

## CHAPTER II.

## POLITICAL HISTORY.

PREHISTORIC PEOPLES—Their settlements and implements—Legendary history. EARLY HISTORY—Asóka, 258 B.C.—The Andhras, 2nd century A.D.—The Kadambas, 4th century—The Chálukyas, 6th century—The Ráshtrakútas, 7th to 10th centuries—The Gangas, 10th century—The Western Chálukyas, 11th century—The Chólas—The Kalachuryas, Hoysala Ballálas and Yáavas, 12th century—The Muhammadan advance, A.D. 1310. VIJAYANAGAR KINGS—Foundation of Vijayanagar, 1335—Harihara I, 1335-1343—Bukka I, 1343-1379—His war with the Báhmíni kings Muhammad Shah and Mujáhid Shah—Harihara II, 1379-1399—Bukka II, 1399-1406—Deva Ráya I, 1406-1412—The Mudkal beauty—Vira-Vijaya, 1412-1419—Deva Ráya II, 1419-1444—He narrowly escapes assassination—Foreign visitors to Vijayanagar—Downfall of the first Vijayanagar dynasty, 1449-1490—Disruption of the Báhmíni kingdom—First kings of the second Vijayanagar dynasty, 1490-1509—Krishna Deva, 1509-1530; his personality—His buildings—His administrative improvements—His patronage of literature—His expeditions to Mysore and the east coast—His capture of Raichúr and the Doáb—His haughty treatment of the Musalmans—Achyuta Ráya, 1530-1542; a weak ruler—The Bijápur king visits Vijayanagar—The three brothers—Sadásiva nominally king, 1542-1567—Ráma Rája's dealings with the Musalmans—Musalman irritation against the Hindus—The Musalmans combine against Vijayanagar—The battle of Talikóta, 1565—Flight of Vijayanagar king and sack of his capital—The end of the Vijayanagar Empire. MUHAMMADAN PERIOD—The Poligars become powerful—The Maráthas, 1678—The Emperor Aurangzeb, 1687—The Nizam-ul-Mulk, 1723—Haider Ali, 1761—Tipu Sultan, 1786—The second Mysore war, 1792—The third Mysore war, 1799—Bellary ceded to the English. ENGLISH RULE—Munro appointed Principal Collector—The poligars—Their turbulence under native rule—Munro's policy regarding them—The affair of "Ternikull"—Alarms of rebellions—The Pindári raid of 1818—Bhúma Rao's rising in 1858.

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THE earliest inhabitants of the district of whom any traces remain are the prehistoric makers of the rude stone and iron implements and rough pottery which have been found on the tops of so many of its hills and the builders of the kistvaens which occur here and there within it.

These ancient races passed through three main stages of development, namely, the palæolithic age, during which their only achievements were rough chipped stone implements; the neolithic, when the implements were more various, better formed and polished, and pottery first came into use; and the iron age, during which the discovery of the superiority of iron drove stone out of the field and wheel-made pottery ousted the hand-made variety.

Geological evidence shows that a great and unbridged gap occurs between the palæolithic and neolithic periods, but the latter and the iron age appear to overlap, and the people of the iron period were probably the direct descendants of the neolithic inhabitants.

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Up to the present some thirty<sup>1</sup> settlements of these primitive peoples have been discovered in Bellary, which is more than have been found in any other district in the Presidency. The most prolific in implements and pottery have perhaps been those on the two hills in Bellary town itself and on the Peacock Hill (Kappagallu) five miles to the north-east. It is curious that these settlements were always placed on the granite hills and never on those of other formations. The reasons for this choice were perhaps that the granite hills are more isolated, and so more easily defensible; that they were more handy for the plots of cultivation which these early people must have had on the low ground; that they weather into more convenient rock shelters and terraces than the other hills; that they contain the diorite of which the tools were made; and that the collection of water on them is more easy.

Their settle-  
ments and  
implements.

The tools most commonly discovered are the stone strikers used for making implements, and corn-crushers, mealing-stones and celts; but some twenty different classes of tools, etc., are represented<sup>2</sup> and in three places stone beads were discovered. Some of the implements are made of stones which had been selected for their special properties and brought from long distances.

The curious mounds of ashes which are found in several places in the district, and which are referred to in the account of Kudatini in Chapter XV, seem to be connected with these ancient peoples. The account of Kappagallu in the same chapter refers to the signs which have been discovered of their occupation of the Peacock Hill.

On the Face Hill at Bellary and in several other settlements traces of iron manufacture seem to be indicated by the presence of numerous lumps of hematite (which is not native to these hills) and, with them, pieces of iron slag, while on the Fort Hill at Bellary was found a small earthenware tuyère which may have been used for smelting.

<sup>1</sup> A list of them will be found in Mr. Bruce Foote's paper in J.A.S.B., lvi, pt. 2, No. 3, 1887. It includes the hills at the following places:—*Bellary taluk*, Bellary (Face and Fort hills), Kappagallu, Saudammakonda and Sanarasamukonda (both some 3½ miles north-east of Bellary), Halékóta (North and South hills), Béder Belagallu, Kollagallu (East and West hills), Bádanhatti and Rúpanagudi. *Alúr taluk*, Rámadurgam, Manikurti, Hosappátidévaragudda, Hattibellagallu, Nágarađona and Chippigiri. *Hospet taluk*, Daróji, Kurikuppi, Gádiganúru (foot of the hill) and Tóranagallu.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, chisels, hammers, ring-stones, pestles, sharpening stones, scrapers.

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The pottery found is of very many different sizes and shapes and the ornamental patterns on it, some of which are quite tasteful, are very various, being seldom twice alike.

The largest collection of kistvaens in the district is that at Gollapalli and its hamlet Aduguppa in Rayadrug taluk, where there are some 700 of these erections. Reference is made to them in the account of the place on p. 295 below. There are others (Jour. Bomb. Br. R.A.S., iv, 306-7, 1852) at Kosgi, Hálaságaram in Kúdligi taluk, Timalápúram in Hadagalli and Mallápúram in Rayadrug.

How the authors of all these interesting relics are connected with any of the present inhabitants of the district is a matter which remains to be determined.

Legendary  
history.

The silence of the centuries which separate them from the people of the earliest historic times is broken only by traditional and legendary chronicles. The district figures, for example, in the Rámáyana, for all accounts agree <sup>1</sup> in stating that the first news which Ráma received that Rávana had carried off his wife to Ceylon was conveyed to him while at the court of Sugriva, the king of Kishkindha, and that with the forces there obtained he accomplished his expedition and the recovery of Síta; and this Kishkindha is generally acknowledged to have been near the present Hampi.<sup>2</sup>

There are also the puránas and the *sthala puránas*, or local chronicles preserved in some of the temples. None of these, however, can be regarded as serious history, and it is not until the Muhammadans arrive upon the scene that the literature of the country is of any great assistance.

When what may be called historic times are reached, scattered and isolated facts can be gathered here and there from the three sources of information—inscriptions,<sup>3</sup> grants recorded on copper, and coins—which remain to us, but the material as yet <sup>4</sup> available from them is far from sufficient for the construction of any continuous account of the early fortunes of the district.

The earliest piece of historical evidence is the discovery (by Mr. Rice in 1892)<sup>5</sup> on the banks of the Chinna Hagari river in

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Asóka, 258  
B.C.

<sup>1</sup> Rice's *Mysore* (Constable & Co., 1897), i, 277-79.

<sup>2</sup> For more details, see the account of Hampi in Chapter XV.

<sup>3</sup> For particulars of the inscriptions referred to below and for other help, I am much indebted to M.R.Ry. V. Venkayya, M.A., Acting Government Epigraphist.

<sup>4</sup> Thousands of inscriptions remain to be deciphered, and Bellary is one of the districts in which least has been done. M.R.Ry. Venkayya was kind enough to have the numerous records at Hampi, Bágali, Kógali, Kudatini, Ambali and Kurugódu specially transcribed for the purposes of this present volume.

<sup>5</sup> Rice's *Mysore*, ii, 533. The edicts have been described by Dr. Bühler in *Epigraphia Indica*, iii, 134-142.

the strip of Mysore territory which runs up between Rayadrug and Kúdligi taluks, of rock edicts of the Buddhist emperor Asóka, dating about 258 B.C. Asóka, however, sent proselytising missions to foreign countries, and these edicts do not prove that Bellary formed part of the Mauryan dominions.

There follows an unbridged gap of four and a half centuries, and the next link in the chain is the finding, again in neighbouring parts of Mysore, of an inscription<sup>1</sup> of one of the kings of a branch of the Andhra or Sátaváhana dynasty (Haritiputra Satakarni) and of some lead coins<sup>2</sup> of which one bore the name of a ruler (Pulumáyi) of the main branch of that line. Both of these kings belonged to about the 2nd century A.D. and we thus have proof that at that time the Andhras—whose capital was on the Kistna river at Dharanikóta, the present Amarávati, and who, like the Mauryans, were Buddhists—were ruling the district.

