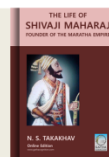




THE LIFE OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

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Chapter 21

Renewed Campaign Against the Moguls, 1670-72

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The campaigns that Shivaji now undertook were conducted on a scale to which we have no parallel in his previous career. The first plan was the recovery of the important forts of Sinhagadh and Purandar, the possession of which by the Moguls enabled them to obstruct Shivaji's free communication with Poona, Chakan and adjoining parts. Jay Singh had furnished the bravest of his Rajput soldiery to man these forts. The garrison armies were as vigilant as they were brave and loyal. Shivaji aimed his first operations against Sinhagad. The governor of the garrison was a brave Rajput veteran named Uday Bhanu. His loyalty was not to be tampered with by any means. The picked men under him were tried veterans, whose chivalrous valour had been proved on many a well-fought field. The conquest of this fort, therefore, was one of the most perplexing tasks that ever presented itself before Shivaji, who was all the more keen about its conquest, because, as the national ballads (powadas) of the Maratha minstrels would lead us to infer, he had entered upon the undertaking at the urgent desire of his mother Jijabai.¹ In

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GATHA COGNITION®

1. The powada says that Jijabai challenged Shivaji to a game of dice and having defeated him demanded the fort of Sinhagad as the forfeit. The fort was then under the Moguls, and thus Jijabai got him effectually to conquer it. Tanaji Malusare was engaged in the festivities in connection with the marriage of his son Rayaba, when the orders of Shivaji reached him to come with his Mavalis straightway to Raigad. And so the hero came putting off the festivities.

this perplexity, Tanaji Malusare, the veteran general and the companion of Shivaji's youthful adventures, presented himself before Shivaji and undertook with his younger brother Suryaji and a corps of one thousand Mavalis of his own choosing to capture the fort. According to the ballad celebrating the event, Tanaji was attended by a force of 12,000.

About Tanaji himself almost incredible accounts are given in the native chronicles as to his valour and personal appearance. He is described as a man of gigantic proportions, of an aspect most terrible, with chest-nut hair and blood-shot eyes, and a marvellously long, bushy moustache. He had such muscular strength that, we are told, he could control the movements of an elephant, by drawing him about by the tusks at his pleasure. On the field of war, no one would stand before him face to face. Shivaji had not his equal. He was as versed in the theory and practice of arms, as he was distinguished for his personal valour and physique.

Sinhagad lies on the eastern side of the great Sahyadri range. The hills projecting from Fort Purandar extend right up to it, with which indeed by steep and narrow ridges lengthening from west to east Fort Sinhagad communicates. On the northern and southern sides the fort rears itself up into a huge precipice, with an ascent of half a mile, rising abruptly from the depths below. Arrived at this height, the traveller finds the mountain overtopped by a craggy summit, consisting of a huge mass of black rocks upwards of forty feet in height. Surmounting the rocky mass, arise the stone fortification and its towers. The fort is of a triangular shape, the area enclosed being about two miles in circumference. Except at the gates, it seems to present no entrance. The summit of the fort commands a prospect of the beautiful but narrow valley of the Nira on the east. On the northern side a great plain unfolds itself before the eyes, this city of Poona being its chief attraction, while masses of undulating mountains rise on the west and south. In this quarter rises Fort Haigad, from which Tanaji Malusare proposed to lead his faithful Mavalis.

This force of a thousand Mavalis set forth by devious paths known only to themselves. Over hill and glen the veterans followed separate tracks until they united together at the trysting-place near the fort in the darkness of the night. It was the night of the eighth day of the dark half of the moon, in the month of *Magh* (February). Tanaji divided his forces: one-half posted themselves at a little distance, with orders to advance at a pre-arranged signal, and the other half took up their position unobserved at the foot of the rock.² A part of the fortress most difficult of access and on that account less likely to be guarded by the sentinel parties was chosen for attempting an escalade.

2. According to the powada, Tanaji did the scouting himself as a village Patil (headman).

Here it was that a Mavali warrior, most daring and resourceful among his fellows, scrambled up the crag with the aid of a *ghorpad* or iguana and making fast a ladder of ropes to a rock enabled his comrades to ascend the rampart one after another. As each Mavali scaled the ladder in silence he laid himself down to prevent discovery. But scarcely had 300 of them entered the fort³, when the sentinels began to suspect that some unusual event was brewing around them, and their attention being attracted to the quarter in which the Mavali escalade had in part been effected, one of them ran up to ascertain what was the matter. An arrow shot with deadly aim was the silent answer to his inquiry. An alarm was now raised and presently the garrison camp became a babel of confusion with mounting and arming in haste. The scene of panic determined Tanaji to a bold charge with the handful of Mavalis who had made good the ascent. Soon a shower of the Mavalis' arrows was directed towards the spot whence the outcry proceeded. By this time the sentinels had kindled their torches, and a blaze of light discovered the plight of the garrison and the cool intrepidity of their assailants. A desperate conflict then ensued, reducing itself to a series of hand-to-hand encounters. Though surprised in the middle of their plan and out-numbered by the Rajputs, the Mavalis fought with such terrible earnestness that the enemy had to retire on all sides. Meanwhile the leaders of the opposite sides, Tanaji and Uday Bhanu⁴, were engaged in deadly conflict. They were both known to fame for their perfect mastery of the science of self-defence. They had at last discovered in each other foemen worthy of their steel. The combat was long and arduous, a succession of thrusts and parries, and much blood was shed on both sides. At length both heroes fell mortally wounded. When the Mavalis saw that their leader was slain and that the tide was turning against them, then for the first time they lost heart and began to retire. The retreat had almost turned to a rout, each making for the place where the escalade had been made, when Suryaji, the brother of Tanaji, appeared on the rampart, bringing up the remainder of the escalading party. On learning what had happened Suryaji rallied the fugitives, pouring scorn upon them for flinching from the post of duty at such a crisis. He declared escape was impossible, for he had cut down the scaling ladder, and he asked who among them was so base, such a faint-hearted craven as to leave his father's remains to be unceremoniously dealt with by a common *mahar* (sweeper)? For Tanaji was as good as a father to them. "Now is the time," he exclaimed with growing animation, "to prove your loyalty to Shivaji, to try your mettle as heroes. Come then and attack the

