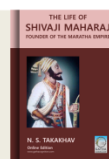




THE LIFE OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

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Chapter 28

The English and the Abyssinians

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Shivaji had sacked Rajapur in 1661, Surat for the first time in 1664, Karwar in 1665, Surat again in 1670, and Hubli in 1673. At all these places the British East India Company maintained factories, which came in for a share of the general misfortune, on account of the victor's plunder or enforced contributions. The factory at Rajapur was abolished, soon after the passing of that port under Shivaji. In 1668, the Company's representatives at Surat established a factory at Bombay island¹ and, making it their headquarters, opened trade relations on a larger scale, with the country around them.

Adjoining Bombay harbour is Salsette, which was then under the Portuguese flag. The Portuguese residents of those parts could not easily reconcile themselves to the loss of Bombay and began to hate the English merchants. They refused permission to the English to have any kind of trade relations with their subjects in that neighbourhood. The English could

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GATHA COGNITION[®]

1. The island of Bombay had been conferred by the king of Portugal upon King Charles II of England, in 1661, as a part of the dowry of his daughter Katherine at her marriage with the Stuart King. The latter bestowed it upon the East India Company subject to an annual rent of £10. The transfer was made in 1668 to Sir George Oxinden, the Company's president or governor at Surat, who, as we saw, had bravely defended the Surat factory at Shivaji's first invasion in 1664.

procure no food or other supplies from Salsette and had to depend for food provisions on other provinces. With the exception of Salsette, the boundaries of Bombay marched with those of Shivaji's dominions. It was natural under the circumstances for the company to maintain a friendly attitude towards the Maratha monarch. Nor had Shivaji any reason to look askance at the Company's power. He had a good opinion of their enterprising spirit both as regards commerce and navigation. Their commerce, Shivaji knew, was to the advantage of his countrymen. Besides, in his frequent wars with the chiefs of Janjira, he expected to benefit by their naval assistance. Their navy was powerful and their ships were large and strong. They might provide him with war-ships of superior strength. They might send him supplies of muskets, artillery and ammunition. Such were not his calculations, nor were they unfounded in fact. Then there was always a prospect of the Abyssinians in concert with the Mogul power forcing their way into the British territory and delivering their attacks upon the contiguous district of Coorla which was under the Maratha flag. Had Shivaji so resolved, it would not have been beyond his means to expel the British merchants and plant his standard in their harbor-town; and it is only reasonable to believe that he did not consider it expedient to give needless provocation to the merchant-adventurers, or to place any obstacle in the way of their thriving trade with his subjects. Shivaji's higher ambition, no doubt, included within its scope the complete subjugation of the western coast of the peninsula. But he knew that the realization of this plan depended essentially on the raising of a capable naval contingent, and he could not afford to treat with discourtesy those mercantile powers, whom he looked upon as the most competent to contribute to his naval resources. From the same motive he acted in a conciliatory spirit towards the Dutch and the French. With the Portuguese too his original attitude was friendly. But the growth of fanaticism among these representatives of European commerce and the religious persecution of their Hindu subjects which they embarked upon, alienated his sympathy, and in the end he did not even attempt to disguise his enmity towards them. For a long time, however, the Portuguese obtained a respite from his hostilities by their regularity in carrying out the treaty obligations they had incurred with Shivaji and the punctual delivery into his kingdom of the stipulated quantities of arms and ammunition from year to year. Had Shivaji lived a few years longer, he would probably have delivered his country from the oppressive yoke of the Portuguese power.

While the headquarters of the British Company were at Surat, under the aegis of the Mogul government, there was little expectation of Shivaji's being able to derive any active assistance from the English. In consequence he had not scrupled to pillage their factories along with the rest of the enemy

possessions. But when at a later period, as mentioned above, the British transferred their principal settlement on the west coast to Bombay, the relations between the two powers became somewhat more intimate. To contribute to this result, the appointment of Mr. Aungier to the governorship of the western presidency came as an auspicious omen.² He was a clever and farseeing statesman and, coming at once to the conclusion that a friendly alliance with the Maratha ruler was a condition for ensuring, the stability of British trade and authority in these parts, he immediately set to work to bring about this desirable end. On the other hand the Janjira chief was casting about for British alliance, with a view to turning Bombay into a base for his intended naval operations, from which to make his attacks upon Coorla and other territories under Shivaji. He acknowledged the hegemony of the great Mogul and was indeed the chief admiral of the Mogul power. Relying on the protection of that government he had made repeated attempts to force his way into Bombay, - attempts that had only failed on account of the fortitude and adroitness of Aungier. The Mogul governor of Surat made repeated requests to Aungier to admit the Abyssinians to Bombay, but the latter persisted in his refusal, pleading the fear of reprisals from Shivaji in excuse. This unbending neutrality on the part of Aungier won the highest respect from Shivaji.³

When Shivaji commenced fortification works in his territories contiguous to the Portuguese territory of Bassein and prepared for a decisive struggle against the Sidi, Aungier fearing that the English in their turn might be molested by him, sent an embassy⁴ under Lieutenant Ustick to arrange a treaty with Shivaji. But this envoy preferred a demand for the re-imbusement

2. Sir George Oxenden was governor of the factory at Surat from 1663 to 1669, Gerald Aungier was governor from 1669 to 1677, at Surat and Bombay. Aungier came down from Surat to Bombay in 1671, and returned to Surat about 1675. During the intervening period he was mostly in Bombay. The Sidi invasions and the embassies to Shivaji's court belong to this period. However the factory at Bombay was generally in charge of a deputy governor, while the governor himself resided at Surat, (Dr. Fryer.) This was reversed in the regime of Sir Josia Child, when Bombay became the British head-quarters of Western India, about 1683.