The Andhras were followed by the Kadambas, whose capital was at Banavási in the North Kanara district of Bombay and who were Jains by religion. One of their chief towns was Uchchásringi, which is probably Uchchangidurgam in the Harpanahalli taluk.<sup>3</sup> Four miles from this latter, at Anaji, just within the Mysore boundary,<sup>4</sup> an inscription, belonging perhaps to the 4th century A.D., describes a great battle between these Kadambas and their inveterate foes the Pallavas<sup>5</sup> of Kánchi (Conjeeveram).

Another gap of two centuries now intervenes until in the middle of the 6th century the Kadambas were reduced by king Kirtivarman I (566-597 A.D.) of the Chálukyas,<sup>6</sup> a dynasty who were originally Jains and later Hindus and whose chief city was Vátápi, the modern Bádámi in the Bijápur district of Bombay. This ruler's son Pulakésin II (609-642 A.D.) is recorded, in an unpublished inscription at Kurugódu in Bellary taluk, to have possessed that village. Kirtivarman is elsewhere described as "the night of destruction to the Nalas" and the latter tribe (of

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The Andhras,  
2nd century  
A.D.

The Kadam-  
bas, 4th cen-  
tury.

The Chá-  
lukyas, 6th  
century.

<sup>1</sup> In the Shikárpur taluk of the Shimoga district, *Mysore*, ii, 428.

<sup>2</sup> Near Chitaldroog, in 1888 (*Mysore*, ii, 518).

<sup>3</sup> See however Dr. Fleet's *Kanarese Dynasties in Bombay Gazetteer*, vol. I, Pt. 2, p. 285, note 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Mysore*, ii, 499.

<sup>5</sup> A copper grant by the Pallava king Sivaskandavarman, who perhaps belonged to the 5th century, obtained from Chenappa, a merchant of Hiréhada-galli, records the gift of land in the village of Chillarekakodumka in the district of Sátáhani to certain residents of Ápitti, and the writer of the grant was a native of Kolivála (*Ep. Ind.*, i, 2). These places have not been identified and the history of the custody of the grant is not on record, so it does not as yet add much to our knowledge.

<sup>6</sup> Until the tenth century the name was generally spelt Chálnkya.

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whom little is yet known) were probably also rulers of part of Bellary at this time, for a grant of a later Chálukyan king<sup>1</sup> gives a Bráhmaṇ some land in Ratnagiri in the Madakasíra taluk of the Anantapur district, and describes that place as being in the Nalavádi *vishaya* (district).

Early in the seventh century the Chálukyas split into a western and an eastern branch, and the Western Chálukyas captured (perhaps from the Pallavas) a part at least of Bellary towards the end of that century, for a grant of one of the kings of the line<sup>2</sup> dated 689 A.D. refers to a gift of land made when his victorious camp was at Pampátírtha, which is the present Hampi in Hospet taluk.

The  
Ráshtrakútas,  
7th to 10th  
centuries.

About 757 their sovereignty was wrested from them by the Ráshtrakútas of Málkhed,<sup>3</sup> to whom they became feudatories. An inscription in the Bágali temple in Harpanahalli taluk says that in A.D. 944-945 a Chálukyan feudatory of the Ráshtrakúta king Krishna III (940-956) was governing the "Kógali five-hundred," which corresponded to the Hadagalli and Harpanahalli taluks, and the same temple also contains a record, dated 972-973, of king Khottiga of the same line. Both these kings are also mentioned in inscriptions at Kudatini in the Bellary taluk.

About the middle of the seventh century the Pallavas of Conjeeveram established a province in these parts which for the next three centuries was under the rule (subject, apparently, to the suzerainty of the Western Chálukyas and of the Ráshtrakútas) of the Nolambas, a branch of the Pallavas, and was known as "the Nolambavádi thirty-two thousand." It appears<sup>4</sup> to have included the greater part of Bellary and the northern and north-eastern parts of Mysore. Its capital was<sup>4</sup> the Uchchásringi or Uchchangi already mentioned; two of its sub-divisions, Kaniyakal and the Kógali country, have been identified,<sup>5</sup> respectively, with part of the Rayadruḡ taluk and with the present Hadagalli and Harpanahalli taluks; and one of its chief towns was Hémávati<sup>6</sup> in the Madakasíra taluk of Anantapur.

The Gangas,  
10th century.

Little is known of the history of Nolambavádi during these three hundred years (except that it was apparently subject to the Ráshtrakútas) but at the end of that time Márasimha (963-974), a king of the Gangas—a dynasty whose capital was on the Cauvery

<sup>1</sup> Vikramáditya I, 655-680 A.D. See Fleet in *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 282, 363.

<sup>2</sup> Vinayáditya, 680-696 A.D. *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 369.

<sup>3</sup> About 90 miles west by south of Haidarabad.

<sup>4</sup> *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 318. "Thirty-two thousand" refers to the traditional or supposed number of villages in the tract, *ibid.*, 298, note 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, xxx, 108 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *Mysore*, i, 307. Three inscriptions of the dynasty have been found here; see Nos. 124, 125 and 127 of 1899 in the Government Epigraphist's records.

at Talakád, close to where the river leaves Mysore territory and enters Coimbatore district—took the title of Nolambakulántaka, or “death to the Nolamba race,<sup>1</sup>” which evidently implies that he defeated that line. His epitaph at Srávana-Belgola in Mysore also states<sup>2</sup> that he reduced the hill-fortress of Uchchangi. The Gangas at this period were also feudatories of the Ráshtrakútas. In 973 the last of this latter line was defeated by a Western Chálukyan king (Taila II, 973–997), and shortly afterwards the last of the Gangas (Ganga Rája, 996–1004) was overthrown by the Chólas from the country round about Tanjore, and during the next two centuries the Western Chálukyas, thus left without a rival, returned to even more than their old splendour and prosperity.

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Part at least of the Bellary district must have come at once under their revived sovereignty, for this same Taila II is stated to have taken the Kuntala country, which included<sup>3</sup> Hampi and Kurugódu, and there are inscriptions of his in the Bágali temple and in the Jain basti at Kógali in Hadagalli taluk. They also seem to have quickly extended their hold over it, for in 1010–11 one of their kings is found to be governing the Nolambavádi thirty-two thousand, the Kógali five-hundred, the Ballakunde three-hundred (the capital of which was Kurugódu) and other provinces through a Pallava feudatory<sup>4</sup>; one of the minor capitals of another king (Jayasimha II, 1018–42) was at Pottalakere, which is said to be the present Dhanáyakanakeri in Hospet taluk, and two grants of the time of this latter ruler appear in the Bágali temple. At Kógali there are three records of Sómésvara I (1044–68) of this dynasty; in 1064 a prince of the line (Vishnuvardhana-Vijayáditya)<sup>5</sup> was ruling Nolambavádi with Kampli as his *nelevídu*, or “fixed place of abode,” *i.e.*, his capital; in 1068 Sómésvara I drowned himself in the Tungabhadra at Kuruvatti in the Harpanahalli taluk to end an incurable disease from which he was suffering; and in 1072 a member of the dynasty (Jayasimha III) was in charge of Kógali, Ballakunde and Nolambavádi.<sup>6</sup> At Bágali there are a dozen inscriptions of Vikramáditya VI, ranging from 1079 to 1126, and other records of his occur at Kudatini, at Ambali, and at Gooty in the Anantapur

The Western  
Chálukyas,  
11th century.

<sup>1</sup> *Mysore*, i, 307.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, v, 171.

<sup>3</sup> Fleet in *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 431. Also an unpublished inscription (No. 6 of 1891) in the Government Epigraphist's records.

<sup>4</sup> Named Iriva-Nolambádhirája, *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 434.

<sup>5</sup> *Id. ibid.*, 440.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, iv, 214.

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district.<sup>1</sup> Jagadékamalla II, another king of the line, appears in inscriptions dating from 1143 to 1148 at Ambali, Kudatini and Voraváyi near Kurugódu. These records clearly establish the re-occupation of the country by the Chálukyan dynasty.

From about 1070, their capital was at Kalyáni in the Nizam's Dominions, and it was probably during this eleventh century that the beautiful temples, built in the style called after them the Chálukyan, the carved steatite in which has aroused so much admiration, were erected in the Hadagalli and Harpanahalli taluks.<sup>2</sup> Some of the Jain temples which are scattered all over the district appear to have been erected about the same time, though one at least of them (the Gánigitti shrine at Hampi) was not built until as late as 1385.