3. The powada says that the rope gave way after fifty Mavalis had climbed up the rampart.

4. The powada describes Uday Bhanu as the husband of eighteen wives and father of twelve sons. A fearful account is given of the quantity of meat he consumed at his meals.

enemy!” With a deafening cry of “Har! Har! Mahadev!” the Hindu war-cry invoking their principal deities, the whole party as one man again turned round upon their pursuers: Suryaji’s words had infused new vigour, new ambition, new life into them. They steeled themselves to the task of avenging the death of Tanaji, the idol and the hero of every loyal Mavalis, and of paying their last honours to his mortal remains. The tide turned. One victorious charge and the fort fell before them. Three hundred hardy Mavalis laid down their lives. Nearly five hundred valiant Rajput soldiers lay dead upon the field of battle. A few – very few – kept in hiding and surrendered. Many precipitated themselves over the rampart and were dashed to pieces.

According to the pre-arranged signal the glad tidings of victory were conveyed to Shivaji by setting on fire a thatched house in the fort. Shivaji hailed the news with joy, but when he heard that the victory was purchased by the death of the gallant Tanaji, his joy was turned to sorrow. “The fort is taken” he exclaimed, “but the lion is slain!” in allusion to the name of Sinhagad or the Lion’s Den which he had given to the fort, though according to some historians the fort had up to that time been known as Kondana, and received the name Sinhagad after this event. The gallantry of the faithful Mavalis received handsome acknowledgments. Every member of the expedition received a silver armlet in token of the victory. The officers were amply rewarded. Suryaji’s services were duly acknowledged by his being promoted to the command of the garrison of the captured fort.⁵

On the capture of Sinhagad, it took little time to reduce Purandar. About a month after the victory of Sinhagad, Suryaji led his gallant Mavalis to Fort Purandar, which was escalated by a night attack, the garrison cut to pieces, and Shivaji’s standard planted on the flag-staff. The Rajput garrison of Purandar knowing but too well how ineffectual had been the resistance of their comrades at Sinhagad lost heart and with all their preponderating numbers offered little resistance. The Mavalis carried the fort without much loss on their side.

The next move was against Fort Mahuli the conquest of which was assigned to the minister, Moropant. This warrior surrounded the fort and led a sudden assault. A bloody battle followed, in which Moropant lost a thousand

5. One of the most interesting historical novels in the Marathi language is on the subject of the conquest of Sinhagad. The author was the late Mr. Hari Narayan Apte popularly known as the Sir Walter Scott of Marathi Literature. In the four pages of his description of the capture of Sinhagad (pages 227-31) Mr. Kincaid has crowded together the romantic and fantastic incidents celebrated in the powada but in a foot-note at page 231 he refers to the “less romantic but more probable story” to be found in Sabhasad’s bakhar, which in the main is followed here.

lives and was obliged to fall back. Nothing daunted by this reverse, Moropant Peshwa continued the siege while the garrison within the walls redoubled their effort to hold out. After some rest, Moropant Peshwa again advanced to the assault, but again a second time was he obliged to retire. The Peshwa's siege force still continued the blockade without the least sign of irresolution, while the defenders relying on the expectation of a relief force from the Mogul camp at Junnar maintained the defensive with a dogged determination. This went on for two months, neither party giving way. At length the defenders lost faith in the ability of the Mogul commanders to effect their rescue and surrendered the fort to the Peshwa.⁶ Soon after the capture of Mahuli the fort of Karnala was captured by assault and the whole of the district of Kalyan was recovered before the commencement of the monsoons. Other stray forts, here and there, under the Moguls, such as Lohagad, Rohida, Shivneri, fell before Shivaji's storming parties without much resistance.