3. The Sidi's raids began about 1672.

4. Shivaji made a demand for ammunition, which was refused; upon which the king closed the Konkan forts so that the Company's boats could get no fuel. Ustick was sent to put Shivaji under hopes, but not to commit the Company to an immediate agreement to supply ammunition and to negotiate for an indemnity for the Company's losses in the sack of Rajapur. Lt. Ustick was also to obtain a firma for freedom of trade in the Maratha territory, paying a uniform two per cent customs duty. The president had written from Surat that no definite agreement should be made to supply ammunition or help against the Sidi. But Shivaji should be kept in suspense with promises, which were not to be fulfilled. (Factory Records, Surat 87, quoted by Prof. Sarkar, Shivaji pp. 439, 441).

of the English losses at Rajapur, to the amount of thirty-two thousand pagodas, as one of the articles of the proposed treaty, and as Shivaji would not yield on this point, the scheme fell through on that occasion. The following year (1673) Aungier sent one Mr. Nichols⁵ as his ambassador, and he opened communication through Prince Sambhaji, for repayment of losses at Rajapur and Hubli, but again with no better result. Shivaji undertook to reimburse the Company's losses at Rajapur, but refused to admit that the Company had suffered any such loss at Hubli as they now professed. In order to assure the envoy on this point, Shivaji produced the inventories of the booty obtained at Hubli. This difference of accounts between the two powers as regards the Company's losses at Hubli came in the way of a permanent treaty.⁶ There was also another difficulty. Shivaji demanded a supply of cannon from the English, which, from their fear lest it might give offence to the Moguls or the Abyssinians, they refused to provide.

Sometime later the Sidi of Janjira regardless of any permission of the Bombay government appeared with his fleet in Bombay harbour and commenced a series of naval raids upon Shivaji's territory. But Aungier proved himself equal to the occasion, forbade the Sidi to turn the harbour into a base of hostile operations, and expelled his fleets from the port. Shivaji learnt about the bold step taken by the governor against the Sidi and congratulating him upon it proposed that a new embassy be sent to his court to remove the existing misunderstanding and arrange a permanent treaty. But just at this time the Mogul governor of Surat sent repeated demands to Aungier, that permission be granted to the Sidi so that his fleets might spend the coming monsoons in the safe shelter of Bombay harbour. This was very embarrassing to Aungier, as noncompliance with these orders meant the risk of the English factory being stopped at Surat. On the other hand, Shivaji getting wind of these orders informed the governor that were he to grant any such facilities to the Sidi to turn Bombay harbour into a centre for the Abyssinian raids to be directed against the Maratha possessions, he would undoubtedly fall in with the scheme of the Dutch Company who had projected an attack upon Bombay and had sent their emissaries inviting Maratha co-operation with a force of ten thousand to conquer the island.⁷ The Sidi had

5. This envoy was Capt. Nichols (Thomas Niccolls) who was appointed the first English judge in Bombay by Aungier. In 1677 he was sent as an ambassador with a letter from King Charles II to Goa. (R. & O. Strachey: "Keigwins's Rebellion, pages 14 and 15).

6. The Company assessed its losses at Hubli at 7894 pagodas, but Shivaji produced his inventories and assessed their losses at less than 200 pagodas. There must have been under-assessment by Annaji Datto and over-assessment by the British factors.

7. This was between 1672-74, when Holland and England were at war. The Dutch commodore Reickloss Van Goen opened negotiations with Shivaji requesting his co-

meanwhile already brought up his fleet and anchored it in Bombay roads. Aungier required them to leave the precincts of the Company's possessions. But the Sidi defied these orders and sent up some of his vessels into the creeks to make good their landing north of Sino, expelling the inhabitants and occupying temporary cantonments for the rains. Aungier's soldiers, however, drove them away. Upon this the Sidi embarked five hundred armed men upon boats, who approaching the harbour at Mazagon attempted to land. But they were received by Aungier with such a cannonade that they had to run away in a panic. By this time news was received that the Dutch squadron which was advancing northwards upon Bombay had been scattered by adverse winds in the neighbourhood of Vengurla, a part of it being carried down towards Ceylon, a part towards Surat, and the rest adrift towards the Persian Gulf. This news filled the drooping hearts of the little garrison at Bombay with fresh courage, with the result that they were induced to make light of Shivaji's threats. Though the Sidi had failed to make good a landing in the harbour, his fleets still occupied their anchorage off Bombay. His insistence upon his unjust demands finally forced the Bombay government to come to a compromise, it being stipulated that the Sidi might be permitted to disembark a land-force of not more than three hundred to remain under British surveillance, provided they undertook not to make any incursions into Shivaji's territories on the landward side of the harbour, in which case they would be liable to summary expulsion and prohibited from, entering again.

Shivaji's envoy,⁸ who came down to Bombay for the express purpose of arranging a treaty with the Bombay government, communicated to his master the details of the compromise arrived at between the Sidi and the Company. Shivaji was satisfied with the conduct of the Bombay government and wrote to them to send their ambassador to Raigad for the purpose of concluding the long-pending treaty. Upon this Aungier sent an envoy⁹ with a proper escort to Raigad, but upon his arrival in sight of that fort, he was

operation against the English at Bombay and promising help to recover Danda. Rajpuri from the Sidi. Shivaji, however, had more faith in his English friends and distrusted the Dutch proposal.

8. Bhimaji Pandit, who along with the Company's interpreter, Narayan Shenvi, had been sent from Raigad to Bombay to settle the indemnity dispute, which was finally adjusted at 10,025 pagodas. This amount was agreed to by the Surat Council, but Shivaji being soon engaged in the Kolhapur and Panhala campaigns, the treaty had to be held over. (Factory Records, Surat, 106).
9. Mr. Henry Oxenden, afterwards deputy governor of Bombay, 1677 to 1679. The authorities for the account of this embassy of Oxenden (or Oxinden) are "Oxinden's Narrative of the Negotiations with Shivaji, 13th May to 13th June 1674" quoted in Bruce's Annals; and Dr. John Fryer's "East India and Persia-Nine Years' Travels, 1672-1681".