The Chólas.

From the earliest period of their revival, however, the Chálukyas were opposed by the Chólas. In its inscriptions each dynasty claims to have worsted the other and it is not clear how far fortune really favoured either. The Chóla king Rájarája I, who came to the throne in 985 at the time when his dynasty (see above) overthrew the Gangas, says<sup>3</sup> that he conquered Nulambapádi, which is doubtless the same as Nolambavádi. Two other kings of the line (Rájádhirája I, 1018-53, and Vírarájendra I, who ascended the throne in 1062,) claim<sup>4</sup> to have destroyed Kampli, which, as has been seen, was a Chálukyan capital at that period.<sup>5</sup>

The Kala-  
churyas,  
Hoysala  
Ballálas and  
Yádavas,  
12th century.

It was not, however, to the attacks of the Chólas that the Western Chálukyas eventually succumbed, but to the forces of three dynasties which were originally their own feudatories. One of these was the line of the Kalachuryas, the head of which, Bijjala, in 1156 threw off his allegiance, captured much of the Chálukyan country and established himself at its capital Kalyáni. It was during his time that the Lingáyat sect was founded. The Chálukyan kings retired to the south of their territories, but eventually in 1183 temporarily regained their position. The king who ascended the throne in that year was the last of the line and lived for some time at Kurugódu. He quickly succumbed to the other two of the

<sup>1</sup> *South Indian Inscriptions*, i, 167. Two of them mention the Gooty fort.

<sup>2</sup> These are described in detail, with plans and drawings, in Mr. Rea's *Chálukyan Architecture*, which forms Vol. XXI of the reports of the Archæological Survey of India. See also the accounts of Ambali, Bágali, Halavágalu, Hiréhada-galli, Huvinahadagalli, Kuruvatti, Mágala and Nilagunda in Chapter XV below.

<sup>3</sup> *S. Ind. Inscr.*, iii, 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 57, 194.

<sup>5</sup> At Hémávati two inscriptions in Tamil, the language of the Chólas, have been noted (Nos. 117 and 118 of 1899 in the Government Epigraphist's lists); one of them is dated in the reign of Kulóttunga-Chóla, but it is not clear which of the three kings who bore this name is indicated.

three feudatories above mentioned, the Hoysala Ballálas of Dvárasamudra (the modern Halébid in Mysore) in the south and the Yádavas of Dévagiri (now known as Daulatábád) in the north, and after 1189 the Western Chálukyas appear no more in history.

The inscriptions connecting the Hoysalas and Yádavas with Bellary are few. The Hoysala king Víra-Ballála II (1191-1218) is recorded to have taken Nolambavádi,<sup>1</sup> and inscriptions of his occur at Bágali, Kudatini, Voravayi and Hémávati<sup>2</sup> in Anantapur district. Another record at the Kumárasvámi temple in Sandur states that in 1205-6 a feudatory of his revived the worship there. Two records of Víra-Rámanátha of the same line appear in the Jain basti at Kógali. An officer of the Yádava king Singhana (1210-47) is stated<sup>3</sup> to have reduced the Pándyas of Gooty in the Nolambavádi province, and there is an inscription of the Yádava ruler Krishna, dated 1250-51, in the Bágali temple.

About 1310, a year which is one of the great landmarks in South Indian chronicles, the advance of the Muhammadans from the north began to seriously threaten the very existence of all Hindu dominion in the south. Malik Káfur, the famous general of Alláud-dín of the Khilji dynasty of Delhi, swept into the Deccan with an immense force, captured Orangal (Warangal) in the Nizam's Dominions and took and sacked Dvárasamudra. Two years later his armies again marched south and Dévagiri fell. Both the Hoysalas and the Yádavas were practically extinguished.

Anarchy followed, Musalman governors, representatives of the old royal families and local chiefs struggling for supremacy, until out of the confusion arose the great Hindu empire of Vijayanagar, which from its capital near Hampi for two centuries stemmed the tide of Muhammadan advance.

Some of the many legends which are related about the foundation of this kingdom are given in Mr. Sewell's recent work regarding it,<sup>4</sup> and he considers the most reasonable account to be the following: Two brothers of the Kuruba caste, named Harihara and Bukka, who were employed under the king of Orangal, fled from the second sack of that city by the Musalmans in 1323 and took service under the Rája of the fort of Ánegundi standing on the northern bank of the Tungabhadra nearly opposite the present village of Hampi. There they rose to be respectively minister and treasurer.

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The  
Muham-  
madan  
advance,  
A.D. 1310.

VIJAYANAGAR  
KINGS.

Founda-  
tion of  
Vijayanagar,  
1335.

<sup>1</sup> *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 505.

<sup>2</sup> No. 122 of 1899 in the Government Epigraphist's lists.

<sup>3</sup> *Bomb. Gaz.*, *ibid.*, 524.

<sup>4</sup> *A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar)* by Mr. R. Sewell, I.C.S., retired (Swan Sonnenschein, 1900), pp. 20-23. The account of the rise and fall of this empire which follows hereunder has most of it been purloined from this book.



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In 1334 this Rájá was attacked by Muhammad Taghlaq of Delhi, whose rebellious nephew he had harboured. Seeing defeat to be certain he caused a huge fire to be lit on which his wives and those of his chief men immolated themselves, and then with his followers he sallied forth against the invader and was slain. Muhammad Taghlaq left a local governor to rule the new conquest and retired northwards. The countryside, however, rose against the new ruler and eventually Muhammad, finding events too strong for him, restored the principality to the Hindus, and raised to be its Rájá and minister, respectively, the two brothers Harihara and Bukka who had previously been its minister and treasurer.

Harihara I,  
1335-1343.

Harihara, runs the story, was one day out hunting when a hare, instead of fleeing from his dogs, flew at them and bit them. Returning homewards, he met the sage Mádhavácháriár, surnamed *Vidyaranya* or "forest of learning," who, hearing of this portent, advised the Rájá to build a city on the spot and gave him his assistance in doing so. Thus was founded, in about 1335, Vijayanagar, "the City of Victory," and Harihara built the Pampápati temple, which still stands on the river bank at Hampi, in honour of the sage who had helped him in the work.

Bukka I,  
1343-1379.

He was succeeded by his brother Bukka I, who reigned thirty-six years and greatly extended the kingdom. He is said, indeed, to have ruled over all Southern India, and, seeing that the only alternative was a despotism of Muhammadans, the Hindus of the south doubtless acknowledged his sway without much demur.

The year after his accession he combined with the defeated ruler of Orangal and the king of the Hoysala Ballálas to attack the Muhammadans and wrested from them Orangal and most of the rest of the Deccan. But his triumph can only have been temporary, for shortly afterwards the Musalman Viceroy of Daulatábád revolted against the authority of Delhi, proclaimed himself independent, and in 1347 founded the Báhmini line of kings whose capital was at Kulbarga in what is now the Nizam's Dominions. He soon extended his sway as far south as the Kistna river and for the next 135 years the history of Vijayanagar is largely the story of its constant struggles with the Báhmini kings.

His war with  
the Báhmini  
king Muham-  
mad Shah.

The first serious collision between the two powers occurred in 1366, Muhammad Shah being then king at Kulbarga.

One evening when, as Ferishta puts it, "the spring of the garden of mirth had infused the cheek of Muhammad Shah with the rosy tinge of delight"—or, less poetically, when he was in his cups—he gave a band of musicians who had pleased him an order for payment drawn on Bukka's treasury at Vijayanagar. On

getting this, Bukka placed the presenter of it on an ass's back and paraded him throughout the town and sent him back to Kulbarga with every mark of derision and contempt. He also immediately collected troops and made an inroad into the Báhmini dominions; captured Mudkal, an important city in the Raichúr doáb (the tract of land lying between the Kistna and Tungabhadra rivers); and put all its inhabitants to the sword.

Muhammad Shah was furious with grief and rage and swore that until he had slain one hundred thousand of the infidels in retaliation he would never sheathe the sword of holy war. He marched south, crossed the Kistna, routed the Vijayanagar forces and killed (according to Ferishta) 70,000 men, women and children who were in the camp with them. Later in the same year he crossed the Tungabhadra somewhere near Siruguppa in Bellary taluk and threatened Ádóni. Bukka marched out with a large force to intercept him and on the 23rd July 1366 "the armies of light and darkness met" on the wide black cotton-soil plains thereabout—perhaps near the present Kautálam in Ádóni taluk. "From the dawn till four in the afternoon," says Ferishta, "like the waves of the ocean, they continued in hot conflict with each other," and at first the Hindus were successful and more than one of the Musalman commanders "drank the sherbet of martyrdom." But eventually fortune changed, the Musalmans took advantage of the confusion caused in the enemy's ranks by a runaway elephant, the Hindu centre broke and their troops fled in every direction. A frightful massacre ensued, even children at the breast and pregnant women being put to the sword. Muhammad Shah pursued Bukka from place to place for three months, massacring all the Hindus who came in his way, and at last drove him into Vijayanagar. He was however unable to take that city, and after a siege of a month retired across the Tungabhadra. The Vijayanagar troops followed, but were again utterly defeated and more massacres occurred. Bukka then sued for peace, and on his agreeing to pay the musicians the amount of the draft Muhammad Shah accepted his submission. Ferishta glories in the statement that during the war the Musalmans had slain 500,000 infidels and had so wasted the districts of the Carnatic that they took several years to recover their normal population.

