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BAJI RAO II AND THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY

1796-1818

BAJI RAO II AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

1796-1818

BY
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TO MY FATHER

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PREFACE

THE following pages were first submitted as a thesis, and accepted by the University of London for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in December, 1936. The book aims only at the political history of Baji Rao II and his times, and consequently an account of social and economic life has been left out.

A word may be added to explain the references in the footnotes. In order to avoid confusion, records in the Imperial Record Department, Calcutta (now in Delhi) are referred to as Secret Consultations, while records in the India Office, London are mentioned under the names of the series in which they are classified. As regards Khare's *Aiīhasik Lekha Sangraha*, the figures in the footnotes indicate the number of the document, except when otherwise mentioned.

I wish to express my indebtedness to Professor H. H. Dodwell and Dr L. D. Barnett, my tutors in the University, for the help that I have received from them. I am grateful to Sir Jadunath Sarkar and Sir Patrick Cadell for many valuable suggestions. Mr G. S. Sardesai very kindly read the manuscript before it was sent to the press. Thanks are also due for the assistance I have received from Mr D. V. Apte, Dr V. A. Patwardhan, Dr Phulrenu Datta, Mr John Lennard, Mr A. K. Mukerji and Mr Dilip SenGupta. Mr R. Bhattacharyya has very kindly read the proofs and Mr A. Roy Chaudhury has prepared the index. I am obliged to the Keeper of Records, Imperial Record Department, Delhi, the Superintendent of Records, India Office, London and the Superintendent of Records,

British Museum, for permitting me to read the manuscripts. Finally, I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to Dr S. N. Sen without whose help and encouragement the present volume would never have been attempted.

Calcutta

P.C.G.

January 1939

INTRODUCTION

THE First Maratha War was concluded in 1782, by the signing of the Treaty of Salbai between the Marathas and the English. The Sixth Article of the Treaty gave Raghunath Rao the choice of his future residence.¹ In August 1783, Raghunath Rao went to live at Kopargaon on the Godavari, with his wife Anandibai, his adopted son Amrit Rao and his son Baji Rao.² Raghunath Rao died at the end of the year 1783, and in the next March his wife gave birth to Chimnaji.³ In October 1792, Anandibai and the young prisoners were brought to Anandvalli, near Nasik.⁴ Anandibai died in 1794, and shortly afterwards Amrit Rao, Baji Rao and Chimnaji were removed to the hill fort of Shivner in Juner,⁵ where they continued to stay until 1796.

Little is known about Baji Rao's early life. Only a few papers in the Peshwa Daftar throw some light on the events of his life during the years 1786-8, while he was staying at Kopargaon. Those papers generally deal with Anandibai, but occasional glimpses are also found of Baji Rao and Amrit Rao, performing religious ceremonies, making short pilgrimages or visiting local temples.⁶ Baji Rao's education was entrusted to Raghupant Thosar.⁷ But the young prince was difficult to control. References are found to his petulant

¹ Aitchison, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vi, pp. 41-2.

² Peshwa Daftar, iv (Introduction); Grant Duff, ii, p. 153. Baji Rao was born at Dhar on 10th January 1775 (Rajwade, iv, p. 130; Peshwa Daftar, iv [Introduction]).

³ Rajwade, iv, p. 182; Peshwa Daftar, iv (Introduction); Grant Duff, ii, p. 158. The date given in Rajwade corresponds to 30th March. Grant Duff calls it April.

⁴ Peshwa Daftar, iv (Introduction); Grant Duff, ii, p. 252.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 252.

⁶ Peshwa Daftar, iv, 23, 41, 52, 55, 63, 73.

⁷ Peshwa Daftar, iv, 26.

temper, his wilfulness and his lack of attention in studies.¹

It is not unlikely that Anandibai, who could never reconcile herself to her fate, wanted her son to attain the position which her husband had lost. But nothing is known about Baji Rao's political ambition. However, when he came to Shivner, he opened a secret negotiation with his cousin, Peshwa Savai Madhav Rao. But Nana Fadnavis, when he learnt about it, placed Baji Rao under stricter watch and made further negotiations with the Peshwa impossible.² But though Nana did his best to stop Raghunath Rao's sons from interfering in his arrangements for the security of the State, fate intervened, rendering all his precautions useless. The young Peshwa died as the result of either falling or throwing himself from the terrace of his palace, and his death at once produced a situation which even the genius of Nana Fadnavis found difficult to cope with, and which opened out new possibilities to the sons of Raghunath Rao.

¹ Peshwa Daftar, iv, 11, 53, 55, 64, 72.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 252.

CHAPTER I

DOMESTIC EVENTS AT POONA, NOVEMBER 1795—MARCH 1800

ON the 12th January 1796, in a letter to Henry Dundas, the President of the Board of Control, Sir John Shore, the Governor-General of India, referred to a 'circumstance highly favourable to us'.¹ This 'circumstance' was the death of the young Peshwa Savai Madhav Rao on the 27th October 1795.

Savai Madhav Rao died childless, and in the normal course of events he would have been succeeded by one of his cousins, the sons of Raghunath Rao, who were then prisoners at Juner. But two days after the Peshwa's death, Uhtoff, the Assistant Resident at Poona, informed the Governor-General that there was 'an idea very prevalent at Poona' that Nana Fadnavis was opposed to Baji Rao's succession, and that 'he would wish to supplant him by some infant of the family'.² This was actually what Nana planned. That a son of Raghunath Rao, who had been notorious for his alliance with the English, should succeed to the Peshwaship was contrary to his political belief; and he proposed to the Nizam and the Maratha chiefs that Savai Madhav's widow Yasodabai should adopt a son, and Nana would carry on the administration in the name of the infant.³ Daulat Rao Sindhia's minister, Baloba Tatia, was opposed to the plan, but ultimately agreed to it, and by the end of November, Raghuji Bhonsla, Tukoji Holkar and Sindhia had all given their consent.⁴

¹ Furber, *Private Records of an Indian Governor-Generalship*, p. 89.

² Forrest, *Selections from State Papers*, p. 541.

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 257.

⁴ Khare, ix, 3654.

Malet, the English Resident at Poona, advised Colonel Kirkpatrick, the Resident at Hyderabad, to persuade the Nizam to adopt the cause of Raghunath Rao's sons.¹ But the Governor-General was opposed to any interference in the succession, and later on informed Dundas that the Resident 'with more zeal than judgment interfered in the measures for the appointment of a successor in a very objectionable mode'.² So the Resident left the Poona affairs to what the Governor-General called their 'natural course and consequences',³ and Nana Fadnavis proceeded with the search for a suitable child for adoption. By the 26th November, ten children were brought to Poona,⁴ but none of them seemed to satisfy Nana Fadnavis; and he suggested the name of his own brother-in-law for adoption.⁵ But Nana's brother-in-law fared badly when his intelligence and luck were put to test,⁶ and the scheme was dropped.

Nana Fadnavis's plan of adoption caused more trouble than was at first anticipated. The fate of the young prisoners in the hill fort of Juner created a romantic interest, and Baji Rao's cause became popular in the country. The Maratha chiefs did not like any other person to be placed on the *masnad* when there were rightful claimants to the Peshwaship. Malet learnt that Sindhia had refused to sign in favour of an alien adoption.⁷ On the 26th November, Sindhia's agent, Baloba Tatia, informed the Resident that the Peshwa's widow was incompetent to adopt, as she had not yet arrived at the age of puberty, and wanted to know whether the English would help Sindhia against Nana Fadnavis.⁸ On the 4th December, the Patwardhan

¹ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 406.

² Furber, op. cit., p. 89.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Khare, ix, 3657.

⁵ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 430.

⁶ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 431.

⁷ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, pp. 414-15; *Poona Residency Correspondence*, p. 401.

⁸ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, pp. 414-15.

vakil reported a rumour that Sindhia and Holkar had united and pressed for Chimnaji Appa's adoption.¹

Meanwhile, Raghunath Rao's sons at Juner began negotiating with the English. In December they sent a secret agent to the English Resident Malet.² No encouragement was given on account of the Governor-General's policy of non-intervention, but Baji Rao found Sindhia more helpful. It was agreed that Sindhia should raise Baji Rao to Peshwaship, and Baji Rao should pay him 1,25,00,000 rupees and grant a jagir worth 25,00,000 rupees.³ But Nana became aware of the plot and called Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan from his jagir at Tasgaon to Poona. Parashuram Bhau was at the time the most celebrated Maratha general and the most distinguished of the Patwardhans. He had played prominent parts in the First Maratha War and the war against the Nizam. On Parashuram's arrival at Poona it was decided that Parashuram Bhau should bring Baji Rao and Chimnaji to Poona, and Chimnaji should then be adopted and proclaimed as Peshwa.⁴ Parashuram Bhau left Poona on the 14th February 1796,⁵ and on the same day the British Resident was informed that 'it having been deemed advisable to invite the sons of Ragonaut Rao from Juner to Poona', Parashuram Bhau had been sent to Juner for that purpose.⁶

Parashuram Bhau arrived at Juner on the 15th February, and next day had an interview with Baji Rao.⁷ Baji Rao refused to hand over Chimnaji Appa and

¹ Khare, ix, 3662.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 431.

³ Khare, ix, p. 4776; Riyasat, pp. 8-9. According to Grant Duff, Baji Rao offered to Sindhia 'four lakhs of rupees of territory and whatever might be the expenses of the troops' (p. 256). This agrees with the account given in the Peshwaichi Akher (p. 4).

⁴ Khare, ix, 3668. From Grant Duff it appears that from the first the plan was to 'anticipate Sindhia's design, to release Bajee Rao and to declare him Peishwa' (p. 256). I have followed the Patwardhan Papers.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 20 Feb., p. 288.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Khare, ix, 3673; Riyasat, p. 11.

argued that only he had the right to Peshwaship.¹ For more than a week there was a deadlock, and at last Parashuram Bhau sent Govind Rao Pingle to Nana Fadnavis for his advice.² Nana feared that any delay might tempt Daulat Rao Sindhia to march to Juner, and so advised Parashuram Bhau to agree to Baji Rao's proposal and bring him and Chimnaji to Poona. Accordingly, Parashuram Bhau left Amrit Rao at Juner, and on the 3rd March arrived at Khadki in the suburb of Poona with Baji Rao and Chimnaji Appa.³ Baji Rao had an interview with Nana Fadnavis on the 5th March,⁴ and on the 11th Nana gave him a declaration in writing assuring him of his confidence and co-operation.⁵ Baji Rao also on his part signed a similar declaration to the effect that he would never 'injure' Nana Fadnavis by 'word or deed', all the State affairs would be managed jointly by them, and that suspicion was 'wholly eradicated' from his heart.⁶

But the chief difficulty to this arrangement was that Baji Rao had previously entered into an agreement with Daulat Rao Sindhia. Sindhia could not at that time fulfil his obligations on account of the death of his minister, Jeoba Dada Bakshi, and some disturbances in his army. Baloba Tatia, who succeeded Jeoba Dada as Sindhia's chief minister, now encouraged him to march to Poona and control the affairs there.⁷ On the 2nd March, Malet informed the Governor of Bombay that Sindhia had begun his march to Poona.⁸ On the 7th March, he again wrote to the Bombay Government that 'the approach of Sindhia with his whole force' had given 'grave grounds for speculation and alarm'.⁹

¹ Khare, ix, 3675, 3677, 3678.

² Khare, ix, 3677; Riyasat, p. 111.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 15 March, p. 438; Khare, ix, 3693.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 15 March, p. 477.

⁵ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 6.

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 257, footnote.

⁷ Grant Duff, ii, p. 257.

⁸ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 8 March, p. 436.

⁹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 15 March, p. 477.

Nana Fadnavis and Baloba Tatia were not on friendly terms, and consequently Nana was alarmed for his safety. Baloba informed Nana that no harm would be done to him, provided he should cause the Poona Government to make payments to Sindhia and confer territories on him, and also agree to carry on the administration in what Sindhia's party considered a suitable manner.¹ Nana Fadnavis, however, did not consider it prudent to trust Baloba and did not agree to Parashuram Bhau's proposal to oppose Sindhia's army. Instead, he made preparations for leaving Poona. He sent the women of his family to hill forts in the Konkan and applied to the British Government for protection in a village under the Government of Fort Victoria.² In view of the Governor-General's attitude, the Resident hesitated to commit himself.³ In the evening of the 21st March, Nana left Poona with about 3,000 horse and foot,⁴ accompanied by Appa Balwant, Gangadhar Pant Bhanu, Aba Shelukar, Raghu Pant Godbole and Bajoba Sirolkar.⁵

Nana Fadnavis reached Purandhar on the 23rd,⁶ and arrived at Satara next day.⁷ Before his arrival, a letter came from Baji Rao asking the Raja of Satara not to admit Nana within the fort.⁸

So Nana encamped at the village of Karanji, near Satara.⁹ It was his plan to liberate the Raja of Satara and restore the old Bhonsla regime. He asked the Raja to collect troops and offered him, it is believed, one crore of rupees for his expenses. But the Raja of Satara did

¹ Khare, ix, pp. 4825-6.

² Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 26 March, p. 518.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 26 March, p. 520. The number of his troops varies in different accounts.

⁵ Khare, ix, 3727.

⁶ Khare, ix, 3726, 3727.

⁷ Khare, ix, 3726, 3727, 3730.

⁸ Khare, ix, 3730.

⁹ Ibid.

not agree to Nana's suggestion, and Nana retired to Wai in the neighbourhood.¹

In the meantime, Daulat Rao Sindhia had arrived near Poona, and had an interview with Baji Rao on the 24th March.² Baji Rao had encamped until then in the suburb of Poona. On the 25th, he moved to the city and entered the Peshwa's palace.³ The same day, Sindhia asked Baji Rao to pay him 25,00,000 rupees out of the sum of 1,25,00,000 as promised by Baji Rao at Juner. But Baji Rao was not in a position to pay. He pointed out to Sindhia that, as Sindhia had not proceeded to Juner and brought Baji Rao to Poona, he had failed in his obligations, and, moreover, in the unsettled condition of affairs at Poona, any payment to Sindhia was impossible.⁴ This probably came as a shock to Sindhia, but for the time being no other attempt to secure money from Baji Rao was made.

With Nana Fadnavis at a distance, and with Sindhia and Parashuram Bhau as his allies, Baji Rao's investiture appeared only a question of time. For bringing the clothes of investiture from the Raja of Satara, Baji Rao left Poona and arrived at Theur on the 2nd April.⁵ He halted for a few days at Theur, and, in the meantime, another revolution was planned by Parashuram Bhau, Sindhia and his minister Baloba. It was decided that Baji Rao should be arrested and Chimnaji invested as the Peshwa. But as Chimnaji was a minor, Parashuram Bhau was to manage the administration on his behalf. Baji Rao should be placed under Sindhia's charge and was to be handed over to Parashuram on the payment of 25,00,000 rupees. A joint attack was also planned on the Nizam and out of the tribute imposed on him, Sindhia was to receive 75,000 rupees.⁶ Nana Fadnavis

¹ Grant Duff, ii, pp. 258-9; Riyasat, pp. 18-19.

² Khare, ix, 3721, 3735, 3737.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 29 March, pp. 556-7.

⁴ Khare, ix, 3733.

⁵ Khare, ix, 3745.

⁶ Riyasat, p. 13; Khare, ix, p. 4894; Grant Duff, ii, p. 258.

was informed of the plot,¹ and a hint was given to the British Resident that there might be a change in the Government at Poona.²

Baji Rao hardly suspected anything till the 9th May, when the plan was carried out. He passed the day in discussing Sindhia's demands for money, and in the evening went to Sindhia's camp for further discussion. At about eight o'clock at night, Parashuram Bhau suddenly appeared at Chimnaji's tent and asked him to accompany him to Poona. Chimnaji refused, but was forced into a palankeen by Patwardhan's karkun, Hari Vishnu Sahasrabuddhe, and removed to Poona.³ This news was brought to Baji Rao while he was still in Sindhia's camp. In alarm he pressed Sindhia to pursue Parashuram Bhau, but Sindhia pleaded the impossibility of the pursuit in the dark and asked him to stay in his camp for the sake of his own safety. In the morning Baji Rao discovered that he had been trapped.⁴

Chimnaji Appa was taken to Rastia's house at Poona,⁵ where he waited for an auspicious moment and entered the Peshwa's palace on the 12th May.⁶ Trimbak Rao Pethe was sent to Satara for the robes of investiture,⁷ but difficulties arose as regards adoption. Chimnaji Appa was related to the late Peshwa Savai Madhav Rao in such a way as to make his adoption by the latter's widow invalid according to Hindu law. The Nayadhisht Balkrishna Shastri refused to consent to the adoption, and, according to a letter written by the Patwardhan's agent, Parashuram Bhau was very much annoyed and threatened to drive him out of the city.⁸ Two other

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 258.

² Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 13 May, p. 740.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 13 May, p. 738 ; Khare, ix, 3779 ; Riyasat, p. 18.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 13 May, p. 738 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 260 ; Riyasat, p. 18.

⁵ Khare, ix, 3780.

⁶ Khare, ix, 3783-4.

⁷ Khare, ix, 3795.

⁸ Khare, ix, 3792.

pandits, however, Mahadeo Dikshit Apte and Yagneswar Shastri Dravid bowed before political expediency and gave their consent to the adoption.¹ Towards the end of May, Chimnaji Appa was taken into adoption and soon after invested as the Peshwa Chimnaji Madhav Rao.²

Chimnaji Appa's administration began in June 1796 and ended in November. During its short life, the newly born administration was never free from troubles. Parashuram Bhau, who now managed the administration, found no means to satisfy Sindhia's immediate financial needs. The Nizam's minister, Mushir-ul-Mulk, was at that time staying at Poona as a hostage for the fulfilment of the terms of the Treaty of Kharda. The Poona Government offered the minister his personal liberty provided the Nizam would pay a portion of the money due from him by the treaty.³ On Mushir-ul-Mulk's undertaking that he would attempt to procure the money, he was freed on the 5th June 1796.⁴

The conduct of Nana Fadnavis was yet another cause for uneasiness. After Chimnaji's accession, Parashuram Bhau sent his son to Wai for a reconciliation with Nana.⁵ But Nana looked with suspicion on Parashuram Bhau's son marching with an army, and, warned by Baba Fadke, he took to flight.⁶ He left Wai on the 4th June and arrived at Mahad on the 6th via Raigarh.⁷ About the end of the month, a rumour spread at Poona that Nana Fadnavis was seeking shelter with the English and that Salsette had been fixed for his residence.⁸ In

¹ Riyasat, p. 28.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 434 ; Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 31 May, p. 764 ; Khare, ix, 3794, 3795 ; Riyasat, p. 28.

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 260.

⁴ Riyasat, p. 35.

⁵ Grant Duff says that he was Parashuram Bhau's 'eldest son, Hurry Pant' (ii, p. 260). According to Sardesai, Bhau sent his eldest son, but Sardesai gives his name as Madhaji Pant (Riyasat, p. 30). Khare agrees with Sardesai that Bhau sent Madhaji Pant to Poona, but he calls him his third son (ix, p. 4908).

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 261.

⁷ Khare, ix, 3799, 3800, 3805 ; Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 11 June, p. 804.

⁸ Khare, ix, 3812.

fact, Nana had actually opened negotiations with the English. On the 27th June, Nana's agent presented a letter to Malet who was then staying at Bombay.¹ In that letter, Nana Fadnavis informed the Resident that the Government at Poona was illegal as it was not supported by himself or the principal chiefs, and asked for protection for his dependants.² Next day, Moro Pandit presented the draft of an agreement between Nana Fadnavis and the English, in which it was proposed that the British Government should assist Nana Fadnavis with troops for setting up Baji Rao as the Peshwa. Baji Rao on his accession would cede to the Company a territory worth 25,00,000 of rupees, and also grant the same amount in cash. Baji Rao's Government would always maintain friendship with the English.³ Two letters written by Baji Rao were also received by Malet and the Governor of Bombay on the 2nd August. In these letters Baji Rao introduced his karkun, Madhaji Ballal, who would 'represent everything' and asked for financial help.⁴ It is not known what Madhaji Ballal was to 'represent', but in any case the Governor-General was in no way inclined to interfere in the succession. Early in the year, he had written to the Directors, that 'we have no right to interfere in the election of a head to the Maratha empire, nor can [we] take part in the decision of it'.⁵ In October, he again recorded in his Minute that 'the accession . . . of Chimnaji . . . has had all the notoriety and solemnity necessary for our information', and that any question as to the superiority of Baji Rao's claims was 'a consideration for the Marathas, not for us'.⁶

But though there was no hope of receiving help from the English, and the Government at Poona tried to

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (39).

² Ibid.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (41).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (45).

⁵ British Museum Addl. MSS. 12,583.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 28 Oct. (1).

secure its own position by removing the employees of the old regime and appointing its own men,¹ Nana Fadnavis gradually succeeded in building up a successful opposition to Parashuram Bhau's administration. Nana, however, had been followed by Sindhia's troops, and at the end of July two skirmishes were fought near Dasgaon and at Jambul-parah between Sindhia's men and Nana's force, in both of which Sindhia's party was defeated.² In the beginning of August, Uhtoff, the Assistant Resident at Poona, learnt that Nana was preparing a seal in the name of Baji Rao as the Peshwa.³ The creation of a second Peshwa would have landed the country in civil war, but happily, even if this idea had crossed his mind, Nana Fadnavis did not try to put it into practice. Instead, he tried a surer method. He gained Tukoji Holkar to his cause and won over Raghuji Bhonsla, promising him among other things 15,00,000 of rupees and the district of Garah Mandal.⁴ Baba Fadke, the head of the Peshwa's household troops, was an adherent of Nana, and his men were bought off.⁵ Nana Fadnavis also negotiated with the Sidis⁶ and encouraged the Raja of Kolhapur to occupy the district of Chikodi and Manoli which were then in Parashuram Bhau's possession.⁷ A treaty was made with the Nizam by which the Nizam promised to help Nana with 15,000 men, and Nana undertook to restore the territory ceded by the Treaty of Kharda, and excuse the balance of the tribute imposed on the Nizam. The Peshwa was to give up his claims on Bedar. Nana also promised to secure the help of the English for the Nizam in case Tipu should attack his territory.⁸ Negotiations began also with Sindhia through Rayaji Patel and Sarje Rao

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (48).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (41), (46).

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (46).

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 267.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 262; Riyasat, p. 40.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (46); Khare, ix, 3812.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 5 Sept. (48); Riyasat, p. 40.

⁸ Riyasat, pp. 36-7.

Ghatge.¹ Sindhia agreed to declare for Baji Rao and imprison Baloba Tatia on condition that the fort of Ahmadnagar with territory worth ten lakhs of rupees, and one crore of rupees in cash should be offered to him. He would receive half of the amount on moving to Jamgaon and the rest on crossing the Godavari.²

Baloba Tatia suspected that Baba Fadke was acting on behalf of Baji Rao and imprisoned him. But his karkun Naro Pant Chakradeo escaped to Mushir-ul-Mulk's camp, and two of his associates Nilkanth Rao Prabhu and Maloji Ghorpade fled from Poona.³ Baloba also arranged to send Baji Rao to the north in the charge of Sarje Rao Ghatge. But Sarje Rao had already been won over by Baji Rao's faction. Baji Rao promised him that after the proposed marriage between Sindhia and Ghatge's daughter should take place, Ghatge should be made Sindhia's chief minister. So Ghatge and Baji Rao did not move from Poona, but waited on the pretext that Baji Rao was ill.⁴

The end of October saw another change of Government, when Sindhia suddenly arrested his minister Baloba Tatia, and asked Mushir-ul-Mulk to send Naro Pant Chakradeo from his camp to take charge of the city.⁵ The date of Baloba's arrest given by Grant Duff is not correct. According to him, Sindhia arrested Baloba on the 27th October,⁶ but a Patwardhan letter

¹ Sakharam or Sarje Rao Ghatge belonged to the family of the rulers of Kagal. He was formerly in Nana's employment. After Nana's flight from Poona in February 1796, he entered Sindhia's service (Riyasat, p. 67). In 1809 he was described by Broughton as a 'stout square-built man, not more than five feet high; his features coarse and large, especially his eyes which are grey, and uncommonly penetrating. His countenance is just what his character would have one to expect; strongly marked and expressing in legible characters, cunning, cruelty and daring ferocity. Yet there is a certain quickness in his address and manner of speaking that indicates talent and genius. His complexion is fair, and what little hair he has is quite grey.'—*Letters written in a Mahratta Camp*, p. 50.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 262; Khare, ix, p. 4925.

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 264.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 265.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 4 Nov., p. 1716.

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 267. In a letter dated the 27th October, Uhtoff wrote to the Governor-General that on the previous night Sindhia informed Mushir-ul-Mulk of Baloba's arrest (Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 4 Nov., p. 1716).

dated the 26th October acknowledged receipt of the news from Poona that Baloba had been arrested.¹ Appa Balwant was instructed to arrest Parashuram Bhau, but a letter referring to this plan and addressed to Parashuram Vaidya was delivered by mistake to Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan and he immediately fled with Chimnaji Appa towards Juner. They were pursued, and the killadar of Juner refused to admit Parashuram Bhau to his fort. A battle was fought near Juner in which Parashuram Bhau was defeated and taken prisoner. He was sent to Mandav-Gun, and Chimnaji Appa was brought to Sindhia's camp.² Nana Fadnavis returned from Mahad, and on the 18th November had a meeting with Mushir-ul-Mulk and Sindhia, and received a deputation from Holkar.³ On the 21st, Chimnaji Appa met his brother and encamped with him.⁴ On the 25th, a meeting was arranged between Nana Fadnavis, Raghuji Bhonsla, Sindhia, Mushir-ul-Mulk and Holkar.⁵ Next day Baji Rao had a meeting with the Maratha chiefs,⁶ and on the 27th November, Uhtoff, the Assistant Resident, was informed that Baji Rao was to be installed as the Peshwa.⁷ Yasodabai's adoption of Chimnaji Appa was declared to be invalid.

So Baji Rao's Government was established. Aba Shelukar, who had been sent to Satara, returned to Poona on the 4th December with clothes of investiture, and the ceremony took place at midnight.⁸ On the 25th December, Nana Fadnavis wrote a letter to the Governor of Bombay informing him of Baji Rao's

¹ Khare, ix, 3845.

² Rajwade, x, pp. 339-40; Peshwanchi Bakhar, pp. 164-5; Grant Duff, ii, p. 267; Riyasat, p. 42.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 22 Nov., p. 1781.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 29 Nov., p. 1805.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 29 Nov., p. 1804.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1796, 20 Nov., p. 1827.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Forrest, op. cit., p. 545.

accession.¹ In the new administration, Nana Fadnavis became the Prime Minister with Trimbak Rao Parchure as his assistant, and the command of the army was given to Naro Pant Chakradeo.² But from the beginning it was apparent that Nana Fadnavis was losing his control over the Government. Baji Rao, as soon as he was established, refused to give up Garah Mandal to Raghuji Bhonsla as promised by Nana Fadnavis. On the other hand, Sindhia wanted to keep Garah Mandal for himself. This led to enmity between Sindhia and Bhonsla, and both called their troops from their capitals to Poona.³ Baji Rao also would not fulfil his obligations to Mushir-ul-Mulk, according to the Treaty of Mahad, contracted by Nana Fadnavis. After some fruitless attempts to make the Peshwa perform his part of the contract, Mushir-ul-Mulk left Poona in disgust without taking the Peshwa's leave.⁴ It was then that Baji Rao tried reconciliation. He sent Govind Rao Pingle to conciliate Mushir-ul-Mulk, and on the 10th May agreed to restore to the Nizam territory worth 25,00,000 of rupees and remit 1,05,00,000 rupees of fines due from him.⁵ This was, however, not a complete satisfaction of the Nizam's claims according to the Treaty of Mahad, but for the time being it served to pacify him. The territory of Garah Mandal also was given to Bhonsla.⁶

Baji Rao was always pressed by Sindhia for money, and he tried every source for raising funds. Along with Parashuram Bhau, many of his followers had been imprisoned, and they were now required to purchase freedom by paying heavy fines to the Government. Madhaji Pant Kale had to pay 50,000 rupees ; Bhikaji

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1797, 13 Jan., p. 22.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 270.

