CHAPTER III.

VI. The Nanda Dynasty (495 to 313 B.C.)

Nanda was ambitious, powerful and avaricious. Like another Parasurama, he killed almost all the proud Kshatriyas of the time (Vis. Puran IV. 24. 4). He was the first Kshatriya of low degree to sit on a reputed Kshatriya throne. So, his usurpation was much disputed and opposed. The allies, all proud of their high birth, warmly espoused the opposition. Heroic Nanda also proved himself equal to the occasion. In different battles, he defeated and overthrew most of the 16 great Powers of North India, plundered their treasures and gathered vast wealth. It is said that after Yudhishthira, he was
the first Samrāt (emperor) of India. He assumed the
glorious title of Mahāpādma i.e. the Rich. With an
eenormous army he held the country under military
subjection. The Mahāvamsa alludes to his avarice and
Yuen Chwang speaks of his immense riches. The five
stupas near Pataliputra were believed to have contained
the vast treasures of Nanda Raja. All troubles over,
Nanda directed his attention to the condition of his
people. A pond of his construction was afterwards
repaired by king Kharavela of Kalinga in 165 B.C.
(Inscription of Hasti Guha i.e. Elephant Cave, Uday-
giri). By power of arms, Nanda made himself lord over
a considerable part of North India. Of the 16 states,
some were under his direct rule and some were allowed
to rule as his vassals. The power of Magadha was at its
height under Nanda Mahāpādma, Pataliputra. the
capital was now magnificent, populous and an important
centre of trade. Katyāyana, critic of Panini was a minis-
ter of Nanda. Besides 8 legitimate sons, Nanda had
by fair Murā prob. a Persian woman, a heroic son
Chandragupta by name. Nanda ruled 28 years. Then
his eldest son Sumālyā succeeded (377 B.C.) The
Nanda brothers kept the empire intact and reigned until
340 B.C., when the 8th Nanda brother Dasa-siddhika
and his sons were murdered by his wife's paramour
Indradatta who put his own son by the queen on the
throne. This king of base origin was Sudhana or
Ugradhanva (Gk. Xandrames or Agrames). His realm
is mentioned by the Greek writers as the kingdom of
the Prasii, Skr. Prāchya (i.e. eastern) or Ganganides
Skr. Gangarāsiha. In point of power, population and prosperity, Magadh was now the brightest kingdom in India (Hist. Hist. of the World Vol. II).

According to the Greeks, Sudhanvā Nanda was extremely unpopular for his wickedness and base origin. The state, however, was administered by Brahman ministers of whom Rākṣasa, a quite selfless Brahman was the chief. A rough idea of the extent and power of the Nanda empire may be had from its military strength consisting of 20,000 horse, 200,000 foot, 20,000 chariots, 3 or 4 thousand elephants. One may be curious to ask here why the Persians did not conquer India. Of course, attempts were made, though not crowned with full success. Cyrus failed to substantiate his dream. Some 30 years later, Darius conquered some Indian tracts north of Cabul. Probably the Persians could not mind the conquest of India so seriously, as they were busy fighting with the Greeks; or, they may have sent expeditions to India, but the Hindus beat them back. The following nine centuries (from 330 B.C. to 530 A.D.) will find India in great troubles. The first invaders were the Greeks. India was saved by her two great heroes (ca. B.C.) and Pushpa Mitra (ca. B.C.). Yet the Aryan Greeks had conquered some parts of India and our Indo-Greek relations existed for 400 years.

Alexander the Great in India (327-26 B.C.)

The Greeks, people of Greece, a small peninsula in the south-east of Europe, were an excellent people
noted for their bravery, learning, wisdom and arts. They were Aryan colonists of the Mediterranean islands called the Ionians. Hindu tradition makes them of Hindu origin, being the descendants of Turvasu, a rebellious son of Yayati. It is said that these Yavanas gradually marched towards the West. Greek Ionian and Hindu Yavana is the same word. Hindus applied the same word Yavana to the Greek invaders and conquerors of India of the 4th century B.C. and later on. The word Java (applied to the Turks or Muhammadans in general) is often wrongly confounded by scholars with Yavana (the Greeks).