refused permission to continue his journey, as Shivaji was then away from Raigad. Shivaji was at this time absorbed in the preparations about his coronation, and had just then proceeded to Pratapgad to make his devotions at the shrine of his tutelary deity upon that fort, as a preliminary to the imposing ceremonial that was to follow.¹⁰ The British ambassador was informed by the fort authorities that he would obtain permission to enter Raigad upon Shivaji's return to that place, and he had to encamp meanwhile at the village of Pachada¹¹ under the shadow of the fort. The ambassador wrote to the British interpreter, Narayanji Pandit,¹² about the object of his embassy, and on the latter coming to interview him on the subject he showed him his credentials from Aungier and the nazar with which he had provided himself for presentation to Shivaji and the ministers of his court. Narayanji was satisfied with all he saw and undertook to bring about an interview with Shivaji on his return from Pratapgad. The ambassador showed Narayanji the draft articles of the treaty to be submitted to Shivaji and asked him to express his opinion upon them. One of the draft articles was to the effect that Shivaji should make his peace with the Sidi. Upon this Narayanji Pandit advised the envoy to omit this article altogether, as Shivaji could never agree to it, the destruction of the Abyssinian power and the reduction of their stronghold of Janjira not being a scheme of yesterday, but the dream of Shivaji's life, pursued with good success or bad success since the year 1648. Shivaji had made a heavy sacrifice in this enterprise, but the peace and safety of the Konkan seaboard being at stake, he was determined to prosecute the war at all costs, sparing neither men nor money, till the extermination of the Abyssinian power. "Even now" said Narayanji, "Shivaji has laid siege to Janjira; supplies of arms and ammunition, men and money are flowing daily to the front; and under these circumstances, this demand of yours will scarcely be palatable to Shivaji." This demand was, therefore, waived by the envoy, who next began to argue that Shivaji must throw open the trade routes throughout his dominions, the Baleghat route which had been closed to trade should again be opened, and that facilities for transport would encourage the merchants to bring their goods to port, which in the long run would be of advantage both to Shivaji and to the Company.

10. Dr. Fryer gives a detailed account of this embassy and incidentally of the coronation. He says that Shivaji took an offering weighing one and a quarter maund in gold to be presented to the goddess at Pratapgad.

11. The name of the village is given as Pucharra by Fryer. It is also spelled Pachad or Pachada and Panchad or Panchada. It was at this village that Jijabai died soon after the coronation.

12. This Pandit acted as interpreter to Mr. Oxenden, and generally as an interpreter to the English at Bombay. He is mentioned as Naran Sinai or Narran Sunay (Shenvi or Saraswat Brahman) in Bombay Records (Forrest, Home Papers 1, 80, 99), as an interpreter employed in other negotiations with Shivaji.

“Shivaji,” said the envoy, “having spent his life in the alarms of war, does not perhaps comprehend these matters of peace; but it is the duty of men like you to explain these things to him To this Narayanji replied that all this would be done in good season, now that the war with Bijapur seemed fairly to be on the way to come to an end. That government had now come to the end of its resources and had often sent envoys to sue for peace. This peace was bound to come in two or three months at most, when prosperity would again reign in the land and merchants would have all the freedom of trade and security of property. “When Shivaji is crowned king,” continued Narayanji, “be sure that he will pursue the highest ideals of kingship, the protection of the subjects and the promotion of industry and trade. While his mind has been diverted into the constant wars with the Moguls and with Bijapur, he has not had the leisure and peace of mind required to attend to these things.” At the end of this interview, the British envoy bestowed a diamond ring on the Pandit, with a similar present to his eldest son, and requested him to bring about a meeting with Shivaji as early as possible.

On the return of Shivaji to Raigad permission was granted to the envoy to come up the fort and a *bungalow* was assigned to him for his residence. On the strong representations of Narayanji Pandit on behalf of the British envoy, a day was fixed for an audience four days from that date. At this audience, the envoy explained the draft articles to the king, and he signified his approval of them, promising that the English merchants were perfectly at liberty to trade in any part of his dominions, and that there was no fear of any harm either to their persons or their property. The ambassador replied that this was the very reason why he had been deputed to Shivaji’s court as an envoy by the president-in-council of the Company on this side of India and that the privileges requested by the Company were exactly the same they had already obtained from the political authorities in Persia and the sea-port towns of India. Shivaji again replied in a reassuring manner and had the draft articles submitted to the Peshwa Moropant for examination and report. With this the special audience came to an end.

The ambassador now learnt he could not expect final orders on the proposed treaty until after the conclusion of the coronation festivities. He consulted Narayanji Pandit as to what should be done about the nazar presentations that were to be made to the ministers of the court. The latter replied that the nazar to Moropant should be taken over to the minister’s residence by the ambassador in person, as to the rest there would be no objection to send them by his orderlies. However he advised that the presents proposed to be sent were scarcely adequate for the position occupied by the ministers and that fresh ones should be ordered from Bombay to make a proper impression on the court, especially if he desired a full and speedy

success in his mission. The ambassador on his part thought it also more prudent to act handsomely by Shivaji's officers, even at some cost to his government, rather than be detained, for three or four months on the fort after the commencement of the monsoons.

It is said that the draft treaty contained twenty articles, of which eighteen were agreed to by Shivaji. These articles provided, among other things, that Shivaji should pay ten thousand pagodas as damages to the Company for the losses they had sustained during the sack of Rajapur; that the Company be permitted to open factories at Rajapur, Dabhol, Cheul and Kalyan; that the Company should have perfect freedom of trade throughout the dominions of Shivaji; that they should have complete freedom to fix their own rates, without any artificial maxima or minima; and that the customs duty on British imports into Shivaji's state be fixed at two and a half per cent, *ad valorem*. Among the articles objected to one was to the effect that British money should be declared legal tender in Shivaji's dominions. This was rejected, the king pointing out that any coinage was legal tender which the people accepted, that there was no legal prohibition of any kind, and that on the other hand it would be an act of tyranny to compel his people to accept any description of money-tokens against their will, when they thought it to be to their disadvantage. An assurance was given to the envoy that if the British coinage was of the same weight and fineness as the Mogul, there would be no difficulty for it to gain currency in the Maratha kingdom.¹³ The other article objected to by Shivaji was in connection with the restitution of British vessels wrecked by storm or otherwise and carried adrift to the Konkan coast, and the flotsam and jetsam of their cargoes. The Company claimed that these be restored to them hereafter by Shivaji's government. To this Shivaji replied that this was not the *lex loci* so far as the Konkan coast was concerned. All wreckages and derelicts of drifting cargoes belonged by immemorial usage to the ruling sovereign, and he did not see his way to relinquish this time-honoured prerogative of royalty; for were he to abate his privilege ever so little in favour of the English, their rivals, the French and others, would insist on the same indulgence being extended towards them.¹⁴ Such being the firm resolution of Shivaji, the ambassador could say nothing in support of the claim. However Narayanji Pandit assured him that there would be little difficulty to have this privilege granted, since the Mogul and Bijapur

13. Shivaji may have known that the coinage in use at Bombay was debased and fluctuated in value, which was a partial cause of the two mutinies which took place on the island between 1674 and 1683.