³ Khare, x, 3912 ; Riyasat, p. 47.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 270.

⁵ Khare, x, pp. 5059-60, Nos. 3963-64, 3971 ; Riyasat, p. 52.

⁶ Khare, x, 3974, 4001. From Grant Duff it seems that Garah Mandal was not given to Bhonsla in 1797 for it was offered to Bhonsla in 1798 when Baji Rao was attempting to free himself from Sindhia's control (ii, p. 284).

Pant, Shivram Pant Modak and Balaji Vishnu Sahasrabuddhe 25,000 each. Ganpat Rao Karmarkara's fine was 20,000, Jayram Pant Joshi's 50,000 and Chinto Pant Limaye had to pay 85,000 rupees.¹ Hari Vishnu Sahasrabuddhe, the karkun who forced Chimnaji Appa into the palankeen on the night of the 8th May at Theur, was less fortunate. He was taken to the Peshwa's palace and ordered fifty strokes. After further torture, he was paraded in the street.² In March some new taxes were imposed. They were taxes on loans (*karja-patti*), on saranjams (*saranjam-patti*), on wages (*vetan-patti*), on rent (*Bhade-patti*) and contentment taxes (*Santosh-patti*).³ The last was imposed as a mark of popular delight on Baji Rao's accession. But the people at Poona did not seem at all pleased at the impositions, and the shopkeepers closed their businesses and went on strike.⁴

In April a serious disturbance occurred at Poona. It was during a religious ceremony in the temple of Muralidhar that the Peshwa's infantry under Captain Boyd had a clash with the Arabs. All attempts to pacify their dispute were unsuccessful and both the parties had a free fight in the streets of Poona. At last Nana Fadnavis sent some of his own troops, who suppressed the riot.⁵

It is evident that Baji Rao's Government was not firmly established. Baji Rao was jealous of Nana Fadnavis and it was Sindhia who was the real power in the State. Nana's power was considerably weakened by Tukoji Holkar's death in the month of August. Holkar left two legitimate sons, Kashi Rao and Malhar Rao, and two illegitimate sons, Yashwant Rao and Vithoji. Kashi Rao, who was an imbecile, was

¹ Khare, x, p. 5058.

² Khare, x, 3929.

³ Khare, x, 3927 ; Riyasat, p. 51.

⁴ Khare, x, 3933.

⁵ Khare, x, 3952, 3954 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 270.

supported by Sindhia, while Malhar Rao's cause was favoured by Nana Fadnavis. In the early morning of the 14th September, Sindhia made a sudden attack on Malhar Rao's camp and killed him. Yashwant Rao and Vithoji escaped and fled to Nagpur.¹

Sindhia's next move was directed against Nana Fadnavis. It was decided by Sindhia and Baji Rao that Nana Fadnavis should be invited to a conference and arrested. By this measure Baji Rao hoped to get rid of Nana and perhaps also to possess himself of Nana's fortune. The other persons concerned in the plot were Amrit Rao, Sarje Rao Ghatge and Govind Rao Kale.² But Nana had become suspicious of Sindhia and employed 5,000 Arabs for his protection.³ A few days before he had been visited by Daulat Rao Sindhia, and his return visit was due. But on various pretexts he put it off until the 31st December. On the morning of the 31st he again tried to excuse himself. But on being assured by Daulat Rao Sindhia and his officer Michael Filose⁴ that no treachery was intended, he proceeded to Sindhia's camp in the afternoon, accompanied by Dada Gadre, Aba Shelukar, Bajoba Sirolkar and Raghu Pant Godbole. But in Sindhia's camp he and his companions were arrested by Michael Filose.⁵ Those of Nana's adherents who did not accompany him were invited by Baji Rao and placed under arrest. Among them were Baba Fadke, Appa Balwant, Naro Pant Chakradeo, Naro Nilkanth Majumdar and Govind Rao Pingle.⁶

After Nana's arrest Sindhia wrote two letters to Malet

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1797, 19 Sept., p. 1621 ; Khare, x, 4079 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 271.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 272.

³ Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 169.

⁴ Michael Filose was a 'low-bred Neopolitan of worthless character'. About 1790 he served under Sindhia's General De Boigne. Later on, he had separate command. He became notorious in connexion with Nana's arrest. In 1798 when Nana was about to be freed he fled to Bombay. His battalions were then commanded by his sons. See Compton, *Military Adventurers*, pp. 354-6.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1798, 5 Jan., pp. 94-5 ; Khare, x, 4125-6 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 170.

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, 273.

and Uhtoff to the effect that as Nana had been 'self-willed' and was acting contrary to the Peshwa's wish, he was arrested by Baji Rao's order.¹ Uhtoff was also informed by Baji Rao and Amrit Rao that Nana's arrest had been sanctioned by the Peshwa.²

Nana was sent a prisoner to Ahmadnagar³ and a new administration was set up at Poona. Amrit Rao became the Prime Minister, with Govind Rao Kale and Shivram Thate as his associates.⁴ Balaji Pant Patwardhan held the command of the army in the place of Naro Pant Chakradeo.⁵

In March 1798, Sindhia married Sarje Rao's daughter.⁶ After the ceremony was over, Sindhia again began to press Baji Rao for money. There had been great discontent in Sindhia's army,⁷ and their payment could no longer be deferred. Baji Rao had no means for satisfying Sindhia's demands, but he proposed that if Sarje Rao be made Sindhia's Diwan, then he might with the assistance of the Peshwa's favourite, Baloji Kunjar, raise some money from the citizens of Poona.⁸ In his letter to the Governor-General, dated 13th April 1798, Palmer, who had succeeded Malet as the Resident of Poona, described Sarje Rao as 'as fit an instrument for rapine as can be found',⁹ and for three months while he was in charge of collection Poona witnessed a reign of terror. People who were thought to possess wealth were arrested by Sindhia's troops and tortured till they consented to pay. Among those who were thus arrested was Trimbak Rao Parchure who, a few months before, was one of the ministers. Trimbak Rao's fortune amounted to 7,00,000 of rupees, of which he had

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1798, 5 Jan., pp. 98-9.

² Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1798, 12 Jan., p. 131.

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 273.

⁴ Khare, x, 4126; Grant Duff, ii, p. 273.

⁵ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 33; Grant Duff, ii, p. 274.

⁶ Khare, x, 4178; Grant Duff, ii, p. 274.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Grant Duff, ii, p. 274.

⁹ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 21.

to pay 5,00,000 to Sindhia.¹ Trimbak Rao was then permitted to leave Poona, and he started for Benares but died on the way.² Among others who suffered were Narayan Rao Vaidya, Chinto Pant Deshmukh, Babu Rao Kesab's son, Janardan Shivaji, and his uncle Khadilkar.³ Narayan Rao had to promise to pay 3,00,000 lakhs of rupees, Babu Rao Kesab's son 5,00,000 and Janardan Shivaji 40,000 of rupees.⁴ Sindhia demanded 10,00,000 of rupees from Appa Balwant, but he committed suicide to save himself from disgrace.⁵ Three Brahmins, who were supposed to be the custodians of Nana's wealth, were tortured to death.⁶ One of them was probably Gangadhar Pant Bhanu, who was stripped and tied to a heated gun.⁷

In this way, Sarje Rao raised some money from Poona. But even Baji Rao had not suspected that he would go so far. An arrest of Yashwant Rao Panse, the son of the superintendent of the topkhana, almost led to a fight between Sarje Rao's troops and the Peshwa's own.⁸ About this time, there was a rising among the Peshwa's troops on account of the arrears of pay. The new commander, Balaji Pant Patwardhan, proved unable to control his men, and the Peshwa's favourite, Baloji Kunjar, who tried to mediate, was insulted by the troops. At last, at the suggestion of Govind Rao Pingle, who was himself in prison, Naro Pant Chakradeo was freed and he immediately restored order.⁹ Govind Rao Pingle was also liberated.¹⁰

On account of the highhandedness of Sindhia's men, the friendship between Baji Rao and Sindhia did not

¹ Khare, x, 4179. (In 4184 he is said to have given 8 lakhs.)

² Khare, x, p. 5314.

³ Khare, x, 4190.

⁴ Ibid. In Letter No. 4200 Janardan Shivaji's quota is said to be 35,000.

⁵ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 29.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Khare, x, 4208, 4210.

⁸ Khare, x, 4222, 4223.

⁹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 277.

¹⁰ Ibid.

last long. Amrit Rao proposed that Sindhia should be invited to a conference and arrested. Accordingly a meeting was arranged and Sindhia paid a visit to Baji Rao. Baji Rao charged him with violence and cruelty practised by his men and ordered him to leave Poona. Sindhia pleaded his inability to move on account of the lack of funds, and so the meeting terminated. Baji Rao at the last moment lost heart and did not give the signal for Sindhia's arrest.¹ In the month of May, events almost came to a crisis. On the night of the 4th, Sindhia sent a body of troops in the city to arrest Govind Rao Pingle and other advisers of the Peshwa and put the Peshwa under restraint. But the Peshwa had taken special precautions, and his troops were prepared for an attack. Sindhia therefore desisted.² On the 9th June, Palmer informed the Governor-General that Baji Rao planned his retreat from Poona with the intention of declaring hostilities against Sindhia.³

Apart from the Peshwa's enmity, Daulat Rao Sindhia had now real reasons for anxiety. As a result of a quarrel with Madhaji Sindhia's widows, he found himself in a very awkward position. His attempt to send the Bais prisoners to Ahmadnagar failed, and their cause was taken up by a Pathan officer named Muzaffer Khan and the old Sindian chiefs. On the 8th June, Sindhia's officer, Major Du Prat, made an unsuccessful attack on the Bais who were then encamped with Amrit Rao near the river Bhima.⁴ Later on, on the 25th June, while negotiations were being carried on for a settlement with the Bais, Sindhia's officer, Captain Dugeon, and Sarje Rao Ghatge made a treacherous attack on Amrit Rao's encampment at Khadki.⁵ At

¹ Grant Duff, ii, pp. 276-7.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 77.

³ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 153.

⁴ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 161 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 283.

⁵ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 255 ; Khare, x, 4278 ; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 39 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 283.

that time the Bais were not staying with Amrit Rao, and the incident was regarded as a declaration of war against the Peshwa. Baji Rao concluded a treaty with the Nizam by which he confirmed the Treaty of Mahad, relinquished the Chauth of Bedar and promised to cede to the Nizam in perpetuity a territory worth 8,00,000 rupees.¹

Under the circumstances, Sindhia took the only means open to him for counteracting Baji Rao's measures and freed Nana Fadnavis. In July, Sindhia brought him from Ahmadnagar to his camp and demanded two crores of rupees.² But Nana agreed to pay only 10,00,000 of rupees and required that he should be set at liberty before the payment.³ The Resident at first considered it unlikely that Nana's release would have any effect, on account of Amrit Rao's jealousy of Nana Fadnavis.⁴ But the Nizam's revocation of his treaty with the Peshwa⁵ left Baji Rao without an ally and he began negotiations with Sindhia and Nana. On the 24th July, Nana submitted a number of propositions for a settlement of all the parties which were generally approved.⁶ The next step towards a conciliation was effected by Sindhia's arrest of Sarje Rao Ghatge. Both Sarje Rao and his agent Fakirji Garway were arrested by two young officers, Fidele Filose (a son of Michael Filose) and Hessing.⁷ An agreement was drawn up for a reconciliation between Nana Fadnavis and Amrit Rao and the articles were submitted to the British Resident for his approval.⁸

In September, it seemed that Sindhia would return

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 284.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 285.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 10 Sept. (41).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 10 Sept. (40).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 10 Sept. (42).

⁷ Ibid ; Khare, x, 4329. Sarje Rao Ghatge was freed after one year. Until 1809 he managed Sindhia's affairs, though on more than one occasion he quarrelled with him. In July 1809, he was killed in a scuffle.

⁸ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 405.

to the north, and to expedite his march Nana promised to pay him 15,00,000 of rupees.¹ Nana was now approached by Baji Rao, who asked him to take charge of the administration.² Nana's reluctance was removed by the Peshwa's persuasions, and he again accepted the office.

The last phase of Nana Fadnavis's administration began from the end of 1798. Scarcely, however, had he commenced his duties when he learnt of a plot formed against him by Govind Rao Kale and Sakharam Thate. They were arrested and the former was sent to Sinhagarh and the latter to Konkan.³ Baji Rao denied all knowledge of the plot, but Nana's suspicions were not removed. He avoided interfering in the affairs of the State as far as possible. The administration was practically carried on by Naro Pant Chakradeo.⁴

The interest of the years 1799 and 1800 lay in the foreign policy of the Government, and there is very little to record of the domestic events at Poona. The only event of importance was the death of the old minister. In a letter written to the Governor-General on the 13th March, the Resident referred to the 'continuance of the minister's indisposition' and remarked that 'the death of Nana Furnaveese' was 'much to be apprehended'.⁵ Nana died on the same night.

Next day, the Resident reported the minister's death to the Governor-General, in the course of which he remarked that with him had 'departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Government'.⁶ But even towards the end of Nana Fadnavis's career, little of that

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 29 Oct. (32).

² Peshwaichi Akher, p. 32.

³ Khare, xi, 4635, 4654; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 43; Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 15 Feb. (61), (63); Grant Duff, ii, p. 289. The details of the plot are not very clear. From Grant Duff and Peshwaichi Akher it seems that Baji Rao was behind the plot. But according to the Bengal Consultations and Patwardhan Papers, it was a conspiracy formed by Sindhia and Amrit Rao to arrest Nana and put further check on Baji Rao's authority.

⁴ Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 171.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 3 April (20).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 3 April (22).

‘wisdom and moderation’ was left. His last years were not the fitting epilogue to a glorious political career ; they were embittered by jealousy and suspicion, and it had been his fate to share the responsibility of the State but very little authority. But so long as he was alive, he tried to keep in check the conflicting interests in the country and carried on the Government in most difficult times. Even if after 1795 his management of affairs does not meet with complete approval, it is because he had once worked miracles in 1774.

The events in the early years of Baji Rao’s administration form one of the most confusing chapters of Maratha history. There were cross purposes at work and the disintegration of the Maratha Empire had already set in. Still, when Nana died, one felt that the last link connecting the once great Maratha Empire with Baji Rao’s administration was gone. After Nana’s death, it was Sindhia who practically managed the Peshwa’s administration. But Sindhia was bound to fail where Nana could not succeed, and after March of 1800 the Maratha State was rapidly heading for the crisis of 1802.

CHAPTER II

HOLKAR'S INVASION AND THE TREATY OF BASSEIN

NANA FADNAVIS's death did not improve Baji Rao's position. On the other hand, it removed the little check the minister had exercised on Sindhia's ambition and made him supreme. Until his departure to the north in November 1800, Sindhia was the only power that mattered ; and evidently he made no secret of this. He prevented Baji Rao from releasing his former minister, Govind Rao Kale, from prison¹ and took possession of Nana's jagir on the plea that Nana had promised him one crore of rupees.² The appointment of Amrit Rao in the place of Nana was also due to Sindhia's influence in the court. For some time past, probably from the time of Nana Fadnavis's restoration to power in 1798, cordial relations had not been maintained between Baji Rao and Amrit Rao, and it is doubtful whether Baji Rao would have appointed his brother as his minister of his own accord. But Amrit Rao's cause was supported by Sindhia's Diwan, Baloba Tatia,³ and the appointment was probably suggested by Sindhia.⁴ Baji Rao perhaps did not think it prudent to oppose Sindhia's wish but, in order to guard against any ambitious design on Amrit Rao's part, the Peshwa instructed him to consult on all occasions Baloji Kunjar and Balwant Rao Naganath.⁵

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 1 May (1).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 1 May (3).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 1 May (4). In a letter dated the 28th March, the Resident informs the Governor-General that 'the Paishwa has appointed . . . Emrut Rao, to be his minister . . .' According to Peshwaichi Akher the clothes of investiture were given on the 23rd April (Peshwaichi Akher, p. 89 ; Riyasat, p. 153). It apparently refers to the ceremony and not the appointment itself which had taken place earlier.

Under these circumstances Amrit Rao had little power in the administration. His situation was made still worse by the hostilities between Sindhia and Baloba Tatia and other Senvi Sardars. At the end of April, Sindhia arrested Baloba Tatia and sent him to Ahmadnagar, where he died. Many of his associates were imprisoned or put to death. Sarje Rao Ghatge became Sindhia's Prime Minister.

It was about the time that the Company's possessions in the Karnatak, as well as the Peshwa's territories, were being ravaged by the depredations of Dhundia Wagh, a fugitive from Seringapatam, who had accepted service under the Raja of Kolhapur. The British Government had asked the Peshwa to permit the Company's troops to enter the Maratha frontier in pursuit of Dhundia.¹ After some hesitation, the Peshwa consented.² On the part of the Poona Government, Dhondo Pant Gokhale and Ganpat Rao Panse had already taken the field against Dhundia ;³ but the former was attacked and killed in battle ; and Dhundia Wagh carried on his depredations till September, when he was defeated and killed by Arthur Wellesley at Manoli in Belgaum district.

At Poona, the destruction of the Senvis was followed by the ruin of Nana Fadnavis's associates. On the 14th June, Nana's friends were invited to the Peshwa's palace to consider the adoption by Nana's widow. There Baji Rao charged them with conspiracy and had them arrested by Sindhia's troops. Among those who were seized were Naro Pant Chakradeo, Dhondo Pant Limaye, Chimnaji Khande Rao, Raghu Pant Godbole and Bajoba Sirolkar.⁴ Naro Pant Chakradeo's arrest immediately led to a fight between Sindhia's troops and a Rohilla chief named Shah Mir Khan, and the Arab

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (19).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 89 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 172 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 304 ; Khare, xii, 5575.

guards of Nana's house readily joined Shah Mir Khan and began firing upon Sindhia's men. They were at last overpowered and compelled to surrender ; however, their lives were spared and they were allowed to retire.¹ Chinto Pant Deshmukh, who was one of the arrested, was freed and given work of the Fadnish.² The people who now carried on the administration were Baloji Kunjar, Baijnath Bhat and Balwant Rao Naganath.³

On the 20th June, the Resident informed the Governor-General that Moroba Fadnavis was likely to be the new Prime Minister and that he had been called to Poona.⁴ On the 23rd June, he again reported that Moroba Fadnavis had arrived near the city and that Amrit Rao was to be ' put under personal restraint '.⁵ Of late, his unpopularity with Sindhia had considerably increased, and Sindhia insisted that he should leave Poona and stay at his own jagir.⁶ It was given out to the Resident by the Peshwa's agents that Amrit Rao had been plotting against Sindhia, and had been concerned with Naro Pant Chakradeo and others in the plot against Baji Rao.⁷ Captain Palmer was also informed that a letter from Amrit Rao to Yashwant Rao Holkar had been intercepted.⁸ Amrit Rao must have guessed that his further stay at Poona would be unsafe for him. He left Poona on the 22nd July,⁹ and towards the end of the month arrived at Bassein.¹⁰ Moroba Fadnavis, who had been brought to Poona to supplant Amrit Rao, hesitated to accept office,¹¹ and after a short stay at Poona was disgusted at the maladministration and asked for the

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (28), (29) ; Khare, xii, 5575, 5588, 5589 ; Peshwaichi Akher, pp. 89-90 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 172.

² Khare, xii, 5602 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 172.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (29).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (30).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (35).

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (41).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (39) ; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 96.

¹⁰ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (43).

¹¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (31).

Peshwa's permission to retire.¹ On the 14th July, Captain Palmer reported that Sindhia would probably himself assume the office of the Diwan.² About this time the Resident had also learnt that Sindhia had made a proposal to the Chhatrapati of Satara to marry his daughter and administer the Poona Government as the Chhatrapati's Diwan in the Peshwa's place.³ But the Chhatrapati did not consider that his position would improve under Sindhia and divulged the plot to Baji Rao.⁴

However, Sindhia's stay at Poona was cut short by the activities of Yashwant Rao Holkar in the north. It will be remembered that after Sindhia's treacherous attack on Holkar's camp at Poona on the 14th September 1797, Yashwant Rao had fled to Nagpur.⁵ He professed to act in the name of his nephew Khande Rao who was a prisoner with Sindhia, and soon gathered a considerable number of followers round him. An attempt to check his activities by Dudrenec's troops proved unavailing. Yashwant Rao carried on warfare in Malwa and ravaged Sindhia's territories. Matters soon came to such a crisis that Sindhia made preparations for departure to the north and, in November 1800, left Poona.⁶ But before his departure he had secured from the Peshwa bills amounting to 47,00,000 of rupees.⁷ Sarje Rao Ghatge was left at Poona with four battalions and ten thousand horse.⁸

At Poona, Baji Rao continued his quarrel with the old chiefs, and by the middle of 1801 many of them had lost their saranjams. Among those whose properties were confiscated were Sakharam Thorat and Kashi Rao Holkar.⁹ On the 1st April, Baji Rao invited

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (35).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Sec Chapter I.

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 308.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Peshwaichi Akher, pp. 103-4 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 173.

Madhu Rao Rastia and Kashi Rao Rastia to his court, and arrested them.¹ Their sons were also imprisoned and their houses plundered.² Madhu Rao was sent a prisoner to Raigarh,³ but his son, Balwant Rao, escaped from Shanwarwada where he had been imprisoned, and fled to Talekot.⁴

Early in the year, the Peshwa had been called upon to cope with the insurgents in various parts of his territory. The chief insurgents were Jivaji Yashwant and Vithoji, younger brother of Yashwant Rao Holkar. Vithoji Holkar began his depredations in the districts round about Pandharpur. He was soon joined by two of Sindhia's officers, Yashwant Rao Ramkrishna and Krishna Rao Modi, and began to carry on his devastation in Amrit Rao's name.⁵ Baji Rao sent Balkrishna Gangadhar Babanpage against them, but he too joined the rebels.⁶ But Balkrishna Gangadhar's troops were defeated by Ganpat Rao Panse, and he came to Poona and sought for pardon.⁷ Jivaji Yashwant's brother also arrived at Poona under a guarantee of personal safety and began negotiations with the Peshwa.⁸ But while the negotiations were in progress he was treacherously seized and his troops were attacked and dispersed.⁹ Balkrishna Gangadhar was also placed under arrest.¹⁰ Furthermore, in April, Vithoji Holkar was seized by Bapu Gokhale and sent to Poona. Baji Rao wished to make an example of him ; he was given 200 strokes and afterwards tied to the foot of an elephant

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 30 April (32) ; Peshwaichi Akher, pp. 101-4 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 173.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 30 April (32).

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 310.

⁴ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 105 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 173.

⁵ Riyasat, pp. 178-9 ; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 101.

⁶ Riyasat, p. 178.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 16 April (63).

⁸ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 16 April (63), 30 April (32).

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 16 April (32).

¹⁰ Ibid.

and trampled to death.¹ It is said that this barbarous mode of execution was suggested by the Peshwa's favourite, Baloji Kunjar.² Baji Rao also had special cause for anger on account of the fact that Vithoji professed to act on Amrit Rao's behalf.³

The rebellions were crushed, but there were other causes for anxiety. In the beginning of June, the Resident was 'credibly informed' that Chimnaji Appa was plotting against his brother, and was 'in correspondence not only with some of the principal members of the State', but also with the neighbouring Governments.⁴ About four weeks later, the Resident learnt that as a result of an information received, the Peshwa had arrested Nana Fadnavis's father-in-law, Dada Gadre.⁵ The Resident was informed that Dada Gadre was a party to a conspiracy to depose Baji Rao and raise Chimnaji Appa to the Peshwaship. This revolution was to be effected with the help of the Nizam. Dada Gadre and Mir Fakiruddin (the Resident's Munshi) were to be the ministers in the new administration and Ram Chandra Parashuram was to be the commander of the army.⁶ On the face of it, there seems to be no foundation for this story. It is extremely unlikely that in any revolution at Poona the Resident's Munshi would be raised to the office of minister. Mir Fakiruddin denied knowledge of the plot, and suspected that Sadashiv Mankeshwar and Baloji Kunjar were responsible for this false accusation.⁷ The Resident also reported to the Governor-General that the Peshwa's informer stated to him that the plot 'was a new contrivance of his own to ensnare and betray' Dada Gadre

¹ Khare, xiii, 6027 ; Rajwade, x, 525 ; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 101 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 174 ; Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 3 June (49) ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 310.

² Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 174.

³ Khare, xiii, pp. 6857-8.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 9 July (131).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 14 August (25).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

and was 'wholly unknown to the principals and Chimnaji Appa'.¹

On the 23rd June, Sarje Rao returned to Poona from the south,² and persistently demanded money from the Peshwa. On the 26th June, Baloji Kunjar invited him to his house and tried to place him under arrest, but Sarje Rao apprehended danger in time, and escaped to his encampment.³ It proved difficult to conciliate Sarje Rao after this, and serious trouble looked imminent. Sarje Rao called his whole force to Poona;⁴ the Peshwa looked for assistance to the sons of Mahadeo Parashuram Patwardhan who were then staying at Poona with 1,000 horse, and asked them not to leave the city.⁵ But Sarje Rao received a message from Sindhia to join him immediately and left Poona on the morning of the 28th.⁶

In the meantime, Holkar had carried on his depredations in Malwa. In June, he defeated Sindhia's officer, Hessing, who was sent to oppose him and plundered Ujjain. But his attack on Sindhia's artillery in July was effectively checked by Sindhia's officer, Major Brownrigg. In October, Sindhia's army inflicted a crushing defeat on Holkar near Indore and plundered his capital. Proposals of peace were then made by Sindhia, but after some consideration they were rejected by Holkar. Instead, he planned to carry on the war in the Deccan.

In this, Holkar was probably actuated by the consideration that the power of the Poona Government had grown extremely weak. Unless Sindhia should return to the Deccan and come to the Peshwa's assistance, the Peshwa's territories would fall an easy prey to Holkar's invasion. If he could strike successfully at Poona and constitute himself the real custodian of the

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 14 August (25).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 23 July (11).

³ Khare, xiii, 6084-5; Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 23 July (11); Grant Duff, ii, p. 311.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 23 July (11).

⁵ Khare, xiii, 6085.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1801, 23 July (12).

Peshwa's authority, he would give a rude shock to Sindhia's prestige and power in the south and correspondingly increase his own. It is not unlikely (as Holkar afterwards stated to Close) that he had been encouraged by Amrit Rao and the Patwardhans.¹ According to the author of the Peshwanchi Bakhar, after his departure from Poona Amrit Rao sent one Babu Khataokar and another person to Holkar and called him to the south.² This account seems more probable in the light of an information received by the Resident's Munshi on the 24th July 1800, that Amrit Rao was trying to communicate with Yashwant Rao Holkar.³ Vithoji Holkar's death may be one of the factors influencing Yashwant Rao's decision, but I doubt whether this incident, unfortunate though it was, deserves the importance attributed to it. Surely Grant Duff's statement, that Yashwant Rao 'who loved his brother, vowed vengeance on those whom he considered his murderers'⁴ should not be taken too literally. Soon after Vithoji's death, Holkar wrote a letter to the Peshwa in which he declared that he bore no ill-will to the Poona Government for his brother's death, since it was the result of his own misdeeds.⁵ Even if the sincerity of this letter is doubted, his brother's death afforded an insufficient motive for the cost and danger of his expedition. The cause is rather to be sought in the old enmity between Sindhia and Holkar.

In the month of May, Holkar arrived near Chalisgaon, on the south of the Tapti.⁶ A portion of his army was left at Thalner, under Jivaji Yashwant, Mir Khan and Fateh Singh Mane, while another section under Shah Ahmad Khan, Nago Jivaji and Abjai Laxman Lar was

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (58).

² Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 173.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (41).

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 310.

⁵ Peshwa Daftar, xli, 27.