We are sure of an Indo-Hellenic intercourse, at least in learning and trade, before Alexander who, however, made it closer. Alexander (356-323 B.C.), son to Philip II. and queen Olympias of Macedon, a province to the north of Greece Proper, was the pupil of Aristotle. He became king at 20 (336 B.C.). In 335 B.C. he subdued the northern tribes of Macedon. In 334 B.C., when he was barely 22, he was out to conquer and Hellenise the world, with 30,000 foot, and 5,000 horse. Of these, only 7,000 were pure Greek soldiers. The Greeks hated to serve him, as they called Alexander a foreigner. So, many resigned on the way. Of them, Memnon became the admiral of Persia, but he died of cholera in 333 B.C. This proved good for Alexander. Darius III. (Codomannus) was then the Persian monarch. Alexander invaded Persia. After many battles, Darius, being defeated, fled towards India but was assassinated by Bessus, one of his faithful friends.
Persia, Asia Minor and Egypt were conquered. The port of Alexandria was founded near the mouths of the Nile. The Carthaginian Power was annihilated. In 330 B.C. Alexander reached Ecbatana. He next went to Bactria and conquered it. Here he married Roxana. In 332 B.C. he had founded Alexandria, 30 miles north of Cabul. In April, 327 B.C. he crossed the Hindu Kush in 10 days, with his army of 50 or 60 thousand soldiers and came down on the rich valley of Koh-i-Daman. Alexander now conquered the Aryans on the right bank of the Indus. He captured Pushkalawati after a siege of 30 days and overpowered the Gandarians. After a strenuous opposition, the Asvakas (Greek Assacanes) were subjugated during the winter. He next attacked Massaga. Here Alexander was wounded by an arrow. Unluckily, the king of Massaga was killed by a blow from a missile. Alexander then took the formidable fortress by a storm. The queen of the late Chief and her infant son were captured. She afterwards bore a son to Alexander. He next captured the fort of Aeroses near the Indus and appointed a faithful Hindu officer Simagupta by name, as governor.

In January, 326 B.C. Alexander crossed the Indus at Ohind (Udabhândapura), 16 miles above Attock (ancient Aratta-wahaka) where a bridge of boats was built by the friendly Indian Chiefs under the supervision of the Greek Generals. At Ohind Alexander received an embassy from Ambhi, son to his late ally the king of Taxila. The kings of Taxila sought his aid to ruin their enemies, the hill-king of Abhisares and Puru. The
king of Kashmir sent his brother to tender his submission. Several minor kings came personally to pay him homage. The kings of the Panjab, in stead of offering Alexander a combined resistance, easily yielded to him one after another. Only two kings opposed the Greek invader. One was king Hasti, defeated after a month's efforts and the other was king Puru said to be of the Pândava origin, and ruler of the Doab between the Jhelum and the Chenab. His kingdom contained 300 towns and is now identified with the districts of Jhelam, Gujrat and Shikarpur. Alexander advanced to the Vindas (Jhelum) and met the army of Porus on the further bank of the river (May, 326 B.C.) No other Indian king came to the frontier to repel the foreign foe. The hill Chief of Abhisara, an ally of Purus, now left him and joined Alexander. The promised contingent of the Kashmir king did not yet arrive. The Greek writers have called the Hindu Raja of Taxila a most useful ally for his “liberal supplies” to the Macedonian army. Purus alone, with his two sons and an army 80,000 strong, gallantly stood to oppose the mightiest hero of the world. To the eternal glory of this valiant Indian monarch be it said that when Alexander had summoned him to submission, Porus gave the proud answer that he would indeed come, not as a supplicant but at the head of an army ready for fighting. Alexander now prepared for a decisive battle. The river was in flood. Porus had drawn his army in battle-array on a dry land before a hill. Thinking that the cavalry—the main stay of his army, could not face the huge elephants of Porus,
PORUS ALONE FIGHTS WITH ALEXANDER.

Alexander thought of a device. Leaving the camp well-guarded, he marched 16 miles to the north, forded the river near an island and reached the eastern bank, under the cover of a dark night. A son of Porus hurried up with an army to oppose but was routed. Then Porus marched with the bulk of his army towards the north-east on the Carri plain. The Hindus fought bravely for 8 hours but were defeated. Arrian ascribes the Hindu defeat to the following causes: (i) The Indian bows, though very powerful, were useless to the mobile Greek cavalry. (ii) The ground was slippery. (iii) The Greek horsemen were superior in personal strength and discipline. The army of Porus was annihilated, his two sons were killed and "Porus himself, a magnificent giant, six and a half feet in height, fought to the last, but at last succumbed to nine wounds and was taken prisoner in a fainting condition." Alexander, pleased with the gallantry and princely dignity of Porus, not only reinstated him but also augmented his kingdom by giving him some conquered tracts. Porus was now fast friend of Alexander.