14. Shivaji declared that so far as the crews of the stranded ships were concerned, he undertook to assist and protect them.

governments had extended this favour to them, and a way could be found to represent to Shivaji that he too should follow where the other powers had led the way.

After a good deal of discussion, all the articles were in the end agreed to by Shivaji,¹⁵ and soon after the Coronation, the treaty was sealed and signed by Shivaji and the eight ministers of the *Ashtapradhan* council. As to the Company's claim to be indemnified to the extent of ten thousand pagodas on account of the spoliation of their factory at Rajapur, a compromise was finally arranged that for three years in succession the Company should purchase from Shivaji goods to the extent of five thousand pagodas, paying only half the cash price. This would clear seven thousand five hundred pagodas at the end of the term of three years and for the remaining two thousand five hundred pagodas owing by Shivaji, the British imports at the port of Rajapur, after the Company had opened a factory there, should be allowed to enter duty-free, until the accumulated duty so exempted amounted to two and a half thousand pagodas, which would liquidate the whole claim. When the treaty was thus finally ratified, a copy of the document was handed over to the British envoy by Narayanji Pandit, who expressed to him Shivaji's parting words to the effect that he had ratified this friendly treaty from the firm conviction that it was to the interest and prosperity of his subjects, that the British should establish their settlements in their neighbourhood and continue their thriving trade within his kingdom, and that he strongly hoped that this mutual friendliness would endure.

During the coronation festivities this ambassador attended the durbar as the representative of the governor of Bombay and on that occasion he presented in the name of his government a diamond ring to Shivaji. He had an opportunity to approach the king as he sat on his throne of state and has given a picturesque account of it.¹⁶ "On the two sides of the throne", writes

15. Grant Duff says that eventually all the articles were agreed to by Shivaji. This view is followed in the text. According to Orme the two disputed articles were not sanctioned. Dr. Fryer states that some days later (i. e. after the coronation) Naranji Pandit informed the ambassador that all the articles except that relating to currency had been signed by Shivaji. The treaty was signed on 12th June 1674.

Mr. Rajwade has published a paper describing the articles of the treaty, in which it is stated that the English made demands for four concessions of which two were granted. The concessions demanded were (1) Free trade in Shivaji's dominions; (2) Freedom from customs duty for English goods; (3) British coinage to pass current in Shivaji's dominions; and (4) Restitution of British wrecks and cargoes. Of these the first two were granted, and the last two were refused. (Rajwade VIII, 29)

16. Slightly paraphrased from Oxenden's Narrative.

Oxenden, “there were gold spears, the points whereof supported many an allegorical device emblematic of temporal power. Those to the right bore two large gold fishes with horrid jaws; those to the left bore representations of horses’ tails; two lofty spears poised upon their sharp points in even balance a pair of weighing scales made out of gold, the fish betokening the mastery of the sea, the horses’ tails, the sovereignty over the land, and the golden scales, unswerving scales of justice.”

Mr. Oxenden, the British ambassador, spent about a month at Raigad. Dr. Fryer, the English traveller, who was then in India, has given, in his *Travels*, Mr. Oxenden’s account of Raigad and the buildings and royal mansions there.¹⁷ Mr. Oxenden’s conduct during the embassy and his enlightened outlook upon affairs created in Shivaji’s mind a very favourable impression about the English. Pursuant to this treaty, the English Company shortly afterwards re-established their factory at Rajapur,¹⁸ but it had a short career, and it is doubtful, therefore, whether the Company was able to recover all the indemnity they had obtained on paper. Three years after the treaty Aungier died at Surat,¹⁹ and his mantle fell upon a successor who possessed neither the talents nor the far-seeing wisdom of that able statesman.²⁰

Of the Sidi’s methods of war-fare against Shivaji, by which he converted Bombay into a base of operations, mention has already been made in more than one place in this Chapter. A constant feature of these, frontier raids on the part of the Sidi was the violent arrest of peaceful inhabitants, the ruthless slaughter of male adults, and the kidnapping of women and children to be sold into slavery. The rapacity of these ruthless raids had reached a climax in 1673. Do what the English might to counteract the Sidi’s excesses,

17. Dr. Fryer records and Mr. Kincaid reproduces the story of the native butcher who came up the fort to have a sight of his English patrons, who in one month had eaten more of his meat than all the people of Raigad together consumed in a year.

18. Sir John Child (afterwards deputy governor of Bombay, 1679-81, governor of Surat, 1682-90 and finally general with control over all the Company’s affairs in India) was appointed chief of the newly revived factory of Rajapur. The factors did not fare well at the hands of Annaji Datto, the governor of the Konkan. But the king gave them many reassurances (Rajapur Letter, 20th April, 1675, Factory Records, Surat, 88). Another embassy was sent and the Company threatened to close the factory. Offers were made to pay the indemnity in batty, fodder, or betel-nuts. A part only was thus paid, after the Khanderi-Underi war.

19. Grant Duff says he died at Bombay in 1676; R. & O. Strachey in “*Keigwin’s Rebellion*” give the date of his death as 30th June 1677. He died at Surat.

20. Aungier’s successors were Thomas Rolt at Surat and Pettit and Oxenden (British envoy at Shivaji’s coronation) at Bombay. There were many intrigues at Bombay owing to the ambition of John Child, who succeeded Oxenden in 1672.

they had in the end to look helplessly on at the perpetration of these iniquities. They feared the Moguls who had taken the Abyssinians under their wings. They dared not openly make war upon these troublesome proteges of the imperial power. The Bombay government once wrote to the directors of the Company for permission to effect the conquest of Janjira, open a factory, and transfer their head-quarters to that strong-hold. But permission was refused. The Bombay government feared the Sidi's raids might one day bring them into conflict with Shivaji. Steering their course evenly between Shivaji and Aurangzeb, they maintained for the present an uncertain neutrality.