⁶ Riyasat, p. 194 ; Khare, xiii, 6383.

sent in advance.¹ On the 31st May, Holkar approached the Godavari ; a corps from his army crossed the river and came near Kopargaon, where it raised contributions.² Holkar next wrote a letter to Poona, professing obedience and apologizing for his ' large retinue ' and sent a number of presents to the Peshwa, consisting of ten pieces of fine cloth, one elephant and two horses, which the Peshwa, after some hesitation, accepted.³ Two or three days later, Holkar demanded that the Peshwa should acknowledge as the legal representative of Holkar's family, Khande Rao, the son of Malhar Rao Holkar, at that time a prisoner with Sindhia. Khande Rao was to be put in possession of jagirs rightfully belonging to him and Sindhia should be persuaded to make peace with Holkar, and give up a part of his territory in the north to Khande Rao, according to an alleged partition-agreement.⁴

The demands of Yashwant Rao Holkar make it clear that the solution of the difficulties was not in the Peshwa's hands. It was impossible to compel Sindhia to make friends with Holkar at the cost of what he would have regarded as the loss of his honour and fortune. Besides, Baji Rao had no more control over Sindhia than he had over Holkar.

At Poona, neither Holkar's professions of friendship nor his presents succeeded in allaying the distrust and fear in the heart of the Peshwa. Baji Rao asked him to advance no farther and promised to bring about a settlement with Daulat Rao Sindhia.⁵ But his assurances had no effect on Holkar's march, nor did he succeed better in his attempts to build up a resistance against the invader. Opinion in the Peshwa's court was

¹ Riyasat, p. 194 ; Khare, xiii, 6384. Shah Ahmad Khan is mentioned as Shamat Khan in Patwardhan letters.

² *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 62.

³ Ibid ; Riyasat, p. 194 ; Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (6) ; Khare, xiv, 6387.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (1).

⁵ Riyasat, p. 194 ; Khare, xiv, 6387.

by no means generally hostile to Holkar. The vakil of the Raja of Berar advised the Peshwa to make peace with him.¹ Gopal Rao Munshi, hoping to increase his importance, entered into correspondence with the invader, for which he was placed under arrest with his brother and son.² A similar fate was shared by Nana's cousin, Moroba Fadnavis, and nearly the whole of the Fadke family for suspected treason.³ An attempt was made to send Yasodabai, the widow of the late Peshwa Savai Madhav Rao, to some hill fort, but it proved unsuccessful, owing to her repeated objections.⁴ The Peshwa had already fortified the fortress of Purandhar as a base to fall back upon, if necessary, and now tried to raise an army.⁵ To build up within a short time an army that would successfully confront the strong battalions of Holkar, might have been accomplished by a strong and energetic man, but for Baji Rao it was impossible. Baloji Kunjar, the Diwan of the Peshwa and his favourite, proved a broken reed. Bapu Gokhale who might have been of help was absent from the city and the southern jagirdars were sulky and evasive. To crown all, the Peshwa had not sufficient money to pay up the arrears of the troops in his service. In June 1802, the Mankari cavalry of the Peshwa mutinied for arrears of pay and tried to seize Baloji Kunjar and enforce payment. Baloji Kunjar sought shelter in the Peshwa's palace, and the leader of the mutiny, Bhagwant Singh, after an altercation with the Peshwa, left Poona with a party of about 1,500 men.⁶ Nevertheless, the task of collecting troops was carried on with a certain amount of zeal, and the force in the neighbourhood of Poona which at the end of June amounted to not more than 3,000 horse and 2,000 infantry, was gradually augmented, so that in August

¹ Riyasat, p. 195.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (2), (5) ; Khare, xiv, 6399.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (5) ; Khare, xiv, 6399.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (1).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (2).

the Peshwa could send a body of 4,000 cavalry and 1,000 infantry, to check Fateh Singh Mane near the river Tapti.¹ But the army so collected was often nothing but a crowd, which knew very little of war, officered by men who knew hardly more. Those who desired a soldier's life poured in, to be accepted without question, and the rank of officer was given to men like Kadir Khan, a city butcher, who gave up his butcher's knife and took to arms.² Some attempts were made to improve the artillery. A factory for casting guns was established near Parvati Hill and entrusted to the charge of Govind Rao Paranjpai.³

In July, Holkar's general, Shah Ahmad Khan, defeated a party under Narasingh Khande Rao, a jagirdar of the Peshwa, and killed him.⁴ Fateh Singh Mane also repulsed a corps of Sindhia marching from Ahmadnagar.⁵ He then joined Mir Khan and made preparations for the siege of Ahmadnagar.⁶ August brought no change. Sadashiv Rao arrived for the Peshwa's help with a large force from Sindhia and proceeded towards Ahmadnagar.⁷ Fateh Singh Mane remained for some time in the south of the Tapti.⁸ One of his detachments moved southwards and, arriving at the north bank of the Bhima, opened a cannonade on the Peshwa's troops guarding the ford. The troops of the Peshwa fell back, and Fateh Singh Mane crossed the river with little opposition.⁹

The rapid advance of the invading army produced no little disturbance at Poona and the anxiety was increased by the flight of Madhu Rao Rastia, who bribed the

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (20).

² Khare, xiv, 6405.

³ Khare, xiv, 6396, 6406.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (4).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (5).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (6).

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (28).

⁸ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (20).

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (28).

guards of his prison and made his escape.¹ The political prisoners were immediately sent to hill forts and the Peshwa dismissed from his court all Holkar's people except his vakil, Paraji Pant.² Baji Rao next tried reconciliation with Holkar and proposed to send him a note of honour, but was hindered by the objections of his military chiefs.³ The Peshwa then sent for Amrit Rao who was at Nasik and tried to regain his support, offering him the post of Fadnavis and releasing his associate Moroba.⁴ But Amrit Rao continued to hold aloof. In the meantime, the enemy advanced unopposed. In September, Fateh Singh approached Pandharpur and levied contributions.⁵ About the middle of the month, the Arabs in the service of the Peshwa, stationed near Pandharpur, mutinied for arrears of pay. They plundered the village of Wahim on their way, and came to Poona on the 16th, where they looted the bazaars. The troops were called in and some of the mutineers were arrested and put to death.⁶ Meanwhile, Sadashiv Rao arrived at Ahmadnagar and sent a letter to the Peshwa asking for money.⁷ His message was the signal for further alarm in the city and people began to flee to the Konkan.⁸ The Peshwa lost heart, and on the 25th ordered relays of palankeen-bearers and detachments of horse for his departure in case of danger. But the next day, these arrangements were cancelled and he started levying contributions in the city.⁹

The incompetence of the Peshwa's army was first brought to light in an action between Nana Purandhare and Fateh Singh Mane near Baramati on the 8th

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (28).

² Ibid.

³ Riyasat, p. 197.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (35).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (40).

⁶ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1802, 25 Sept., p. 4453.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (40).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

October. The Peshwa's troops 'behaved with a shameful want of spirit' and within less than an hour the whole army was dispersed. Among the Peshwa's officers, Ganpat Rao and Maloji Ghorpade were wounded, while Pandoji Kunjar fled at an early stage of the battle. The State flag (Jari-Patka) was torn from the staff, to save the disgrace of its capture by the enemy, and 'brought off by one of the fugitives'.¹ The flag-staff was captured by Fateh Singh and sent back to Nana Purandhare.² After the battle Fateh Singh approached Baramati and raised contributions.³ Then he was joined by Holkar and visited the temple at Jejuri.⁴ Holkar's army then encamped at Gardonde, near Poona.⁵

The panic which the victory of Fateh Singh caused at Poona was extreme. In the city and around it, the Peshwa's Government was virtually suspended and panic reigned. 'I cannot describe to your Highness [Excellency?],' the Resident wrote to the Governor-General, 'the melancholy scenery which this place at present exhibits. The assessments on the city are carried on with so much rigour that the inhabitants fly towards the neighbouring hills in the hope of securing their property. On the road they were generally met by the Pindarries, who plunder and abuse them. These banditti carry their depredations to the very outskirts of the city, and the cultivation on the ground is unprotected, the Ryots are cutting in an unripe state as the only means of saving something from the crop'.⁶ The Peshwa's court offered a scene of no less confusion. The idea of applying for British assistance was detested by the Maratha chiefs, and great dissatisfaction had been caused by the civilities paid by the Peshwa to Sir John Malcolm a few days

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (46); Khare, xiv, 6447, 6448, 6449, 6458, 6459.

² Khare, xiv, 6449; Riyasat, p. 199.

³ Khare, xiv, 6459, 6460.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Khare, xiv, 6461; Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (47).

⁶ Quoted in *Wellesley's Despatches*, v, p. 9 (Maratha Supplement).

earlier.¹ Raghunath Rao, the agent for English affairs, was looked upon with suspicion and openly threatened for his attachment to the English by Narayan Rao Vaidya, the Berar-Vakil.² This state of affairs at the court made confusion worse confounded and, as the Resident wrote to the Governor of Bombay on the 20th October, the Peshwa 'was not much master of his own will'.³ However, on the 14th October, the Peshwa secretly sent Raghunath Rao to the English Resident, to enter into a general defensive alliance with the Company. By it, the Peshwa was to subsidize a corps of British troops consisting of six battalions with artillery; he agreed to grant a jagir for the troops from his territories on the Tungabhadra, and agreed that the corps was to be permanently stationed in his own territory. But the treaty was by no means to bind the Peshwa to any conditions regarding his relations to the servants and subjects over whom he was to exercise absolute control.⁴

From Baramati Holkar sent a letter to Baji Rao, which was received at Poona on the 23rd October. In this letter, Holkar professed that it was not his intention to enter on hostilities against the Peshwa—his real object was a conciliation with Daulat Rao Sindhia. For this purpose he asked the Peshwa to send Baloji Kunjar, Dajiba Deshmukh, Babu Rao Angria and Sindhia's wakil, Nimbaji Bhaskar, to his camp.⁵ It is difficult to believe in the sincerity of Holkar, and at Poona the letter was received with suspicion. As none of the people whom Holkar mentioned could be prevailed on to visit him, next day four other persons, Raghunath Dhondodeo Bhagvat, Abaji Shankar, Balaji Naik and Narayan Rao Vaidya were sent to Holkar's

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (46).

² Ibid.

³ Forrest, *op. cit.*, p. 550.

⁴ *Wellesley's Despatches*, iii, pp. 3-26.

⁵ Khare, xiv, 6466; Riyasat, pp. 200-1.

camp. But Holkar refused to see them and declared that unless Baloji Kunjar and Nimbaji Bhaskar would come and see him he would not pay any attention to the peace proposals from Poona.¹

The attempt to conciliate Holkar thus failed. These measures were naturally detestable to Sindhia's general, Sadashiv Rao, who in the meantime hurried southwards and encamped between the city and Holkar's army. Apprehending that Baji Rao might leave the city or come to an understanding with Holkar, he urged him either to accompany the army to the field or stay in the city with two of Sindhia's battalions, which would act as his bodyguard and also perhaps, as Sadashiv Rao hoped, prevent him leaving the city.²

On the 25th October, the battle was fought at Hadapsar, near Poona. On the same day Baji Rao sent his agent, Raghunath Rao, to the British Resident with the draft of a treaty. The Peshwa agreed to subsidize a body of British troops consisting of six native battalions, with their due proportion of artillerymen, ordnance and stores, and to grant a *jaedad* for the subsistence of the corps, from his territories bordering on the Tungabhadra. This corps was to be permanently stationed in the Peshwa's territory, and was to be employed only on 'defensive principle of action'. The body was to be permitted to be employed 'for the purpose of chastising such of his dependants as engaged in an obstinate rebellion against his authority.' The Peshwa would abide by the decision of the British Government in regard to his disputes with the Nizam. The British Government would give the Peshwa a free hand in dealing with his 'relatives, servants and subjects' and the Peshwa on his part would not carry on any hostile measure against the friends and dependants of the Company. A body of the Company's troops was to be

¹ Riyasat, pp. 201-2 ; Khare, xiv, 6471.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (48).

immediately kept ready so that the Peshwa might call for military assistance, if necessary.¹

The battle began about half past nine in the morning, and lasted till twelve. Holkar's army consisted of twenty-eight battalions, of which fourteen were commanded by European officers, 5,000 Rohillas, 25,000 cavalry and 100 field pieces. Sindhia's army amounted to four battalions, trained by De Boigne, and 20 guns, assisted by six battalions under Ambaji Inglia and 10,000 horse. Sindhia's army was joined by the Peshwa's force and the whole army was placed under the command of Sadashiv Rao.² The Peshwa's troops opened a brisk fire and for sometime offered a strong opposition to Holkar. But Holkar settled the issue of the battle with a cavalry charge and cut through all opposition. Sadashiv Rao's army was put to rout; Holkar gained a complete victory and captured the baggages, stores and guns of the enemy. But the battle was won with a heavy loss of life and Holkar himself was seriously wounded. The army of Holkar did not follow up the victory, a few stragglers came very near the city but retired, and in the evening the army encamped near the field of battle.³

On the morning of the 25th, the Peshwa had set out from the city to witness the battle; but as the tide turned against him, he retired to the outskirts of Poona. He spent the night in a garden at Wadgaon,⁴ left Wadgaon next day, and arrived at Sinhagarh with some of the chiefs, and about 7,000 horse, some infantry and five guns.⁵ Holkar, who had always been eager to make a show of obedience to the Peshwa, sent him a supply of food from Poona.⁶ In the meantime, Baji

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 63.

² *Wellesley's Despatches*, v, p. 10 (Maratha Supplement).

³ *Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons.* 1803, 21 Feb. (56); Grant Duff, ii, pp. 316-17; Khare, xiv, 6466, 6468; Forrest, op. cit., p. 550.

⁴ Khare, xiv, 6470.

⁵ *Ibid*; Forrest, loc. cit.

⁶ *Riyasat*, p. 106.

Rao left Sinhagarh attended by only 25 horsemen and arrived at Dihivud in the Ghats.¹ He then retired to Mahad and was joined by his household troops.²

Holkar came to Poona only to find that the Peshwa had escaped. The flight of the Peshwa obviously landed him in difficulties. Probably it was his plan to keep the Peshwa in his palace, entrust Amrit Rao with the real administration of the State and substitute himself in the place of Sindhia. Unless he could capture the Peshwa's person, there was no chance of his project being fulfilled. It would have been possible for him to seize the Peshwa by force, but he was reluctant to use it at this stage, and tried to maintain a show of obedience to his master. In case of his failure to bring the Peshwa back to Poona, the courses open to Holkar were either to make Amrit Rao the head of the Poona State, or to abolish the office of Peshwa, and invest the Raja of Satara with the former authority of his house. As Amrit Rao at first showed some unwillingness to respond to Holkar's invitation, it was supposed that Holkar would release the Raja of Satara.³ It is doubtful whether this plan would have succeeded. Though the office of Peshwa had lost much of its former glory, and the instructions from Poona were often disregarded by the Maratha sardars, the Peshwa enjoyed a unique position in Maratha sentiment. Any attempt by Holkar to do away with this office would have been looked upon with disfavour. The restoration of the Raja of Satara would have involved difficulties too. The Raja, though a descendant of Shivaji, and in theory the master of the Peshwa, was in reality his prisoner. For all political purposes, his power was long dead, and popular opinion was accustomed to the fact. Curious though it may seem, any attempt at the resurrection of the Raja would have seemed nothing short of a

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 342.

² *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, pp. 344, 345, 352 ; Khare, xiv, 6473.

³ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 344.

revolution. In spite of Holkar's efforts to make these dry bones live again, the power of the Chhatrapati could never have been revived.

Holkar sent an invitation to the Resident to see him on the 27th October. He also had an interview with the Assistant Resident, Strachey. He complained to them that Baji Rao had been misled by Baloji Kunjar and Sindhia's wakil, Nimbaji Bhaskar, and that he had been following a course of conduct which had made him highly unpopular with the Maratha chiefs. Some of them had complained to Holkar and he had felt it 'incumbent to rectify' the Poona Government.¹ However, immediately after his occupation of Poona, Holkar began to wreak vengeance on his enemies. Ambaji Inglia's house was plundered and burnt; the houses of Baji Rao Barve, Khande Rao Rastia, Balwant Rao Nagonath and Narayan Rao Vaidya were also plundered. Chinto Pant Deshmukh, Baijnath Bhat, Aba Kale and Anyaba Rahatekar were further disgraced and beaten.² Baji Rao had entrusted the administration of the city to Aba Kale. The charge was taken from his hand and given to Holkar's men, Harnath, Nago Jivaji and Shekhji.³

Holkar also had sent a body of troops to Juner to bring back Amrit Rao.⁴ After some hesitation, Amrit Rao set out on the 3rd November, with his son Vinayak Rao, and arrived in the suburb of Poona on the 7th.⁵ There he was joined by Holkar and escorted in procession to the outskirts of the city. A durbar was held in the garden of Balwant Rao, and Amrit Rao received a large number of visitors including Moroba Fadnavis, Baba Fadke, Sridhar Pandit and a host of other

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (58), (59). The date of Strachey's interview cannot be ascertained from the Records.

² Khare, xiv, p. 7881, Nos. 6483, 6485, 6486, 6487, 6492; Riyasat, p. 208.

³ Khare, xiv, 6475, 6481, 6491.

⁴ Khare, xiv, 6478.

⁵ Khare, xiv, 6485; *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 355.

Maratha chiefs and their officers.¹ A new Jari-Patka was set up and letters were sent to the Maratha chiefs inviting them to the city.² The old adherents of Nana Fadnavis flocked to Poona and gathered round Amrit Rao.³ But if Holkar thought that the coming of Amrit Rao would solve all his difficulties, he was to be disappointed. On the day of his arrival at Poona, Amrit Rao received a letter from Baji Rao and hesitated to commit himself further.⁴ He rejected the proposal that he should place himself at the head of the State, but he consented to accept the office for his son, Vinayak Rao. It was settled between Holkar and Amrit Rao, that if it could be ascertained that Baji Rao would not return to Poona, Vinayak Rao was to be installed as the Peshwa, Amrit Rao would act as his Diwan, and Holkar would be in charge of the military. For this purpose it was necessary that Vinayak Rao should be adopted by the widow of Savai Madhav Rao, who was at that time a prisoner at the fort of Raigarh. But the idea of a sudden change was favoured neither by Amrit Rao nor by other influential people in the State, such as Baba Fadke and Moroba Fadnavis. Amrit Rao watched anxiously for some move on Sindhia's part and still corresponded with Baji Rao, hoping for his return.⁵

Holkar's most pressing needs were financial. He had with him an army of more than 30,000 horse, 8,000 or 9,000 infantry and a large artillery.⁶ The army was long in arrears, and in November the troops of Mir Khan and Shah Ahmad Khan became so mutinous that their chiefs struck their tents and began to march.⁷ Money was expected from Baba Fadke

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 355 ; Khare, xiv, 6485 ; Forrest, op. cit., pp. 560, 561.

² Forrest, op. cit., p. 561 ; *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 355.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 328 ; Forrest, op. cit., pp. 565, 571 ; *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 359.

⁶ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 344.

⁷ Forrest, op. cit., p. 565.

and the killadar of Lohogarh, but these expectations came to nothing.¹ Holkar fell back on the only course left and tried to raise contributions in the city. This attempt was given up after a few days and the charge of collecting money was left to the officials of the city under the control of Haripant Bhawe.² Poona once more experienced the cruelties of a foreign army. The floors in the houses were dug up in search of valuables and people who were believed to be wealthy were tortured for their money. Vireswar Bhat and Jivaji Pant Nene were beaten to death, and there were people who committed suicide.³

The revolution at Poona had made the position of the English Resident particularly delicate ; and he applied to the court for permission to leave. On the 10th of November, Holkar returned him a polite answer, expressing his consent, and offered to help him with an escort.⁴ No effort was spared to win the good will of the Resident and impress upon him the justice of the cause of the party in power at Poona. On the 16th November, Close paid a visit to Amrit Rao at his camp, where Holkar was also present. Amrit Rao attributed the Peshwa's flight to the 'thoughtlessness of youth' and asked for the Resident's advice. Close, however, did not commit himself.⁵ On the 18th, Amrit Rao paid the return visit to Close, and on the 21st Close received his passport bearing Amrit Rao's seal.⁶ But his departure was still delayed by a message that Holkar wanted to see him before he left. Close received information through secret channels that Holkar intended to make an attempt to seize the Peshwa and wanted to postpone the Resident's departure until

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 359.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 21 Feb. (80) ; Riyasat, p. 216.

³ Riyasat, p. 227 ; Khare, xiv, 6507.

⁴ Forrest : *State Papers*, p. 562.

⁵ Id., I p. 569-71.

⁶ Id., pp. 571-2.

then.¹ Mir Khan had marched with a large force with orders to release Savai Madhav Rao's widow and arrest the Peshwa and bring him back to Poona.² The march of this army frightened the Peshwa so much that he fled to Suvarndrug.³ Mir Khan's failure was a great shock to Holkar's expectations, but after this no attempt was made to prevent the Resident's departure. Close paid a visit to Holkar on the 26th, and on the next day to Amrit Rao.⁴ He left Poona on the morning of the 28th November.⁵

In the meantime, Baji Rao had sent his agents, Naro Pant and Bapuji Rao, to Bombay, and on the 4th November they presented a letter to the Governor.⁶ In that letter, Baji Rao referred to the friendship that had existed between his father and the English, and asked for the protection of the Bombay Government. He wrote that his servants 'Holkar and company . . . entered upon the carrying on of intrigues and misconduct portending the worst confusions' and 'might prosecute base conduct' towards him. So he had 'resolved to seek an asylum' with the Government of Bombay. He wanted the Governor to undertake to protect him from Holkar, make provisions for his expenses, and place no restraint on his personal liberty. The Peshwa also desired to be provided with 'large armed vessels, well-equipped with warlike stores' and placed under the care of 'an Englishman of a courteous disposition, courageous in his nature and who will act conformably' to his pleasure. The next day a reply was sent to the Peshwa in which the Governor declared that he had no right to commit the British Government to any policy until he received the instructions of the Governor-General, but as the Peshwa was an ally of the English, the Governor was sending him 'a large vessel of strength' under Captain Kennedy, 'a good

¹ Forrest, op. cit., pp. 572-4.

² *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 367.

³ Id., p. 369.

⁴ Forrest, op. cit., pp. 574, 575.

⁵ Id., p. 576.

⁶ Id., pp. 551-2.

and discreet man'. The Governor closed the letter with a hope that the Peshwa would consult his 'real interest by sedulously cultivating and seeking to improve alliance' with his 'true friends, the English'.¹ Accordingly, the ship *Herculean* was placed at the disposal of Captain Kennedy, with instructions to afford protection to the Peshwa if he would 'seek an asylum at Bankot or desire to embark on that ship'.² He was at the same time warned 'not to go beyond general assurances of friendship'. A few days later 'two lakhs of rupees in gold' were shipped on the Company's cruiser *Antelope* and sent to Captain Kennedy, so as to enable him to comply with requests on the part of the Peshwa. But he was instructed to keep it a secret until an application should be made for a loan, and the Peshwa should agree to pledge his territories in the Gaekwar's dominion as security, and pay an interest at nine per cent. per annum on the loan.³

It is not difficult to understand the attitude taken by the Government of Bombay. The authorities in Bombay were eager to receive the Peshwa into the territory, but afraid to commit themselves fully without directions from the Governor-General. In a letter addressed to the Governor of Bombay on the 9th November, Close expressed his view on the subject. The Bombay Government he considered should assist the Peshwa but 'without committing ourselves to a degree which might eventually be hurtful to the public interest or embarrassing to his Excellency . . .'.⁴ But though the Bombay Government hesitated fully to adopt the Peshwa's cause, the Governor-General welcomed the situation. On the 29th November, Wellesley sent his instructions to the Governor of Bombay and to Colonel Close.⁵ Close was informed that the Governor-General

¹ Forrest, *State Papers*, pp. 557-8.

² *Id.* p. 558.

³ *Id.*, p. 563.

⁴ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 356.

⁵ Forrest, *op. cit.*, pp. 578-82.

considered it 'extremely desirable that the Peshwa should immediately place himself under the protection of the British power by retiring to Bombay'. The British Government would then communicate with Holkar for the re-establishment of the Peshwa, and also open a negotiation with Sindhia. The Government of Bombay was directed to secure Baji Rao's assent to the terms of the defensive alliance and to the cession of his territories in Gujarat. All opposition to the Peshwa was to be overcome, and, if necessary, the Governor-General would risk a war with the Maratha power. As soon as the Peshwa should land in Bombay, a defensive alliance was to be concluded with him. The Bombay Government might relax their former demands and frame a treaty on the propositions to which the Peshwa had already assented, provided it did not preclude the British Government's eventual conclusion of defensive engagements with Sindhia.

Before these instructions were received by the Bombay Government, the Peshwa had practically given himself up to the English. He applied to the Bombay Government for two battalions, and for some time it was his plan to stay at Suvarndrug. But by the middle of December, a party of Holkar's troops arrived at Suvarndrug, where the Peshwa was staying, and carried off Anand Rao, the killadar of the place.¹ But before they arrived, the Peshwa had left Suvarndrug on the 1st December,² and sailed for Bassein, where he landed on the 17th December.³ There he was met by Close, and on the next day discussions regarding the terms of the treaty began. The propositions which the Peshwa had made on the 25th October supplied the basis of the treaty, but new conditions were added to it. The main discussion centred round the territory that the Peshwa was to relinquish for the maintenance of

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 386.

² *Id.*, p. 372.

³ *Id.*, p. 387.

the subsidiary troops. It had been the Peshwa's intention to make the whole cession from the Tunga-bhadra districts. But the Bombay Government insisted on the cession of territories from the Peshwa's share of Gujarat and the district of Savanur.¹ On the 26th December, the Peshwa notified his unwillingness to cede the pargana of Surat Atavisy. Raghunath suggested to Close that the Suba of Ahmadabad without the right of Mulukgiri (lit. foreign expedition) be substituted in its place.² A settlement was finally arrived at, by which the Peshwa agreed to cede territories from four different parts of his possessions—Gujarat and the territories south of it; territories on the south of the Tapti; territories between the Tapti and the Narbada and the territories near the Tungabhadra.³

The treaty was formally signed on the 31st December, and described as a treaty of 'general defensive alliance'. By it, the Peshwa agreed to receive from the Company 'a permanent regular Native Infantry, with the usual proportion of field pieces and European artillery-men attached, and with the proper equipment of warlike stores and ammunitions', which force was to be stationed permanently in his territories. For the payment of the troops, the Peshwa ceded in perpetuity to the Company territories as detailed in the schedule yielding an income of 26 lakhs of rupees. The Peshwa relinquished for ever his right over the city of Surat, and it was agreed that a piece of land yielding a revenue equal to the Peshwa's loss should be deducted from the territories ceded by him. The Peshwa would abstain from warfare on the Nizam and the Gaekwar, and would give up all claims for Chauth on the Nizam's dominion. The Company would act as arbitrator in all differences between the Peshwa and the Nizam or the Gaekwar. The Peshwa undertook not to keep in his employment

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 397.

² *Id.*, p. 395.

³ *Id.*, p. 418.

Europeans of a nation at war with the English. He also engaged 'neither to commence nor to pursue in future any negotiations with any power whatever, without giving previous notice and entering into mutual consultation with the Hon'ble East India Company's Government'.¹

In the meantime at Poona things had not turned out favourably for Holkar. There was no end to his financial distress. He made a plan of sending his troops to Baroda to enforce a payment of twenty lakhs of rupees from the Gaekwar as satisfaction of his dues for the Suba of Ahmadabad.² Later on, in January 1803, a fantastic plan was suggested by Baba Fadke, of procuring money from the Nizam.³ The flight of the Peshwa from Mahad raised fresh complications. In the beginning of December, Amrit Rao wrote a letter to the Governor of Bombay, professing friendship to the English and regretting that the Peshwa had 'thrown himself into the thorny wilds of Konkan . . . by the advice of the bad counsellors'.⁴ But the flight of the Peshwa from Mahad and his seeking shelter with the English, gave rise to a new opportunity for Amrit Rao and his party. As soon as the Peshwa left his territory, it was considered that he had abdicated his Government and that the situation called for the installation of a new Peshwa.⁵ Holkar wanted to go to Satara himself and get from the Raja the robes of investiture for Vinayak Rao. But Holkar was suddenly taken ill, and the work was entrusted to Fateh Singh Mane, who reached Satara about the middle of December.⁶ The Raja at first refused; but when Fateh Singh moved up his artillery, he promptly submitted.⁷ The robes of

¹ Aitchison, op. cit., vi, pp. 52-8.