Muhammad Shah died in 1375 and his son and successor, Mujáhid, soon picked a fresh quarrel with Bukka and invaded his territory. Bukka for some reason lost heart and retired to the Sandur hills and then to his capital. Mujáhid Shah followed, attacked the city, drove in the outposts and gained the suburbs. But he was unable to force his way further and eventually retreated

CHAP. II.  
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KINGS.

Bukka's war  
with Mujáhid  
Shah.

CHAP. II. to Ádóni. He besieged the hill-fort there for nine months in vain  
 VIJAYANAGAR and at length abandoned the attempt and retired to his own  
 KINGS. country.

But though Bukka had suffered heavily in these two campaigns he had widely extended his realms in other directions and even Ferishta, biassed as he is, admits that he ruled practically all Southern India and that "the roies of Malabar, Ceylon and other islands and other countries kept ambassadors at his court and sent annually rich presents."

Harihara II,  
1379-1399.

Bukka died about 1379 and was followed by his son Harihara II. He was the first of the Vijayanagar kings to assume the imperial title of *Mahárájádhírāja*, or "king of kings," his predecessors having only described themselves as *Mahámandalésvara*, or "great lord." The extent of his dominions may be gathered from the fact that inscriptions of his time are found in Mysore, Dharwar, Conjeeveram, Chingleput and Trichinopoly.

Towards the end of his reign his son Bukka led an expedition against the fortresses of Mudkal and Raichúr in the Raichúr doáb, the possession of which tract was always a bone of contention between the Vijayanagar and the Báhmini kings. The Báhmini Sultan, Firoz Shah, advanced to meet him and halted on the other side of the Kistna. Thence he sent a small band of his followers into Bukka's camp, who, disguising themselves as mummers, gained admission to the tents of Bukka's son and while dancing and playing before him suddenly attacked and killed him. This took place in the middle of the night and caused such confusion that Firoz Shah crossed the Kistna unopposed, fell upon Bukka's camp, routed him and pursued him into Vijayanagar. Bukka's father, king Harihara II, had to pay a large ransom for the prisoners taken in the campaign, but otherwise the war did not apparently affect the relative positions of the two kingdoms.

Bukka II,  
1399-1406.

Harihara II was succeeded by the above Bukka, who thus became king Bukka II. He did much to improve his capital, raising fresh walls and towers, building further lines of fortifications, and bringing into it a channel from the Tungabhadra—apparently the Turuttu ("swift") channel which flows through it to this day. He contrived this by "damming the river with great boulders; and according to story he threw in a stone so great that it alone made the river follow the King's will. It was dragged thither by a number of elephants . . . . By means of this water they made round about the city a quantity of gardens and orchards and great groves of trees and vineyards . . . . and many plantations of lemons and oranges and roses."

Bukka II was followed by his brother Deva Ráya I, who, like his predecessors, came into violent collision with the Báhmini kings of Kulbarga.

The cause of the war this time was a very beautiful girl who lived in Mudkal in the debatable land of the Raichúr doáb. Deva Ráya heard of her many perfections and wished to marry her, but she declined to leave her parents to be immured in a zenana. The king accordingly sent a body of cavalry to fetch her by force; but she and her parents fled, the cavalry were attacked by Firoz Shah's men, and war ensued. Firoz Shah moved against Vijayanagar, where Deva Ráya had shut himself up. He gained part of the outskirts of the capital, kept Deva Ráya a prisoner within it for four months, ravaged all the country round about and at last besieged Ádóni. Deva Ráya then sued for peace and eventually submitted to humiliating terms, having to pay an immense indemnity, cede in perpetuity a fortress in the Carnatic, and give his daughter to Firoz Shah in marriage. Firoz Shah on his return to his own country sought out the girl whose beauty had been the first cause of the campaign and married her to his own son.

Deva Ráya I was succeeded by his son Vira-Vijaya "who did nothing worth recording" and was followed in 1419 by his son Deva Ráya II.

The reign of this king witnessed the usual struggle with the Báhmini Sultan. The Vijayanagar troops were again the aggressors and were at first successful, defeating the Sultan's forces in a pitched battle, perpetrating a general massacre of the Musalmans and erecting a platform with their heads on the field of battle. "They followed the Sultan into his own country," says Ferishta, "which they wasted with fire and sword, took many places, broke down many mosques and holy places, slaughtered the people without mercy; by their actions seeming to discharge the treasured malice and resentment of ages." Eventually, however, the Hindus were driven out of the Báhmini dominions and across the Tungabhadra. The Musalmans followed and near his own capital Deva Ráya himself had a very narrow escape. He was surprised in the early morning when asleep and fled almost naked into a neighbouring sugarcane plantation. Some of the enemy found him there and mistaking him for a common person made him carry a bundle of the canes which they had looted. Eventually, however, they left him in search of more valuable plunder and he escaped to his own men. But he regarded the event as an unlucky omen and retired to Vijayanagar. The Báhmini king, Ahmad Shah, ravaged all the country round, massacred the people in thousands (whenever

CHAP. II  
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Deva Ráya I,  
1406-1412.

The Mudkal  
beauty.

Vira-Vijaya,  
1412-1419.

Deva Ráya II,  
1419-1444.

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VIJAYANAGAR  
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Déva Ráya II,  
1419-1444.

the total reached twenty thousand he halted three days to celebrate the event) and at length so closely blockaded the capital itself that its inhabitants were starving. Deva Ráya sued for peace and after exacting a large tribute Ahmad Shah returned to his own dominions. This was about 1423. In 1435 the then Báhmini king, Alá-ud-dín, attacked Deva Ráya again on the ground that he was five years in arrear with his tribute, and again easily reduced him to submission.

Deva Ráya upon this began anxiously to examine the weak points in his armour which enabled a ruler of dominions so much inferior to his own in extent, population and revenue to so readily force upon him the payment of tribute. He came to the conclusion that the chief defect in his troops was their inferiority in cavalry and archers and he thereupon took many Musalmans into his service, "allotted them jaghirs, erected a mosque for their use in the city of Vijayanagar and commanded that no one should molest them in the exercise of their religion." He also carefully trained large numbers of his own men in the use of the bow.

He narrowly  
escapes  
assassination.

Towards the close of his reign Deva Ráya narrowly escaped assassination by his own brother. This brother planned the matter with much ingenuity. He invited the king and all the chief men of the city to a house-warming at a new residence he had lately built. It was the custom in those days for each guest to eat separately, by himself, and as each was ushered alone into the dining apartment he was set upon and stabbed by confederates who were waiting there. The host had taken care to have all the noisiest music in the city to play at the entertainment and this drowned all sound of the succession of scuffles which occurred and each guest went in turn to his death in complete innocence of the fate of his predecessors. When all the chief men of the city had been disposed of in this simple manner, the brother went to the king and invited him to come also to the feast. A sudden suspicion seized the king and he made some excuse; whereupon the brother fell upon him with a dagger and leaving him for dead went out on to the portico of the palace and coolly announced to the people below what he had done and how that, the others being all slain, he was now king. But Deva Ráya was not really dead, and escaping by a back way he appeared at the same moment as his brother and called upon the people to seize the traitor. They fell upon the brother and killed him and Deva Ráya was saved.

The Báhmini king heard of these events and seized the opportunity to demand a large sum from Vijayanagar, hoping at last to be able to crush its power. Deva Ráya, however, sent a brave answer and prepared for war. Three pitched battles were

fought within two months in the Raichúr doáb and then Deva Ráya agreed to pay an annual tribute to the Báhmini king on condition that the latter would never again molest Vijayanagar territory.

During the reign of Deva Ráya II two foreigners visited his capital. The first of these was Nicolo Conti, an Italian, who came there about 1420, and the second was Abdur Razzák, an ambassador from Persia, who followed some twenty years later. Both of them have left glowing accounts of the richness and magnificence of the city and certain extracts from these will be found in the account of its ruins which is given under "Hampi" in Chapter XV below. Conti states that insolvent debtors became the property of their creditors, mentions the practices of sati and hook-swinging as being in vogue, and says that at the car festivals people used to throw themselves under the wheels of the car, "a mode of death which they say is very acceptable to their god." The feasts of the Canarese New Year's Day, the Dipávali and the Dasara were also kept. Abdur Razzák gives a most vivid account of the celebration of one of these and also a detailed description of the buildings about the king's palace which has proved of great assistance in identifying the various portions of it which are still traceable.<sup>1</sup> He says the kingdom extended from the Kistna to Cape Comorin.