We have already spoken of Shivaji's great preparations for a renewed war with the Sidi. Danda-Rajpuri erstwhile captured by the Sidi with the Mogul's aid was attacked by land and sea and the district around it reduced. From Janjira to Goa the Konkan sea-board was cleared of the Abyssinian power. The Sidi's fleets were pursued from the Konkan waters north-ward up to the port of Surat. Janjira itself was subjected to a rigorous investment both by land and sea in 1675. But though the assaults were renewed time after time, the stronghold defied all the efforts of the besiegers, and in the end, Shivaji had to raise the siege and come away. The Sidi had suffered considerable loss, but he again retrieved his fortunes under the protection of his Mogul master.

The departure of Shivaji upon his campaign in the Karmatic presented an opportunity to the Sidi chief, Sambal by name, for a renewal of his naval raids upon the Konkan coast, with the concurrence and co-operation of the Mogul navy. Falling suddenly upon Jayatapur, he set it on fire; but when the garrison turned upon him and presented a resolute front, he had to stop his advance up the creek. Shivaji's warships then came in pursuit. He eluded them, betook himself again into Bombay waters, and effecting a landing at Mazagon, encamped on British territory.²¹ Here a treacherous Brahman from Coorla came to meet Sidi Kassim and offered, if ably supported, to betray some respectable Brahmans of that district into his power. The Sidi naturally lent himself to this plot, and, entrusting him with a few men in a boat, sent them forth upon the secret raid, taking care that the Company's government should remain ignorant of the whole proceeding. The traitor succeeded in betraying and seizing four fellow-Brahmans, who were brought down and kept close prisoners by the Sidi upon his warships. When Shivaji's subhedar at Cheul came to learn of these proceedings he addressed a peremptory letter

21. There was at this stage a quarrel between the two Sidi chiefs, sambal and kassim. The Moguls had transferred, the admiralship to the latter. The former refused to surrender his authority, but was at length compelled to do so, and then transferred his services to Shivaji (Orme's Fragments).

to the Bombay government for the immediate surrender of the four Brahmans, who, he asserted were unjustly detained in custody within the sphere of their jurisdiction, and threatened, in case of their failure to comply with this requisition, to lay an embargo upon all transport of food, fodder and fuel supplies to their port, at the same time gravely hinting that this would not be the worst. At this ultimatum the Bombay government set on foot an inquiry into the subject-matter of his grievance. The Sidi at first pretended ignorance of the whole event, but as the Bombay government became more insistent, he tried to excuse himself, but was at length obliged to liberate the prisoners he had kidnapped. Eleven members of the crew concerned in the abduction of the Brahmans were put under arrest by the British authorities, of whom three were led to execution, and the rest deported to St. Helena.²²

On Shivaji's return from the Karnatic, Moropant and the other commanders represented to him the misdeeds of Sidi Kassim and the liberties taken with the Brahman residents of Shivaji's dominions and called loudly for summary chastisement of the authors of this iniquity. They pointed out that the Janjira fleets lay skulking in Bombay harbour, the authorities of which, in awe of the Mogul government, permitted them to spend the autumn lying off Mazagon. The ministers suggested an expedition in full force to set the Sidi's fleets on fire. Shivaji entered heartily into the proposal and about the month of July sent his naval commanders, Darya Sarang and Daulat Khan, with a contingent of four thousand men to Panvel to cross over into Bombay harbour. But at Panvel they found no boats or facilities for transport, and the rainy season being at its height, they could procure no boats from other quarters to take them over. Under these circumstances they had to give up the original plan of suddenly appearing before Mazagon. However Daulat Khan not liking to be thus frustrated in his purpose made a forced march to Kalyan and applied to the Portuguese government for a free passage through their district of Thana. His object, it may be presumed, was to cross over from the Thana district by way of Mahim creek into Bombay island and surprise the Sidi camp and their vessels drawn up on the Mazagon shore, and having collected the local craft, to strike boldly forward against the Abyssinian fleets anchored in the harbour and set them on fire.

The news of the arrival of this force at Panvel caused a flutter of excitement at Bombay. The small defence force of the island was brought up

22. This event took place in 1677, when Mr. John Pettit (who had distinguished himself at Shivaji's first invasion of Surat, 1664) was deputy governor of Bombay. In December 1677 he left Bombay for Persia, where he held the place of the Company's agent. St. Helena had been recaptured from the Dutch and made over to the East India Company in 1673. (Orme's Fragments, and R. & O. Strachey: *Keigwin*)

to garrison the Mazagon shore. On the news of Daulat Khan's presence at Kalyan, the field force was removed to Mahim and a frigate was brought up to defend the creek. But happily for the Bombay government these precautions proved needless, on account of the intervention of the Portuguese government. The latter, affrighted by the near approach of Shivaji's forces, became anxious for the security of Salsette. The Portuguese governor marched up with a select force to Thana and advanced a fleet of forty armed vessels into the creek. Daulat Khan found himself checked at Thana, broke off the meditated march, and with a view to turn to some account his baffled expedition, he diverted his men into the exposed parts of the Portuguese dominions, plundering and laying waste village after village. His troops had scoured the Portuguese coast up to Damaun and Surat, when he received peremptory orders to return to Raigad, which he could not but obey.