² *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 376.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1803, 11 Jan., p. 269.

⁴ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 379.

⁵ Khare, xiv, 6525.

⁶ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 379; Khare, xiv, 6526, 6527, 6530.

⁷ Ibid; Riyasat, pp. 218-19.

investiture were granted on the 22nd December.¹ But the troops sent to seize the widow of Savai Madhav at Raigarh had no success,² and the plan of adoption was never carried out.

Early in January 1803, the news of the Peshwa's treaty reached Poona. It meant the end of Holkar's hopes. For a time, his idea was to make a stand against the power of the East India Company. In December, when Sindhia was lying between Ujjain and the Narbada, Holkar had attempted to negotiate with him through Ambaji Inglija.³ But Sindhia, on his part, showed no enthusiasm, and later on was enjoined by the Peshwa not to come to any accommodation with Holkar.⁴ The Maratha jagirdars were of no help. The Patwardhans when invited to Poona excused themselves. The Vinchore jagirdars did not move, and it was evident that a united front against the Company's power was impossible. Holkar himself would have been glad to come to an understanding with the English. On the 12th January, in reply to a letter from the Government of Bombay, he expressed his desire to support the 'authority and commands' of the Peshwa.⁵ At the same time, he sent a list of his demands to Baji Rao. They included the release of Malhar Rao, Holkar's son Khande Rao Holkar and his recognition as the legal head of the family, the restoration by Sindhia of the territories that had been occupied by him after the battle of Indore, and the payment of a crore of rupees by the Peshwa to Holkar for the expense of his troops.⁶ But the Peshwa considered that the propositions of Holkar did not 'merit the smallest regard',⁷ and wanted him to leave Poona with his force as preliminary to any agreement. In March, Holkar left Poona, and proceeded towards Barhanpur. The stay of his army at

¹ Riyasat, p. 119; Forrest, op. cit., p. 589.

² Riyasat, p. 118.

³ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 75.

⁴ Id., p. 97.

⁵ Forrest, op. cit., pp. 589-90.

⁶ Id., pp. 591-2.

⁷ Id., p. 590.

Poona for a period of more than four months ruined the city and desolated the country around it.

In the meantime, the British Government formulated a plan for the restoration of the Peshwa. On the 2nd February 1803, the Governor-General wrote to Lord Clive at Fort St. George that his intention to restore the 'Peshwa's authority originated in a supposition that the majority of the Maratha jagirdars and body of Peshwa's subjects entertain a desire of co-operating in that measure'.¹ The Governor-General suggested that every practicable means should be employed 'to conciliate the good will of the Maratha chiefs'.² On the 3rd, the Resident at Hyderabad was advised to instruct Colonel Stevenson, the Commanding Officer of the subsidiary troops, to join his force with the army of the Nizam.³ Major-General Wellesley received instructions from General Stuart on the 9th and commenced his march from Madras.⁴ Wellesley crossed the Tungabhadra on the 12th, and 'was well received by the inhabitants of the country'.⁵ A general assurance was given that the chiefs co-operating with the British troops would be strongly recommended to the Peshwa. The forces of Patwardhans and Gokhale united with the British troops,⁶ and in the beginning of April, Major-General Wellesley was joined on the bank of the Krishna by a number of powerful Maratha chiefs, including Appa Saheb Patwardhan, Bapu Gokhale, Bapu Vithal and the vakil of the Kittur Raja.⁷ From this station, he sent a message to Fateh Singh Mane to fall back and advanced towards Poona.⁸ When he was about sixty miles from the city, he received the information that Amrit Rao intended to set fire to it on the approach of the British army.⁹ Wellesley

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, i, p. 98.

² *Id.*, p. 100.

³ *Id.*, p. 102.

⁴ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 93.

⁵ *Wellington's Despatches*, i, p. 118.

⁶ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 110.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁸ *Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro.* 1803, 15 April, p. 2277.

⁹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 118.

therefore hastened on, covering this distance in thirty-two hours, and in the afternoon of the 20th April, entered Poona.¹ Amrit Rao left the city before the arrival of the British forces and moved to Juner.² But before he set out, he sent for one Ramdayal, a servant of the British Residency at Poona, and left a message for Close to the effect that as he was leaving the city unmolested, he would ask the Resident to secure for him a suitable pension from the Poona Government.³

The story of Amrit Rao's intention to burn the city seems lacking in truth. It is opposed to the spirit of his letter to Colonel Close. Though Arthur Wellesley and Grant Duff give the same version, it is not improbable that what they recorded was but a current rumour which had hardly any foundation in truth. Colonel Welsh of the Madras establishment, who accompanied Major-General Wellesley, did not find any reason for supposing that the city was in danger. In fact, he wrote that the confidence with which the people behaved 'seemed to give a flat contradiction to the report which had induced the General to a forced march'.⁴

It had been Wellesley's plan to bring the Peshwa to Poona at the end of April. But it was the first week of May before the Peshwa arrived near the city. He ascended the Bore Ghat on the evening of the 5th May,⁵ reached Talegaon on the night of the 6th⁶ and arrived at Chinchone, near Poona, on the 7th.⁷ The 13th of May was fixed for the Peshwa's entrance to the city,⁸ and in accordance with the Peshwa's wishes, the Governor of Bombay ordered a salute of 19 guns to be fired in Bombay, Baroda, Surat and other places.⁹ On the 13th, the Peshwa entered Poona in a procession

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 118.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons.* 1803, 22 June (43).

⁴ Welsh, *Military Reminiscences*, i, p. 152.

⁵ Forrest, *op. cit.*, p. 596.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Id.*, 597.

⁹ *Ibid.*

accompanied by Chimnaji Appa and a large number of Maratha chiefs. He took his seat on the masnad and received presents from the principal sardars of the State. At sunset, salutes were fired from hill forts near Poona.¹

So Baji Rao was reinstated. With pomp and procession and firing of cannon, he seated himself once more on the masnad from which six months before the troops of Holkar had driven him. But the restoration of the Peshwa was not the restoration of the old regime. Baji Rao, when he left the city a fugitive, was at least in theory a free agent, but he certainly was not when he returned a victor. Sindhia would dominate no longer, nor would Holkar march again to Poona, but at the same time, he had lost his hold on the army and the foreign policy of his State. The new Peshwa, directed by British opinion and backed by British bayonets, presented a sight hitherto unknown. He had secured what he wanted, freedom from his own chieftains, but at what price he had yet to discover.

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803, 22 June (54).

CHAPTER III

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE POONA GOVERNMENT (1798-1802)

IT has been seen that in domestic affairs the Peshwa had no end to his troubles. His difficulties were further increased by unhappy entanglements with neighbouring powers. The Raja of Satara was the first to carry on hostilities with the Poona Government, and almost simultaneously the Raja of Kolhapur made an attack on the Peshwa's territories. A half-hearted negotiation for a defensive alliance was carried on with the Nizam until 1798, when the Nizam entered into a Subsidiary Alliance with the East India Company. In the long run, the Peshwa was driven to sacrifice all independent management of his foreign policy when he engaged, by the Treaty of Bassein, 'neither to commence nor to pursue in future, any negotiations with any power whatever without giving previous notice and entering into mutual consultation with the Company's Government'. (Article 17)¹.

The position of the Raja of Satara was indeed peculiar. In theory, the head of the Maratha Government, he was, in practice, a State prisoner. He had been kept under control by Nana Fadnavis, and his affairs were managed by Nana's agents, Sadashiv Pant Abhyankar and Babu Rao Apte.² Towards the end of 1797, when Baji Rao and Sindhia planned Nana's imprisonment, Baji Rao encouraged Raja Sahu of Satara to free himself from Nana's control.³ The Raja at once complied and arrested Nana's agents, and aided by his brother, Chatur Singh, and some of his relations established his

¹ Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vi, p. 57.

² Peshwaichi Akher, p. 34.

³ Grant Duff, p. 277 ; Riyasat, p. 79.

own Government. When Shivram Thate arrived from Poona to take charge of the fort of Satara on the Peshwa's behalf, the Raja refused to hand it over.¹ Baji Rao sent Madhu Rao Rastia with some troops to Satara. Madhu Rao arrived at Satara in April 1798.² He left his troops at a distance and himself with a few followers entered the city. Some time elapsed in fruitless negotiations, during which period the Raja carried on negotiations with the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and with Sindhia, both of whom promised him help against the Peshwa. The Raja also began collecting troops, and in June his men made a sudden attack on Rastia's party and drove them out of the city. After an unsuccessful attempt to cannonade the fort, Madhu Rao left Satara and retreated to Malgaon and Raja Sahu wrote a letter to the Peshwa complaining of the high-handedness of his agent.

Baji Rao was alarmed at the prolonged opposition from Satara. Parashuram Bhau, who was at that time a State prisoner, offered to subdue the Raja of Satara. He was allowed to collect troops and go to Satara on condition that he would pay a sum of twenty lakhs as the price of his freedom, and until then he was to be considered technically under arrest. At Satara, Sahu did not receive the help he expected from Sindhia or the Raja of Kolhapur. The Raja or the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur had, however, already marched for Satara and on the 21st June arrived at Islampur.³ But his further progress was arrested at Karad, where the right of way was denied to him.⁴ So the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur did not advance farther and began plundering neighbouring districts and raising contributions. The chance of the Raja of Satara was further weakened by the change of ministry at Poona. Towards the end of July, Sarje Rao Ghatge was imprisoned and Nana

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 278 ; Riyasat, p. 80.

² Ibid.

³ Kharc, x, 4265.

⁴ Kharc, x, 4287.

Fadnavis had been freed. With Sarje Rao's arrest, Sahu's hope of securing help from Sindhia's army was extinguished and he was left to resist Parashuram Bhau's attack single-handed.

Early in August, Parashuram Bhau arrived near Satara and forded the river Vena. In the battle that followed, the resistance of the Raja was broken down and his army scattered. He himself took shelter in the fort, while his brother, Chatur Singh, fled to the Kolhapur territory, pursued by a part of Parashuram Bhau's army. The city was plundered.¹ The Raja did not hold out for long ; in the beginning of September he surrendered, and Madhav Rao Rastia's men occupied the fort.² From this time onwards the Raja again lived a prisoner as before, and in December 1798 Baji Rao passed an order for the attachment of the properties held by a number of people in the Raja's service who had risen against the Poona Government.³

Simultaneously with the disturbances at Satara, Shivaji III, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur, had carried on his depredation. His attempts were mostly directed against his old enemy the Patwardhans. He plundered Parashuram Bhau's capital, Tasgaon, and burnt his palace.⁴ Then he occupied Chikodi and Manoli, and seized the fort of Bhudhargarh.⁵ In October 1798, the troops of Kolhapur under Ratnakar Pant Rajagna were checked by the Peshwa's general, Dhondo Pant Gokhale, who inflicted a crushing defeat on them.⁶ In November, an unsuccessful attempt was made to bring about a reconciliation between the Patwardhans and the Raja of Kolhapur.⁷ In the beginning of 1799, Parashuram Bhau collected his army and made an

¹ Peshwa Daftar, xli, 6, 7, 12 ; Khare, x, 4350.

² Khare, x, 4377.

³ Peshwa Daftar, xli, 14.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 299.

⁵ Khare, xi, 4549 ; *Bombay Gazetteer*, xxiv, p. 234 ; Modak, *Kolhapur Prantacha Itihas*, p. 21.

⁶ Khare, x, 4397, 4398.

⁷ Khare, xi, 4549.

attempt to check the Chhatrapati. On the 17th September 1799, an action was fought at Pattankudi between Parashuram Bhau and the joint forces of the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and Chatur Singh in which Parashuram Bhau was defeated and killed.¹

After Parashuram Bhau's death, strong measures were adopted by the Poona Government for the reduction of the Raja of Kolhapur. A number of sirdars, including Manaji Fadke, Maloji Ghorpade, Vinchurkar and the Pratinidhi, left Poona in December with five of Sindhia's battalions under Major Brownrigg, and commenced operations in January.² Two actions were fought between Sindhia's battalions and the Raja of Kolhapur, in both of which the Raja was defeated.³ The Raja then took shelter at Panhala and the Peshwa's troops besieged Kolhapur.⁴ The troops of Kolhapur were again defeated at Panhala by the joint forces of Ramchandra Appa and Brownrigg.⁵ The Chhatrapati of Kolhapur had already applied to Bombay for English aid and now sought for an accommodation with the Peshwa. The Raja's wakil at Poona made certain proposals to the Peshwa and hostilities were suspended for their consideration.⁶ Two letters addressed by the Chhatrapati to the Bombay Government were received on the 22nd February 1800.⁷ In one of them the Chhatrapati stated that Parashuram Bhau who 'made preparations for desolating his country was killed', and when 'the intelligence of this reached Poona, the servants forsaking their allegiance sent a force to distress my subjects'. The Raja also called

¹ Khare, xi, 5090, 5091, 5092, 5093, 5095; Grant Duff, ii, p. 300. It is sometimes believed that Parashuram Bhau was seriously wounded in the battle, but captured alive and brought before the Chhatrapati when he was murdered in cold blood.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 300; Riyasat, p. 92.

³ Home Miscellaneous Series, 484, p. 73.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Riyasat, p. 96; Grant Duff, ii, p. 300; Khare, xii, 5297.

⁶ Home Miscellaneous Series, 575, p. 634; 484, p. 78.

⁷ Home Miscellaneous Series, 470, p. 245.

upon the 'Honourable Company,' 'my ancient friends,' 'the same as my own brothers,' 'to make haste to despatch the respectable Captain Wilson' for his help.¹ But before the arrival of the Peshwa's force at Kolhapur, the British Government had commenced negotiations with the Peshwa for a settlement of their claims on Kolhapur,² and they did not show any inclination to interfere. On the 6th March, the Governor of Bombay wrote to the Raja of Kolhapur that he could not enter into any discussion with him, until he would fulfil the terms of the treaty made between the Raja's agents and the late Governor, Sir Robert Abercrombie, and for further representations referred him to Colonel Palmer at Poona.³

Hostilities at Kolhapur were soon renewed at the discovery of an alleged plan made by the Raja to attack the Peshwa's force during the suspension of arms.⁴ The Raja was driven within the fort of Panhala and the Peshwa's troops invested the fort.⁵ The destruction of his power looked imminent, when he was saved by the death of Nana Fadnavis. Nana's death led to fresh confusions at the Poona Durbar and the troops employed against the Chhatrapati were recalled.

The relations between the Poona Government and the Nizam may be shortly described. It has already been said⁶ that the Nizam had been a party to the agreement of Mahad with Nana Fadnavis and had helped the restoration of Baji Rao in December 1796. But Baji Rao was not inclined to fulfil his part of the contract. The establishment of his Government was

¹ Home Miscellaneous Series, 470, p. 245.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 575, p. 609 ; 484, p. 73.

³ Home Miscellaneous Series, 470, p. 249. It refers to the Treaty of 1792, by which the Chhatrapati agreed to discharge the balance due to the Company and pay satisfaction to the merchants for the losses they had suffered by his fleet since 1785 and also permitted the Company to establish factories at Malvan and Kolhapur (Aitchison, op. cit., vii, pp. 234-5).

⁴ Home Miscellaneous Series, 475, p. 649.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See Chapter I.

not conducive to better relations between the two States, and the Nizam lived in constant terror of an attack from Sindhia at Poona. In June 1798, when hostilities were almost commenced between Baji Rao and Sindhia, following an attack made by Sindhia's battalions on Amrit Rao's camp, Baji Rao naturally looked for an ally and began negotiating with the Nizam.¹ A treaty was immediately made by which the Nizam promised to help the Peshwa with 10,000 horse, the same number of infantry and some artillery, within fifteen days after the ratification of the treaty, for the express purpose of supporting the Peshwa against Sindhia. The Peshwa for his part agreed to pay the Nizam territory worth eight lakhs of rupees.² But nothing resulted from the alliance, for almost immediately after its ratification, the treaty was revoked by the Nizam.³ In September 1798, the Nizam readily entered into a treaty with the English, by which he received the subsidiary force and agreed to dismiss the Frenchmen in his service. Another treaty with the English was made in 1800, and the Nizam gradually faded out of politics.

Towards the close of the 18th century, the greatest power in the south was Tipu Sultan. While he was planning to drive the English out of India, with the help of the French, he also considered the prospect of an alliance with the Peshwa. On the death of the Peshwa Savai Madhav Rao, there arrived at Poona, from Mysore, a secret emissary named Balaji Rao.⁴ He continued to stay secretly at Poona, and in 1797 other vakils from Tipu also arrived. On the 10th August 1797, Sir John Shore, who was then the Governor-General, wrote to the Assistant Resident at Poona, that the 'ostensible cause' for the deputation of vakils by

¹ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 255.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 263.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 10 Sept. (40).

⁴ Wilks, *History of Mysore*, ii, p. 324.

Tipu furnished no ground for alarm, but at the same time he recommended the Assistant Resident 'to ascertain their real objects, particularly if the silence or conduct of the Poona Government excited any suspicion.'¹ About the middle of 1798, when the relations between Baji Rao and Sindhia became very strained, both of them sent vakils to Tipu Sultan.² In September, Colonel Palmer, the English Resident at Poona, learnt that Tipu had replied³ to the Peshwa. The summary of Tipu's answer was that he was desirous of helping Baji Rao, but at that time he was 'mediating a war against the English, and in order to carry [it on] successfully', he had 'formed an alliance with the French'. Under these circumstances he was unable to assist the Peshwa, but he hoped that the Peshwa would join him in the war against the English and in case he was unable to do so, he should stand neutral.⁴

On the 3rd February 1799, the Governor-General informed Colonel Palmer that the British Government was 'in a state of war' with Tipu Sultan from that day and expressed a hope that 'the Marhatta Empire will instantly pursue the requisite measures for the vigorous prosecution of hostilities against the common enemy'.⁵ By the Triple Alliance of 1790, the Peshwa was bound to act jointly with the Nizam and the English against Tipu Sultan. It was promised to Colonel Palmer that the Peshwa would assist the English with 25,000 men, and one Madhav Rao Ramchandra was employed to collect troops.⁶ Nana Fadnavis, who had again become the Prime Minister, invited Parashuram Bhau to Poona, and to take charge of the Peshwa's force.⁷ But Parashuram Bhau was at that time busy defending his

¹ British Museum Addl. MSS. 13.595 (F.16).

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 285.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1798, 1 Oct. (33).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Forrest, op. cit., p. 620.

⁶ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 64.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 11 Jan. (17).

own territories against the Raja of Kolhapur, and in March 1799 the English Resident was informed that Dhondo Pant Gokhale had been directed to act with the Bombay detachment.¹

But though Nana Fadnavis was probably sincere in his professions of help to the English, Baji Rao had not the least desire to act against Tipu. In spite of Nana's attempts, the Peshwa's contingent was not ready. Baji Rao's abject condition might have been the apparent reason of his inaction, but at the same time it was believed that the Peshwa's neutrality had been purchased by Tipu for the consideration of thirteen lakhs of rupees, and that Nana was kept ignorant of this transaction.² On the 10th January 1799, Tipu's valiks, who had recently arrived at Poona, were presented to the court.³ On the 16th January, Nana Fadnavis informed the Resident's munshi, Mir Fakiruddin, that the Resident should be 'perfectly assured of the Paishwa's resolution to adhere to his defensive engagements, whatever temptation Tippoo might offer' and that Tipu's vakils 'should be dismissed without the smallest unnecessary delay'.⁴ But the vakils continued to stay at Poona, and on the 2nd February the Resident spoke to Nana about the 'unnecessary detention' of Tipu's vakils.⁵ On the 24th February, the Governor-General's Secretary wrote a letter to the Peshwa requesting him to dismiss the vakils of Tipu Sultan and not to receive any other mission from him during the war.⁶ But the letter from the Governor-General did not produce the desired effect, and the Resident at last informed the Peshwa that he must 'decline the honour of waiting upon him' until Tipu's vakils were removed.⁷ The

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 29 April (19).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 20 May (19); Grant Duff, ii, p. 291.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 8 Feb. (44).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 15 Feb. (63).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 22 Feb. (20).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 11 March (9).

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 15 April (7).

vakils left Poona on the 19th March and for a few days encamped in the neighbourhood.¹ They again commenced their march on the 25th,² but proceeded very slowly and in the end of April they were only 50 miles from Poona.³ The Peshwa had been prevailed upon by Nana Fadnavis to dismiss Tipu's former vakil, Balaji Rao, and he left Poona in April.⁴ But on the 4th May 1799, before the vakils had reached Mysore, Seringapatam had been stormed and Tipu killed. The sudden fall of Seringapatam and the death of Tipu came as a shock to Baji Rao, and he was reported to have said that Tipu's death had been like 'the loss of his right arm'.⁵ The Peshwa, however, now made some exertions for getting his detachment and sent the Jari-Patka to Parashuram Bhau.⁶ The Resident believed that he acted with a view to a 'plausible claim of sharing with his allies'.⁷ At the same time, the Resident was also informed that Baji Rao had sent special messengers with letters to Fateh Hyder and other sirdars in Mysore.⁸ But apparently nothing came out of his secret negotiations with Tipu's faction in Mysore. Next year the Resident reported to the Governor-General of a 'secret emissary from Seringapatam being entertained' by the Poona Court.⁹ But on enquiry it transpired that there was nothing very mysterious about this secret emissary. His name was believed to be Mirza Ali Reza, and he was said to be connected with the family of Tipu Sultan by marriage.¹⁰ Amrit Rao declared him to be an 'impostor who had forged the letters' he purported to carry 'with a view

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 15 April (7).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 29 April (9).

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1799, 3 June (6).

⁴ Wilks, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 326.

⁵ Home Miscellaneous Series, 574, p. 598.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 3 April (19) (20).

¹⁰ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 1 May (6).

to obtain subsistence from the Government.'¹ The English Resident also agreed that Amrit Rao's supposition of 'his being a cheat and his motive to it is well-founded',² and to the Governor-General he expressed his intention of handing over this person to Colonel Close, who was then the Resident at Mysore, 'to ascertain his person and demerits, and 'to apportion his punishment'.³

The destruction of Tipu's power left the Marathas the only formidable power in the south. During Sir John Shore's administration, the English attitude towards the Poona affairs was definitely that of non-intervention. In December 1795, during the troubles about succession to Peshwaship, the Governor-General directed Malet, the Resident at Poona, to observe strict non-interference and leave the Marathas entirely to themselves to settle the question.⁴ In January 1796, again he advised Malet to observe a guarded line of conduct, and, if necessary, to avoid interference by going to Bombay on the plea of recovering his health.⁵ In the middle of 1796, when Chimnaji Appa was raised to the Peshwaship, the Governor-General was quite prepared to recognize his authority. On 28th October 1796, Sir John Shore recorded in his Minute, that to disclaim the Company's obligations to the Peshwa on the 'plea of the superior right of Bagerow' would be 'setting up a claim to decide upon the Mahrattah succession', and that 'this is a consideration for the Mahrattas, not for us'.⁶

In April 1798, when Wellesley (then Lord Mornington) came to India, the foreign policy of the British Government was completely changed. He immediately reversed Sir John Shore's policy of neutrality towards the Indian States. It was Wellesley's plan to

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 26 June (46).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 433.

⁵ Home Miscellaneous Series, 241, p. 447.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1796, 28 Oct. (1).

secure the alliance of the Peshwa and the Nizam as a precaution against any French attack on India. In July 1798, when he learnt of the abject condition of the Peshwa, he hoped that the presence of a British force at Poona might liberate the Peshwa from Sindhia's control and leave him free to fulfil his engagements with the British Government. On 8th July 1798, Wellesley directed Palmer, the Resident at Poona, to furnish the Peshwa with a strong force from Bombay, on condition that the Peshwa should arrange for the regular payment of the troops, and 'bind himself by treaty to exclude for ever all natives of France from his armies and from his dominions'. If Sindhia should attempt to obstruct the march of the detachment from Bombay, or behave in an unfriendly manner, the British troops were to be 'employed actively against him'.¹ Next day, the Governor-General wrote to the Resident, that in case of Baji Rao's flight from Poona, the Resident was authorized to 'offer him a retreat at Bombay, and to assure him that he will be received with every mark of respect and friendship'.² On the 12th August 1798, the Governor-General recorded in his Minute that from the news from Poona he had 'every reason to hope that the abilities and experience of Nana may be successfully employed by Colonel Palmer in effecting the return of Sindhia to his dominions and the consequent restoration of the Peshwa'.³ But though Nana Fadnavis was released from his prison in July and raised to the ministry towards the latter part of the year, the

¹ *Wellesley's Despatches*, i, pp. 118-22. In Home Miscellaneous Series (573, p. 189) there is a letter of the same date written by Wellesley to Palmer in which the latter is informed that he would be empowered to offer to the Peshwa the immediate aid of one regiment of European infantry, two regiments of native infantry and one company of artillery 'for the purpose of protecting his person and supporting his authority'. The Peshwa on his part was to consent as previously to the increase of the British detachment serving with the Nizam, and also to the Governor-General's arbitration of the difference between the courts of Poona and Hyderabad. The same letter also appears in British Museum Addl. MSS. 13,596 (F.1).

² *Wellesley's Despatches*, i, p. 157; Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 315.

³ *Wellesley's Despatches*, i, p. 200.

Peshwa's Government could not be induced to accept the subsidiary system. In August, the Peshwa had consulted Amrit Rao and Govind Rao Kale,¹ and had already declined to accept the Governor-General's propositions.² The Governor-General ascribed the Peshwa's rejection of his terms to the jealousy caused by the Resident's anxiety for securing Nana's freedom,³ and on the 9th September instructed him to inform the Peshwa that the Governor-General 'never considered the interest of Nana to be necessarily connected' with the propositions made to him.⁴

The proposal for a Subsidiary Alliance with the Peshwa was renewed in 1799, after the war with Tipu was over. The Governor-General set apart a portion of the territory conquered from Tipu for the Peshwa, and his despatches, dated 23rd May and 12th June 1799, informed the Resident at Poona that it was his 'intention under certain conditions to make a considerable cession of territory' to the Peshwa.⁵ The 'conditions', however, entailed the acceptance of the propositions made to the Peshwa in the previous year, and the Governor-General wrote to the Resident on the 23rd May, that 'on some parts of these propositions, I shall absolutely insist, as indispensable preliminaries to any cession of territory to the Peshwa'.⁶ In reply to the Governor-General's suggestions, the Peshwa suggested a new treaty,⁷ and after some discussion of the propositions,⁸ the whole scheme was dropped and Tipu's territories were shared between the Nizam and the English.

The negotiations were again commenced in April 1800. At that time, Baji Rao was completely under

¹ Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 363.

² Home Miscellaneous Series, 573, p. 383.

³ *Wellesley's Despatches*, i, pp. 252-4.

⁴ *Id.*, i, p. 254.

⁵ *Id.*, ii, pp. 12, 51.

⁶ *Id.*, ii, p. 14.

⁷ Home Miscellaneous Series, 575, p. 42.

⁸ Home Miscellaneous Series, 575, p. 681.

Sindhia's control, and on the 12th April 1800, the Governor-General advised the Resident to 'exert' his 'utmost endeavours to engage' the Peshwa to conclude a secret treaty with the British Government.¹ By this treaty, the British Government would agree to compel Sindhia to leave the Deccan, and the Peshwa would engage to entertain a permanent subsidiary force consisting of three regiments of native infantry, two companies of European artillery, and in case the Peshwa did not oppose, a regiment of native cavalry as well. The Peshwa would also promise, among other things, to remove from his service and territory all Frenchmen and Europeans in alliance with France and never admit such people into his country or employment.² In May 1800, the Resident reported that there had been established 'mutual confidence, cordiality and concert' between the Peshwa and Sindhia 'in a greater degree at present' than had been known before.³ Matters, however, soon came to a crisis in June, but still the Resident was of opinion that 'no consideration but that of unavoidable and imminent destruction will induce his [Peshwa's] assent to the admission of a permanent subsidiary British force into his dominions. . . .'⁴ In August, however, it was believed that Baji Rao might attempt a flight from Poona, and on the 23rd August, the Governor-General asked Lord Clive, the Governor of Madras, to inform Arthur Wellesley that 'on receiving authentic and unquestionable intelligence either of the flight or imprisonment' of Baji Rao, the British army was authorized to occupy on behalf of the Peshwa the territory south of the Krishna.⁵ On the 26th August, the Resident was directed that in the event of Baji Rao's

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (76).