The period which followed the death of Deva Ráya II in 1449 is one of confusion and uncertainty. It is known that in 1490 one Narasimha, who was in some way related to the royal family, usurped the Vijayanagar throne, but after examining the available material Mr. Sewell comes to the conclusion that regarding the years which intervened between Deva Ráya's death and Narasimha's *coup d'état* "all that can be definitely and safely stated at present is that . . . the kingdom passed from one hand to the other, in the midst of much political agitation, and wide-spread antagonism to the representatives of the old royal family, several of whom appear to have met with violent deaths."<sup>2</sup>

In Kulbarga, also, the times were troublous. Between 1489 and 1527 several of the most powerful nobles revolted against the Báhmini kings and established themselves as independent rulers, and though the representatives of the Báhmini line continued during this period to be sovereigns in name their power rapidly declined and was eventually divided between the five Muhammadan kingdoms of Bijápur, Ahmadabad, Berar, Ahmadnagar and Golconda, all of whom figure largely in subsequent history.

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KINGS.

Foreign  
visitors to  
Vijayanagar.

Downfall of  
the first  
Vijayanagar  
dynasty,  
1449-1490.

Disruption of  
the Báhmini  
kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> See "Hampi" in Chapter XV, p. 259 below.

<sup>2</sup> *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 97-98.

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VIJAYANAGAR  
KINGS.

First kings  
of the second  
Vijayanagar  
dynasty,  
1490-1509.

Krishna  
Deva,  
1509-1530;  
his per-  
sonality.

His buildings.

His adminis-  
trative im-  
provements.

Who the Narasimha who usurped the Vijayanagar throne in 1490 really was, and how he succeeded in ousting the old kings is not altogether clear. Nor are the events which immediately followed his accession. He seems to have been a strong ruler who checked the Muhammadan aggressions which the weakness of his predecessors had permitted and who once more consolidated the empire. Ferishta says that he won back, from the king of Bijápur who then held it, the Raichúr doáb, but lost it again almost immediately. He was apparently succeeded by his minister, Narasa Nayak, and the latter's son, the famous Krishna Deva, followed in 1509, the year that Henry VIII ascended the throne of England.

From this last date onwards, events become clearer. Krishna Deva stands out more conspicuously on the canvas of history than perhaps any other ruler of Vijayanagar, and under him the empire reached the zenith of its power. The chronicle of Domingos Paes, a Portuguese who visited Vijayanagar about 1520, which has been made available for the first time by Mr. Sewell,<sup>1</sup> gives us many graphic details of his personality. He was an athlete and kept himself in hard "condition" by regular bodily exercise, rising early and practising sword-play or riding about the plains round the city before the sun was up. He had a noble presence, attractive manners and a strong personal influence over those about him. He led his armies in person and yet was a poet and a patron of literature. Able, brave and statesmanlike he was withal a man of much gentleness and generosity of character.

He did more than any of his predecessors to beautify his capital, building in it the ranga-mantapam of the Pampápati temple, the Krishnasvámi and Hazára Rámasvámi temples and the great monolithic statue of Narasimha, and beginning the famous temple to Vitthalasvámi.<sup>2</sup> As an inscription near it testifies, he made the anicut on the Tungabhadra at Vallabhápuram and the Basavanna irrigation channel which takes off from it and he perhaps constructed others of the Tungabhadra channels. He erected the huge embankment near Hospet at the north-western end of the two ranges of hills which enclose the State of Sandur and he built the town of Hospet in honour of a courtesan he had known in the days of his youth and had married when he became king, and called it after her Nágálápur.

He systematised the organisation of the empire, which was divided into a number of provinces each under a local governor, who was responsible for its administration, paid from its revenues

<sup>1</sup> *Forgotten Empire*, pp. 236 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Some account of these will be found under "Hampi" in Chapter XV below.

a certain fixed annual contribution to the royal exchequer, kept up a fixed number of troops ready for instant service with the king, and retained for his own use such revenues as remained after satisfying these conditions. He was thus enabled to raise the enormous armies which he led against his enemies.

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He greatly encouraged literature<sup>1</sup> and gathered about his court the best poets of his time. He was himself a poet, composing in Sanskrit and Telugu. None of his Sanskrit works have survived, but a Telugu poem of his called *Amukthamályada* or *Vishnu Chiththiyamu* is pronounced by competent authority to be an excellent production. Until Krishna Deva's time Telugu poetry had been confined to versions in that language of the classical Sanskrit works, such as the *Rámáyana* and *Mahábhárata*, but thenceforth original poems began to be composed. The originator of this advance was Allasáni Peddana, the chief of the poets at Krishna Deva's court and to this day one of the most popular and best known of Telugu versifiers.

His patronage of literature.

Krishna Deva's victories in war were no less renowned than his triumphs in peace. Soon after his accession he reduced to order a refractory vassal in Mysore, capturing the two strong fortresses of Sivasamudram and Seringapatam, both built on islands in the middle of the Cauvery river. In 1513 he marched against the hill-fort of Udayagiri, in Nellore district, then under the king of Orissa, captured it and brought from it the image of Krishna which was set up in the Krishnasvámi temple in his capital. In 1515 he took Kondavid and Kondapalle, two strong hill fortresses in the Kistna district, and Rajahmundry in Gódávári district. He thus consolidated his possessions on the east coast of the Presidency.

His expeditions to Mysore and the east coast.

In 1520 he set out against Raichúr, the fortress in the debatable land which for nearly two centuries had been the subject of dispute between his predecessors and their northern neighbours. It belonged at this time to Ismáíl Ádil Shah, the king of Bijápur. According to Fernão Nuniz, the second of the two Portuguese chroniclers whose narratives Mr. Sewell has brought to light, the army he took with him numbered as many as 736,000 men with 550 elephants, and advanced in eleven great divisions. He began a regular siege of Raichúr and Ismáíl marched out with 140,000 horse and foot to relieve the place. A tremendous battle took place between Raichúr and the Kistna river. Krishna Deva opened the engagement by a frontal attack in mass and drove in the Bijápur centre, but the enemy directed a devastating fire upon the Hindus from some guns which had been held in reserve and following up their advantage

His capture of Raichúr and the Doáb.

<sup>1</sup> See K. Veerasalingam's Works, Vol. X. *Lives of the Telugu Poets.*



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with a cavalry charge routed them and pursued them for a mile and a half. Krishna Deva, however, in person rallied and led forward his second line and fell upon the Musalmans with such impetuosity that he drove them right back into the river, where immense slaughter took place. He then crossed the river and attacked the camp of Ismáíl Ádil Shah, who barely escaped with his life. The result of the action was decisive, and Ismáíl never again attacked the Vijayanagar territories while Krishna Deva was alive. Krishna Deva returned from the battle and resumed the siege of Raichúr, which he soon captured. His success here was in no small measure due to the marksmanship of some Portuguese mercenaries who with their arquebuses picked off the defenders on the walls and so enabled the besiegers to approach close to the lines of fortification and make breaches in them. The great battle and this siege are most vividly described by Nuniz, who seems to have been himself present at them both.

His haughty  
treatment of  
the Musal-  
mans.

Krishna Deva was unduly uplifted by his successes. He despatched haughty and irritating replies to the other Muhammadan kings of the Deccan who sent envoys to him and to Ismáíl Ádil Shah's ambassador he gave answer that if that king would come and kiss his foot, his lands and fortress would be restored to him. This overbearing behaviour was the first item in the long account of insults and humiliations received at the hands of the rulers of Vijayanagar which eventually induced the Muhammadan kings of the Deccan to forget their own differences in order to unite and crush their common enemy.

Achyuta  
Ráya,  
1530-1542.  
A weak ruler.

Krishna Deva Ráya died in 1530 and was succeeded by Achyuta, his brother. Achyuta was a craven and withal a tyrant. He alienated his best friends by his violent despotism and "his conduct and mode of government ruined the Hindu cause in Southern India and opened the whole country to the invader though he himself did not live to see the end."<sup>1</sup> Ismáíl Ádil Shah of Bijápur speedily took his measure and attacked Mudkal and Raichúr and captured them.

The Bijápur  
king visits  
Vijayanagar.