Shivaji in person had advanced against Janjira, which was subjected to all the rigour of a land siege with ceaseless cannonading. Even with the advent of the monsoons the siege was not relaxed, Shivaji having resolved to carry the fort before the cessation of the rains. While Shivaji spared no exertion to press home the blockade, he tried at the same time with gold to win over the commander of the garrison. Fattah Khan, the lord of the sea-fort, at first resented these offers, but as the blockade became more and more stringent he was glad to entertain these conditions of surrender and accept a feudatory dependence under Shivaji. But his three principal officers scorned any such proposals. Theirs was an inveterate enmity with Shivaji. Their bigoted hatred was far too pronounced to admit of any *pourparlers* with the enemy, and if they hated the Hindus in general, they had a special racial antipathy against the Marathas. They made up their mind to frustrate Fattah Khan's design, enlisted the sympathy of the Abyssinian leaders, and with their assistance apprehended Fattah Khan. Having thus excluded the possibility of the proposals for surrender, they opened negotiations with the Mogul governor at Surat soliciting his intervention and promising to transfer the fort from the suzerainty of the Bijapur sultan to that of the Mogul emperor and to

6. According to the Bundela Memoirs Shivaji conducted the siege of Mahuli in person. The Commander of the fort was a Rajput named Manordas. When the provision in the fort came to an end Manordas sent a message to Shivaji that he and his garrison soldiers were Rajputs and would not surrender the fort till every man had fallen on the field of war. Shivaji knew the secret passages leading to the fort and tried to escalate it by one of these paths. But the enemy within was on the watch and attacked the raiders in full force, Shivaji losing many men in the contest. He had to return, raising the siege for the time being. But eventually he made another raid and captured the fort. The Jedhe Chronology gives the date August 1670 for the capture of Mahuli.

make over to the empire the services of their magnificent navy and hold their lands as in jahgir from the emperor.⁷ These proposals were duly submitted to the emperor with the favourable comments of the governor of Surat and were sanctioned by Aurangzeb. One of the Abyssinian petitioners was declared the lord of the fort and placed in command over it, with the imperial title of Yakut Khan.

The result of the Mogul intervention was decisive. Shivaji had to break up his camp and move his forces in pursuit of objects more easy of realization. The fulfilment of his intention to chastise the Abyssinians had to be indefinitely postponed. With a view to inflict an immediate and summary vengeance on the imperial subhedar of Surat whose intervention had such disastrous effects upon his plans against Janjira, Shivaji suddenly turned round upon that wealthy town when the rains had scarcely subsided and fell upon it unawares with a squadron of 15,000 horses. Unhappily for Shivaji sudden sickness and death had removed the subhedar from the reach of the Maratha vengeance. But the hapless town fell an easy prey to the victorious invaders, the more easy in as much as a goodly proportion of the city guards had recently been diverted by the local governor, whether under orders of Muazzim and Jaswant Singh out of collusion with Shivaji's plan, or merely by the blind operation of chance, there is no means to determine. And so it came that though the governor of Guzerat had prepared a large squadron of horse to face the anticipated invasion of Shivaji, the third of October on which Shivaji reached Surat, saw the governor of the city in command of a defence force of barely three hundred men. For some days before the invasion news had leaked out that Shivaji had gathered a large body of light horse at Kalyan, and the British factors at Surat had rightly conjectured that their own town was the objective of this light armed force. They had taken steps to remove their goods to Swally, where the new president⁸ Gerald Aungier and most of the councillors of the English company had betaken themselves. The English factory and ware-houses in the city were left in charge of Streynsham Master, who was then on the Surat council, and afterwards governor of the Madras factory.

Shivaji plundered the city at leisure to his heart's content. The citadel was stormed, but an attempt to demolish it by mining was according to the

7. Khafi Khan gives the names of the confederate Abyssinians as Sidi Sambal, Sidi Yakut and Sidi Khairiyat. But his account is rather confused, for Yakut Khan seems to have been in general the title of the Sidi admirals under the Mogul and not of a particular Sidi chief, (Khafi Khan in Elliot VII, 289-290).

8. Aungier succeeded to the governorship of the Surat factory in 1669. Sir George Oxenden, the hero of the first sack of Surat having died in that year.

English traveller Dr. Fryer beaten off by the Moguls. The Marathas spread themselves over the whole town except the European factories. For three days the sack of Surat continued (3rd to 5th October 1670).⁹

Once again the English merchants fought on the defensive and saved their possessions from wholesale plunder. They resisted two of the invader's attacks, but in the end consented to make a small present to Shivaji. This the company's agents took to the invader's tent outside the town. Shivaji told them that he wished to be on friendly terms with the English and assured them that he would do them no harm.¹⁰ The Dutch factory lay rather isolated from the busy part of the town. Shivaji sent a letter assuring them that no harm would be done to them, if they remained quiet.¹¹ The French by prudent management and the payment of a fine saved their factory. They remained neutral permitting Shivaji's troops to pass through their factory to attack a Tartar prince, once King of Kashgar, who having been deposed by his son had just returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca and was then living at Surat under the protection of the emperor. Shivaji obtained a quantity of gold, silver, jewels and many other valuable articles in the pillage of this unfortunate prince's residence.

On the third day Shivaji received intelligence from Barhanpur that a great Mogul army was coming with all speed for the defence of Surat. Shivaji immediately broke up his camp and evacuated the plundered town, having left a letter to the townsmen, demanding a tribute of twelve lakhs of rupees per annum, as the price of their exemption from future pillage.