To commemorate his victory, Alexander built two towns via, Nikaia, on the battle-field (modern Sukhchainpur) and Boukephala (in memory of his favourite horse)—now called the town of Jihlam. The victory spread the Greek fame far and near and roused native fear. The king of Kashmir now came personally to give homage. The Asvakas then revolted and the Khattios helped by the Kachodrakas and Malavas offered stubborn resistance but all were put down. Many other Princes tendered
ALEXANDER'S RELUCTANT RETURN.

submission and promised allegiance to the invincible invader. The Agalassians were severely defeated. Alexander now felt a strong desire to conquer Magadh but his troops were quite unwilling to proceed further. His speech, promise and threats to the army were in vain. Their reluctance was probably due to the following—
(i) The Macedonian army was almost shattered.
(ii) The Magadhan army was very powerful, whose fame had reached even Egypt.
(iii) The bravery of the men of Porus had convinced them that other Indians were no mean rivals to them.

The wise counsels of Koinos, his trusted Cavalry General, persuaded Alexander to stop from further conquests and to give orders for retreat. (September, 326 B. C.). On the Eastern bank of the Sutlej, he erected 12 big altars, each 50 cubits high, dedicated to the 12 great gods. It is said that Chandragupta and his successors long venerated the altar and offered sacrifice on them. In 325 B. C., Alexander sailed up the Chenab to the Indus. The tribes of the Punjab and Indus were easily subdued. King Subhuti (Sophytes), lord of the Salt Range, yielded without resistance. Before leaving the Panjab, Alexander publicly appointed Porus to be king of the entire Doab between the Hydaspes and the Hyphases. These tracts, peopled by 7 different nations had nearly 2,000 towns. In the meantime, a marriage reconciled Porus and Ambhi as friends. The small states on the Lower Indus were easily seized. Alexander fortified the conquered tracts and established satrapies. In August, he returned to
Persia through Gedrosia (Mukran Coast) with 80,000 men. In September, Nearchus sailed for Persia with the fleet. At Babylon, Alexander lived and ruled for a short time. Here he married the eldest daughter of Darius III. 80 captains and 10,000 Greek soldiers took Persian women.

After Alexander's departure, Philipus, the Greek Governor of the Punjab was murdered by mutinous mercenaries. Eudemus and Ambhi of Taxila are made temporary governors. At the age of 32, Alexander died of a strong fever at Babylon (June 11, 323 B.C.) He stayed in India 19 months. In 323 B.C. there was one bright Greek domain from Macedonia to India, from Bactria to Egypt. Alexander's communication with the distant home and other parts of the empire was marvellously quick. His expedition was an organised one and had historians, geographers, scientists, merchants &c. He encouraged caravan trade from India to the Levant. His merchants collected Indian products, perfumery &c. to be shewn to Europe. One object of Alexander's conquests was to spread Greek civilisation abroad. But we regret to note that he himself and his men were Orientalised in Persia. In 321 B.C. Antipater appointed Peithon satrap of the Upper Indus and Porus of the Lower Indus. But ere long, Porsus, held in high esteem by the Hindus, was murdered by Eudemus, (320 B.C.) This crime roused the heroic people of Porsus against the Greeks. In 317 B.C. Chandragupta expelled the Macedonian Satraps from the land of the Indus. By 316 B.C., he was master of Afghanistan,
Beluchistan, Sindb and the Punjab. No Indian work—
Hindo, Buddhist or Jain—makes the least mention of
Alexander. The Indians probably regarded Alexander
as a mighty robber and his expedition and conquests as
a political hurricane. India was not changed—India
was not Hellenised. The Persian India of the North-
West also was not Iranised much.