² Ibid.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (13).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (27).

⁵ *Wellesley's Despatches*, ii, pp. 368-9.

‘deposal and of the elevation of any other person to the Peshwaship by Sindhia, the Resident should not acknowledge such Peshwa and repair immediately to Bombay, unless his stay at Poona was necessary for public interest.’¹ If the Peshwa should be deposed or imprisoned before the conclusion of the treaty, the treaty should be concluded with the person empowered by Baji Rao to act on his behalf. But in case of Baji Rao’s flight to Bombay or Hyderabad, the negotiations should be carried on directly with him.² The Governor-General, however, did not think it advisable that his intentions should be communicated to Baji Rao so long as he remained in Sindhia’s power, as ‘many inconveniences might result from a premature disclosure of the Governor-General’s plan.’³ The Resident, however, was authorized to exercise his discretion if ‘circumstances not at present in his Lordship’s contemplation should arise, which might render a full and unreserved communication on the subject with the Peshwa expedient.’⁴ But the events did not shape as the Governor-General expected and the negotiations were closed.

On the 30th November 1801, the Peshwa offered to subsidize six battalions of the Company’s infantry with the corresponding artillery, and assign territories worth 25,00,000 rupees in north India for their maintenance, provided that the subsidiary troops should be retained within the Company’s territory, except when the Peshwa should require their services.⁵ The British Government considered that as the territory assigned in north India was not contiguous to the Company’s possessions, but intermixed with and surrounded by the possessions of other chiefs, it would only lead to

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1800, 27 Nov. (49).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 39.

embarrassment and inconvenience to the Company.¹ Moreover, no satisfactory solution was arrived at regarding the question of the mediation by the British Government of the differences between the Peshwa and the Nizam,² and the Governor-General considered that 'an unqualified concurrence in the Peshwa's propositions would produce more injury than benefit to the British interests.'³ So the Peshwa's proposals were rejected.

Further negotiations were begun by the Governor-General in June 1802,⁴ but they did not receive adequate response from the Peshwa until September. On the 20th September, when Holkar had advanced near Poona, Baji Rao expressed his intention of entering into a Subsidiary Alliance, on condition that the subsidiary force was to remain within the Company's territory ; the British Government would promise not to enter into any political transactions with other Maratha powers or the jagirdars, and would renounce all concern in the relations subsisting between the Peshwa and the Maratha chiefs ; the Peshwa would be at liberty to employ any European except those who during any war should act injuriously to the Peshwa or the Company ; the Peshwa's claims should be supported by the British force ; and lastly, the British Government would not interfere in any affair between the Peshwa and the Nizam.⁵ These proposals were certainly more than what the British Government could be expected to assent to, and, naturally, they were rejected.

On the 14th October, the Peshwa again sent his agent to the Resident, proposing a general defensive alliance with the British Government and agreed to

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 39.

² *Wellesley's Despatches*, iii, pp. 12-26. This paper (addressed by Edmonstone to Close dated 23rd June 1802) gives a summary of the negotiations between the Peshwa and the British Government.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Wellesley's Despatches*, v, pp. 1 ff (Maratha Supplement).

⁵ *Ibid.*

subsidize six native battalions and the requisite artillery. This corps was to be permanently stationed within his territory, and a jagir for its maintenance was to be granted from his possessions bordering on the Tungabhadra.¹ Events followed quickly after this. After Holkar's victory over the combined armies of Baji Rao and Sindhia on the 25th October, Baji Rao fled from Poona and arrived at Bassein, and on the 31st December, signed a treaty of 'perpetual and general defensive alliance' with the British Government.² On the 16th December 1803, eight supplementary articles were added to the Treaty of Bassein, by which certain territories ceded to the British Government by the Treaty of Bassein were restored to the Peshwa and some changes were introduced regarding the subsidiary force stationed at Poona.³

The Treaty of Bassein had been the subject of much criticism. Castlereagh commented that the Governor-General's abstract policy behind the treaty could not be justified, that it had not been judiciously pursued, and that by contracting this treaty the Governor-General had exceeded his legal authority.⁴ Castlereagh's contentions were answered by Major-General Wellesley,⁵ and in October 1804, Sir John Malcolm also prepared a reply to Castlereagh's observations.⁶ Much of the controversy round this treaty has now died away in course of time, and it must be admitted that from the British point of view it was one of the most adroit moves ever made. It gave the British Government unquestionable supremacy over the Maratha States and paved the way towards an Indian Empire. Lord Wellesley considered that the 'important advantages gained'

¹ *Wellesley's Despatches*, iii, pp. 3 ff and enc. B.

² The articles of the treaty have been analysed in the previous chapter.

³ Aitchison, vi, pp. 60-2.

⁴ Castlereagh's observations in *Wellesley's Despatches*, v, pp. 302-18, also in British Museum Addl. MSS. 13,592.

⁵ *Wellesley's Despatches*, v, pp. 318-37.

⁶ British Museum Addl. MSS. 13,592.

by this treaty, were that 'the Company obtained for the first time something like a rational security for the improvement and continuance of the peace of India. A new power was thrown into the weight of its own scale ; a lawful right was established to interfere in the preservation of the Peshwa's authority, whenever it should be attacked ; the intrigues of foreigners were excluded from his capital . . . our own military resources were considerably increased without expense to the Company ; the army of the Peshwa likewise became bound at our call on every occasion of emergency ; his subjects received a protection to which they had hitherto been strangers. . . .'¹

The only criticism that can be made of the Governor-General's defence is that it had not stated the case fully. The Treaty of Bassein meant something more than a defensive alliance. The subsidiary system 'proved', as has been called, 'a patent system for the infiltration of British supremacy',² and it had the 'inevitable tendency to bring every Indian State into which ' it was 'introduced, sooner or later under the exclusive dominion of British Government'.³ The Governor-General himself was not ignorant of the real significance of the treaty. He wrote in 1804, that the 'critical state of affairs' following Holkar's invasion and the Peshwa's flight from Poona 'seemed to hold out a very favourable opportunity for establishing in the most complete manner the interests of the British Power in the Mahratta Empire'.⁴

¹ Wellesley, *A Vindication of the Late War*, p. 18.

² Roberts, *India under Wellesley*, p. 34.

³ Jones, *Papers Relative to Growth of British Power and Subsidiary System*, p. 96.

⁴ Wellesley, *History of Events and Transactions in India*, p. 23.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW REGIME

ON the 26th of May 1803, the Bombay Government came to the conclusion that 'early endeavours must be used' to bring about a settlement between the Peshwa and Amrit Rao, and to conciliate the latter by 'moderate concessions properly secured'.¹ In the beginning of May, Amrit Rao had left the village of Bopkhare, where he was staying after his departure from Poona, and arrived at Chakan.² From Chakan he came to Jorba, a village near Nasik, where he stayed for a few days for the marriage of his son Vinayak Rao.³ He then plundered Nasik and besieged the fort of Patta in the neighbourhood.⁴ Towards the end of the month he wrote a letter to Arthur Wellesley, undertaking 'to separate himself from Peshwa's enemies', and asked for a reconciliation with his brother and a 'provision in the State'.⁵ This letter was followed by the visit of Amrit Rao's wakil on the 15th of June, who complained against the ill-treatment of Amrit Rao's servants in the Peshwa's territories, and asked for General Wellesley's permission to allow Amrit Rao to take shelter at the Sangam, or if that were not possible, at the English camp.⁶ The correspondence with Amrit Rao was referred to the Peshwa, who suggested terms for a settlement. In a memorandum addressed to Colonel Close,⁷ Baji Rao stated that 'as Major-General Wellesley is satisfied that his brother is disposed to return to

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1803, 27 May, p. 3201.

² Khare, xiv, 6630.

³ Khare, xiv, 6634.

⁴ Khare, xiv, 6637, 'Abara Patta beyond Nasik'.

⁵ *Wellington's Despatches*, i, p. 175.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 182.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1803, 1 July, p. 4416.

his family and to abandon the rebellions', he was 'inclined from motives of mercy to forget what has passed'. But his terms were scarcely consistent with these words. The Peshwa agreed to offer his brother territories with an income of four lakhs of rupees per annum, so long as he would continue to obey the Government and reside wherever he might be ordered. Amrit Rao was to join General Wellesley's camp within ten days of the receipt of the terms, after which he would be treated as a rebel and an enemy of the State.

It was obvious that Amrit Rao would not accept these terms, the object of which was to render him virtually a prisoner. Besides, as Arthur Wellesley wrote to Close, that in comparison, Amrit Rao was far better off. He still occupied valuable territories belonging to the Peshwa, and possessed a number of fortresses.¹ In July, the news reached Bombay that Amrit Rao was being encouraged by the Nizam to invade the Peshwa's territory,² while the Peshwa had ordered Appa Dessai and Bapu Gokhale to attack Amrit Rao's troops situated between Poona and Nasik.³ But an attempt to reach a settlement proved successful and hostilities were averted. In August 1803, a treaty was drawn up between Amrit Rao's wakil and Arthur Wellesley,⁴ in which it was agreed that during the life of Amrit Rao and of his son, Vinayak Rao, they would enjoy a revenue of seven lakhs of rupees per annum, granted in territory or in cash—the English Government undertaking the guarantee for the payment. The revenue of the districts then in Amrit Rao's possession was to be included in the amount stipulated. The friends and adherents of Amrit Rao were taken under British protection, and it was agreed that arrangements would be made for their support. Amrit Rao on his

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, i, p. 546.

² *Id.*, Supplementary iv, p. 128.

³ *Id.*, i, p. 221.

⁴ *Id.*, i, p. 311.

part was to join General Wellesley within nine days after the signing of the agreement. He was faithfully to serve the Company and the Peshwa, and when he should join the English camp, 'the more force both in cavalry and infantry that accompany him the more will be the General's satisfaction'.

Baji Rao was informed of the details of this agreement,¹ but he was not pleased with the treaty. He was not prepared to yield so great a concession to his brother, and he had planned a different future for him. But hostilities were not allowed to go further. Arthur Wellesley directed Close to ask the Peshwa to suspend all hostilities.² Amrit Rao's meeting with the English General was, however, delayed owing to the death of his chief associate, Moroba Fadnavis, a cousin of Nana.³ Towards the end of September, he sent a vakil to General Wellesley to inform him of his acceptance of the treaty and to ask him for a provision for ten thousand people who accompanied him.⁴ In fact, Amrit Rao had not half the number with him, and as Arthur Wellesley remarked, his object was to secure as much money as he could.⁵ In forwarding this claim, Amrit Rao was relying upon articles four and five of his treaty with the English, which required him to bring his whole army to the assistance of the Company and promised provisions for his adherents. A settlement, however, was arrived at, and on the 12th November, Amrit Rao joined the British army.⁶ A salute was given him by the British troops.⁷ Colonel Welsh of the Madras Establishment, who was with General Wellesley at the time, found Amrit Rao to be 'by all accounts a very fine fellow', who 'expressed himself highly gratified' and presented each corps with a *zeafut* (feast) of three hundred rupees.⁸

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, i, p. 330.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Id.*, p. 362.

⁴ *Id.*, pp. 421-4.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 422.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 504.

⁷ Welsh, *op. cit.*, i, p. 198.

⁸ *Ibid.*

The question of the settlement regarding Amrit Rao's friends and adherents was taken up in January 1804. But some difficulties were still experienced on account of the mutual jealousy between the two brothers. On the 1st March, Baji Rao's Diwan, Sadashiv Mankeshwar, saw Arthur Wellesley and informed him that 'even Amrit Rao's name is so odious to His Highness, that if it were only mentioned in his presence it would be necessary for his Highness to perform ablution'.¹ Sadashiv's picture of his master's dislike for Amrit Rao was probably true, but at the same time, the Peshwa sent an agent to Amrit Rao to bring about a settlement.² The fort of Purandhar was then given up to the Peshwa, and Amrit Rao's men were allowed to leave unmolested and take possession of their lands.³ On the 7th March, Close wrote to the Bengal Government that 'most of the persons and adherents of Amrit Rao at Poona have been delivered over to his vakil and there seems a wish on the part of this Durbar to come to some kind of accommodation'.⁴

The affairs of Amrit Rao having been settled he proposed to go and reside at Benares after the rains. He left Ahmadnagar on the 8th November⁵ and proceeded to Benares via Allahabad and Gaya.⁶ On his way to Allahabad, he was plundered by the Gonds and forced to return to Nagpur. For the rest of the journey he was protected by the British Government, with whose help he reached Benares, where he spent the rest of his life.

So Amrit Rao passed out of Poona and passed out of history. In fact, the history of Poona for the last few years had been mostly the story of the rivalry of the two brothers. There had been chances of Amrit Rao's being seated on the Peshwa's masnad, but every time the

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, p. 119.

² Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 9 March, p. 1538.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 9 March, p. 1568, 16 March, p. 1587.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 9 March, p. 1587.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 2 May (86).

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 2 May (34).

expectation came to nothing. Though Amrit Rao probably would not have made a good leader, he would have been a capable administrator. But at the same time it is difficult to see how he could have been retained in the administration. Nothing would have seemed more abominable to Baji Rao, and the picture of the Peshwa's brother, disaffected and backed by a considerable portion of popular opinion and a strong party at the court, did not seem conducive to peace.

During his banishment, Amrit Rao always retained his liking for the English, which he said his father 'instilled into' his mind.¹ In 1814, he was visited at Benares by Lord Hastings, who was impressed with the charm and politeness of his manners.² In 1817, he once more tried his hand at politics. Amrit Rao, it may be surmised, was not allowed to keep in direct touch with the affairs at Poona. But some news of the trouble with the Peshwa after the murder of Gangadhar Shastri must have reached him, and at once Amrit Rao saw his opportunity. The news he received about affairs at Poona was imperfect, but he hoped that Baji Rao would be removed from the Peshwaship, and he saw no reason why history should not repeat itself and raise him to the head of the Government at Poona. He sent his agent, Golam Nabi Khan, to Colonel Maddock with the request that his jagir might be exchanged for one to the south of the Narbada, pointing out at the same time 'the great advantage which might accrue to the British Government and to the country itself' if he was allowed 'to restore the affairs of the Deccan to order'.³ A letter from Amrit Rao was also received by the Governor-General on the 30th July in which, after congratulating the Governor-General on his 'elevation in the British Peerage' and wishing him 'many happy years' and 'new dignities and honours', he

¹ Sec. Cons. 1817, 18 July (10), enclosure.

² Hastings, *Private Journal*, i, pp. 133-5.

³ Sec. Cons. 1817, 18 July (10).

came to his real object.¹ He referred to his attachment to the Company, his knowledge of the administration, the mismanagement of Baji Rao, and concluded with a prayer that he might be regarded as possessing 'a superclaim to any two brothers', by right of primogeniture. When the letter reached the Governor-General, a settlement had been made with the Peshwa, and on the 21st August he informed Amrit Rao that the 'friendly relations so long subsisting between the British Government and His Highness the Peshwa' had been 're-established and confirmed', and this fact 'rendered unnecessary' any particular reply to Amrit Rao's letter which was 'evidently dictated' by the 'supposition of a different state of affairs'.²

For his magnificent gifts and charitable institutions, Amrit Rao was one of the most popular figures at Benares. In the estimation of Bishop Heber, he was 'really a good and kind man, religious to the best of his knowledge, and munificent, not from ostentation but from principle'.³ His annual charities were estimated by Bishop Heber to be one lakh and fifty thousand rupees.⁴ Amrit Rao celebrated a great festival every year, and the details of it recorded by the Bishop remind one of the more well-known Dakshina festival of his brother at Poona. 'The day on which his patron-god is worshipped, he annually gave a seer of rice and a rupee to every Brahman and every blind or lame person who applied between sunrise and sunset. He had a large garden a short distance from the city . . . each person receiving his dole was shown into the garden, where he was compelled to stay during the day lest he should apply twice . . . The sums distributed on these occasions are said to have, in some instances, amounted to above 50,000 rupees'.⁵ A Chitpavan

¹ Sec. Cons. 1817, 5 Sept. (34).

² Sec. Cons. 1817, 5 Sept. (36).

³ Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, i, p. 375.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Id., pp. 374-5.

Brahman of the most orthodox type, he possessed a rare catholicity of mind. A few days before his death, he called upon the English missionary at Benares to see him as he was 'anxious to obtain a further knowledge of Christianity'.¹ Bishop Heber had never the chance to see Amrit Rao, for he died 'on the second night of my residence at Secrole', a suburb of Benares, and his 'ashes I saw yet smoking on the Ali Bhaee's [Ahalya Bai's] Ghat as I passed it'.²

The settlement with Amrit Rao, though the most urgent, was not the only problem that Arthur Wellesley had to deal with. The restoration of Baji Rao did not mean the end of the task that the Company had undertaken, but in fact the beginning of it. Long periods of civil war and the want of any strong central authority had made the Maratha chiefs unaccustomed to any regular government, and the Peshwa's power had been reduced almost to a name. When the Peshwa was brought back to Poona by the Company's army, a large number of Maratha chiefs joined Arthur Wellesley and paid respects to the Peshwa after his restoration. But it is evident that most of the chiefs were not prepared to yield more than a show of obedience to Baji Rao, and very few of them would have exerted themselves for the cause of the Government. The Maratha chiefs who lived to the south of Poona may be classified as rajas, jagirdars and the other officers of the Poona Government entrusted with military duties. To the first class belonged the Raja of Kolhapur, with a revenue of 80,00,000 rupees and an army of 1,500 cavalry and 3,000 peons. He was hostile to the Patwardhans and by no means friendly to the Peshwa. Among the jagirdars, the most important was the house of the Patwardhans represented by Balaji Rao Gopal, Ramchandra Rao, commonly called Appa Saheb, Trimbak Rao Raghunath and Chintaman Rao. Balaji

¹ Heber, *op. cit.*, i, p. 396.

² *Ibid.*

Rao Gopal, who was the eldest of the family, possessed Miraj and the territories around it, with a revenue of about four lakhs and kept an army of about 700 horse and 1,500 peons. Ramchandra Appa had a revenue of equal amount and kept an army of 500 horse and 1,000 foot. Trimbak Rao Raghunath had a smaller revenue of about two lakhs only, and his army consisted of 300 horse and 1,000 infantry. Chintaman Rao's revenue amounted to four lakhs and a half, and his army was comprised of 700 cavalry and 1,000 peons. The Patwardhans were old enemies of the Raja of Kolhapur, and most of them kept in service an additional body of Pindaris to plunder the Raja's territory. Madhu Rao Rastia, the head of the Rastia family, enjoyed a revenue of twenty lakhs of rupees and kept an army of 4,000 horse and an equal number of infantry, with an additional body of Pindaris. He also was hostile to the Raja of Kolhapur and friendly towards the Patwardhans. Parashuram Pant Pratinidhi, another important jagirdar, enjoyed a revenue of ten lakhs and kept an army of 3,000 cavalry. He had pledged full support to the Peshwa but did very little to keep his promise. Among the chiefs who enjoyed a smaller income were Appa Dessai of Nipani, Pandurang Baburao of Baramati and Venkat Rao of Ichalkaranji. They were all friendly to the Peshwa, but none of them kept more than 1,000 horse or had an income of more than 1,25,000 rupees. The Dessai of Kittur in Belgaum had an income of four lakhs and an army of 1,000 horse and 4,000 peons. He was always exposed to the English attack and was regarded as 'easily kept in allegiance to the British Government'. Among the military officers of the State was Bapu Gokhale with a force of 2,000 horse, 1,000 infantry, a body of Pindaris and a few guns. Ganpat Rao Panse, an old officer of the Poona Government, had an army of 1,200 horse and 500 peons. The other officers kept considerably smaller

bodies of men. Bapu Vithal had an army of 500 horse. Balkrishna Gangadhar's number was the same. Vithal Sco Deo kept a body of 600 horse.¹

It has been stated that when Arthur Wellesley began his march to Poona he issued a proclamation to the Maratha chiefs, and that, though he did not make any definite promise, he assured them that their case would be referred to the Peshwa, and a settlement brought about. Moreover, no sooner was the Peshwa restored, than it was evident that a war with Sindhia was only a question of time, and by the second article of the Treaty of Bassain, the Peshwa had bound himself to act in concert with the British Government against any 'act of unprovoked hostility or aggression'. All these considerations urged General Wellesley to a settlement between the Peshwa and his jagirdars. He presented a memorandum on the subject, to the Peshwa and asked for his approval.² The document contained the concessions which the Peshwa was to grant to his chiefs. By it, Bapu Gokhale was to receive immediately a sum of two or three lakhs of rupees from the Peshwa, for paying off the arrears of his troops, with a grant of saranjami lands. The demands of the Patwardhans were to be satisfied, and they were to be given a guarantee of safety during their visit to the Peshwa. Bapuji Vithal was to be paid the expenses of his men. Appa Dessai was to be allotted saranjami lands for the pay of his troops, and was to be repaid sums of money which he had advanced to Bapu Vithal, Yashwant Rao Patankar, Rupram Chaudhuri and Bapu Gokhale for the payment of their troops. Appa Dessai was also to receive compensation for the loss of a portion of his territories, which the Peshwa had ceded to the Company by the Treaty of Bassein. Provision was also made for the jagirdar of Kittur, Rukmaji Sindhia of Dharwar,

¹ This account is based on Close's memorandum in *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, pp. 112-16.

² *Wellington's Despatches*, Supplementary iv, pp. 82-4.

Madhu Rao Rastia and Lingam Pandit. On the 14th May, Arthur Wellesley paid a visit to the Peshwa, and had a talk with him about the means to be adopted for the conciliation of his sirdars, and the Peshwa is reported to have shown the 'highest satisfaction'.¹ But a fortnight after, on the 31st May, in a letter to the Governor-General, Close declared that notwithstanding the Peshwa's promise to conciliate the jagirdars and make provision for them, 'no substantial measures have yet been pursued'. Ramchandra Rao was induced to see the Peshwa, but no arrangements were made for his visit. No provisions were made for the troops of Bapu Gokhale. The Vinchurkar jagirdars were dissatisfied, on account of the surrender of Olpad to the Company by the Peshwa according to the terms of the Treaty of Bassein. No payment was made to Appa Dessai, and he insisted on returning to his jagir.²

Consequently no settlement could be made. The reasons for it lay not so much in the Peshwa's inaction as elsewhere. We do not know for certain what Baji Rao felt at this time towards the Company, with whom a few months ago he had made a treaty to last 'so long as the sun and moon endure'; but we have no reason for saying that as yet he was particularly restive under British control. He had not until now felt himself secure enough at home to pay any attention to his newly acquired friends, the English. He would not have liked to see Daulat Rao Sindhia's power destroyed, and might have hoped for a defeat of the Company's troops in the war that followed. But at the time, it is clear that he played no part in any way hostile to the English. The point for consideration is not how far he exercised his authority for the support of the English; it must first of all be discovered if he had any. Arthur Wellesley, writing at the end of July, attributed the

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 127.

² *Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons.* 1803, 21 July (79).

‘weak and confused state of the government’ principally to the Peshwa’s ‘personal character’, yet he was not blind to the ‘rebellions and disturbances which have prevailed throughout the Mahratta Empire for the last seven years’.¹ He felt that ‘it could not be expected that even a government regularly organized would be able to resume the functions and its power immediately after a revolution, such as that effected by the victories of Yashwant Rao Holkar . . .’.² There was hardly any chance that the assurances of help given by the Peshwa to General Wellesley would ever be fulfilled. The whole of the Peshwa’s country was in ruins. The entire produce of the preceding year was consumed by Holkar’s troops, and the district round about Poona was depopulated.³ For years the Peshwa and the jagirdars received little or no revenue, and both were ‘obliged to wink at and even authorize the plunder of their own territories for the subsistence of their troops.’⁴

While attempts were made to raise an army in the Peshwa’s territory to serve with General Wellesley, it became necessary to select a Maratha chief to take charge of the ‘Jari-Patka’, the flag of the State. It was Baji Rao’s intention to entrust it to Sadashiv Rao Fadke, but the Resident preferred Ramchandra Appa, commonly known as Appa Saheb of the Patwardhan family.⁵ The Peshwa was never well disposed to the Patwardhans, but he consented to the British proposal on condition that Appa Saheb would pay him two lakhs of rupees as *nazarana* and take an oath of allegiance to the Poona Government.⁶ The Resident persuaded Appa Saheb to visit the Peshwa,⁷ but Appa Saheb was in no way inclined to join the English in a war against other Marathas, nor was he at all anxious to pay such

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 510.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1803,
22 June (64).

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

a huge amount of money to the Peshwa or take the oath of allegiance. In a private letter, dated the 29th May, he wrote from Poona that 'the English are showing great eagerness for my acceptance of the "Jari-Patka" . . . I told them I did not want it. Why do you ask for it to the Sarkar? I will not have it. So they are offended. The Sarkar is very much anxious that I will take the oath of allegiance. I am in a great difficulty'¹

On the 3rd June 1803, Arthur Wellesley left Poona before any settlement with the jagirdars had been made. After his departure, Baji Rao made some hasty arrangements about the army, and issued new sanads to the chiefs whom he could prevail upon to accompany the English army. Appa Dessai Nipaniar received the 'Jari-Patka' and was given the province of Phaltan (which really belonged to another jagirdar) for the expenses of his army.² In like manner, two mahals were taken away from the possessions of Ramchandra Appa Patwardhan and given to Bapu Gokhale.³ Some of the saranjami lands belonging to Anubai Ghorpade were given to Bapu Chaphekar,⁴ and Anyaba Rahatekar received some lands from the possessions of Maloji Ghorpade.⁵

By these measures, the Peshwa collected a body of about five thousand men, which started at the end of June and joined Arthur Wellesley's forces. But the more powerful Maratha sardars refused to contribute to the army. The Patwardhans were offended on account of their possessions being given over to Gokhale and pointed out the debt they had already incurred in the service of the Peshwa.⁶ Rastia refused to join without the Patwardhans,⁷ and the Vinchurkar jagirdars pleaded poverty.⁸ Repeated efforts to induce the

¹ Khare, xiv, 6640.

² Khare, xiv, 6650.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Patwardhans to join the British army proved unsuccessful. At the end of July, Ramchandra Rao Appa Saheb told the Peshwa that he was as loyal a servant of the State as the late Parashuram Bhau had been, but under no circumstance would he serve under Arthur Wellesley.¹ Appa Saheb continued at Poona for some time, but when the news was brought to him that his jagir had been attacked by the Raja of Kolhapur, he left for the south.

The new arrangements which the Peshwa had made to raise the army left much to be desired, but it is difficult to see what else he could do. He acted within his rights when he resumed some of the lands held by his chiefs and passed them over to others. These saranjami lands were granted on condition of military service, and could be resumed at the will of the Peshwa on the failure of the service. But though Baji Rao was within his rights, he was not acting within his power. His conduct was most inexpedient. His measures were highly offensive to a number of already sulky Maratha chiefs and helped to widen the gulf that existed between the Peshwa and his sirdars.

The days that followed were busy with war in the Deccan. The capture of Ahmadnagar from Sindhia was followed by the victories of Assaye and Argaon. On the 15th December 1803, the Raja of Nagpur signed the Treaty of Deogaon with the English, and on the 30th of the same month, Sindhia made the Treaty of Surji Anjangaon.