On receipt of the news of Shivaji's invasion of Surat, the subhedar of Aurangabad had forthwith despatched a force of eight to ten thousand under two commanders, Mohabat Khan and Daud Khan, to the aid of the town. When Shivaji swiftly pursuing his return march along the great road of Salheri had passed Kanchan-Manchan near Chandor (Chandwad) he was overtaken by the Mogul officers near Vani-Dindori.¹² This he did not mind, his object being to descend upon the Kolwan by the great pass near Nasik. But when he perceived that a large Mogul force was likewise holding this pass, he saw the

9. According to Dr. Fryer the old mud walls of Surat had by this time been replaced by a solid rampart of masonry. According to the Marathi chronicles the Mogul governor made a show of fight; but the Factory Reports state that he fled to the castle.

10. *Vide* letter of the Surat Council to the Company, of 20th November 1670, quoted in Hedge's Diary.

11. Dutch Reports, Translations, Vol. 29, quoted by Prof. Sarkar (Shivaji, p. 222).

12. *Vide* Scott's Deccan, Vol. II, p. 25 and Sabhasad, 64-65.

situation had become an embarrassing one and became anxious for the safety of his booty. He, therefore, divided his forces into four or five parties. One of these began to skirmish with the enemy posted in the front, while two others were ordered to manoeuvre on his flanks. Another party was entrusted with the safe convoy of the precious spoil obtained at Surat. They had orders to elude the enemy held in play by the other divisions, to sweep across the hostile positions beyond the mountains and to make the best of their way home into the Konkan. As Shivaji himself accompanied this division, there was a hot pursuit by the Moguls under Daud Khan. Shivaji wheeled round on the enemy with a column of this division and kept the Moguls engaged, while the rest of the party successfully cleared the defile. The skilful manoeuvring of the Marathas and the simultaneous attacks delivered on different sides of the Mogul divisions led to a concentration of the Mogul forces and a pitched battle with Shivaji. Leaving Prataprao Sirnobut to defend the Maratha rear, Shivaji charged the united Mogul armies, fighting and exhorting his men in every part of the field, conspicuous with his burnished arms and helmet, his spirited war-horse, and the mighty sweep of the double-edged sword he wielded in either hand. Fired with the example of their chief the Marathas met the Mogul charge, broke it and turned it into a rout. Such was the battle of Vani-Dindori. It lasted above three hours. Three thousand Moguls lay dead on the field. The remnant was driven into headlong flight. Instead of pressing the pursuit, Shivaji turned his attention to the Mogul encampment, which yielded an abundance of spoil, horses, elephants and war-material. When Shivaji's men heavy laden with this booty turned towards the defile, they found themselves intercepted by a brave Maratha lady, Rai Bagin, her son Jagjivan and their corps of feudal retainers. This lady was the wife of a brave officer in the Mogul service, Udaram, the deshmukhi of Mahur. In a former battle the deshmukh having fallen fighting with great bravery, his place was taken by his wife, who exhorted her men and led them to victory. Admiring this marvellous presence of mind and valour in the woman, Aurangzeb had conferred upon her the title of Rai Bagin, in appreciation of her noble service. On this occasion, the brave lady had again with her wonted fidelity taken up arms in behalf of her imperial master. But she had taken up arms in vain. She was encompassed on all sides by Shivaji's followers. Baffled in all attempts to escape, she had to surrender and sue for pardon. The chivalrous victor received her with every mark of respect and had her escorted home, laden with presents of jewelled ornaments and dresses.¹³

On his return from Surat, Shivaji made preparations by land and sea. Prataprao Guzar at the head of ten thousand horses and Moropant Peshwa in

13. Shedgavkar p. 64 and other bakhars.

command of 20,000 foot were ordered to march northward into Mogul territory. The people of these parts were on the whole in fairly affluent circumstances, and the military control being lax, great hopes were entertained of a rich and easy booty. These hopes were abundantly fulfilled. Prataprao invaded Khandesh and Berar, a region teeming with wealth and, considering the conditions of the time, also with population. The larger towns were pillaged and annual tributes imposed upon them. Written agreements were made with the leading citizens, by which the latter bound themselves to pay a quarter of the annual tribute due to the imperial authorities into the hands of Shivaji or his accredited agents. The due payment of the annual tribute was to exempt the particular town and villages from any molestation at the hands of Shivaji's hosts. Shivaji on his side was to ensure their protection from incursions by any other power. This was the first imposition of the famous chauth on a province immediately subject to the Mogul rule. The principal incident of this expedition was the capture and pillage of Karanjia. Prataprao made a halt of three days at this town and plundered it at leisure.¹⁴ The citizens were found to have buried their valuables in their houses, and Prataprao made a strict search of the houses of the wealthy, dug up their treasures, and carried them away as prisoners of war. A few escaped in women's clothes, Shivaji's orders on the subject being strict, that under no circumstances and on no account should a female be molested or interfered with. In another part of the Mogul dominions, West Khandesh and Baglan, Moropant's victorious infantry carried town after town and fort after fort. Daud Khan, the governor, was campaigning near Ahmednagar. He came up too late to save these places. The leading conquests were those of Aundha, Patta, Salheri, Mulheri, Trimbak and Ramnagar. Salheri was in the end carried by Shivaji in person. He invested the fort with a force of 20,000 horses and foot and captured it by escalade, after the Mogul governor of the fort had fallen in battle. Many new fortresses were erected in these newly conquered parts.