About 1535, however, Ismáíl's successor, Ibrahím Ádil Shah came to Vijayanagar itself and was received in friendly fashion by Achyuta. How this came about is in no wise clear. Ferishta says that the Vijayanagar nobles were driven by Achyuta's tyrannies into open revolt and that the king actually sent for his hereditary foe from Bijápur to protect him, promising in return to declare Vijayanagar tributary to Bijápur. The nobles, more patriotic than their king, prayed Achyuta to dismiss Ibrahím

<sup>1</sup> *Forgotten Empire*, 166.

promising obedience if only he were removed. Achyuta eventually gave Ibrahím some two millions sterling and he returned to his own country. The whole episode is most extraordinary.

Immediately after Ibrahím had retired, the rebellious nobles reasserted their influence and Achyuta was thenceforth king in little but name. The chief of the recalcitrants were three brothers named Ráma Rája, Tirumala and Venkatádri. The two first had married daughters of Krishna Deva. Ráma Rája was the most prominent of the three and Ferishta, indeed, speaks of him henceforth as if he were in fact king of Vijayanagar.

Achyuta died in 1542 and was nominally succeeded by Sadásiva, who was perhaps his nephew. The new ruler was, however, kept under restraint the whole of his life and all real power lay in the hands of the three brothers already mentioned, though they professed allegiance to the nominal king.

Ráma Rája did much to repair the blunders of Achyuta and rehabilitate the prestige of Vijayanagar. His favourite method seems to have been to play off one of the Musalman kings against another and so to keep them from uniting. In 1543 he combined with the kings of Ahmadnagar and Golconda to attack Bijápur and sent his brother Venkatádri to reduce Raichúr and the Doáb. Terms were, however, arranged and nothing definite came of the combination. In 1551 he united with Ahmadnagar against Bijápur and together they took Mudkal and Raichúr and the Doáb once more fell into Hindu hands. About the same time he persuaded the king of Golconda to help him reduce Ádóni, which had been seized by his two brothers who had revolted against his authority. Later on he assisted Bijápur against a rebellious vassal and in 1555 helped him to resist aggression from the Portuguese.

In 1557 the Bijápur king went in person to Vijayanagar with the hope of establishing a lasting friendship with Ráma Rája, but the latter treated him with such scant respect that the effect of the visit was rather to estrange the two than bring them together. In the next year, however, they combined against the king of Ahmadnagar and between them ravaged the whole of his dominions. "The infidels of Vijayanagar," says Ferishta, "left no cruelty unpractised. They insulted the honour of the Musalman women, destroyed the mosques, and did not even respect the sacred Korán." Their behaviour infuriated their friends no less than their enemies and made one more item in the long account which the Musalmans already had against them. Shortly afterwards Ahmadnagar and Golconda combined to attack Bijápur, whose king again applied to Ráma Rája for help. A battle ensued

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VIJAYANAGAR  
KINGS.

The three  
brothers.

Sadásiva  
nominally  
king,  
1542-1567.

Ráma Rája's  
dealings with  
the Musal-  
mans.

Musalman  
irritation  
against the  
Hindus.

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KINGS.

but the Golconda king deserted Ahmadnagar, who was then driven by the three allies into his capital. The Hindus again committed all manner of excess, "burning and razing buildings," says Ferishta, "putting up their horses in the mosques and performing their idolatrous worship in the holy places." Ráma Rájá's behaviour to the Musalmans was more insufferable than ever. "Looking on the Islám Sultans as of little consequence, he refused proper honours to their ambassadors. When he admitted them to his presence, he did not suffer them to sit, and treated them with the most contemptuous reserve and haughtiness. He made them attend when in public in his train on foot, not allowing them to mount till he gave orders." He moreover despatched armies to the frontiers of Golconda and Bijápur.

The Musal-  
mans  
combine  
against  
Vijayanagar.

The Musalman kings could at length no longer brook his arrogance, and sinking their own animosities they formed "a general league of the faithful against him." On Christmas Day, 1564, they began their united advance southward and halted near the town and fortress of Talikóta, 25 miles north of the Kistna river. Ráma Rájá despatched his brother Tirumala with 20,000 horse, 100,000 foot and 500 elephants to block the passage of the river, then sent off his other brother Venkatádri with another large army, and finally marched in person to the point of attack with the whole remaining power of the Vijayanagar empire. His total force is said to have numbered 600,000 foot and 100,000 horse. The Hindus had fortified their side of the ford opposite the enemy's camp, but the latter drew them off by pretending to attempt another passage, and then returning suddenly to the original ford crossed it unopposed. They then marched south towards Ráma Rájá's camp.

The battle  
of Talikóta,  
1565.

On the 23rd January 1565 the great battle of Talikóta (as it was called), one of the most decisive engagements in all South Indian history, was fought. All the available forces on either side took part in it. Ráma Rájá, though over ninety years of age, commanded the Vijayanagar centre and his brothers Tirumala and Venkatádri led, respectively, the left and right divisions. The Musalmans awaited the attack with their artillery in the centre, opposite Ráma Rájá's division. This consisted of six hundred pieces of ordnance disposed in three lines, the heavy artillery in front, then the smaller pieces, and in the rear light swivel guns. Masking all these were two thousand archers. These latter kept up a heavy fire as the enemy advanced and then falling rapidly back allowed the massed batteries to open fire. Their effect was murderous and decisive, and the Hindus retreated in confusion.

On the flanks they had, however, been more successful and had driven back the Musalmans, and the centre rallied for a charge upon the guns. At first their onslaught seemed to prevail, but the Musalmans' heavy guns, loaded with bags of copper coin, were fired into them at close quarters, 5,000 of them fell, and the Musalman cavalry charged through the intervals of the guns and cut their way straight through the disorganised masses of the enemy right up to where Ráma Rájá was posted.

Ráma Rájá had at first superintended operations from a litter. Later, thinking to encourage his men, he had seated himself on a "rich throne set with jewels, under a canopy of crimson velvet embroidered with gold and adorned with fringes of pearls," from whence he distributed money, gold and jewels to those of his followers who acquitted themselves well. Later again, he returned to his litter and it was at this moment that the Musalman cavalry charged up to his position. One of the enemy's elephants stampeded towards him, his bearers dropped him and fled, and before he could mount a horse he was a prisoner in the enemy's hands. He was taken before the king of Ahmadnagar, who immediately had his head cut off and raised on a long spear so that the Hindu troops might see it.

This disaster caused an instant panic among the Vijayanagar forces and they broke and fled. "They were pursued," says Ferishta, "by the allies with such successful slaughter that the river which ran near the field was dyed red with their blood. It is computed on the best authorities that above 100,000 infidels were slain in fight and during the pursuit."

Their panic was so great that they made no attempt to rally on a fresh position or even to defend the hills and approaches round about their capital. Venkatádri had been slain and of the three brothers Tirumala alone remained. He hastily returned to Vijayanagar and fled thence with the puppet king Sadásiva to the hill fort of Penukonda in Anantapur district, taking with him a few followers and a convoy of 550 elephants laden with treasure in gold, diamonds and precious stones valued at more than 100 millions sterling and also the state insignia and the celebrated jewelled throne.

Deserted by their king and the commandant of their troops, the people of the capital made no effort to defend themselves and the very next day the city was looted by the hordes of the wandering gipsy tribes of the country. On the third day the victorious Muhammadans arrived, and for the next five months they set themselves deliberately to destroy everything destructible within the walls of the capital. How thorough was their handiwork may

CHAP. II.  
VIJAYANAGAR  
KINGS.

Flight of  
Vijayanagar  
king and  
sack of his  
capital.

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KINGS.

be gathered from the account given under "Hampi" on pp. 259-78 below of the ruins of the old city as they appear in their desolation to-day. Vijayanagar as a city was blotted out, and has never since been inhabited by any but the few cultivators who still till the fields which wind about among its deserted streets and temples.

The end of  
the Vijayana-  
gar Empire.

Anarchy followed throughout the dominions of the empire. Sadásiva and Tirumala kept up a certain state at Penukonda, but the nobles for the most part threw off their allegiance to them and proclaimed themselves independent.

In 1568 Tirumala murdered Sadásiva and seized the throne for himself. A few years later he was forced to fly to Chandragiri in North Arcot, and it was there that one of his descendants in 1639 granted to Francis Day the land on which Fort St. George at Madras now stands. The existing representative of the family is the Rájá of Ánegundi, a place in the Nizam's Dominions on the other side of the Tungabhadra nearly opposite to Hampi. He holds a jaghir from the Nizam and receives a grant of Rs. 500 a month from the Madras Government.<sup>1</sup>

MUHAMMADAN  
PERIOD.

The Poli-  
gars become  
powerful.