Shivaji was naturally roused to indignation by the protection granted to the Sidi by the Bombay government. Their conduct was at variance with the peaceful alliance recently made by Aungier. Under that able officer, the Sidi obtained little countenance at Bombay and this was clearly the policy required of them by the last treaty. But after Aungier's death, fear of the Mogul government had, in the eyes of his successors, outweighed the advantages of neutrality, and acting in collusion, they had harboured the Sidi at Mazagon during the height of the rainy season. Shivaji knew the helpless condition of the Bombay government²³ and how reluctantly they had been compelled to admit the Sidi into their port, and he had no desire to bring matters to a crisis with a power whose commercial operations contributed so vitally to the material prosperity of his subjects. He looked forward to the time when he could enlist the Company's powerful co-operation for the improvement of his naval resources, and in order that they might do this without fear of the Sidi or the Mogul, it seemed necessary that these powers should be first deprived of their naval strongholds, such as Surat and Janjira. On the subject of avoiding giving any cause for irritation to the Company's government, Shivaji's scruples at times bordered on the extremity of tenderness. The following incident illustrates this solicitous attitude. The subhedar of Cheul had some credit accounts against the deputy governor, Mr. Pettit, for goods and stores supplied. There were also similar out standings against one of the English agents at Surat. These officers, under one pretext or another, had in spite of constant demands for liquidation, put off payment. The governor of Cheul, having failed in all his attempts at recovery of the debts, proposed to take violent measures, imagining that his action would be supported by his master, who had failed in his recent attempt to set on fire the Sidi fleets in Bombay

23. Mr. Henry Oxenden had succeeded Pettit in 1678 and remained deputy governor till 1681.

harbour. Having determined on this plan of action, he seized all the British vessels which were at the time engaged in peaceful trade on the rivers and ports within his jurisdiction. Upon this the Bombay Council fitted²⁴ out four warships manned with sixty armed Europeans and sent them to Cheul to release the British vessels. The British force attacked the governor's crews guarding the interned vessels and succeeded in extricating most of them. When the governor complained to Shivaji upon this subject and urged that the Maratha power was insulted and required to be avenged, Shivaji wrote in reply, that he had been rightly served and that he must forthwith restore any British ships or property which might still be detained by him. And these orders had to be obeyed.

Once again at the end of 1678 Shivaji fitted out a strong naval force under Daulat Khan for the siege of Janjira and opened a terrible cannonade from the sea-ward side. The Abyssinian chief, Sidi Kassim, was then encamped at Bombay. His followers were discontented on account of their pay being in arrears. The Sidi was at the end of his resources. His demands on the treasury at Surat had not yet been honoured. He could not lead his discontented marines to the relief of his capital. But such was the strength of its natural defences, that Daulat Khan was not able to make any impression on the stronghold and was once again compelled to raise the siege and return disappointed.

Shivaji now thought of devising an expedient for checking by one and the same stroke of policy the Sidi and the Mogul in their overt alliance and the Bombay government in their covert collusion with these Mahomedan powers. About twelve miles from Bombay, right opposite to its harbour, are two little islets Khanderi and Underi²⁵ at a distance of two or three miles from one another. These islands were uninhabited and entirely covered with woods, whence the British settlers in Bombay, now and then procured fuel. Nor were they supposed to be of use for any other purpose. Shivaji saw that the possession of these islands would enable him to keep an observant eye upon every vessel entering or leaving Bombay harbour and the movements of any enemy stationed in that neighbourhood. He resolved, therefore, to carry the islands by storm and strengthen them with fortification works, and with this view ordered a body of three hundred soldiers with an equal number of masons and artificers, with the necessary instruments of their crafts, to the islet of Khanderi, and commenced the fortification works with great expedition and despatch. The British government heard of these preparations

24. By this time Henry Oxenden had succeeded Pettit to the deputy governorship.

25. *Kenerey* and *Henery* in Grant Duff, also spelt "Kendry", "Hendry" by other authors.

with dismay; for they knew what these operations betokened to their safety and freedom and the secrecy of their political moves in the future. They, therefore, hastened to change their attitude, at first pleading that the islands were already their own, having been transferred to them by the Portuguese with the island Bombay. The Portuguese on the other hand took their cue from the English and maintained that the islands for many years past were in their possession, that they had not transferred their rights over them to the English, and that they had even meditated forming a settlement there, but the absence of drinking water, notwithstanding their attempts to dig wells, had compelled them to give up that plan. Shivaji paid no attention to these disputes and went on with his fortification works.

But the Bombay authorities did not think it was a moment to sit down with folded hands. They launched three armed ships with forty Europeans on board, with instructions to prevent Shivaji's boats from approaching Khanderi and to order Shivaji's garrisons to evacuate the island. They were met with the reply that the work could not be stopped without Shivaji's orders. The British warships kept hovering round for ten or twelve days, till at last they were forced, on account of a storm, to return to Khanderi. They came reinforced by a frigate, the *Revenge*, carrying sixteen guns. Again they began cruising round the island. A lieutenant on board one of the Company's warships got drunk one day to such an extent that not minding the difficulties, he brought his vessel alongside the island and landed with a few of his sailors. A scuffle ensued between this party and Shivaji's men. The lieutenant with some six of his comrades was killed in the affray and the rest were taken prisoners.²⁶ The ship itself was hauled up and secured by cables to the shore. The other British ships could scarcely come to the rescue of their companions, as a fierce gale was blowing and the sea was running high. Later when the wind fell and the sea had ebbed, they did not feel courageous enough to venture near Khanderi.

Nor were the British warships more successful in patrolling the sea and keeping off the Maratha boats from approaching Khanderi. The light boats of the Marathas continued to dart into the island, under cover of night, with cargoes of provisions and building materials for the fortification works, leaving again as quickly as they had approached it. The British warships were unable to overtake the swift Maratha barques which were so lightly constructed, both as regards their hull and rowing arrangements, that they could move swiftly independent of wind and tide, unlike the sailing craft of the Company. The latter were also handicapped by the smallness of their

26. The lieutenant was named Thorpe. (Page 38, R. & O. Strachey, *Keigwin*).

number and debarred from attempting a resolute²⁷ attack on the Marathas. The British commander applied for reinforcements. These were granted, the Company having hired some vessels for the purpose, so as to augment the English force to eight vessels,²⁸ including a frigate and a fighting contingent of two hundred European soldiers, besides some sailors.