The fleet set in motion comprised one hundred and sixty war-ships. The object of the fitting up of this flotilla was that the naval forces should co-

14. The *Jedhe Chronology*, page 189, says that after the battle of Vani-Dindori, Shivaji retired to Kunjargad and in the following month proceeded to Karanjia, capturing on the way the forts of Ahiwant, Ravla- Javla and Markanda.

According to Sabhasad's chronicle the sack of Karanjia was made by Shivaji in person. Grant Duff adds in a foot-note that the East India Company's factors at Surat were under the impression that Shivaji made the incursion upon Karanjia in person, and that of the leading people of the place few escaped except such as ran away in women's clothes. From this Grant Duff concludes that the Moguls must have known Shivaji's regulations regarding protection to females.

operate on the coast, when the port of Broach should be attacked, as was projected, on the landward side. But shortly after the fleet had weighed anchor from the vicinity of Bombay, it was recalled. On the return voyage they captured off Damaun a large Portuguese war-ship, which was safely brought to Dabhol creek. It is said about the same time the Portuguese brought to the port of Bassein about a dozen of Shivaji's war-ships intercepted by them. These events point to the probability of a sea-fight between the Portuguese and Shivaji's navies between Bombay and Damaun.

It would appear very strange that while Shivaji was winning these new triumphs, the Mogul authorities should not have moved a finger. But this inactivity of the Mogul commanders is chiefly to be ascribed to the absence of an adequate supply of troops in the southern subha. It had become an article of faith with the mistrustful emperor that to send additional forces to the distant satrapy of the south was fraught with singular danger to the empire. Whilst the Peshwa Moropant was storming Mahuli, a considerable force was stationed at Junnar and 5000 additional troops lay at Surat for the defence of the country around. There was likewise the usual quota of troops at the Aurungabad head-quarters. But these numbers were insignificant when compared with the numbers at Shivaji's command. At any given moment, if the Mogul armies in the south were to combine together for any initiative, it was within Shivaji's power to put up forty thousand men to try conclusions with them. And this without any weakening of the garrison forces maintained at each fort and station. While the deficiency of forces crippled the Mogul offensive, the rumours and divisions in the camp made the stagnation complete. All action was paralysed by the common report of a secret league between Shivaji and Prince Muazzim. The friendly relations between Shivaji and Jaswant Singh were well known. The repeated applications of the prince for reinforcement were rejected by the suspicious emperor. It is not too much to believe that the main object of Prince Muazzim was to make friendships in the south so as to pave his way to the throne on the emperor's demise. For between a Mogul prince and the grave, the only alternative stages were the peacock throne at Agra or the prison-walls of Gwalior fort. The growing depredations of Shivaji were to him a new excuse for obtaining reinforcement from the emperor. Lack of troops was his stereotyped answer to the emperor's complaints about the Marathas. It was to his personal advantage to maintain good relations with a valiant chief like Shivaji, and though he could not altogether abstain from action, he managed to send against the Maratha generals such insufficient forces that defeat was a foregone conclusion.

But Aurangzeb was not an emperor to be thus baffled. He recalled Jaswant Singh and appointed Mohabat Khan in his place with powers almost

independent of Prince Muazzim. The latter had barely a thousand men left under his command at Aurangabad. The rest of the Mogul force took the offensive under Mohabat Khan. Diler Khan was sent to co-operate with him. The subhedar of Surat was charged with neglect in the performance of his high duties. The censure was too great for the haughty subhedar to bear and he put an end to a life that had ceased to give pleasure to himself or to his master by poison. The new subhedar received orders to build a number of war-ships at Surat and Bombay, the object being to co-operate actively with the Abyssinians of Janjira with a view to extinguish the new sea-power of Shivaji.

Immediately on his arrival in the Deccan, Mohabat Khan began the offensive. He had recovered Aundha and Patta, when the monsoons compelled him to suspend his operations. On the opening of the fair season, he formed his army into two divisions. The one under Diler Khan advanced against Ohakan, which was immediately taken and all persons within the fort above nine years of age were put to the sword.¹⁵ Upon this success, he received orders to start against Rawla-Javla, and Ahiwant. His assaults on these two forts were gallantly repulsed by the Maratha garrisons, and on the approach of a relief force of twelve thousand sent up by Moropant, he had to break up his camp from before these forts. He next advanced to Kanergad¹⁶ and captured it. A gallant attempt to recover this fort was made by Ramaji Pangare¹⁷, the naik or commander of the personal retinue of the governor of the fort. With two thousand Mavalis¹⁸ he made a mid-night attack. Observing the small force of the assailants, Diler Khan sallied out with a larger body. Nothing daunted, the resolute Pangare rallied the bravest of his Mavalis to the charge, asking only those to follow who were prepared to lay down their lives. Seven hundred Mavalis responded to the call. A furious charge ensued. The seven hundred fell along with their brave leader, with wounds all over their bodies, but in their fall they carried down two thousand Pathans to bear them company. Diler Khan was filled with admiration at this noble exhibition of valour. The rest of the Mavalis, seized with a passionate desire to emulate the

15. Prof. Sarkar (Shivaji, p. 242, Foot-note) is inclined to think that the description in the English Factory Records that "*Poona Chackne*" was captured by Diler Khan really stands for the conquest of Poona and not that of Chakan, judging by the language used.