The allied Muhammadans did not follow up their victory by the entire conquest of the south. Their mutual jealousies prevented any such step. In 1568 the king of Bijápur took Ádóni from a dependent of Vijayanagar who had established himself there,<sup>2</sup> but for the most part Bellary district fell by degrees into the hands of a number of small chiefs called poligars<sup>3</sup> who, though they were usually nominally subject to Bijápur, each assumed independent power in the country round about him.

The Maráthas,  
1678.

Matters continued thus until the Maráthas appeared upon the scene. In 1677 Sivaji, the Marátha chief, took most of the possessions held by Bijápur in the Carnatic and in the next year visited Bellary district. Some of his foragers were killed by the people belonging to the fort at Bellary and he accordingly besieged and took the place.<sup>4</sup> Shortly afterwards one of his generals reduced to submission a number of poligars in the neighbourhood who had for some time refused to pay tribute to Bijápur. In 1680 this tract was formally ceded to him by the Sultan of Bijápur, and all the poligars paid him the usual Marátha tribute, or *chaut*.

<sup>1</sup> G.O., No. 413, Political, dated 18th August 1902, and connected papers. These give a history of the Rájá's rights and claims.

<sup>2</sup> Briggs' *Ferishta*, iii, 134-35.

<sup>3</sup> The word is Tamil, *Pálayakkóran*, 'the holder of a pálayam,' or feudal estate; Telugu, *Pálegádu* and thence Maráthi, *Pálagar*; the English form being taken no doubt from one of the latter. (Hobson-Jobson.)

<sup>4</sup> Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, i, 283. This work and Wilks' *Historical Sketches* are the basis of the greater part of the rest of the present account down to the cession in 1800.

In 1687 the Emperor Aurangzeb of Delhi advanced to reduce Bijápur and Golconda to submission and he recovered the district and added it to the Mughal Subah of Bijápur. The poligars, however, remained in their old position of semi-independence.

In 1723 Asaf Jah, the Emperor's governor at Haidarabad, though still nominally subject to Delhi, made himself independent. But his power over Bellary, which had never been absolute, remained only partial, for though he claimed sovereign rights over it, the Maráthas continued to collect tribute from its poligars. About 1713, indeed, Siddoji Ghórpade, a Marátha general, had seized the valley of Sandur by force from one of these chiefs.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile the Hindu kingdom of Mysore had been rising into prominence and in 1761 the famous Haidar Ali usurped its throne, and thereafter began to encroach upon the possessions of his neighbours. After several conquests in Mysore he moved through Bellary and received the submission of the poligars, chief among whom were those of Rayadrug and Harpanahalli. In 1768 he again marched through the district to recruit his finances. The poligar of Bellary (who was a dependent of Basálat Jang, brother of the Subadar of the Deccan and jaghirdar of Ádóni) refused to make him any contribution and Haidar accordingly attempted to take his fort. But he was beaten off with great loss. In 1775, however, this poligar refused to pay tribute to Basálat Jang and was besieged by him and his French general, Lally. He thereupon sent to Haidar for help. Haidar arrived by forced marches, fell upon the besieging army and routed it, and then turned upon the poligar and demanded the instant surrender of the fort. The poligar was helpless and yielded.<sup>2</sup> Haidar extracted a lakh of pagodas from Basálat Jang, and all the poligars of the district, including those of Rayadrug and Harpanahalli, were forced to acknowledge his supremacy and to pay a contribution towards the cost of the campaign.

In 1786 Haidar's son Tipu attacked Ádóni and at length captured it and destroyed its fortifications.<sup>2</sup> The same year he returned to Mysore by a route lying about midway between Rayadrug and Harpanahalli and while professing friendship towards the poligars of these two places treacherously sent out two brigades to capture their forts and at the same moment seized upon the poligars themselves, who were in his camp. They were cast into prison and their towns were looted, not even the ornaments of the women being left to them. These two poligars had

## CHAP. II.

MUHAMMADAN  
PERIOD.

The Emperor  
Aurangzeb,  
1687.

The Nizam-  
ul-Mulk,  
1723.

Haidar Ali,  
1761.

Tipu Sultan,  
1786.

<sup>1</sup> For further particulars see the account of the history of Sandur in Chapter XVI below.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller details appear in the separate account of the place in Chapter XV.

CHAP. II.  
MUHAMMADAN  
PERIOD.

The second  
Mysore War,  
1792.

always been among the staunchest supporters of Tipu and his father and the manner in which he thus requited them is among the most indefensible of all his actions.

In 1790 Lord Cornwallis, the then Governor-General of India, entered into an alliance with the Maráthas and the Nizam to reduce Tipu to order, and it was agreed that whatever territories should be acquired by them from Tipu should be equally divided between them. Certain specified poligars, among whom were the chiefs of Bellary, Rayadrug and Harpanahalli, were, however, to be left in possession of their districts. Tipu was reduced to submission in 1792 and by the treaty of that year he ceded half his territories to the allies. Sandur was allotted to the Maráthas and a part of the Bellary district to the Nizam.<sup>1</sup> The poligars still, however, as before, retained their virtual independence, the Nizam's officers being entirely unable to control them.

The third  
Mysore War,  
1799.

In 1799 war was again declared against Mysore by the three allies, and Seringapatam was taken and Tipu was killed. In the partition treaty of that year the Maráthas were allotted, among other tracts, Harpanahalli and the six taluks attached to it, while the rest of the district went to the Nizam.<sup>2</sup> Differences arising, the Peshwa refused to accept the share given him, and in accordance with article 8 of the treaty it was therefore divided between the Nizam and the English.<sup>3</sup> The Nizam received Harpanahalli.

Bellary  
ceded to the  
English.

In 1800 the Nizam agreed<sup>4</sup> to cede to the English all the territories acquired by him by these two treaties of 1792 and 1799 in return for a subsidiary force to be stationed in his dominions. Some of these were north of the Tungabhadra, and they were exchanged for the taluk of Adóni in order that the river might be the boundary between the two territories. Bellary thus passed to the British. The districts which were handed over by this treaty (Bellary, Anantapur, Cuddapah and part of Kurnool) are still known as "the Ceded districts."

ENGLISH  
RULE.  
Munro  
appointed  
Principal  
Collector.

Sir Thomas (then Major) Munro was their first (and their most famous) 'Principal Collector,' and General Dugald Campbell commanded the force which was posted at Bellary to reduce them to order. Munro resided at Anantapur and held charge of the taluks which now make up that district, and also of Rayadrug; while 'Sub-Collectors' were stationed at Adóni and Harpanahalli. The former of these, William Thackeray,<sup>5</sup> managed Alúr and

<sup>1</sup> Aitchison's *Treaties, etc.* (1892), viii, 462-63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 319, 322.

<sup>3</sup> Duff's *Hist. of Mahrattas*, iii, 179.

<sup>4</sup> Aitchison, viii, 323, ff.

<sup>5</sup> Uncle of the novelist and afterwards a distinguished officer. He was nominated Member of the Board of Revenue when only 30.

Ádóni taluks and parts of the adjoining areas in what is now the Kurnool district, while the latter, James Cochrane, was responsible for Bellary and the western taluks. Two other Sub-Collectors were in immediate charge of the remainder of the ceded territory. In 1808 (see Chapter XI, p. 149) the country was split into the two collectorates of Bellary and Cuddapah and in 1882 the former was again divided into the existing districts of Anantapur and Bellary.

Munro took over charge at the end of 1800. His first and chief difficulty was the turbulence of the many poligars who held the numerous forts in the district and terrorised the people round about them. They were, as has been seen, an old-established institution and their power was thus the less easily curbed. They were of all ranks and classes. Some were Government servants or renters of revenue who had revolted in times of disturbance or had grown gradually into poligars through the negligence or weakness of former governments; others had originally obtained their villages as jaghirs or inams; others again, like those of Rayadrug and Harpanahalli, had usurped their possessions; and yet others had held their lands on condition of rendering military service to former suzerains. Similarly, some were men of good birth descended from high officers under the old Vijayanagar kings, while others were merely village officers who had profited by former periods of confusion to seize a fort or two and collect a body of banditti. Some of them had an income of only Rs. 60 or 70 a month, but even such a petty chief as this, wrote Munro,<sup>1</sup> "was regularly installed with all the form of the prince of an extensive territory and had his nominal officers of state subsisting on small portions of land."

Except those whose ancestors had been men of rank, or who, like the poligars of Rayadrug and Harpanahalli, had acquired considerable territory, few of them had been regarded by the different powers who had ruled the country as holding any independent authority. Under the kings of Bijápur and the Emperor Aurangzeb, those whose military services were not required had been assessed at the full value of their possessions. In some cases their villages had been taken from them and granted to others. But neither the Musalmans nor the Maráthas had ever been able to make them pay their peshkash with any regularity. Haidar Ali would have rooted them out entirely had he had more leisure, but his constant wars prevented such a step and he adopted other means to keep them from troubling him. Those who fled were

CHAP. II.  
ENGLISH  
RULE.