The naval force under Daulat Khan was anchored at Cheul just opposite to Khanderi, whence every now and then emerged his light craft with their cargoes of victuals, darting to and fro and eluding pursuit. Once Daulat Khan did weigh anchor and advance upon Khanderi. But so swiftly did he sail past the British vessels that they had scarcely time to haul up their anchors. While slipping past, Daulat Khan seized a solitary British ship that had strayed away from the main body and carried her away in tow. The fate of this member²⁹ of their force threw the rest of the British vessels into a panic. They put back in headlong haste, all but the *Revenge*. This ship found herself surrounded by the Marathas. But she pretended to surrender. The enemy came to board her. She fired upon him by treachery. The Marathas quailed before her fire, losing, it is said, five of their vessels.³⁰ While this duel was going on in one part of the

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27. The British commander was Captain Keigwin, who was in charge of the *Revenge*. He was captain-lieutenant of the small squadron of cavalry enrolled by Pettit. Before coming to Bombay he had been governor of Saint Helena. He rebelled against Sir John Child in 1683.
28. The reinforcements permitted to the *Revenge* frigate comprised two *grabs* (or *gurabas*) of two masts, strengthened by three *shebars* (or *shibars*), and two *munchuas* (or *machauas*), the last being described by Orme as a “stronger kind of trading vessel.” The crews were strengthened by the European soldiers, that is, the entire garrison of Bombay.
29. This was the *Dover* under Sergeant Maulverer and a certain Mr. Gape who struck their ensign and top-sail out of cowardice when two miles away from Daulat Khan. Mr. Gape was a factor and afterwards a member of the Bombay Council.
30. A spirited account of the stand made by Capt. Keigwin and Capt. Minchin of the *Revenge* is given by R. & O. Strachey at pages 38, 39 of their “Keigwin’s Rebellion.” Keigwin and Minchin, however, made use of treachery towards the Marathas. They hauled down their sails, so as to make the Marathas believe that the *Revenge* had struck in the same manner as Mr. Gape’s vessel. Shivaji’s admiral thinking that the *Revenge* was going to surrender advanced with twenty-four *grab* (*gurabas*) within pistol-shot and prepared his boats to board the English vessel, when the latter unexpectedly opened fire and in a short time repulsed the Marathas. Minchin and Keigwin of course “covered themselves with glory”, but the exploit of a captain striking his sails under pretence of surrendering and then firing upon the enemy as he advanced to accept the surrender would have covered him with another sort of “glory” at the hands of the British admiralty, had the battle taken place in European waters. But in their harangue to their crew the English captains had admonished them against “the disgrace of Christians being taken prisoners by Heathens,” and they perhaps believed that the laws of naval war might also not be observed by Christians towards “Heathens.” And the example of the Portuguese was before them. It is significant that Messrs, R. & O. Strachey have not a word of censure about the stratagem. As English historians have accused Shivaji of fraud and treachery, it is melancholy to observe that in

sea, the opportunity was seized by the Maratha transports elsewhere to carry further reinforcements, both troops and fortification materials and food supplies, to the island. Thereupon Daulat Khan satisfied with the successful execution of his main purpose³¹ put back into Nagotna roads and stood at anchor. The Revenge followed him in pursuit and only desisted when she found herself completely out-distanced. At Nagotna, Daulat Khan played the same game as at Cheul, repeatedly sending his light boats with the needed provisions to Khanderi, without any effectual hindrance on the part of the British squadron cruising about.

The naval skirmishes around Khanderi were at their height, when Shivaji ordered a force of five thousand to march to Kalyan with instructions to make a diversion upon the landward side of Bombay. But the Portuguese authorities as before refused them permission to march upon Bombay through the Thana district. The news of the approach of Shivaji's forces towards their northern barriers again spread consternation at Bombay, where it was feared that, should the Portuguese grant the required passage or should the Marathas be able to obtain the necessary transports to cross over by water, in either case, the island-town would be doomed to undergo all the horrors of an invasion. Nor had they enough troops to spare to make a show of defence on the Mahim barriers as they had effectively done on the former occasion, occupied as all their available forces already were, both naval and military, in operations around Khanderi. Under the circumstances the Bombay government found no other course open to it but to send an envoy to Raigad with proposals for a fresh treaty.

By this time the fortification works upon Khanderi were nearing completion and the batteries newly mounted upon the island-fort had already begun to give a good account of themselves. The British vessels already driven to stand beyond the range of Khanderi guns found themselves suddenly strengthened by a fresh fleet from Surat, which included another frigate, the

the only recorded battle between him and the British authorities, it was the British captains who deceived Shivaji's admiral by an abuse of the elementary laws of naval warfare. What would have Grant Duff and other English historians said, if instead of the English captains using the stratagem, Shivaji's admiral had made use of it against the English? *Vide* Keigwin's own report of the battle, (reading it in the light of Mr. Gape's surrender), as given at pages 38, 39 of R. & O. Strachey: "*Keigwin's Rebellion*" and Appendix III.

31. The Marathas captured five English ships that had run ashore. If too this is added the *grab* surrendered by Mr. Gape, it would mean that Daulat Khan had captured six out of the seven larger vessels that formed the reinforcement of the Revenge, or including that vessel six out of the total English force of eight larger ships. Certainly Daulat Khan had accomplished his main purpose, and Keigwin and Minchin had "covered themselves with glory," *Vide* R. & O. Strachey: "*Keigwin's Rebellion*," page 39.

Hunter carrying sixteen guns and a complement of thirty-six Europeans. This unforeseen change emboldened the British squadron at Khanderi to assume the offensive and posting themselves at the entrance of Nagotna creek they attempted to bar the way of the light cargo-boats of the Maratha navy. But it was all lost labor. For the creek had another outlet on the opposite side, whence the Marathas could pass in and out with impunity. The British captains planned a forced entry into the creek and the destruction by fire of the Maratha fleets lying at anchor. But such an atrocious plan did not commend itself either to the president or council at Surat.³² These level-headed statesmen saw the folly of wantonly embittering the feud with Shivaji, who could easily retaliate upon them for any such excesses with a thoroughgoing precision, celerity and effectiveness. They placed their hopes on the chance of an amicable settlement and looked eagerly forward to the success of their embassy.

The fortification works which were going on apace at Khanderi, the frustration of all British efforts to counter act them, and the sustained neutrality of the Portuguese power were a combination of circumstances that evoked the liveliest terror and consternation in the camp of the Mogul governor at Surat. Hitherto, thought the Mogul governor, Shivaji had been able to carry all before him on land; now it seemed he stood a fair chance to grasp the mastery of the sea, and the Mogul arms were threatened with a double leaguer, by sea and land. Was Surat going to abdicate her commercial pre-eminence in favour of Shivaji? Was he to capture the overseas trade and menace the security of Surat and the other ports? And the Sidi had his own fears for the security of his stronghold of Janjira. It seemed that the sea-girt fortress most after all vail its standards before the naval triumphs of the Maratha power.

