reign was an important period in the annals of his country. Tod thus praises his achievements: “All that was wanting to augment her (Mewar’s) resources against the storms which were collecting on the brows of Caucasus and the shores of Oxus, and were destined to burst on the head of his grandson, Sangha, was effected by Kumbha, who with Hamir’s energy, Lakhā’s taste for arts, and a genius comprehensive as either or more fortunate, succeeded in all his undertakings, and once more raised the ‘crimson banner’ of Mewar upon the banks of the Ghangār, the scene of Samara’s defeat.” Kumbha fought against the Muslim rulers of Mālwa and Gujarāt, and although success did not attend all his enterprises, he could hold his own position against his ambitious neighbours. He was also a mighty builder, to whom Mewar is indebted for some of her finest monuments. Of the eighty-four fortresses built for the defence of Mewar, thirty-two were erected by Kumbha. The most brilliant monument of his military and constructive genius is the fortress of Kumbhalgarh, “second to none in strategical importance or historical renown”. Kumbha’s Jayastambha, also called the Kirtistambha (Tower of Fame), is another monument of his genius. Further, the Rānā was a poet, a man of letters and an accomplished musician. He was assassinated by his son, Udaya Kuran, probably in A.D. 1469. This cruelty of Udaya’s horrified the nobles, who acknowledged his younger brother, Rāyamalla, as the Rānā. Rāyamalla’s sons quarrelled among themselves for the succession and ultimately one of them, Sangrāma, or Sanga, as he was popularly called, succeeded to the throne of Mewar in or about A.D. 1509. Sanga was endowed with remarkable military prowess. A hero of a hundred fields, he bore the scars of eighty wounds on his body in addition to having an eye blinded and a leg crippled. He fought successfully against Mālwa, Delhi and Gujarāt, and organised the financial resources and the military forces of Mewar with a view to building her supremacy on the break-up of the Delhi Sultānate. Thus a contest between him and any other power then trying to establish
supremacy in Northern India was inevitable. The battle of Khānuā, to be described in a subsequent chapter, was a logical outcome of this fact.

Kāmarūpa and Assam

At the time of the advent of the Muslims in Bengal in the early thirteenth century, the Brahmaputra valley was parcelled out into a number of independent principalities, at war with one another. A line of Chutiya (a tribe of mixed Bodo-Shān stock) kings ruled over the tract east of the Subansiri and the Disang, while a strip to the south and south-east was under the control of some Bodo tribes. Further west was a Kachāri kingdom lying south of the Brahmaputra and extending probably half way across the Nowgong district. West of the Chutiyas on the north bank and of the Kachāris on the south, were the domains of some petty chiefs called Bhuiyās. To the extreme west was situated the kingdom of Kāmarūpa, the western boundary of which was marked by the river Karatóyā and the eastern boundary varied according to the position of its hostile neighbours. It was known as the kingdom of Kāmata. The Āhoms, a section of the great Shān tribe, had appeared as a new element in the history of the Brahmaputra valley early in the thirteenth century, and checked the eastern expansion of the Kāmata kingdom, while its western neighbours, the Muslim Sultāns of Bengal, led several invasions into its territories with varying results.

Early in the fifteenth century a strong monarchy was established in Kāmata by the Khens with their capital at Kāmatāpur, a few miles to the south of Cooch Behār. The Khens ruled over Kāmata for about seventy-five years and their last ruler, Nilāmbar, was overthrown by ‘Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh in about a.d. 1498. After a short period of confusion, Biswa Simha, of the Koch tribe, which was Mongoloid in origin, established a powerful kingdom with Koch Bihār, modern Cooch Bihār, as his capital, about a.d. 1515. The greatest ruler of this line was Biswa Simha’s son and successor, Nara Nārāyan, during whose reign the kingdom of Kāmata grew in prosperity, and reached the zenith of its power. But in 1581 he was compelled to cede the portions of his kingdom to the east of the river Sankosh to his nephew, Raghu Dev. Thus the Koch kingdom was divided into two rival principalities, called Koch Bihār and Koch Hājo by the Muslims. Their feuds drew the intervention of the Āhoms and the Muslims, and in 1639 the western and the eastern States fell under the supremacy of the Muslims and the Āhoms respectively.
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The Āhoms, a section of the Shān tribe, who appeared in Assam in about A.D. 1215, gradually consolidated their position and established a strong monarchy which lasted for six centuries. During the period under review they checked the eastward expansion of the kings of Kāmarūpa and the Sultāns of Bengal. The kingdom of the Āhoms became vulnerable to Muslim attacks only after the latter had subjugated Kāmarūpa. Thus ʿAlāʾ-ud-dīn Husaīn Shāh of Bengal led an expedition into Assam when it was ruled by Suhenpha. In spite of the initial success of Muslim arms, this expedition had a disastrous end. There was no Āhim-Muslim conflict for more than thirty years, till the second phase of it began when invasions into Assam were conducted by some local Muhammadan chieftains of Bengal. But their attempts also failed by September, 1533. Thus the attempt of the Muslims of Bengal to conquer Assam ended in failure by the thirties of the sixteenth century. The history of Assam after this period will be treated in its proper place.

Nepāl

By the year A.D. 879 Nepāl possibly threw off the Tibetan yoke and came to have an independent history of its own. For two hundred years after this we know little about the kings ruling in Nepāl, but from the eleventh century Nepāl flourished under the Thākuris. For more than two hundred years (1097–1326), the Karnātaka king Nānyadeva of Mithila and his successors claimed, from their capital at Simrāon, a sort of loose sovereignty over the local princes of Nepāl. In A.D. 1324, Harisimha of Tirhut, a descendant of Nānyadeva, invaded Nepāl, the reigning king of which, Jayaḍrāma, submitted to him. With his headquarters at Bhatgāon, Harisimha gradually extended his power over the whole valley, and his kingdom had diplomatic relations with China in the fourteenth century. But at the same time Harisimha and his descendants “left undisturbed the local rulers, who acknowledged their hegemony, in the possession of the two other capitals, viz., Patan and Katmandū”.

In 1376 Jaya-Shitimala, grandson-in-law of the Malla king, Jayarudra (1320–1326), and son-in-law of Jagatsimha, a prince of the Karnātaka line of Harisimha, who had married Jayarudra’s daughter, Nāyakadevi, seized the throne of the Mallas and established his authority over practically the whole of Nepāl. It was henceforth ruled by his descendants “in regular succession”. He had three sons—Dharmamalla, Jyotirmalla and Kirtimalla. They kept the kingdom undivided. By A.D. 1418 Harisimha’s descendants lost their authority in Nepāl, and Jyotirmalla tried to exercise imperial
power. About A.D. 1426 Jyotirmalla was succeeded by his eldest son, Yakshamalla, who ruled for about half a century and was the greatest of the Malla rulers of Nepal. But he committed a mistake before his death, between A.D. 1474 and 1476, in partitioning the kingdom among his sons and daughters. This led to the rise of the two rival principalities of Katmandu and Bhatgaon, whose quarrels ultimately led to the conquest of Nepal by the Gurkhas in A.D. 1768.