16. Chitnis calls the fort by the name of Konargad.

17. Chitnis gives the officer's name as Ramaji Nalage.

18. According to some chronicles the gallant officer led one thousand men only. Prof. Sarkar (Shivaji, page 243, foot-note) would place this event after the battle of Salheri.

prowess of their comrades, continued the unequal contest, but at last broke and fled.

While Diler Khan was thus occupied, Bahadur Khan, the governor of Guzerat, was directed to take charge of Mohabat Khan's division. He advanced and laid siege to Salheri. This position was considered to be of high strategic value and Shivaji determined to exhaust every mode of resistance in defending the fort. A shortage of food supplies was reported by the garrison and Shivaji had to exercise all his ingenuity in making good the deficiency. For the siege lines lay all round Salheri and it was no easy task to convey the necessary provisions to their proper destination. Fully resolved, however, that the garrison should not be starved into surrender, Shivaji mustered a large army and drew nearer to Salheri as if for battle. Diler Khan, then under the orders of Bahadur Khan, was not slow to accept the invitation. Diverting the greater part of his army from the siege, he came readily to give battle. But Shivaji had merely practised upon the simplicity of the Mogul general, for no sooner were the siege lines relaxed in consequence of the lure of battle, than the baggage and ammunition trains dashed into the fort of Salheri from the north. Two thousand of Shivaji's horse sent to raid Diler Khan's camp were, however, charged by the Mogul commander and cut to pieces. The situation had become grave. Moropant was ordered from the Konkan with his personal corps to march against Diler Khan and Prataprao had to speed with his flying columns to relieve Salheri. Thus a force of nearly 20,000 horses was flung against the Moguls. The Mogul commander anticipating this movement, deputed Ikhlas Khan with a great part of his forces to oppose their approach. Prataprao saw the advancing standards of Ikhlas Khan, ordered a halt and prepared for battle. The Moguls charged. Prataprao remained steadily on the defensive. The battle having lasted some time, the Maratha general sounded a retreat. The Marathas dispersing like the wind, the Moguls broke order and joined eagerly in the pursuit. Upon this Prataprao suddenly turned round in flight, drew up his men in order and charged straight at the disarrayed ranks of the pursuing Moguls. Meanwhile Moropant had arrived on the scene with the troops in his command, and uniting his arms with those of Prataprao added to the confusion of the enemy. Ikhlas Khan re-formed his forces with the addition of a few fresh troops and renewed the battle. But again the Moguls had to sustain a Maratha charge more fiery and spirited than before. They wavered, broke and fled. The flight became a reckless rout. Five thousand of their bravest were killed among them twenty-two high-placed officers. Several of the leading commanders were wounded and fell into the hands of the Marathas. Among these were Ikhlas Khan himself and Mukaham Singh, the son of Rao Amar Singh of Chandawat. They were released after some time and returned to Ahmednagar. On Shivaji's side, the loss amounted to

between ten and fifteen hundred slain. Among others they mourned the loss of Surrao Kankde,¹⁹ a hero of many battles, who was killed by a chain-shot. Kankde was one of Shivaji's earliest followers and was commander of a corps of thousand Mavalis. He first earned his laurels at the capture of a Javli and afterwards distinguished himself in the escalade of Rohida fort. Shivaji received the news of his death with great sorrow, exclaiming that in his death he had lost an old, valiant and devoted officer. The total defeat of Ikhlas Khan and the loss of such a numerous army took the edge from Mohabat Khan's offensive. He had no heart to persevere in the campaign with the remnant of his army. Bahadur Khan raised the siege of Salheri and retreated straight to Aurangabad. The Marathas hung on his rear almost to the gates of that town.

This was the battle of Salheri, 1672. The Maratha victory was as complete as it could be. The spoils of victory were great and various. The booty comprised 125 elephants, 700 camels, 6000 horses, innumerable draught animals, and an enormous quantity of treasure, jewellery and war material. Dresses and presents of jewellery were conferred upon Anandrao Bhonsle, Venkoji Datto, Rupaji Bhonsle, Khandoji Jagtap, Mansing More, Visaji Ballal, Moro Rangnath, Mukund Ballal and other distinguished officers, for the great daring and courage they had displayed in this battle. The Mogul officers and commanders wounded and taken prisoners were sent to Raigad with the respect due to their position, and when their wounds were healed they were courteously given leave to depart with the customary presents. Such of the prisoners as chose to throw in their lot with Shivaji were gladly entertained in the Maratha service.²⁰

This was the most considerable victory hitherto gained by Shivaji over the Moguls. It exceeded every other success that had previously crowned Shivaji's arms. It enhanced his prestige at every court. It made a revelation of Maratha chivalry and generalship such as had never been witnessed in the past. The Mogul armies were eloquent in their testimony to the fighting spirit of their opponents. The dread of Shivaji's name pervaded every camp in

19. Sabhasad gives a variation of the name as Suryarao. The Sheddavkar bakhar calls him Surerao.

20. In view of the fact that the charge of cruelty is often thoughtlessly made against Shivaji by his traducers, it is but fair to his memory to state that these observations about his good treatment of prisoners of war are made by no less a historian than Grant Duff himself. Indeed the ethics of war practised by Shivaji in the treatment of the fallen foe and prisoners, of women and children and persons of the priestly class, whatever their religion, and of mosques and other places of worship would put to blush the many examples of military and political outrage and acts of ruthless vandalism which have been recently perpetrated upon the war fields in the west.