When the war was over, the Peshwa once more brought up the question of the southern jagirdars. On the 1st March 1804, he sent a message to Arthur Wellesley, at Poona, complaining against the conduct of the Patwardhans, 'who had refused to attend to his requisition and had returned to the south contrary to positive orders'.² Sadashiv Mankeshwar, who brought the

¹ Khare, xiv, 6666.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 21 June (227).

message to General Wellesley, also informed him that the Peshwa wished to resume most of the lands held by the Patwardhans and transfer them to Bapu Gokhale and Appa Dessai ; but if the British Government would not agree to this proposal, the Peshwa would like to make over to Gokhale lands held by Rastia and the Pratinidhi and demand a reduction of troops maintained by the Patwardhans.¹ It was, of course, impossible for Arthur Wellesley to concur to plans which would have landed the whole Maratha country in fresh civil wars, and he was not prepared to see the alliance between Poona and the Company treated as an instrument for punishing enemies of the Peshwa. Instead, he brought forward a plan of his own, which would effect an adjustment between the Peshwa and the southern chiefs, under the guarantee of the Company. On the 7th March, he wrote a letter to the Governor-General, pointing out that the Peshwa's Government could not last 'on its present footing', and unless the British Government interfered there would be a contest in the south affecting Mysore and the Company's territories, which would oblige the Company 'to interfere in the end probably with less effect'.² This letter was followed by another on the 21st March, in which Arthur Wellesley informed the Governor-General that once the formal permission of the Peshwa was obtained, there would be no difficulty regarding the proposed settlement between the Peshwa and his southern jagirdars.³ In the same letter he dwelt on the alternative method that might be employed, and indicated his desire to intervene in the relations between the Peshwa and his jagirdars. He meant that the British Government would oblige the Maratha chiefs to render to the Peshwa the service due from them, and, on the other hand, protect them from the oppression of the Peshwa's

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 21 June (227).

² *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, p. 127.

³ *Id.*, pp. 177-9.

Government and guarantee them their possessions so long as they continued to serve the Peshwa with fidelity.¹ In a letter dated the 3rd June 1804, the Governor-General approved of the scheme, with one condition, that British arms should not be employed against the southern jagirdars 'excepting in cases positively required by the treaty'.² The consent of the Poona Government was easily secured, and the Peshwa informed Close that he would agree to 'any settlement which might be brought about' under the instructions of the Governor-General.³

The work of the settlement with the southern jagirdars began in July 1804, and was entrusted to Edward Strachey. The principal of the jagirdars were the three Patwardhans, Ramchandra Rao Appa Saheb, his younger brother Hari Parashuram, commonly called Baba Saheb, and Chintaman Rao; and Strachey was advised to start with Appa Saheb Patwardhan.⁴ The terms proposed to Appa Saheb were as follows: firstly, mutual oblivion of injuries on both sides and a guarantee of personal safety to Appa Saheb, his relations and adherents; secondly, the British Government to guarantee the lands held under legal grants by Appa Saheb, his relations and adherents so long as they would serve the Peshwa zealously and faithfully. A list would be prepared of the lands held by Appa Saheb and submitted to the Peshwa. If the Peshwa wished to resume any of these possessions, the British Government would enquire into and settle the matter. Thirdly, Appa Saheb would not be required to produce more than two-thirds of the number of the troops he was required to maintain, in consideration of the recent troubles. One-third of the army was always to remain at Poona under the command of a member of the Patwardhan

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, pp. 177-9.

² *Id.*, iv, p. 78.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 9 August (105).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 9 August (130).

family. Finally, Appa Saheb should return to the Peshwa all lands held without a sanad.¹ At first the Patwardhans seemed quite amenable. Baba Saheb saw Arthur Wellesley at Miraj on the 31st June and professed a desire 'to serve the Peshwa's Government as in the former times'.² On the 11th July, Arthur Wellesley wrote to the Resident at Poona that the 'settlement of the Peshwa's affairs with the chiefs of the southern districts will not be difficult'.³ But there was really no likelihood of that, and the settlement remained as distant as ever. Appa Saheb took recourse to procrastination and gained time by the talk of a journey to Poona.⁴ This affair continued in this manner for the rest of the year. In a letter dated the 18th January 1805, Arthur Wellesley agreed with Close that 'however urgent it is to come to an arrangement' with the southern jagirdars, 'it will not answer to commence it until we shall have settled Holkar'.⁵ So the settlement was indefinitely put off, and it was not until the administration of Lord Minto that any satisfactory solution was arrived at.

The rebellion of Parashuram Srinivasa Pratinidhi at the end of 1804 added a further cause of trouble. The Pratinidhi, who formerly lived almost as a prisoner at Poona, had made his escape during Holkar's régime, and was living in his own jagir at Karad in Satara. In August 1803, he attacked Wai with his cavalry, 700 Arabs and 500 gardis, and raised 8,000 rupees from the district.⁶ The Pratinidhi was notoriously a man of many amours. Earlier, he had an eye on a girl in the troupe of Jibi Kani, a well-known courtesan at Poona. Jibi Kani was then staying at Wai. Pratinidhi paid her ten thousand rupees (most of which he had

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 9 August (130).

² *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, p. 385.

³ *Id.*, iv, p. 408.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1804, 29 Nov. (63).

⁵ *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, p. 617.

⁶ Khare, xiv, 6680.

probably secured by recent plunder), and purchased the girl from her.¹ He then returned to his province, and for a time no disturbance was reported.

At this time, the Pratinidhi was about twenty-five years of age, but on account of his undesirable associations and dissolute conduct he was not allowed to manage his own affairs. His possessions were looked after by his mother, Kasibai, and his manager, Balwant Rao Fadnavis.² The Pratinidhi wanted to get rid of them and gathered an army. By this means he freed himself from the control exercised over him, and began to create trouble. In January 1804, he besieged the Peshwa's fort at Khelanja,³ and descended to the Konkan.⁴ His general, Kali Khan, came to the 'mouja' of Abula and thoroughly plundered it.⁵ The village of Patan bought him off, agreeing to pay him one thousand rupees and supply him with horses.⁶ Kali Khan then carried his depredations to Ratnagiri district and received from the Pratinidhi a sanad for the Peshwa's fort of Dantagarh.⁷ In the middle of December, the Pratinidhi himself appeared in the neighbourhood of Wai and threatened the Peshwa's parganas of Nimba and Mahuli.⁸

The rebellion of the Pratinidhi attained such magnitude that it could not be passed over; and Balwant Rao, the manager of the Pratinidhi's State, applied to the Peshwa for his master's arrest.⁹ The Peshwa, who was only too ready to interfere, asked for British opinion and desired British help to relieve his fort at Khelanja.¹⁰

¹ Khare, xvi, 668o.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 413.

³ In Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 31 Jan. (8) this fort is mentioned as Kellingur. Presumably Khelanja is meant. It is a hill fort eleven miles north-west of Wai (*Satara Gazetteers*, pp. 481-2).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 31 Jan. (8).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 31 Jan. (24).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 31 Jan. (45).

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 31 Jan. (8).

¹⁰ Ibid.

When the British help was refused, the Peshwa sent Bapu Gokhale against the insurgents. As Bapu Gokhale approached the Pratinidhi's camp, he was joined by the Pratinidhi's mother and Balwant Rao.¹ The Pratinidhi agreed to join next day. But in the night, the news came that the Pratinidhi had fled with a few attendants. He was immediately pursued and brought back from a village about twenty miles to the south of Satara.² The Peshwa proposed to bring the Pratinidhi and his people to Poona, and put him under the same restraint as he had suffered in Nana Fadnavis's time, and resume the lands held by him.³ But the English Resident did not favour the idea of resuming the Pratinidhi's lands, and the Pratinidhi's mother and Balwant Rao protested against being brought to Poona by Gokhale,⁴ pleading that they had supported the Peshwa's officers and that there could be no reason for carrying them to Poona—a measure which 'would be the means of diminishing the respect and regard which had always been paid to the family'.⁵ As Chintaman Rao Patwardhan showed some inclination to assist the insurgents,⁶ Baji Rao yielded. The Pratinidhi was kept a prisoner in the fort of Mhasvad by his mother,⁷ and for a time all was quiet.

But the imprisonment of the Pratinidhi did not last long. He had a mistress named Rama, a low-caste woman of remarkable qualities. Formerly she had been the cause of a quarrel between the Peshwa and the Pratinidhi, and now once again she came into the limelight. She seized the fort of Vasota, and by a sudden attack rescued the Pratinidhi from Mhasvad.⁸

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1806, 18 Jan., p. 44.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1806, 18 Jan., p. 61.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Wellington's Despatches*, iv, p. 628.

⁷ Grant Duff, ii, p. 414.

⁸ Ibid.

The Pratinidhi then gathered together a number of insurgents and plundered the Peshwa's district in the name of the Raja of Satara.¹ Again Bapu Gokhale was sent against him, and again the Pratinidhi was beaten. In the Battle of Vasantgarh on the 27th March 1806, he was defeated with heavy losses and taken prisoner.² The Pratinidhi had been seriously wounded, but he refused to have his wounds dressed unless his mother and Balwant Rao were both placed under arrest.³ All three, therefore, were brought to Poona, and he was kept a prisoner in the house of Raghupant Godebole, where he lived till 1811, when he was set free.⁴ His treasures were plundered by Gokhale, who also took possession of his saranjami lands. The Pratinidhi lost one of his hands in this battle, and for this reason was sometimes called by his nickname of 'Thotepant' (the maimed Pant).⁵

The Pratinidhi's rebellion was the most serious disturbance in the Peshwa's territory. But there were troubles all over the country, and it was clear that the adherents of the old regime would not yield without a struggle. In August 1803, Bapu Sane, the killadar of Purandhar, rebelled against the Peshwa's authority and closed all roads to the south-east of Poona. This rebellion lasted for about eight months, after which Bapu Sane abandoned the fort to the Peshwa, and took refuge with the British.⁶ Towards the close of the same year, Ramchandra Hari Fadke, commonly known as Baba Fadke, joined with the adherents of Sindhia and carried on depredations in the neighbourhood of Sholapur.⁷ The rebels were routed and Baba Fadke

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 414.

² Riyasat, p. 362. Some details of Bapu Gokhale's campaign against the Pratinidhi may be found in Bhawe, *Marathi Daftar*, Rumal 2, p. 13 (Sardar Gokhale Yanche kaifiyat).

³ Riyasat, p. 362.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Riyasat, p. 363.

⁶ Khare, xiv, p. 7844.

⁷ Khare, xiv, p. 7840.

took shelter with the Patwardhans. But he was made over to the Peshwa in 1812 and imprisoned in the fort of Bassein, where he died.¹ In the beginning of 1804, a rebellion headed by Krishnarao Deshpande and Gopal Rao was suppressed by the English.²

Dhondo Pant Nijsure, the killadar of Lohogarh, was an old adherent of Nana Fadnavis, and for a long time resisted the Peshwa's authority. In April 1804, he was induced by the English to give up the fort to the Peshwa, and he then went to Panvel to live under English protection.³ Hari Ballal, the rebellious killadar of Suvarndrug, created far more difficulties, and for a long time resisted Sadashiv Mankeshwar's efforts to take possession of the fort. With his armed vessels, Hari Ballal plundered the trading boats and secured provisions for his garrison.⁴ At last, the Peshwa was obliged to apply to the Government of Bombay for some 'small armed vessels to blockade the fort of Servernadrug'.⁵ The Peshwa's request was complied with,⁶ and Hari Ballal then started negotiations for peace.⁷ In the beginning of 1806, disturbances were reported from Savanur, where the late killadar's men were fighting with the Peshwa's agent, and were being assisted by some of the chiefs of the south of the Krishna.⁸

It is evident, from the accounts of these troubles and disturbances, that the re-established Government at Poona was put to a severe test. It was, however, the first time that the Peshwa had had a chance to establish a Government which, so far as internal affairs were concerned, he could call his own. Formerly, his chief aim had been to get rid of Nana Fadnavis or Sindhia.

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 422.

² Khare, xiv, p. 7844.

³ Khare, xiv, p. 7845.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 18 Sept., p. 4778.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 7 Dec., p. 5293.

⁸ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1806, 3 April (55).

Death had removed the one, and circumstances prevented the other from exercising any authority in the affairs of the Poona Government ; and the Peshwa was left free to follow his inclinations so long as he did not infringe the conditions of the Treaty of Bassein. The English Resident at Poona was advised to refrain from interfering in the domestic affairs of Poona. On the 30th May 1803, the Governor-General wrote to Colonel Close not 'to exercise any influence in the internal affairs of the Peshwa's immediate Government of a nature injurious to him in dignity or offensive to his prejudice or pride'.¹ But it seemed that a certain amount of support from the Company would be necessary, and 'in order to enable the Peshwa to carry on the Government at all, the country must be conquered again by the British troops'.² Towards the end of the year 1803, Arthur Wellesley felt that the Peshwa had not 'in his service a common carcoon or amildar whom he can trust with the management of a single district'.³ In the beginning of the next year, he wrote to the Governor-General that 'the Peshwa's Government is at present only a name. His Highness has not settled even the country along the Beemah, five miles from Poona'.⁴ In March, Arthur Wellesley complained that the Peshwa expected him to do the police work for his Government. 'I have no means in my power', he wrote to the Resident, 'to provide for the police of his territories. The British troops cannot be dispersed in small bodies for the purpose either of revenue or police'.⁵

But it was not to be expected that stability and regularity could be immediately introduced into the new administration. The Peshwa naturally selected men

¹ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, p. 137.

² *Wellington's Despatches*, iii, p. 267.

³ *Id.*, ii, p. 578.

⁴ *Id.*, ii, p. 671.

⁵ *Id.*, iii, p. 185.

after his own heart for office in his Government, so that he might be able to dominate it completely. As Arthur Wellesley commented in September 1803, the Peshwa 'is everything himself, and everything is little'.¹ The new appointments included Vithoji Naik, a message bearer, who was entrusted with the administration of the city.² The police was placed in the charge of Khande Rao Rastia, an excellent choice, whose character, according to the English Resident, was 'above all imputation'.³ Baijnath Bhat had the charge of the Raja of Satara and the Peshwa's mahals,⁴ and Chinto Pant Deshmukh was given the management of the Dakshina festival, the annual festival of bestowing grants to Brahmins.⁵ Sadashiv Mankeshwar also came into prominence at this time and soon attained the position of the Peshwa's Diwan, which position he held for a considerable number of years. His rise coincided with the eclipse of the power of Bayaji Naik, who had acted as the vakil for English affairs. But Bayaji Naik was reinstated after a short time, and it is not unlikely that his enmity with Sadashiv Mankeshwar had something to do with his former dismissal from the Peshwa's Government.⁶

In June 1803, a terrible famine raged in the Peshwa's territory, and for a whole year did immense havoc in the country. The Peshwa remitted all duties on grain coming to Poona⁷ and tried to secure the inhabitants of the city against the scarcity. In May 1806, the Peshwa's wife Radhabai,⁸ the daughter of Dajiba Fadke, died⁹

¹ *Wellington's Despatches*, ii, p. 651.

² Khare, xiv, 6650.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 16 May (202).

⁴ Khare, xiv, 6666, 6781.

⁵ Khare, xiv, 6666.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1805, 18 Jan., p. 51 and Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1805, 1 Feb. (119).

⁷ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 13 May, p. 119.

⁸ In a letter to the Governor-General dated the 20th May 1806, Close calls her 'Seetabye, daughter of Dajeebah Phurkia'. It was evidently a mistake. Sitabai, the daughter of Moropant Damle, was the wife of Chimnaji Appa, and was married on the 16th May 1797 (see Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1806, June (15) and Riyasat, pp. 49, 540).

⁹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1806, 12 June (15).

and the next month the Peshwa married Varanasibai of Wai.¹ By this time, the country had attained a tranquillity which it had not known for years, and when, in June 1807, Lord Minto set foot in India, he found the Peshwa's territories in a state of comparative peace.

CHAPTER V

LORD MINTO'S ADMINISTRATION

THE policy pursued by Lord Wellesley in India was not approved by his masters in Leadenhall Street. To follow a course of conduct which was risky and highly expensive was not their idea of sound management, and before the conclusion of the war with Holkar they had the Governor-General recalled. Lord Cornwallis was prevailed upon to accept the office of Governor-General again, and on the 29th July 1805, he arrived in India with the intention of putting 'an end to the most unprofitable and ruinous warfare'.¹ But after a stay of only about two months in India, Cornwallis died. His work was carried on by Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Council, and to the great indignation of William Hickey, in February 1806, Barlow was appointed Governor-General of India ; but to Hickey's delight, the appointment of this 'silk-mercing knight of the Bath'² was superseded by the Whig Government in England, and Lord Minto was sent to India to take charge of the administration.

Lord Minto arrived in India in June 1807, and held office until 1813. Until 1812 the history of Poona during his administration presents very little of importance. We have only to note certain changes in the Residency of Poona. Colonel Close, who had been holding the office of the British Resident, was ordered on important business to Hyderabad, where he died. In times of exceptional dangers and difficulties he had managed affairs with considerable credit. He fully deserved the tribute paid to him by Elphinstone,³ that

¹ Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, iii, p. 532.

² Hickey, *Memoirs*, iv, p. 344.

³ Colebrooke, *Life of Elphinstone*, i, p. 270.

his was 'a character such as one would rather think imagined in ancient Rome than met in our own age and nation'—a compliment which would have been an exaggeration in most cases. After Close, the work of the Residency was temporarily managed by Henry Russell. In 1811, Mountstuart Elphinstone arrived at Poona and took over the charge from him. Elphinstone had previously acted as Close's assistant at Poona. His personality and his knowledge of the local language made him pre-eminently suited for the post.

The problem which first attracted Elphinstone's attention was the vexed question of the southern jagirdars. As he afterwards wrote to his friend Strachey in England, he felt that these chiefs should be brought under control, because 'they, in their unsettled state, were always a thorn in our side in time of war'.¹ In October 1811, he drew up a plan based on the principles suggested by Arthur Wellesley and sent it for the approval of the Governor-General.² In this document Elphinstone examined the conditions under which the southern jagirdars held their lands and considered how far the Peshwa's claim on them should be imposed.³ His classification of the Maratha chiefs was different from that adopted by Close in his memorandum of 1803.⁴ Elphinstone included the Patwardhans in the same category as Bapu Gokhale and Appa Dessai, and declared that the Patwardhans were military officers of the State and did not hold lands by feudal tenure as had been supposed.⁵ The main characteristic of this class, as Elphinstone pointed out, was that they were entrusted with the management of the land on behalf of the Peshwa and had to apply the revenue to the payment of their body of troops. The number and pay of

¹ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, i, p. 252.

² *Ibid.*

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

⁴ *Papers re Mahratta War*, 1803, pp. 112-16.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

the troops as well as the allowance enjoyed by the chief were fixed. The Peshwa exercised his control over the management of these lands by means of officers called *darakhbars*, appointed directly by himself. The jagirdars, with whom a settlement was contemplated, all belonged to this class, and included the Patwardhans, Madhu Rao Rastia, Bapu Gokhale, Appa Dessai Nipanikar and the Dessai of Kittur.

Many of the jagirdars were in possession of lands over which they had very little right. The lands wrongfully retained by the jagirdars were of various kinds.¹ Some of these lands had been formally granted for a fixed time but retained afterwards without any colour of right, while the others were occupied with very little or no right at all. Sometimes villages known as *dumala* which were always left out while granting saranjami lands, had been wrongfully occupied by the jagirdars. The grants *inam* and *zamini*—the former a grant of a portion of the revenue of a village, and the latter a portion of the land of a village, were also wrongfully enjoyed. When the jagirdars raised men in addition to the saranjami force, such force was called *itlakhi*, and a portion of land was given to the jagirdars for a definite period until the debt was paid. These lands were often retained, even when the debt had been extinguished. Sometimes lands allotted for a particular purpose were not given up after the fulfilment of that object—for instance, a village granted to Parashuram Bhau for his *naubatkhana* was retained by his son Ramchandra Rao, commonly called Appa Saheb. When the jagirdars were sent against foreign enemies or rebels, they did not always give up the lands they conquered, but wrongfully retained them.

The demands of the Peshwa on these chiefs were two-fold²—they should obey the conditions on which they held their land, and they should restore certain lands

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

² Ibid.

and revenues which they had usurped. The conditions under which they held their lands had arisen out of ancient and varying customs and had become vague and indefinite with time. But the following may be regarded as some of the original terms¹ :—The holder of a tenure should maintain a body of troops, the description, number and pay of which were settled. The allowances of the jagirdars were also fixed. The jagirdar's troops could be mustered as often as the Peshwa desired and the jagirdars had to refund to the Peshwa the pay of any soldier absent from the muster. The expenses of the saranjami lands were to be defrayed from the revenue. Besides these, the Peshwa had other claims of customary origin. They included, firstly, his right to appoint *darakhbars* to look after his interests in the saranjami lands ; secondly, to receive certain payment for his ministers from the jagirdars in proportion to their troops ; thirdly, he contended that one day's pay should be stopped from the salary of the Sibandi (irregular soldier) once a month, and a month's pay should be stopped from the salary of the ministerial officers every year for the benefit of the Peshwa.

It was clear to Elphinstone that to enforce all the claims of the Peshwa on the jagirdars would be inexpedient and unreasonable. Instead, he drew up the following terms to be proposed to the jagirdars² :—

1. There should be a mutual oblivion of past injuries.
2. All pecuniary claims on both sides should be abandoned.
3. The saranjami lands of the jagirdars were to be guaranteed to them by the British Government so long as the jagirdars served the Peshwa faithfully.
4. All the other lands were to be given up to the Peshwa.

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

² Ibid.

5. The jagirdars were to serve the Peshwa conformably to the original conditions of their holdings and ancient customs and to attend with their contingents whenever summoned.
6. The British Government was to guarantee the personal security of the jagirdars and their relatives so long as they served the Peshwa faithfully.
7. All disputes arising in the course of this arrangement should be arbitrated by the British Government.

These terms meant hardship to some of the chiefs, but Elphinstone saw no reason to suppose that there would be any general opposition by the southern jagirdars.¹ Appa Dessai and Bapu Gokhale had duly maintained the required number of troops and so far would not be affected, but they would be required to give up their usurpations. The Dessai of Kittur would lose an annual income of 45,000 rupees, but he would get back his saranjami lands held by the Patwardhans. Rastia had already given up his usurpations and had been living at Poona. The House of the Patwardhans would be affected most. Ramchandra Rao (Appa Saheb) was to restore usurpations to the amount of about 30,000 rupees and Chintaman Rao to the amount of about 45,000 rupees of annual revenue. Trimbak Rao Raghunath was to give up territory to the amount of 10,000 rupees of annual income, but no claim was made against Narayan Rao Patwardhan. The Patwardhans would also be required to contribute their contingents to the service of the Government, but at the same time they were to regain a considerable part of their saranjami land occupied by the Raja of Kolhapur and the Dessai of Kittur.

The scheme suggested by Elphinstone was approved by the Governor-General and preparations were secretly

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

begun, to avoid giving any notice to the southern chiefs. It was Elphinstone's idea to settle the matter during the rains, when there would be no fear of interruption by the Pindaris. Sir Samuel Auchmuty, the Commander-in-Chief, objected on the ground that during the rains 'part of the plan was utterly impracticable, and the rest was very difficult of execution'.¹ But Elphinstone carried his point. The Peshwa left Poona and went to Pandharpur. Elphinstone followed him with Sadashiv Mankeshwar and reached Pandharpur on the 17th July, where he was joined by a brigade of the subsidiary force consisting of the Grenadier Battalion and the 1st Battalion 8th Regiment.² Letters were then addressed to the jagirdars calling upon them to come to Pandharpur and enter into a settlement with the Peshwa on the terms offered.³

The idea of coming to Pandharpur was not liked by many of the chiefs. Madhu Rao Rastia reached Pandharpur on the 24th July,⁴ and Chintaman Rao promised his arrival.⁵ The Raja of Kurundvad State was too old and infirm to move and he agreed to send his son instead.⁶ Ramchandra Rao⁷ and Narayan Rao Patwardhan⁸ held out for some time, but the threat of an attack by a British force brought them into submission. In the beginning of August, the jagirdars present at Pandharpur included Bapu Gokhale, Chintaman Rao Patwardhan, Ramchandra Rao Patwardhan, Narayan Rao Patwardhan, Madhu Rao Rastia, the son of the Dessai of Kittur, and the son of the chief of Kurundvad. Appa Dessai was busy in a war with the Raja of Kolhapur, and his absence was excused.⁹ The rest of

¹ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, i, p. 252.

² Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 5 Aug., p. 733.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 5 Aug., p. 752.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 11 Aug., p. 819.

⁷ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 5 Aug., p. 759.

⁸ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 11 Aug., p. 810.

⁹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 26 Aug., p. 867.

the settlement was carried on without any difficulty. The Peshwa granted sanads to Bapu Gokhale for the lands he held without authority, and so there remained no claim against him.¹ Chintaman Rao made over to the Peshwa the lands he had usurped and showed great readiness to comply with all other demands made on him.² Ramchandra Rao ordered the surrender of lands demanded of him, but at the same time brought some counter claims against the Peshwa.³ Janoba Subadar, a relation of his, refused to surrender the fort of Kusigal, but submitted when Colonel Dowse marched against him.⁴ Narayan Rao had no lands to surrender.⁵ Madhu Rao Rastia agreed to give up his usurpations, but for a long time pleaded poverty as a reason for not raising a contingent for the Peshwa's service.⁶ Settlements were also arrived at with the rest. By March 1813, business was finished, and the contingents of the jagirdars marched to the frontier and to their respective positions.⁷

Side by side with the settlement with the southern chiefs, Elphinstone was carrying on a negotiation with the Raja of Kolhapur, which terminated with the Treaty of October 1812. The State of Kolhapur had always been a source of trouble to the Company and the Peshwa. In the past, the Bombay Government had made repeated attempts to put a stop to the piratical acts countenanced by the Kolhapur authorities, but had never attained a permanent success. An expedition was undertaken by a British frigate, *Fox*, and two British cruisers, which succeeded in only temporarily putting a check to the piratical depredations.⁸ Attempts

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 11 Aug., p. 819.

² Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 16 Sept., p. 962.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 1 Sept., p. 923.

⁴ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 14 Oct., p. 1050.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 1 Sept., p. 923.

⁶ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 16 Sept., p. 962.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 15 April (3).

⁸ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

made by the Bombay Marine to blockade the piratical ports on the western coast did not prove very successful.¹ Towards the close of 1810, the Bombay Government was contemplating taking possession of some forts which commanded the mouths of the rivers and islands, as the only means of successfully stopping this piracy. But the British Resident at Poona regarded these means as unwise, and feared that it might cause unnecessary embarrassment to the Company's Government.² Besides these piratical exploits, the Raja of Kolhapur had been carrying on hostilities with the Peshwa and the southern jagirdars. It was this hostile attitude of the Raja of Kolhapur that had always prompted the southern chiefs to withhold their contingents from the Peshwa's service. For a long time past, there had been a dispute between the Poona Government and Kolhapur as to the ownership of Chikodi and Manoli in Belgaum district, and this dispute was still continuing. In May 1812, the Raja of Kolhapur started fresh hostilities against the Peshwa by sending troops into Appa Dessai's jagir and plundering it.³ In this he was assisted by Chintaman Rao Patwardhan and the Government of Savantvadi,⁴ but unfortunately for the Raja of Kolhapur the war did not prove advantageous to him and he was repeatedly beaten by Appa Dessai. Elphinstone considered that this was the right moment to bring up the question of the settlement with Kolhapur, and also to take some effective means to check the piratical depredations of the State. He thought it prudent to distinguish the affairs of Kolhapur from the interests of the jagirdars and treat them separately, so as to prevent any union between the Raja and the southern chiefs.⁵ Moreover, the Raja of Kolhapur did not owe his position to the Peshwa, but his was an independent power descending

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

⁴ Ibid.

² Ibid.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 3 June, p. 380.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 3 June, p. 366.

from the old Bhonsla family of Poona, and it was apparent that he could not be treated in the same manner as the jagirdars.

In June 1812, Elphinstone offered to arbitrate between the Raja of Kolhapur and the Peshwa. The Peshwa gave his consent. But he did not like the idea of the English occupying the harbour of Malvan and forts in Kolhapur territory.¹ After a few days, the Peshwa's minister, Sadashiv Mankeshwar, brought forward a proposal to pay the British Government 50,00,000 rupees as a satisfaction of the English claims on Kolhapur.² This proposal, 'wild and extravagant' as it was, was not accepted; and then the Peshwa claimed the Raja of Kolhapur as his subject and offered to investigate the Company's demands on that State.³ The British Resident naturally refused to acknowledge the Peshwa's pretensions and retorted that the Peshwa had never claimed the Raja as his subject before—neither 'when the Raja was plundering our shipping, nor yet when we were retaliating with open force'.⁴ As the Resident found that the Peshwa's conduct was leading nowhere, he determined to take a decisive step. On the 29th June 1812, he informed Sadashiv Mankeshwar that the claim of the British Government on Kolhapur was entirely distinct from the proposed arbitration between the Peshwa and the Raja,⁵ and that the British Government would proceed with regard to its own claims on Kolhapur and 'negotiate directly with the Raja conformably to ancient usage', but it would always be ready to arbitrate if the Peshwa so wished.⁶ The Peshwa agreed, and gave the Resident full authority to enter into a settlement with the Raja of Kolhapur on behalf of the Poona Government, and expressed his desire that Elphinstone should be guided by the

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 8 July, p. 504.