Of the numerous adventurers who had flocked to the
camp of Alexander in the Panjub for their private ends,
Chandragupta (Gk. Sanda Coptos), an exile from the
court of Magadh, was the foremost. He induced Alex-
ander to conquer Magadh. His object was to be the
king of Magadh under the Greeks. But he displeased
Alexander by his haughtiness; so, he was forced to fly
the Greek camp. It seems probable that before Chandra-
gupta met Alexander, he had visited the Persian capital
and the emperor Darius III. to induce him to help him
on the throne of Magath some how, but in vain.
Chandragupta was ambitious, bold, heroic, affable, hand-
some and very strong in brain, body and mind. The
great kings favoured him not, but Fortune soon took
him for her own. In the Panjub, he had carefully learnt
the Greek mode of fighting. Now, the death of
Alexander, quarrels of his Generals, murder of Porus,
and the native revolts paved the way of his future success.

Having left the Greek camp, Chandragupta prob.
entered the army of the king of Taxila where he soon
won his laurels. His burning ambition only awaited an
opportunity and it presented itself before long. The
people of the Panjub did not like the Greeks; they
wanted a suitable leader; on the murder of Porus, the natives revolted. Chandragupta put himself at their head and drove away or destroyed most of the Greek garrisons one after another, and became master of the Panjab. (315 B.C.). Next he thought of Magadh—powerful Magadh which could not be conquered easily. He dreamed—he planned—he thought of a stratagem. Luckily, another opportunity occurred soon and helped him to fire. Satakara, being insulted by Rakshasa, applied to Maharaja Nanda for redress but having no relief from the emperor, he left Patalliputra, breathing vengeance and came to the Panjab in quest of Chandragupta whom he found at Taxila where he had already secured the friendship of Chanakya, a clear-headed politician of firm resolve, sound learning but of poor means. Satakara and Chandragupta plotted together for a great political move and gain of their ends by making Chanakya a cat’s paw. One day, Satakara asked Chanakya to go with him to Patalliputra where he was a minister and where he might rise in fame and fortune. Chanakya agreed and went to Patalliputra where soon, through the machination of Satakara, he was greatly dishonoured by the Nanda Raja in a feast in the Royal House. At this, Chanakya took the vow of ruining the Nanda Family.

"In the meantime, the Saka, Yavana, Kirata Kamboja, Persian, Balkha and Chandragupta’s other soldiers and the force of the mountain-king (prob. Napal), besieged Patalliputra on all sides. 315 B.C.

Mudra Rakshasa. Act II."
At Pataliputra some of the Nandas were ruling conjointly. The later Sainadga kings used both Rajagriha and Pataliputra as their capitals; but the Nandas made Pataliputra their sole capital. Rakshasa was their most faithful old Brahman Minister. Sutakura was the 2nd Minister.

Cāṇakya’s full name was Chanakya Vishnugupta Kautilya which means Vishnugupta son to Chanaka, the Indian Bismarck. He was a clear-headed politician. At his instigation and through his machination, Chandragupta killed the Nandas in private, seized the throne, proclaimed himself king of Magadh and Chanakya his prime minister. But strong opposition came from Ugrachanva (Gk. Agrames). Chandragupta, with the aid of the Nepal king, defeated Ugrachanva and secured the throne. (Asiatic Researches. Vol. V.) Rakshasa, highly aggrieved at the ruin of his masters, joined Malayaketu, a hill-king and induced him to invade Pataliputra. Rakshasa succeeded in inducing the kings of Gandhara, Sakya, Hoona, Khasa, Kshmir, Chedi and even the Greek Satraps to back Malayaketu with their armies under the temptation of a fair share of the splendid kingdom of Magadh. All marched towards Patna. Everywhere there was a great din of battle. Rakshasa planned other schemes of murdering Chandragupta. But Chanakya, by spies, learned all the machinations of Rakshasa and set about to frustrate them. First, he caused a division between Malayaketu and Rakshasa, by a false letter, as if written by Rakshasa to Chandragupta and detected by Malayaketu.
Thereby Malayaketu got angry with Rakshasa and killed 5 of the allies. At this, the soldiers terrified, fled and so did the other allies. Malayaketu remained alone. Erelong he was made prisoner by several chief officers sent by Chanakya. Rakshasa, thus defeated and sad, came back to Pataliputra and lived in private. Chanakya and Chandragupta went to him and after showing him great honour, offered him the Prime Ministership. Rakshasa was thus won over. Malayaketu was released and allowed to go back to his own kingdom in state. Now Chandragupta was secure. Rakshasa died soon; then Chanakya was again the Prime Minister (Mudra-Rakshatam). His conquests of North India were complete by 313 B.C. Sudhanva Nanda was probably slain. He was formally crowned in 312 B.C.