South India. Maratha *sepoys* deserted in shoals the Mogul and Adil Shahi governments and came flocking to Shivaji's standards. Shivaji captured the opposite fort of Mulheri and dominated the entire Baglan region. This was a permanent menace to Surat.

Fresh from the scene of this victory Moropant was ordered to march towards Surat with ten thousand horses. As already related Aurangzeb having enrolled the Abyssinians under the protection of the empire had given orders for the construction of a fleet at Surat with a view to making descents upon the Konkan regions under Shivaji and destroying his sea-power. The imperial fleet at Surat was now believed to have well approached towards completion and Moropant's instructions were to destroy the incipient naval force before it could effect a junction with the chief of Janjira. But in this design Moropant was completely foiled, for the fleet had already set sail for Janjira before Moropant's arrival. He now threatened the approaches of Surat, cut off all supplies and trade communications and demanded a heavy tribute. The governor of the city pretended to agree to this condition and extorted huge sums of money from the leading citizens, a part of which he paid over to Moropant as tribute and put all the rest into his own private coffers.²¹

Shivaji now resolved upon reducing the territory surrounding Surat so as to bring it under his own dominion that he might be in a position to command the approaches to that town and place it entirely under his control. With this view he invaded the territories of two petty princes reigning at Jawhar and Ramnagar in the northern Konkan. On the last two occasions when Shivaji invaded Surat he had marched through their territories having purposely taken this circuitous mountain route to evade the attention of the Mogul commanders and divert them from his real objective, which was the wealthy town of Surat. The services of these Rajas in their dominions were handsomely acknowledged on the return of the victorious armies. The state of Jawhar had, during the late struggle, sometimes been on the side of the Moguls, sometimes of Shivaji. Moropant entered Jawhar at the head of a large force and captured it. He then advanced to Ramnagar. When welcomed to the fort of Ramnagar by the local prince, Shivaji declared that the fort must now remain permanently with himself, for this stronghold was the key to unlock the banking house of Surat and it was fair to keep the keys of his safe with himself.²²

21. According to Prof. Sarkar, the governor pocketed all the money subscribed by the citizens for a defence force and attempted to extort further sums for a ransom, which the citizens refused to pay.

22. The Jedhe Chronology (p. 190) states that the Raja of Ramnagar fled to Damaun. The Raja Vikram Singh of Jawhar fled to join the Moguls at Nasik, which place was attacked by

The Raja had no alternative but to acquiesce in this demand. The territory of this prince comprised a few mountain forts, the outlying territory on the sea-coast, forming the district of Damaun, being under the Portuguese. The latter were accustomed to pay an annual tribute to the Raja, to secure their immunity from his incursions. Shivaji having occupied these mountain forts turned upon the Portuguese power at Damaun. The Portuguese were seized with panic. The fortress ramparts had just been completed, but the cannon had yet to be mounted. With difficulty the garrison erected a few guns on the bastions and sent an officer to inquire what errand Shivaji's men had come upon. They made answer, as they had been previously tutored, that they had come to enforce and confirm the annual tribute to the lord of Ramnagar. The Portuguese willingly consented, glad that the storm had passed without further damage.

At Aurangabad there was a fresh transfer of command. Incensed with the defeat of Mohabat Khan and the impairment of the Mogul forces, the emperor recalled both Mohabat Khan and Prince Muazzim and appointed Khan Jehan Bahadur (Bahadur Khan) subhedar of Guzerat to take charge of the Deccan subha with an army of 70,000 strong and to operate against Shivaji. When this governor came upon the scene of his activities he realized that the force at his disposal was inadequate for a direct offensive against the Marathas and determined to have recourse to Fabian tactics, warding off the Maratha incursions and protecting the peaceful inhabitants of the Mogul dominions from these repeated attacks. This resolution made, he planted batteries upon the mountain defiles and secured the ghat passages through which the Maratha armies used to pour down on the fruitful plains below. The policy was not approved of by Diler Khan, elated as he was with his cheap victory at Chakan and being on that account in the good graces of the emperor. He was eager for an aggressive campaign. He advised Khan Jehan that there was no advantage in stationing his men at the ghats, but that the squadrons must be hurled against Shivaji's force, one after another. But this argument had no effect upon the new viceroy and he persisted in his own method of warfare. The result was that the extensive invasions upon Khandesh and other northern parts were indeed stopped, but the Maratha armies divided into small parties kept hovering about the territories of Ahmednagar and Aurangabad being prepared to strike a blow as occasion served. The governor went after them in various directions but with little success and at last encamped for the rainy season at Pedgaum on the Bhima,

Moropant Peshwa six years later, 1678, when Vikram Shaha was defeated and killed. (Jedhe Chronology pp. 190-194).

where he erected a mud-fort for the defence of his camp and gave it the name of Bahadur-gad.²³