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 8 July, p. 522.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 15 July, p. 672.

⁶ Ibid.

principles set forth by Arthur Wellesley and do nothing to compromise his honour.¹

Accordingly, Elphinstone wrote a letter to the Raja calling upon him to submit to the arbitration of the British Government, and give up Malvan as a security for the safety of the British vessels.² The vakil from Kolhapur assured Elphinstone of the Raja's willingness to cede Malvan, but complained that the Peshwa's Government was averse to the idea of the cession.³ In spite of the protest of Sadashiv Mankeshwar that the accusation was entirely unfounded and was only 'an artful falsehood' in order to embroil the Peshwa with the British Government,⁴ the Resident found it 'not only possible but probable' that Sadashiv Mankeshwar was mainly responsible for the intrigue.⁵ The Peshwa denied all knowledge of it,⁶ and no other obstruction was offered to the settlement with Kolhapur. The Durbar of Kolhapur was in the meantime torn by factions, and the reply from the Raja was delayed for some time.⁷ On the 30th August, Elphinstone wrote a letter to the Raja of Kolhapur to the effect that unless he agreed to the English demands within fifteen days, his territory would be attacked by British troops. At the same time, another letter was addressed to Appa Dessai, asking him to abstain from all offensive operations against Kolhapur.⁸ The reply from Kolhapur came on the next day; the Raja agreed to the British arbitration, but expressed his unwillingness to cede Malvan.⁹ At last the Raja submitted, and a draft treaty was drawn up by Elphinstone. The treaty was discussed with the vakil from Kolhapur and sent to the Raja for his approval.¹⁰

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1812, 7 Aug. (23).

² Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 26 Aug., p. 867.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 26 Aug., p. 901.

⁴ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 1 Sept., p. 923.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 26 Aug., p. 901.

⁶ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 9 Sept., p. 942.

⁷ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 16 Sept., p. 962.

⁸ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 16 Sept., p. 977.

⁹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 16 Sept., p. 978.

¹⁰ Ibid.

By this treaty, perpetual peace and friendship were promised between the Raja of Kolhapur, the Peshwa and the East India Company. The Raja of Kolhapur renounced his claims on Chikodi and Manoli, including the dependencies—which were to belong absolutely to the Peshwa. All the ports and territories taken from the Raja since the month of September 1808 in consequence of war regarding Chikodi and Manoli, were to be immediately restored. The Raja of Kolhapur gave up all claims on the Peshwa, the Peshwa's subjects and Appa Dessai. For the security of the British trade, the Raja perpetually surrendered to the East India Company the harbour of Malvan, including the fort and island of the same name, and the forts of Padmagarh and Rajkot and Surjakot with the lands dependent on them. The Raja engaged never to employ any armed vessel, or to permit any armed vessel to be fitted out, or to enter seaports then in his possession or thereafter acquired. He also agreed that the Company's vessels should have authority to search all vessels lying at the ports or sailing from them, and claim them as lawful prize of the Company if any arms were found aboard them. He further engaged to permit agents of the Company to reside in all ports in his dominions, or which might thereafter fall into his hands, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of all vessels lying in such ports and to permit those agents to search the vessels. The Raja promised on behalf of himself and his successors, to render all practical assistance to any ship flying the British flag or carrying a British pass or belonging to the allies of the British Government, if it put into any port, or was driven by stress of weather or any other cause upon the Kolhapur coast. The Raja also agreed that no claim should be advanced by himself or any of his subjects on any vessel belonging to any nation which might be wrecked, or driven by stress of weather on the coast. The Company, on its part, guaranteed to

protect the territory of Kolhapur against all foreign powers or states. The Raja undertook not to pursue any hostile measure against foreign states without the previous consent of the British Government ; and if any difference should arise in future between the Raja or his successor and any foreign state, the Company should adjust such difference. Lastly, the Company relinquished all its pecuniary claims on Kolhapur for depredations committed on the British trade, in consideration of the Raja's inability to satisfy those demands.¹ On the 1st October 1812, the treaty was accepted by the Raja,² and by the middle of November Malvan surrendered to the English.³ At first, the garrison proved mutinous and refused to submit, but they were brought under control by the Raja, and the fort was delivered to Colonel Smith.⁴

So by the end of 1812, the affairs of Kolhapur were successfully brought to a close, and the settlement was in all respects a triumph for the East India Company. The treaty acknowledged the rights of the Peshwa over Chikodi and Manoli, but it should be remembered that the Peshwa had already been in possession of both the districts which formed part of Appa Dessai's jagir.⁵ During the last fifty years, the Government at Poona had held Chikodi for at least twenty-six years, and Manoli for at least thirty-one years.⁶ The conclusion of the treaty most probably saved the Raja of Kolhapur from a defeat at the hands of Appa Dessai and guaranteed his territory from foreign aggression, but at the same time it made him give up control of his foreign relations as the price for English protection. Henceforth he should no longer fit out any armed vessel or

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 14 Oct., p. 1076 ; Aitchison, op. cit., vii, pp. 236-8.

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 25 Nov., p. 1335.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 14 Oct., p. 1061.

⁶ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 23 April (57).

wage war against a foreign power. In other words, from being an independent kingdom of the old Bhonsla family, Kolhapur sank into what was in fact a protected state of the East India Company.

It should be observed that on the occasion of the settlement with the jagirdars as well as in the war with Kolhapur, it was the threat of a British attack that ultimately decided the issue. The Raja of Kolhapur was already involved in a desperate war and probably would have ultimately come to terms. But the Peshwa was no match for the southern chiefs, and could never have brought them under control without British help. Apart from the subsidiary force, the Peshwa's own army was almost negligible. In 1812, his army was estimated by Elphinstone as consisting of 6,500 horse and 3,000 foot, of which 4,000 horse were raised as a temporary measure against the Pindaris and were soon to be disbanded.¹ For some time past, however, the Peshwa was contemplating the creation of an army organized on the European model and commanded by the British officers. On the 3rd October 1811, Elphinstone acquainted the Governor-General that the Peshwa had expressed his intention of raising a body of infantry consisting of six battalions, trained after the European model.² At first Elphinstone did not encourage the Peshwa's proposal, regarding it as intended only to 'amuse' and prevent him from 'urging the Peshwa to augment his cavalry'.³ There was also a possibility that the British Government might feel reluctant to communicate the European military system to the Indian Powers and consider it highly impolitic to leave in the Peshwa's hand a body of men trained by the British officers. Lord Hobart (later Lord Buckingham), who became the Governor of Madras in 1794 and the President of

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 388.

² Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1811, 21 Dec. (6).

the Board of Control in 1812, expressed himself at a later date as quite opposed to the idea of spreading the European military system among the Indians. 'If ever a dominion was originally won', he wrote, 'and is still maintained by superior military knowledge, it is the British Indian Empire. In the diffusion of that knowledge, I should conceive that its greatest danger was to be apprehended.'¹ A similar opinion was expressed later on by the Secret Committee which wrote to the Governor-General on the 3rd April 1815, that this system 'without its advantage is liable to all the objections which can be urged against the subsidiary system; and whatever weight may be due to the opinions that have been brought forward in its support, the possible consequences of its establishment we deem of a magnitude sufficient to deter us from authorizing its further encouragement, particularly with reference to the artillery, an arm which it ought to be our policy not to extend to the knowledge of the natives.'² But, however unfavourable might have been the opinion in 1815, the Governor-General in 1811 welcomed the measure proposed by the Peshwa, and considered that an effective army in the Peshwa's service would relieve the Company from the burden of protecting his dominions.³ On the 1st November 1811, Elphinstone was informed that the Governor-General desired that the Peshwa's suggestion 'should be encouraged and promoted' by all means.⁴ Towards the close of the next year, an application was made by the Peshwa to the British Government to help him in the formation of the Brigade.⁵ On the 18th December 1812, the Supreme Government expressed its satisfaction at the Peshwa's 'wise and salutary resolution' and promised the

¹ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons.* 1811, 1 Nov. (3).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Bom. Sec. Pro.* 1812, 9 Dec., p. 1350.

Peshwa to afford him the aid of the military officers of the Company. But as it was inconvenient to employ these officers permanently in the Peshwa's service, it was desired that they might be replaced as soon as possible by British subjects not in the Company's service.¹

The Peshwa selected Major John Ford of the Madras Native Infantry as the Captain of his Brigade.² Baji Rao had come to know him when Ford was formerly working under Colonel Close at Poona. The other officers were selected by Ford and approved by Elphinstone.³ They all belonged to the Bombay Establishment, and an application was sent to Bombay asking the Government whether the officers could be spared from the Company's service. The officers required immediately for the Peshwa's Brigade were as follows⁴ :—

- 2 Commanding Officers (Captain Hicks, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment ; Lieutenant Betts, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment).
- 2 European Adjutants (Lieutenant Evan Davis, 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment ; Lieutenant Frederick Hicks, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment).
- 4 Jemadars.
- 4 Drill Sergeants.
- 10 Drill Havildars.
- 10 Drill Naiks.
- 20 Drill Privates.
- 2 Gunners.

Lieutenant Shaw was suggested as the instructor of the artillery, and on the 28th March 1813, Lieutenant Leckie was appointed as the Brigade Major.⁵

The Peshwa showed great anxiety to secure the fidelity of Ford. Ford was told that the Peshwa would

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1812, 18 Dec. (17).

² Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 9 Dec., p. 1350.

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1813, 27 Jan., p. 54.

⁴ Ibid. ; also Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 19 Feb. (9).

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 7 April, p. 1535.

always act in concert with the Company, and Ford would be expected to be loyal to the Peshwa and to abstain from intrigues.¹ In the management of the Brigade, the Peshwa showed liberality as well as judgement. He pledged himself for the regular payment of the troops, allotted a branch of revenue for this purpose, and promised to keep a sum of money always with Ford.² The allowances fixed by the Peshwa for the officers and privates of his Brigade were as follows³ :—

Each Commanding Officer	Rs. 1,000 per month
Each Commanding Adjutant	Rs. 500 per month
Lieutenant of Artillery	Rs. 500 per month
Brigade Major	Rs. 800 per month
Surgeon	Rs. 500 per month
Jemadar	Rs. 24 per month
Havildar	Rs. 10 per month
Naik	Rs. 8.4 per month

The sergeants and gunners were to draw the same pay as in the Company's service. The pay of a sepoy had formerly been fixed by the Peshwa at the sum of 8 rupees and 8 annas.⁴ The pay of the sepoy in the Company's service was 7 rupees and 8 annas with an additional *batta* when on field service. It was considered possible that the amount fixed by the Peshwa might interfere with the recruitment of the Company and render the Peshwa's troops indisposed to active service. Consequently the Peshwa was prevailed upon to reduce the pay of the sepoy to 7 rupees with an additional *batta* in times of active service.⁵ The men for the Brigade were mostly recruited from North India, and in 1815 Elphinstone estimated that two-thirds of the men of the

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 19 Feb. (9).

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 24 Feb., p. 741, 17 March, p. 1015.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 19 Feb. (9).

⁵ Ibid. and Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 17 March, p. 1015.

corps came from the north and were British subjects.¹ The Brigade was thoroughly managed and well supervised. The Peshwa's officers mustered it themselves, checked the accounts and were present when the payments were made. But all the rest was managed by Ford and his officers.²

The ambiguous nature of the employment of Major Ford is apparent. Neither he nor his Brigade were in the service of the Peshwa in the real sense of the term. The Brigade was created and maintained at the Peshwa's expense, and in February 1813, Captain Ford's employment was made permanent.³ But it was clear that his service had in reality been lent to the Peshwa and that he held it during the Company's pleasure. It was a certainty that in times of hostility between the Poona Government and the Company, the battalions trained by Ford would not stand by the Peshwa. When the sepoys enlisted for the Brigade, they had to swear fidelity to the Peshwa. Later on, a change was introduced in the oath by which they had to swear to the effect that they would serve the Peshwa faithfully so long as he acted in amity with the Company.⁴ It should not be concluded that the new oath completely altered the situation. It merely illustrated the true relation between the Peshwa and his Brigade. In other words, the Peshwa's Brigade strongly resembled the subsidiary force. By the creation of this body, the Peshwa forged a weapon which he could use as long as the British Government was pleased to allow him to do so ; but at the first sign of hostilities with that power, no help would be forthcoming from the Brigade, and there was every possibility that it would be used against him if such occasion should arise.

Apart from the Peshwa's settlements with the southern

¹ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 122 and Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1815, 30 Dec. (19).

² *Ibid.*

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1813, 19 Feb. (12).

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 424 and Riyasat, p. 486.

chiefs and the Raja of Kolhapur, and the formation of the Brigade, the present period offers nothing of importance. In fact, in Poona as well as in the country, very little was happening. About this time, Baji Rao was not getting on well with his brother, Chimnaji Appa. In September 1806, the Peshwa informed Close that Chimnaji had 'disclosed marks of ambition' and it was expedient to provide for his separate maintenance. It was also suggested that he should reside at a separate house under proper restrictions.¹ On the 17th November, a meeting was arranged between the British Resident and Baji Rao and Chimnaji Appa, when Chimnaji declared that he had no desire to interfere in the conduct of the Poona Government, but that he wanted a suitable provision for himself which would make him independent of the Peshwa's servants.² Chimnaji was granted an allowance of two lakhs of rupees per year.³ But never again was there any real friendship between the two brothers. Chimnaji lived the life of a political suspect at Poona, and his excursions into the country were always looked upon with suspicion.⁴ Two years after, another quarrel between the Peshwa and his brother was reported, and in June 1808, the Peshwa complained to the British Resident that Chimnaji was 'unaccommodating' and his manner 'cold and distant'.⁵ In May 1812, Chimnaji married the daughter of Madhaji Pant Joshi.⁶ His first wife, Sitabai, whom he had married in 1797, died of an accident in 1809.⁷

On the 10th October 1810, the Peshwa's wife, Varanasibai, gave birth to a son.⁸ A sum of Rs. 1,78,641

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1806, 2 Oct. (50).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1806, 11 Dec. (17).

³ Riyasat, p. 565.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1808, 11 July (19).

⁶ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1812, 3 June, p. 366 and Riyasat, p. 565.

⁷ Riyasat, p. 565.

⁸ Riyasat, p. 541; Peshwaili Akher (Bharatvarsha), p. 151. According to a letter written by Henry Russell to the Bombay Government on the 18th October, Varanasibai gave birth to a son in the night of the 17th October (Bom. Pol. Pro. 1812, 20 Oct., p. 5159).

was spent on the occasion, and the child was named Vamanrao.¹ But he had a very short life and died after five months.² Varanasibai was the senior of the Peshwa's two surviving wives; the younger was Benubai, also called Kusabai, whom he had married in 1806.³ In November 1812, the Peshwa married again. The bride on this occasion was Saraswatibai, the daughter of Balwant Rao Pedse.⁴

Before closing the chapter, a reference may be made to the unfortunate incident of Kharsedji Jamshedji Modi. Kharsedji was a Parsi who entered into the service of Close and became the Company's wakil at the Poona Durbar. He was a favourite of the Peshwa, and in 1803 he secured the grant of a village from him.⁵ But when Elphinstone took over the charge of the Poona Residency in 1810, his familiarity with the local language deprived Kharsedji of his former importance. Besides, his relations with the Peshwa's Government were looked upon with suspicion and his loyalty to the British Government was doubted. In 1813, a quarrel broke out between Kharsedji and the Peshwa's minister, Sadashiv Mankeshwar, regarding the appointment of the Peshwa's Subadar of the Karnatak. Kharsedji secured the appointment for himself. But Mankeshwar then brought a charge against him before the Peshwa, alleging corrupt practice in his government. Kharsedji was a British subject, and so the accusation was laid before the British Resident but, before any investigation was made, the whole affair was hushed up at the Peshwa's desire.⁶ Elphinstone, however, was opposed to the idea of a servant of the Residency also holding a post under the Peshwa, and he called upon Kharsedji to resign the one or the other. Accordingly, Kharsedji resigned his office of the Subadarship of the Karnatak.

¹ Vad, *Selections from Satara Rajas and Peshwa Daftar Diaries*, v, p. 47.

² Riyasat, p. 541.

³ Riyasat, p. 540.

⁴ Ibid. and Rajwade, iv, p. 181.

⁵ Peshwa Daftar, 41 (36).

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 426.

But as Elphinstone considered that Kharsedji's further stay at Poona was undesirable, an allowance of Rs. 500 per month was provided for him,¹ and he was asked to quit Poona and reside in Gujarat. Kharsedji consented, but the night previous to his departure he died of poison. It is not known whether it was murder or suicide. Elphinstone started an enquiry, but nothing could be proved. It has been suggested that there was a possibility that he might have been put to death by the Peshwa and his favourite Trimbakji, lest he should expose their guilty secrets.² But there is no evidence to support this conjecture. It was at that time believed at Poona that Kharsedji was a broken man after the loss of his power and prestige with the British Government, and that he committed suicide to save himself from further disgrace.³

The death of Kharsedji Modi in February 1815 was undoubtedly tragic, but it was not politically important. Its main interest lies in the fact that it was an unsolved mystery. The other incident was of incomparably greater significance, for it embroiled the Peshwa in a quarrel with the British Government, and ultimately cost him his power and position. This was the murder of the Gackwar's agent, Gangadhar Shastri. But before entering on the story of his murder, it is necessary to explain the reasons which led to the Shastri's arrival at Poona, and the events that were taking place at Baroda about this time.

¹ Riyasat, p. 377.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 429.

³ In Riyasat, there is a story that Kharsedji procured the poison from one Suleman on the night of his death and committed suicide.

CHAPTER VI

THE PESHWA AND THE GAEKWAR

By the Fourteenth Article of the Treaty of Bassein, the Peshwa had agreed that the British Government should 'examine into, and finally adjust' his demands on the Gaekwar.¹ In 1805, the Gaekwar's Government concluded a treaty with the British, by which it similarly consented to submit all differences with the Peshwa to British arbitration.² The Peshwa's claims on the Gaekwar were of long standing and he had repeatedly asked the British Government for a settlement. In the September of 1806, the Resident at Poona informed the Government of Bombay that the Peshwa's Government had 'shown much anxiety to have its claim on the Baroda Government investigated and adjusted'.³ In May 1808, the Peshwa's claim was repeated⁴ and the Bombay Government directed the Resident at Baroda to take the necessary measures without delay.⁵ But nothing was accomplished until May 1810, when the Baroda Government expressed its desire to send a vakil to Poona.⁶ The Bombay Government also urged the Gaekwar's administration to delay no longer the deputation of an agent for 'the general arrangement of the accounts between the two states'.⁷

Before examining the Peshwa's claims, it is necessary to define the conditions that existed at Baroda about this time. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, when there was hardly any stable government in many

¹ Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vi, pp. 56-7.

² *Id.*, viii, p. 65.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1806, 30 Sept., p. 73681.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1808, 10 May, p. 5068.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1810, 16 May, p. 2323.

⁷ *Ibid.*

of the Indian States, Baroda presented a scene of the worst confusion. Govind Rao Gaekwar had died in 1800, and had been succeeded by Anand Rao, a man of poor intellect. Thereupon, Govind Rao's illegitimate son, Kanhoji, imprisoned his brother and himself assumed the government. However, Anand Rao was supported by the Chief Minister, Raoji Apaji, and Kanhoji was defeated and imprisoned. Kanhoji's cause was in its turn taken up by Malhar Rao, the jagirdar of Kadi, and Mukunda Rao, an illegitimate son of Govind Rao Gaekwar. After some hostilities, both parties applied to the Bombay Government for help, and the Bombay Government decided in favour of Anand Rao Gaekwar. Malhar Rao's power was crushed with the help of a British force, and as the price of the assistance the Gaekwar made important cessions to the Company. In 1802, the Gaekwar entered into the Subsidiary Alliance, and the next year granted a bond of seven lakhs and eighty thousand rupees for the expenses of the subsidiary troops,¹ and in June 1802, the Bombay Government gave the Gaekwar's Diwan, Raoji Apaji, a promise that the office of the Diwan of Apaji 'should remain always in the family of Raoji Apaji from generation to generation'.² Raoji Apaji died in July 1802, and was succeeded by his nephew, Sitaram, whom he had adopted as his son. In a letter written by Anand Rao Gaekwar to Sitaram, he was asked to perform his duties in the way his father did, 'by ensuring friendship with the English Bahadur'. In the same letter, Sitaram was also given the power, jointly with the English, to nominate from the Gaekwar's family anyone to rule the State in case any of the Gaekwar's descendants disturbed 'friendly relations' with the English and 'behaved unjustly'.³ In the Baroda Court, there was a powerful section which disliked the British interference and hated the Prabhu

¹ *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 207.

² Gupte, *Historical Records of Baroda*, p. 35 ; also Aitchison, op. cit., viii, p. 46.

³ Gupte, op. cit., p. 69.

ministers for encouraging the growth of the British power in the State. In November 1803, a conspiracy was formed for the overthrow of the British at Baroda, and the destruction of Sitaram's power.¹ The plot was favoured by the members of the Gaekwar's family, and included among its leaders Rani Takhtabai, the wife of the Gaekwar, and even the Gaekwar himself.² But the plot was discovered before any harm was done, and some of the conspirators were punished.

Nevertheless, Sitaram's downfall was near. He possessed none of his father's talents, and his incompetence and covert hostility to the British power induced the Bombay Government to curb his power. In 1806, the Gaekwar's brother, Fateh Singh, was appointed to act as the Regent of the State, and in the next year Sitaram's uncle, Babaji, was called in to assist in the administration.³ Scarcely was Babaji formally appointed when Sitaram began to show signs of jealousy.⁴ He sent his brother Sakharam to the Governor of Bombay, complaining against the action of 'narrow-minded persons' who intrigued with both the parties, and prayed that the Company's favour be 'preserved' to him.⁵ For several years he alternately appealed for help to the British Government and charged them with breach of faith. At last, in 1808, as a last resort, he sent letters under his seal to the Shah of Kandahar, the chieftains of Sind, and some Maratha chiefs, to come to his help and destroy the English power.⁶ On the discovery of Sitaram's treacherous conduct, he was deprived of his office and placed under restraint. Babaji Apaji carried on the administration until 1810, when he died. He was succeeded by his son, Vithal Rao Bhau, who became the Khasgi Diwan, with the consent of the British

¹ Malet, *Baroda State*, p. 23.

² Ibid.

³ *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 214.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 27 Jan., p. 321.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 6 Feb., p. 844.

⁶ Malet, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

Government.¹ In 1812, another rebellion broke out at Baroda, but it was put down.²

About this time a person named Gangadhar Shastri Patwardhan was exercising considerable influence in the affairs of the Government. Gangadhar Shastri, as Elphinstone described him, was 'a person of great shrewdness and talent who keeps the whole State of Baroda in the highest order', who 'affects to be quite an Englishman, walks fast, talks fast, interrupts and contradicts and calls the Peshwa and his ministers "old fools" and "damned rascals" or rather "dam rascal."' ³ Gangadhar Shastri was born about the year 1775.⁴ His original home had been at Manoli.⁵ At Poona, he had employment under the Fadkes.⁶ In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Gangadhar had quitted Poona as a result of a quarrel with Nana Fadnavis and Dada Gadre, and went to Baroda. He was appointed by Walker, British wakil for the Gackwar's Court, on a pay of a hundred rupees per month.⁷ His services to the Company 'were found to be of the greatest value', and in November 1803, for his 'zeal, diligence and fidelity', he was granted as an *inam* the village of Dindoli in the Chaurasi Pargana.⁸ In 1807, the Bombay Government conferred on him the grant of a palankeen with a monthly allowance of one hundred rupees for its upkeep.⁹ In the same year, through the mediation of the British Government, the Gaekwar granted the Shastri a suitable commission for effecting a considerable saving in the military expenses of the State.¹⁰

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1811, 4 Feb., p. 329.

² *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 217.

³ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, i, p. 276.

⁴ Riyasat, p. 466.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Id.*, p. 467.

⁸ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1803, 18 Nov., p. 8114. In 1802, he had been granted the village of Bhatta in the same Pargana (Aitchison, *op. cit.*, viii, p. 46).

⁹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 13 Feb., p. 930.

¹⁰ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 15 Sept., p. 6087.

Gangadhar Shastri did not continue very long as the 'chief native servant of the Residency'. In 1812, Fateh Singh, the Regent, made an application to the Resident that the Shastri 'be attached to my own person, because he is wise, able and experienced in my affairs'.¹ From the popularity Gangadhar Shastri enjoyed with the English, it is likely that Fateh Singh was encouraged to make such an application by the Resident, who, on the 11th October 1812, wrote a letter to the Bombay Government praying for a compliance with the wishes of Fateh Singh.² Accordingly, in May 1813, Gangadhar Shastri 'was appointed to a situation' in the Government of Baroda.³ He obtained the title of 'Mutalik' and a salary of sixty thousand rupees a year.⁴

The appointment of Gangadhar Shastri had caused no little embarrassment. Even at that time, the nature of his appointment was not very clear. In January 1814, the Bombay Government found it necessary to explain to Elphinstone that Gangadhar Shastri had been 'nominated to a confidential situation' under Fateh Singh Gaekwar, and not 'to the office of Diwan to the Baroda State'.⁵ But about the middle of the same year, in a private letter, Elphinstone referred to the Shastri as the Gaekwar's 'Prime Minister, now on embassy here'.⁶ Elphinstone, of course, did not need to be particularly careful when writing to one of his friends in England. But the same inaccuracy has crept into later writings. Forrest spoke of the Shastri as the 'Gaekwar's principal minister',⁷ and according to Eliot, Vithal Rao, the Gaekwar's Diwan, 'was succeeded by Gangadhar Shastri'.⁸ In fact, though Gangadhar Shastri might have been acting to all intents and purposes as the Diwan of Baroda, he was never appointed

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 27 Jan., p. 305.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 27 Jan., p. 227.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 7 July, p. 227.

⁴ *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 216.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 20 Jan., p. 317.

⁶ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 276.

⁷ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 121.

⁸ *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 216.

as such. So long as the agreement between Raoji Apaji and the British Government continued, the Diwanship was to remain in the family of the former 'from generation to generation'.¹ The title Mutalik literally means a deputy, and in the same letter in which the Resident of Baroda informed the Bombay Government of the Shastri's appointment, he referred to Vithal Rao Bhau as the Khasgi Diwan, and determined that the Shastri's pay should be 'on a scale not less than one-half of the salary and emoluments' of the Khasgi Diwan.² All these considerations go to show that the Shastri held a post that was definitely inferior to that of the Prime Minister. He was, in fact, as Grant Duff said, the 'Prime Minister in all but name'.³

In the meantime, no measures had been taken as to the settlement of the Peshwa's claims, though in July 1807, the Baroda Government contemplated 'sending a respectable agent to the Court of Poona' and suggested the name of Majumdar Madhu Rao Tatia.⁴ In October 1810, the Governor-in-Council of Bombay directed the Resident to 'suggest and press on the native administration of Baroda, the urgent expediency of no longer delaying the deputation of the Vakeel'.⁵ Accordingly, Bapu Mairal was appointed as the Gaekwar's wakil to Poona. He left Baroda towards the end of December,⁶ and arrived at Poona via Bombay in the beginning of April 1811.⁷ Bapu Mairal stayed at Poona for a year, but no settlement was effected. On the 30th April 1812, the Resident of Baroda showed some concern that Bapu Mairal still continued at Poona without any prospect of reaching a settlement.⁸ In September,

¹ Gupte, *op. cit.*, p. 35; also Aitchison, *op. cit.*, viii, p. 46.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 7 July, p. 2898.