Fain would the Sidi have mustered together all the resources of the Abyssinian power to obstruct the triumphs of Shivaji's navy. He was deterred by the mutinous spirit of his mercenary hordes, discontented as they were by their pay having long remained in arrears. He made many requisitions upon the Mogul authorities for financial aid at a juncture so critical in his affairs, but the Moguls returned no decisive answer to his entreaties. It was only when the Moguls saw the advantage Shivaji had achieved by their apathetic disregard of the Sidi's remonstrances and the decisive menace his newly acquired station on the western sea presented to the naval position of the paramount power, that they were awakened to a sense of the gravity of the

32. The deputy governor of Bombay, John Child, was in favour of defiance, but the authorities at Surat required him to take up a conciliatory attitude.

situation and hastened to atone for their past neglect by freeing the hands of the Sidi. An imperial subsidy was immediately sanctioned to relieve his financial distress and the imperial fleets were put in motion to act in cooperation for a concerted offensive against the Marathas. The Sidi put into Bombay harbour with his naval forces and had an audience with the Bombay council. Whatever the result of the conference, he proceeded towards Khanderi, ostensibly to support the British squadron. He cruised round the rocky sea-fort, examining it very narrowly, and assured one of the British officers present³³ that, should the British second his efforts, he would conquer the Maratha fort for them. The British officers, however, did not seem very much to encourage the idea, having reason to suspect his ulterior objects, for they thought that he might indeed with British assistance compel the Marathas to evacuate the fort, but at the end of the campaign instead of relinquishing it to his British allies, he might appropriate it to himself and prove a worse neighbour than Shivaji. With these fears to deter them, they fought shy of the very thought of a concerted campaign with the Sidi.

Disappointed in his expectation of a British alliance, the Sidi, relying on his own resources, opened a vigorous cannonade on the Maratha fort, to which the Marathas made a vigorous reply from their newly planted batteries. The British vessels remained severely neutral, passive but not uninterested spectators of the phases of the war. The Maratha vessels in their turn left the British squadron alone, and poured their broadsides on the Abyssinian foe. The Sidi had come to learn by this time that a British envoy was already at Raigad, negotiating a treaty. To discredit his pacific intention and prejudice the Marathas against a British alliance, at this particular juncture, he forced his way with some of his warships into Bombay harbour, treating the port once more as a base for his naval raids into Shivaji's territory. Four villages were put to fire and sword and a goodly number of peaceful inhabitants were seized and brought as prisoners to Bombay.

Daulat Khan, who all this while was anchored at Nagotna, employed in his well-directed plans of sending victualling and ammunition boats to Khanderi, now determined to face about and with this resolution advanced to the head of Nagotna creek. No sooner did the Abyssinian and British vessels notice the Maratha squadron emerging from the creek than they made all sail to anticipate and arrest their movements. The Maratha commander finding his way barred signalled a retreat, leaving a few vessels at the entrance to prevent the enemy from entering the creek. The Sidi, fearing lest these vessels might under cover of night approach his warships and set them on fire, quietly

33. Capt. Keigwin.

withdrew his fleet, and the British squadron remained alone on the scene to watch the Marathas. The Sidi returned again to his onslaughts upon Khanderi and kept up a sustained cannonade, which did not seem however to make much impression on the Marathas.

At last baffled in this enterprise, the Sidi determined to make himself master of the opposite islet of Underi³⁴ and fortifying it with a sufficient garrison and fortress batteries, he notified to the Bombay authorities his intention to take permanent possession of that island. Upon this Daulat Khan at last emerged from his retreat at Nagotna and came down upon the Sidi. A sustained but indecisive encounter took place. The British vessels presented themselves at the scene of battle just after the end of the conflict. Daulat Khan took up his position on an elevated part of the shore and opened fire upon Underi, ably seconded by the batteries of the rival fort of Khanderi. After this had lasted for some time with indecisive results, Daulat Khan again advanced to tempt the fortune of a close encounter with the Sidi. The battle lasted four hours, with disastrous results to the Marathas, who lost four larger and as many smaller vessels, with five hundred men, besides a large number taken prisoners by the Sidi. Daulat Khan himself was severely wounded in the battle. The Sidi's losses are said to have been light. The remnant of the Maratha fleet fell back towards Rajapur, with the wounded admiral on board his flagship. At Rajapur the battered fleet was again put into fighting trim and with fresh additions to their crews again came forth to battle.

In the meantime the British ambassador at Raigad found the Maratha monarch agreeable to the peace proposals presented by the authorities at Bombay,³⁵ and a Maratha envoy was sent down to Bombay to confirm the articles of the treaty. In view of these pacific arrangements, the Bombay government recalled their squadron from Khanderi and disclaimed any partiality they might be suspected to have had for the Sidi in his recent triumph. The Sidi on his part attempted indeed to hinder the conclusion of the treaty for which the Maratha envoy had expressly come down to Bombay. With this view he sent to Bombay harbour for sale the Maratha vessels he had captured as the prizes of his recent victory, and applied at the same time for permission to enter the Bombay waters at the head of his squadron. This was naturally refused by the Bombay government, upon which he forced an entrance into Pen creek, carrying fire and sword into the villages on either

34. It may be remarked that on account of the similarity of names Grant Duff confounds Khanderi with Underi and *vice versa*. Orme, who uses the right names in one place, inverts them in another.

35. *Vide*: R. & O. Strachey, page 40.

side of the channel. In the course of this raid he is said to have seized and carried away more than a thousand inhabitants.

Amid these exciting events the new treaty was concluded in March 1680 between Shivaji and the Bombay government. By this treaty the conditions of the peace of 1674 were affirmed, and the British authorities bound themselves to grant no anchorage to the Sidi's vessels within the limits of the Bombay harbour during the monsoons, or if at all they did so, they were to permit it under special covenants on the part of the Sidi not to cause any annoyance to Shivaji's dominions.

But Shivaji did not long outlive these events. Whatever naval schemes he might have evolved in his own mind, for which the conquest of the sister isles was to be the starting-point, were destined to be brought to a sudden end with his death at Raigad, which took place soon afterwards.