While the Khan was thus passing the time in a state of inaction, Shivaji undertook a campaign further afield. His envoy at the court of Golconda informed him of a plan adopted by that durbar to embark on war operations on a considerable scale against the French who had recently created trouble within the Kutub Shahi frontiers.²⁴ True to his usual plans in such operations, Shivaji observed great secrecy as to his objective, when starting upon this new campaign from Raigad with ten thousand horses. For aught that his followers knew, Shivaji might have meant to swoop down upon Aurangabad, or Ahmednagar or Bijapur. With extraordinary celerity and advancing by forced marches, Shivaji made a sudden diversion into the Golconda territory and presented himself all at once before the gates of Hyderabad (Bhaganagar). The city was seized with panic. Shivaji threatened to use fire and sword unless the officers and leading citizens paid a tribute of twenty lakhs of pagodas. They submitted to these terms, levied what sums they could upon the citizens and delivered their town from the horrors of an invasion. Content with what he received, Shivaji withdrew from the town, without further molestation to any of the Kutub Shahi possessions, and with the same rapidity as before brought home his victorious squadrons to Raigad.²⁵

While Shivaji was intent upon this expedition, the united navies of the Moguls and the Abyssinians had made a descent upon the Konkan coast, with much destruction to the towns and villages. The Maratha batteries at Danda-Rajpuri were stormed and destroyed, and the officer in charge, Ragho Ballal Korde, though he resisted bravely, was defeated and slain.²⁶

The Abyssinian attack was made during the Holi carnival and the garrison soldiers were caught napping. Sidi Khairiyat made a demonstration on the landward side and while the Maratha soldiers rushed in full force in

23. *Vide* Prof. Sarkar (Shivaji pp. 248-54) for a detailed account of these minor operations. A Maratha light horse column 750 strong charged an imperial force of 10,000 at Bakapur on the barriers of Berar and was repelled by the gallant Bundela general Subhakarn. Dr. Fryer (I, 339-340) describes an unsuccessful attempt on the side of Shivaji to capture Shivneri. Apparently this fort (Jedhe p. 189) was besieged, perhaps captured, by Shivaji in 1670, and subsequently lost.

24. M. De La Haye, the French governor, seized St. Thome and drove out the Golconda garrison. Upon this the Kutub Shahi sultan prepared his army and sent it forth to recover St. Thome.

25. The entry at page 190 in Jedhe's Chronology has reference to this event.

26. *Vide* Khafi Khan, (Elliot VII, 290-92).

that direction the sea-ramparts of the stronghold were carried by Yakut Khan, with a fleet of forty war-ships. There was great slaughter. The powder magazine caught fire and blew up with a number of men, including a dozen or so of the Abyssinians. It is said that when the magazine blew up, Shivaji, who was forty miles away, started from sleep, and said some misfortune must have occurred to Danda-Rajpuri. He sent his men forthwith to ascertain what had happened. In the neighbourhood of this sea-port were six or seven forts belonging to Shivaji. Yakut attacked them and six of them surrendered after two or three days' resistance. But the *quilledar* of one fort held out for a week in the hope of relief from Shivaji. He was at last obliged to surrender. Sidi Yakut granted quarter to the garrison and seven hundred of them came out. With true Abyssinian treachery, he violated his promise, made the children and handsome women slaves and forcibly converted them so Islam. The old and ugly women he set free, but the men he put to the sword. In this way he fulfilled his promise to the garrison to let them go without injury. He boasted that of exploit and wrote about it in a grandiloquent vein to the Mogul commanders. The latter made themselves parties to his perfidy and atrocities by increasing his mansab and sending him presents of robes of honour. On Shivaji's return from Golconda he was able to take ample vengeance.²⁷

The Mogul and Abyssinian admirals about this time arranged to get into Bombay harbour and make a descent upon Coorla, then under Shivaji, and applied to the British governor of Bombay, Mr. Aungier, for permission to disembark their troops at Bombay. This permission was not granted. Nevertheless they made their entry into Bombay harbour by force after devastating some of Shivaji's villages and made overtures to the Bombay government for joint action against the Maratha king. Shivaji's representative at Bombay having got wind of these proceedings threatened the British authorities with an invasion of the island town by the Marathas the moment they threw in their lot with the Abyssinians. In the face of these threats Aungier considered it a wise policy to maintain strict neutrality and sent the Abyssinians about their business.

There was war at this time between England and Holland (1672). A Dutch fleet of twenty-two war-ships under Commodore Reickloff Van Goen had just arrived, sailing up the Malabar coast, with a view to attack and capture Bombay. The Commodore applied to Shivaji for aid against the Bombay government with a land force of three thousand promising in return

27. *Vide* Khafi Khan (Elliot VII p. 292). The narrative of the event is taken from Khafi Khan. Surely after this admission of a Mogul mansabar's perfidy and inhuman atrocities by a Mogul historian, the charges of perfidy and cruelty against Shivaji cannot be easily sustained.

to co-operate with him with his sea-forces against Janjira. The Dutch admiral waited for a reply, but Shivaji was engaged in a wider project of his own and had no leisure to attend to these proposals. The Dutch fleet is said to have returned, not finding it easy to commence their operations without that active co-operation which they had so confidently counted upon.