The poligars.

Their turbulence under native rule.

<sup>1</sup> Report of 20th March 1802 to the Board, printed at Bellary Collectorate Press, 1892.



CHAP. II.  
ENGLISH  
RULE.

prevented from returning by a strong detachment posted in their country, while those who fell into his hands were kept about his court, holding, indeed; nominal sway over their villages, but burdened with a peshkash so heavy that it left them no margin from which to maintain an armed force. Tipu's weaker rule gave the poligars their opportunity and they returned to all their old power; the indolence and impotence of the Nizam's officers enabled them to still further strengthen their position; and in the end confusion was supreme.

"They were almost constantly in rebellion," wrote Munro, "and their reduction and rebellion were equally disastrous to the country; for the revolting poligar exacted contributions by every species of violence in order to enable him to raise a numerous rabble to defend himself, and the army which marched against him plundered the villages in its progress, and, after reducing him, it usually restored him on condition of his discharging his arrears and paying a Nuzzerannah on account of the expenses of the expedition. If he fulfilled his engagements, which was very rarely the case, it was not by refunding from his treasury, but by making new assessments upon the unfortunate inhabitants."

Munro's  
policy regard-  
ing them.

Munro assessed the whole of the poligars at the highest peshkash which they had paid either to the Nizam or to Haidar and if they declined or neglected to pay set Dugald Campbell's troops or his own military peons to enforce punctuality or, in the alternative, capture their strongholds. One by one, with wonderful rapidity and astonishingly little parade or fuss, they were reduced to order or dispossessed, and within a year there remained no force which was able to "make any formidable opposition to Government."

No small part of this success was due to Munro's military peons. They were formed into companies 100 strong, about two thirds of them being armed with matchlocks and the rest with pikes. They knew no drill, but then neither did their opponents the poligars' levies. They were useless, it is true, in an attack against a fort, but when once the regular troops had driven a rebellious poligar to flight they completed his discomfiture as no other force could have done. They opened communication with his followers and induced them to desert; they discovered his retreats and attacked when a suitable opportunity offered; they surprised his detached parties; they corrupted his friends; until rendered powerless by the reduction of his force and pursued by fear of treachery, the poligar fled to some distant province.

The Directors in England (though Munro's biographers do not mention the fact) were rather shocked at these decisive measure

"We would reconcile the poligars to our dominion and attach them to our interest," they wrote in April 1804, "by more gentle measures," and they urged that endeavour should be made gradually "to wean them from their feudal habits and principles." They even stigmatised Munro's action as "disingenuous" and ordered that unless he could justify his proceedings he should be removed. Munro's reply of 22nd February 1805 is an unassailable defence of his position. He shows that neither on the ground of their ancient rights nor of their later conduct were the poligars entitled to "gentle measures" and that their "feudal habits and principles" consisted of crimes, oppressions and contumacities which, if permitted to continue, would have rendered good government impossible. The Directors said no more and Munro's policy gave the district the first taste of tranquillity which it had known for many years. In his letter of 20th March 1802, already referred to, he gave an exhaustive account of the claims and rights of these petty chiefs and recommended the grant of pensions to those who were deserving of them. Some of these families have now died out, but there still (1904) remain in Bellary district 23 descendants of poligars who continue to draw allowances from Government.

These poligar families are usually now indistinguishable from their neighbours except that they sometimes keep their womenkind gosha. The doings of their forebears are commemorated all over the district in the sculptured *virakals*, or 'hero-stones,' which may be seen in so many villages. These generally contain three panels. In the uppermost are the usual sun, moon and lingam; in the lowest the hero is depicted routing his enemies; and in the middle one the young men and maidens, with their arms round each other's necks, are dancing to celebrate his victory.

The Bellary district gave less trouble to quiet than Cuddapah, and the only serious affair was that at the end of 1801 at "Ternikull" (Taranikallu) a village in the then Adóni division and now in Pattikonda taluk. The potail, or headman, of Ternikull had been accused of peculation, and at midday his followers dragged from the Sub-Collector's catchery two other heads of villages and a taluk gumastah who had given evidence against him and openly murdered them. The potail then confined the amildar (tahsildar) and refused to release him unless he was promised a pardon for the deed. Finally he and his people took refuge in their fort, sent away their families and cattle, built up the gates and prepared for resistance. Dugald Campbell sent six troops of cavalry, six companies of sepoy and two galloper guns to take the place, but they were beaten off in three successive attacks. The General then marched there himself with all his force and also sent for help

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ENGLISH  
RULE.

The affair of  
"Ternikull."

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RULE.

from Gooty. Though he had ten field pieces and attacked at three points, he was similarly repulsed with a loss of six European officers wounded, fourteen men killed and 228 wounded. Three heavier guns were then, by great exertions, dragged down from the Gooty rock, breaches were made in the walls of the fort and the place was at length taken by storm.<sup>1</sup> The potail was duly hanged.

Alarms of rebellions.

Though no other open action of importance was necessary, alarms of risings were not infrequent. The pensioned poligar of Harpanahalli was said to be raising troops, there was a plot to seize Bellary fort and a wide-spread conspiracy was discovered<sup>2</sup> which had for its object the capture of Adóni and the establishment there of Kudrit Ulla Khán, son of Basálat Jang, the former jaghirdar of the place.

The Pindári raid of 1818.

Since Munro's time the peace of the district has only twice been disturbed. In 1818 a body of Pindáris some 500 strong crossed the Tungabhadra, plundered Belláhunishi and other riverside villages and then marched on Harpanahalli. The amildar there made the feeblest resistance and they looted his treasury of Rs. 24,000, destroyed all his records, tortured him, his sheristadar and others and pillaged the town without mercy. The amildar tried to get even by declaring that they had looted kists which as a matter of fact had never reached the treasury—meaning to pocket them himself when they did arrive—but he was detected and dismissed.

From Harpanahalli the Pindáris went on to Kottúru, which they also pillaged, and thence to Kúdligi. Here the Tahsildar, Mulappa though the fort was in a very weak condition and he had only half a-dozen matchlocks, defended himself in a most plucky manner beat off his assailants and saved his treasury and the town. Government afterwards presented him with a pair of gold bangles worth Rs. 700 as a mark of their appreciation.

Bhíma Rao's rising in 1858.

The last occasion on which the help of troops was necessary was Mundrighi Bhíma Rao's rising in 1858. This Bhíma Rao had been Tahsildar of Harpanahalli and of Bellary, but had been dismissed in 1854 for a series of underhand intrigues against the Huzt Sheristadar and other leading native officials. He was no ordinary Tahsildar, but a man of some landed property at Mundrighi i Dharwar, a keen sportsman, and possessed of great powers of personal influence. His rising is recounted in a ballad which

<sup>1</sup> General Campbell's letters of 21st and 31st December 1801 to Government

<sup>2</sup> Munro's letter to Government of 26th June 1804.

sung to this day in the western taluks.<sup>1</sup> The unrest occasioned by the Mutiny of 1857 had spread to Dharwar and the country adjoining and the authorities had made vigorous searches for arms which had disquieted the désáyis and zamindars there. The Nurgund Rája and the désáyis of Damal, Hammigi and Toragal accordingly plotted with Bhíma Rao to bring about a general rising on the 27th May 1858.<sup>2</sup> On the 24th a party of police arrived to search the Hammigi désáyis's house for weapons and ammunition and accordingly he and Bhíma Rao took up arms prematurely. They threatened Ramandrug, but the Tungabhadra was full and they never actually crossed it. They captured the fort of Kopal, some 26 miles from Hospet, and took up their stand there. A company of the 74th Highlanders, two companies of the 47th Native Infantry and a squadron of the 5th Light Cavalry, with two guns and some Mysore irregular horse, set out from Bellary to Kopal and were joined there by other troops from across the river. On the 30th May some shots were exchanged with the fort and the next day a breach was made and the place was stormed. The rebels showed fight, but were driven back towards the citadel at the top of the fort, about 100 of them being killed on the way. Bhíma Rao and the désáyis of Hammigi were among these. While preparations were being made to blow in a gate which checked further advance the remainder of the insurgents surrendered. Seventy-seven of them were subsequently executed and no more trouble occurred. The loss on the Company's side in the attack was seven Europeans and one native wounded.

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RULE.Bhíma Rao's  
rising in  
1858.

<sup>1</sup> The adventures of another Bhíma Rao of the same family are related in Sir Walter Elliott's *Sketch of a Southern Mahratta leader* in the *Asiat. Quart. Rev.* for January 1892.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Bhíma Rao's gumastah, printed in *Judl. Cons.* of 2nd July 1858.