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 437.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 24 July, p. 4907.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1810, 24 July, p. 4907.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1811, 8 Jan., p. 15.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1811, 10 Sept., p. 3807.

⁸ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1812, 10 June, p. 319.

Fateh Singh Gaekwar asked the Resident's permission to depute Shastri to Poona as his vakil, and promised to 'sustain all charges incidental to his mission'.¹ The Resident requested the Bombay Government to agree to Fateh Singh's proposal,² and on the 5th October the Government of Bombay expressed its consent.³ Before he left, the Shastri was given a guarantee of safe return by the British. But, what was most unusual, it was discovered after his death that he had left a will properly attested by Fateh Singh Gaekwar and Williams.⁴

In fact, the Shastri had good reasons for apprehension. He was not only undertaking a difficult task in a foreign court, but also leaving behind a number of powerful enemies at home, whom his presence might have kept in check. Though the Resident at Baroda considered it a very 'fortunate' circumstance to 'obtain' the services of Gangadhar Shastri,⁵ there was a considerable section in the Gaekwar's court which held quite a different opinion. It has already been said that there was a strong anti-British faction at the Gaekwar's court. It looked upon the Shastri as a hated interloper, and his ascendancy as a deplorable incident. About this time, the disgraced Diwan Sitaram was one of the prominent members of this party.⁶ As early as March 1807, the Bombay Government placed it on record that Sitaram and his brother Sakharam were jealous of the power of Gangadhar Shastri and looked upon him as the author of all the troubles between them and the Company.⁷ In 1810, at the time of the Resident Walker's departure for England, he recommended the Shastri to the 'encouragement and protection' of the Company

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1812, 27 Sept., p. 2732.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1812, 27 Sept., p. 2728.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1812, 7 Oct., p. 2803.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 1 June (12). He was most probably James Williams, the first assistant to the Resident at Baroda, who became the Resident of Baroda in 1821 (Dodwell and Miles, *Bombay Civil Servants*, p. 185).

⁵ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 15 Sept., p. 6084.

⁶ Wallace, *Memoirs of India*, pp. 198-9; *Rulers of Baroda*, p. 145.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1807, 20 March, p. 1724.

against the enemies which his actions at Baroda might have created.¹ As has been said by Wallace, the Shastri's 'entire annihilation was indispensable to Sitaram's faction',² and one of the objects of Kanhoji's conspiracy of 1812 was the destruction of the British power by the murder of the English Resident and Gangadhar Shastri.³

It is not necessary to enter into the details of the Peshwa's demands on the Gaekwar, and it was no easy task to state them even at the time when the demands were made. On account of the early disturbances at Poona and the confusion at Baroda, all the necessary papers could not be found, and when the Peshwa's Government prepared its demands in 1806, it stated that, owing to a lack of some necessary documents, a complete account could not be made out, but if the missing records were found, other items should be inserted.⁴ In this connexion, it is interesting to note how later writers differ from one another in estimating the Peshwa's demands. Grant Duff believed that the 'debts of the Gaekwar to the Peshwa . . . amounted to nearly a crore of rupees'.⁵ Wallace, who often relied on Grant Duff, gave the same amount.⁶ According to Prinsep, the Peshwa's total claims amounted to a sum considerably exceeding three crores of rupees,⁷ while the anonymous author of *The Rulers of Baroda* estimated it at more than four crores and a half, inclusive of the various miscellaneous demands.⁸ It seems that neither Grant Duff nor Wallace examined the records of the Company or of the Peshwa and the Gaekwar. The details of the account, as given by

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1810, 6 Feb., p. 869.

² Wallace, op. cit., p. 199.

³ *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 217.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1806, 30 Sept., p. 73681.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 437. He probably meant the balance when the two claims were considered.

⁶ Wallace, op. cit., p. 195.

⁷ Prinsep, *Political and Military Transactions*, p. 70.

⁸ *Rulers of Baroda*, p. 148.

the author of *The Rulers of Baroda*, are correct, and are corroborated by the Bombay records ; and though he does not quote his authority, there is ample evidence to show that he has examined the latter. But, again, it is difficult to understand how he arrived at the total of four and a half crores, which is still less than the total amount claimed by the Peshwa. Most probably the difference was due to the somewhat illusory nature of the Peshwa's miscellaneous demands which varied considerably during the different stages of this transaction.¹

In order to trace the origin of the Peshwa's claims on the Gaekwar, we have to go back as early as 1751, when Balaji Rao imprisoned Damaji Gaekwar and compelled him to buy his liberty on certain conditions. In the first place, he promised to give up half of his territories in Gujarat to the Peshwa, and hold the other half as his vassal. Secondly, he promised to help the Peshwa to conquer Ahmadabad from the Mughals.² In 1762, Damaji joined Raghunath Rao against the Peshwa Madhu Rao and threatened to create trouble. But the Gaekwar's attempts completely failed and he was compelled to agree to pay, as a penalty, an annual tribute of five lakhs and 5,25,000 rupees to the Peshwa and furnish a contingent of 5,000 horse.³ In 1768, there being a disputed succession to Baroda, the successful claimant bought recognition of the Peshwa by agreeing to pay him annually the sum of 17,79,900 rupees, and also by promising to pay a compensation of 6,75,000 rupees for the future discontinuance of the contingent.⁴ The sums promised in all these transactions were enormous and, as the Gaekwar's Government was in a state of great confusion, it often happened

¹ It may be mentioned in this connexion that the most reliable account of the Peshwa's claims, based on the Company's MSS., is given in the *Bombay Gazetteer* (vii, pp. 384-5).

² Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

that no payment could be made. In 1798, when an account of the Poona claims was drawn up by the Peshwa's Government, it showed that the Gaekwar owed to the Peshwa the sum of 39,82,789 rupees on these accounts.¹

In 1806, the Peshwa's Government prepared a list of its claims on the Gaekwar, in which the account was stated as follows :—

	Rs.
Balance of an account settled in 1798	39,82,789
For the tribute and commutation for ten years at the rate of Rs. 14,54,000 per year	1,45,40,000
The Peshwa's claims over the Babis Mahals according to an agreement with the Gaekwar in 1765, at the rate of 1 lakh of rupees per year, for thirty-seven years	37,00,000
On account of the bestowal of the dignity of Sena-Khas Khel on Anand Rao Gaekwar, in accordance with ancient tradition	56,38,001
Total	Rs. 2,78,60,790

Besides this, the Peshwa called upon the Gaekwar to give him three elephants and five horses according to a promise in 1792, and repay a debt of one lakh of rupees, with interest, borrowed in the same year, for which the Poona Government had stood surety. The Peshwa also demanded a sum of Rs. 50,19,887 for several engagements and Rs. 26,000 for the enjoyment of the revenue of the village of Ramia by the Gaekwar for thirteen years, without any authority.²

In 1811, the Peshwa's claims were again estimated. By lapse of time, they had then risen to Rs. 3,40,76,790,

¹ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1806, 30 Sept., p. 73681.

² Ibid.

apart from the demands under the head 'miscellaneous claims' which remained practically the same as in 1806.¹

In reply to the Peshwa's demands, the Gaekwar had brought forward his counter claims on the Poona Government in 1806² and 1813.³ In 1813, the Gaekwar's counter claims amounted to 3 crores, 36 lakhs and 50 thousand of rupees.⁴ The Gaekwar argued that, in the first place, the transfer of the city of Broach to the English by the Poona Government in 1777 was illegal, as Broach belonged to the Gaekwar's Government, and the Peshwa had no rights over it and, consequently, the Gaekwar should be paid an indemnity of 2,16,00,000 rupees. Secondly, for suppressing the rebellion of Aba Shelukar, the Governor of the Peshwa's share of Gujarat, at the wish of the Poona Government, he claimed for his expenses a sum of 80,000 rupees.⁵ Thirdly, the Gaekwar's Government claimed a deduction of 40,50,000 rupees in consequence of the political unrest of the State. He argued that in cases of insurrection at Baroda, it was the Peshwa's duty to come to his

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 13 Oct., p. 3925. These sums are made out from the Company's MSS. But it is not always possible to follow the steps by which these numbers have been arrived at in the original papers. A statement of the Peshwa's accounts in 1816, after the Shastri's murder, appears in the *Bombay Gazetteer* (vii, p. 385). It is given below :—

	Rs.
(1) The balance in 1795	39,82,789
(2) Tributes and commutations from 1798 to 1816 at the rate of Rs. 14,54,000 per annum	2,61,72,000
(3) By the Peshwa's partition-treaty the Peshwa demanded 1 lakh per annum from the Gaekwar (1760-1816)	56,00,000
(4) Nazar's due from the Gaekwar for the Peshwa's recognition of him as Sena-Khas Khel	56,38,001
Total	Rs. 4,13,92,790

Besides this there were the miscellaneous demands, which included the Gaekwar's promise to pay to the Peshwa three elephants and five horses, the Gaekwar's debt of one lakh for which the Peshwa was the surety, another debt to a banker named Balaji Naik Vira, a promise to give the Peshwa jewels to the value of one lakh of rupees, a demand for the sum of 50,19,887 rupees for various engagements, and lastly another demand from the Gaekwar at the rate of Rs. 2,000 for holding the village of Ramia without authority for seventeen years. (The sum of Rs. 20,000 appearing as the annual revenue of the village of Ramia in the *Bombay Gazetteer* is evidently a misprint.)

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1807, 24 July, p. 4907.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 13 Oct., p. 3935.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

assistance, but as no help ever came from the Poona Government, it was but proper that the Peshwa should bear part of the loss. As regards the Peshwa's demands for 56,38,001 rupees as nazarana, it was pointed out that, owing to financial difficulties, the Gaekwar was not in a position to pay the whole amount. But he declared his readiness to pay, if the Peshwa would decide to accept a smaller sum.¹

Besides the adjustment of the Peshwa's claims on the Gaekwar, another object of Gangadhar Shastri's visit was the renewal of the lease of Ahmadabad to the Gaekwar. The lease had been first granted to the Gaekwar's Government in 1800, nominally in the name of Bhagwant Rao Gaekwar, for a period of five years, at the rate of 5 lakhs of rupees per annum.² This lease was renewed in October 1804, at the annual rate of 4,50,000 rupees.³ The lease was to terminate in 1814, but the Baroda Government wanted to have it renewed. The British Resident at Baroda, as well as the Court of Directors, considered it desirable to leave the farm of Ahmadabad in the hands of the Gaekwar.⁴

Gangadhar Shastri arrived at Poona in the beginning of 1814. Baji Rao at first refused to receive him on the ground that the office of the Diwan (to which he believed the Shastri was appointed) was in the gift of the Peshwa and consequently the Shastri's appointment was illegal. In the second place, he pointed out the dishonour he would incur 'by receiving as a minister a person who had been notoriously attached' to his enemies, the Fadkes.⁵ The second objection was smoothed over and the Peshwa was prevailed upon by Elphinstone to receive the Shastri. But at the same time, Baji Rao protested against this 'being constructed

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 13 Oct., p. 3935.

² *Bombay Gazetteer*, vii, p. 201.

³ Bom. Pol. Sec. Pro. 1804, 19 Oct., p. 5212.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1813, 10 Nov., p. 4309.

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1814, 4 Feb. (29).

into an acknowledgement of his appointment as Diwan.¹ The Bombay Government, when apprised of it, contradicted the Peshwa's statement that the Shastri was ever appointed as the Diwan of the Baroda State.² But Elphinstone did not think it prudent to raise the matter again, and to 'exasperate the Peshwa by any contest on a subject which had so little connexion with the real object of the mission'.³ The Shastri was presented in the Durbar in February,⁴ but for some time no steps were taken towards a settlement on account of Sadashiv Mankeshwar's illness and the Peshwa's absence on a pilgrimage.⁵ In March, when the negotiations began, there was no chance of a speedy solution. The Shastri wished that the English would coerce the Peshwa into granting the lease of Ahmadabad. But Elphinstone did not like the idea,⁶ nor was the Peshwa willing to give any consideration to a further renewal of the lease of Ahmadabad to the Gaekwar,⁷ and in June he sent a person named Trimbak Rao Lakshman to Baroda to take charge of his share of Ahmadabad from the officers of the Gaekwar.⁸ On the 26th June, Carnac, the Resident at Baroda, wrote to the Bombay Government, complaining about the 'delay and procrastination incidental to all transactions with the Poona Durbar', and asked that Gangadhar Shastri and Bapu Mairal be 'speedily dismissed' by the Peshwa.⁹ Accordingly, the Bombay Government directed the Resident at Poona 'to exert his best endeavours for expediting the return' of Gangadhar Shastri and Bapu Mairal to Baroda.¹⁰

¹ Sec. Cons. 1814, 4 Feb. (29).

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 20 Jan., p. 310.

³ Sec. Cons. 1814, 4 Feb. (29).

⁴ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 9 Feb., p. 790.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 13 April, p. 1654.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 4 June, p. 2455.

⁸ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 6 July, p. 2748.

⁹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 13 July, p. 2924.

¹⁰ Ibid.

In fact, apart from the failure of the Shastri's negotiations, the Resident at Baroda had other reasons for anxiety. Soon after the Shastri had arrived at Poona, Carnac came to know that intrigues were being carried on at Poona by Sitaram, the ex-minister. On the 8th February he wrote to the Bombay Government, complaining against Govind Rao Bandhuji, a former servant of Sitaram, who had been sent to Poona 'to counteract and defeat' the objects of the mission of Gangadhar Shastri.¹ On being questioned by Carnac, Sitaram denied all knowledge of Govind Rao's affairs and at the wish of the Resident wrote a letter to Govind Rao, showing his disapprobation of his conduct.² It is extremely doubtful whether any importance should be paid to Sitaram's letter denying his complicity in the intrigues at Poona. On the 25th June, Elphinstone complained to the Bombay Government about the intrigues of Govind Rao Bandhuji, who had held a secret meeting with the Peshwa's minister, Sadashiv Mankeshwar, and had presented a letter purported to be written by Fateh Singh Gackwar, disavowing the Shastri's mission and complaining about the Shastri's ascendancy in the State.³ This letter was declared to be a forgery by Gangadhar Shastri,⁴ and agreeably to the wish of Fateh Singh Gackwar, Carnac applied to the Bombay Government for the arrest of the person of Govindrao Bandhuji.⁵ On the 4th August, the Bombay Government instructed the Resident at Poona to 'take such steps' as he might judge most advisable 'under all the existing circumstances, for satisfying the wish of the Gaicowar Government'.⁶

Govind Rao Bandhuji escaped arrest partly owing to

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 16 Feb., p. 748 (ii).

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 13 July, p. 2967.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 6 July, p. 2745.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 10 Aug., p. 3202.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1814, 10 Aug., p. 3210.

the objections of Gangadhar Shastri,¹ and partly to the lack of necessary proof of his guilt.² He was allowed to continue at Poona, and early next year, Bhagwant Rao Gaekwar, an illegitimate brother of the Gaekwar, arrived at Poona, and started fresh intrigues.³ A proposed interview between Bhagwant Rao and the Peshwa was objected to by Elphinstone.⁴ But the Peshwa argued that Bhagwant Rao was a vakil from Anand Rao Gaekwar and Fateh Singh, and was 'charged with complaints of the degraded condition of the Government and of the tyranny of Gangadhar Shastri'.⁵ In spite of his promise to the Resident not to see Bhagwant Rao, the Peshwa allowed the latter to be presented in a full Durbar on the occasion of the Vasant-Panchami.⁶ At Baroda, Fateh Singh Gaekwar denied all knowledge of the transactions of Bhagwant Rao and expressed his desire to recall the Shastri from Poona.⁷ However, he was most reluctant to disavow Bhagwant Rao's transactions in writing; he informed the Resident that his verbal assurances were enough, and that 'his family strongly urged the inexpediency of his having too many written communications with the English'.⁸ But Fateh Singh was at last prevailed upon to tender a written disavowal of Bhagwant Rao's doings⁹ and address a letter to Bhagwant Rao expressing disapprobation of his conduct.¹⁰

Events at Poona about this time seemed to take a definite turn for the better. Elphinstone found the Peshwa anxious to detain the Shastri,¹¹ and on the 29th April he informed the Bombay Government that

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 Aug., p. 3210.

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 19 Feb., p. 683.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 1 March, p. 817.

⁷ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 22 March, p. 1258.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 22 March, p. 1297.

¹⁰ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 22 March, p. 1299.

¹¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 8 March, p. 1007.

the negotiations had 'made considerable progress'.¹ The Shastri prepared a draft agreement, which the Peshwa accepted. By it, the Gaekwar was to cede a territory yielding a revenue of seven lakhs of rupees, and acknowledge the sovereignty of the Peshwa by receiving investiture from him, provided it should be always given to the nearest heir and without a nazar-ana.² Gangadhar Shastri believed that these terms would prove beneficial to the Gaekwar, for, as he pointed out, by paying seven lakhs of rupees a year, the Gaekwar would escape the whole of the Peshwa's demands, which, even if all the Gaekwar's claims were admitted, would amount to a larger annual sum.³ Fateh Singh was averse to any settlement on the basis of territorial cession and expressed his disapproval of the scheme. Gangadhar Shastri still hoped that he might be 'brought to open his eyes to his own interest', and Elphinstone considered that a postponement of the negotiation might be helpful to secure a favourable answer from Baroda.⁴ So he encouraged the Peshwa's intention of going on a pilgrimage to Wai,⁵ and when, after his return from Wai, the Peshwa projected his annual pilgrimage to Nasik, the Resident determined to accompany him with Gangadhar Shastri.⁶

It is generally believed that the Peshwa played on Gangadhar Shastri's vanity and won him over. The office of Prime Minister of Poona was offered to him, and the Peshwa proposed a marriage between his sister-in-law and the Shastri's son.⁷ However, the

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2019.

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2019. The author of *Rulers of Baroda* does not refer to these terms, but speaks of a different Treaty. 'He (Baji Rao) entered into a secret negotiation with the emissary (Gangadhar Shastri) . . . and while obtaining his consent to pay up 39 lakhs of arrears with interest, he pretended to wish to settle all other claims for one crore of rupees and ten lakhs a year' (p. 150).

⁴ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2019.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2053.

⁷ Grant Duff, ii, p. 440.

marriage did not take place, owing to the Shastri's fear that Fateh Singh might think that the interests of the State had been neglected.¹ But, however Gangadhar Shastri might be desirous of protecting the interests of the Baroda State, his proposal for the settlement with the Peshwa had caused no little anxiety to the Bombay Government. On the 8th May, the Bombay Government passed a resolution disapproving of his conduct.² The Bombay Government considered that by entering into a discussion on the question of the rights of sovereignty, the Shastri had acted beyond his jurisdiction, and that his proposed arrangement with the Peshwa's Government embraced 'a direct acknowledgement of the right of the Peshwa to interfere in the domestic concerns of the Guicowar'. Under these circumstances, the Bombay Government thought it desirable that Gangadhar Shastri 'should terminate his mission as soon as possible' and that the Gaekwar's Government be freed from the 'unprofitable expense of maintaining the mission, without any prospect of effecting an adjustment upon any satisfactory principle'.

Whatever effect this Minute, if it had been communicated to Gangadhar Shastri, would have had on his future conduct we do not know (he had already left for Nasik with Elphinstone on the 7th May, before the resolution of the Bombay Government had reached Poona³), and we do not know whether Henry Pottinger, the acting Resident, or Elphinstone, thought it proper to inform him of it. From Nasik, the Peshwa and his party went to Pandharpur, accompanied by the Shastri. Bapu Mairal, the Shastri's assistant, was left behind, and Elphinstone was dissuaded from accompanying the Peshwa on his pilgrimage, as 'His Highness wished' him 'not to go on this occasion'.⁴

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 440.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2019.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 10 May, p. 2053.

⁴ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 138.

At Pandharpur, on the 20th July,¹ Gangadhar Shastri returned from an entertainment given by one Ramchandra Gossain and complained of indisposition. In the evening, he was asked by Lakshman Pant, a messenger from Trimbakji, to join him in the temple.² As the Shastri was indisposed, he at first declined the invitation. But the request was twice repeated, and at last the Shastri set out for the temple, accompanied by a few of his attendants. Then, as Bapu Mairal tells the story :—

‘As he passed among the streets, one of his attendants overheard a man in the crowd ask, “Which is the Shastri?” and another reply, “He who wears the necklace,” but he did not think of observing these people. The Shastri entered the temple, performed his devotions, chatted a few minutes with Trimbakji Dangle, and then proceeded towards his house. He desired three of his people to stay behind, . . . and he advanced himself accompanied by Trimbakji Dangle’s sepoys. . . . When the party walked some little way from the temple, three men came running behind them . . . their left hands were folded up in a cloth, probably intended as a shield, and in each of their right

¹ The accepted date of the Shastri’s murder is incorrect. Elphinstone believed it to be the 14th July, and the same has been accepted by later writers, including Grant Duff and Prinsep. But in most of the Company’s records, the date is given as the 19th July. The first news of the incident reported by Henry Pottinger gives the date as the 19th, and the same date appears in a despatch to the Governor-General from the Bombay Government, which, of course, based the description of the incident on Pottinger’s account. In the translation of an extract from Bapu Mairal’s narrative, the date appears as the 19th July. Bapu Mairal, of course, gives the Indian date, which is the 14th Ashar. But the 14th Ashar does not correspond to the 19th July, but the 20th. In the translation of a letter to Bapu Mairal from Moro Trimbak, who was with the Shastri at Pandharpur, written two hours after the Shastri’s death, the date appears as ‘Ashar Shood 14th’ (Thursday, 20th July). This is the only document with a correct date in the English as well as the Indian calendar. So the correct date is neither the 19th nor the 14th of July, but the 20th.

It is possible that Elphinstone, while going through the enquiry, has confused the Indian 14th Ashar with the English corresponding date, and Henry Pottinger’s date in reckoning the correct English date has been responsible for all subsequent mistakes in the records of the Company. (Sardesai also believes that the Shastri was murdered on the 20th July.—Riyasat, p. 457.)

² Forrest, *Elphinstone’s Writings*, p. 139.

hands there seemed to be a twisted cloth. . . . One of the assassins struck the Shastri a very violent blow, apparently with the cloth, when it was discovered that he had a sword also in his hand ; another seized him by the lock of hair on the crown of his head to throw him down, and, when he was fallen, the third assassin cut him over the head. Two more men at this juncture rushed from the front of the party, and three of the attendants who attempted to stay by the Shastri were wounded. . . . This was about half past eight at night.¹

Next day, the Shastri's people asked Trimbakji for an enquiry. Trimbakji was full of professions, but he said he had no idea on whom to fix the guilt. Regarding it useless to delay any longer, they applied to the Peshwa and secured his permission for their departure.²

The news of the murder of Gangadhar Shastri, a Brahmin and a foreign envoy, caused great consternation. Henry Pottinger, the officer in charge of Poona, informed Elphinstone, who was at Ellora,³ and wrote to the Bombay Government⁴ and the Governor-General.⁵ On the 25th July, Elphinstone addressed a letter to the Peshwa from Ellora, calling upon him to discover and punish 'the authors and instigators of this atrocity'.⁶ He left Ellora next day, and, arriving at Poona on the 6th August, took charge of the situation.⁷ Next day Trimbakji returned to Poona,⁸ and on the 9th the Peshwa made a private entrance to the city, without the usual ceremonies on such occasions.⁹ An interview between the Peshwa and the Resident could not be arranged for some days on account of the death of the Peshwa's daughter.¹⁰ On the 15th August, Elphinstone addressed a long letter to the Peshwa expressing his surprise at the

¹ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 141.

² Id., p. 142.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 9 Aug., p. 3762.

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 6 Sept. (19).

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1815, 23 Aug. (32).

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 9 Aug., p. 3762.

⁷ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Id., p. 85.

delay in enquiring into the Shastri's murder and requested the Peshwa to confine Trimbakji who, Elphinstone declared, was condemned by the 'universal voice of His Highness's subjects'. 'I declare', he wrote, 'my conviction of Trimbakji's guilt and I call upon your Highness to apprehend him as well as Bundojee and Bugwant Rao, and to deposit them in such custody as may be considered perfectly safe and trustworthy.' On the 16th, another incident took place which further complicated the situation. As a precautionary measure, Elphinstone had asked Bapu Mairal to leave the city with his party and encamp near the Residency. Accordingly, Bapu Mairal left the city, but as he was moving towards the English station, a considerable part of his troops mutinied and blocked the way. Throughout the night of the 16th, this confusion continued, while the Resident sat powerless to interfere. Any attack made by the British on the mutineers would have cost Bapu Mairal's life, and the first shot fired from the British artillery might have been construed as an act of war by the Peshwa. The only course that remained was attempted, and silver succeeded when other methods failed. A sum of one lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees was advanced by the Resident to Bapu Mairal. A considerable number of mutineers were bought off with the pay of four months in advance and, though it did not completely stop the disturbances, Bapu Mairal managed to escape and took shelter near the Residency. The mutiny took place on the pretext of the arrears of pay, but it was not difficult to see in it the designing hand of Govind Rao Bandhuji, who, as Elphinstone discovered, was in the habit of corresponding with Bapu Mairal's army.² On the 19th, Elphinstone sent a note to the Peshwa through his minister Sadashiv Mankeshwar, assuring the Peshwa that the British Government had 'no intention of

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Sept. (37).

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (133).

coming to extremities' and expressing his uneasiness at the assembling of the Maratha troops at Poona.¹ The Peshwa's minister assured the Resident that the appearance of the troops in Poona was only due to the coming Dakshina festival and there were no political reasons behind it.² These propositions did very little to reassure Elphinstone, but he could count on the arrival of the subsidiary force, the first division of which arrived at Poona on the 17th, and others were expected in a day or two.³ In the evening of the 20th the Peshwa had an interview with Captain Ford, when he again professed his sincerity and belief in the good faith of the British and undertook to punish Trimbakji, if only the Resident could prove his participation in the crime.⁴ Elphinstone accepted this offer, and on the 22nd sent a message to the minister offering to prove Trimbakji's guilt.⁵ The Resident was waited upon by a deputation of Maratha chiefs consisting of Baloba Vinchurkar, Moro Dikshit, Chimnaji Narain, Gopal Rao and Anand Rao. Ford was also present at the Peshwa's request. The Resident laid before them the case against Trimbakji and dwelt on the propriety of his immediate arrest.⁶ The deputation promised to report what Elphinstone had stated to the Peshwa. But the Resident knew that nothing could be expected of it, and that the Peshwa's real object was to gain a little time by false negotiations.⁷ On the 27th, Elphinstone received an unofficial message from the minister, that Sindhia Holkar and other Maratha chiefs had been 'urging the Peshwa to join them and form a confederacy against the British, but the Peshwa had always refused their overtures and the Resident might depend on the Peshwa's fidelity, for he was a person of such resolution that when once he had taken a line, nothing could ever

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (137).

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (135).

³ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (133).

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (139).

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (140).

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (142).

⁷ Ibid.

induce him to alter it'.¹ On the 29th, Elphinstone was informed that Appa Dessai was making preparations to advance on Poona and that Bapu Gokhale was also collecting troops in his jagir.²

So passed the month of August. September brought a change. On the first of the month, Elphinstone received from the Governor-General a despatch dated the 15th August, in which the Governor-General expressed his approval of the Resident's conduct, reviewed the various situations that might arise, and suggested that if the worst happened 'the means of securing His Highness's person should be considered the object of primary consideration'.³ The Governor-General also instructed the Government of Bombay⁴ and the Government of Fort St. George⁵ to render any military help that might be necessary to the Resident of Poona. The Government of Fort St. George was also directed to place a force immediately at Elphinstone's disposal.⁶ Henry Russell, the Resident at Hyderabad, was asked to be prepared to co-operate,⁷ and Colonel Doveton was ordered to hold in readiness the force under his command and 'conform to any instruction' received from Poona.⁸ The Governor-General also sent a note to the Peshwa through Elphinstone asking for the Peshwa's 'anxious exertions for the discovery and punishment of the perpetrators of the atrocious crime' and advising him to treat any statement coming from Elphinstone as directly proceeding from the Governor-General.⁹

With such support from the Governor-General, Elphinstone decided to take a bolder step. He prepared an ultimatum and sent it to the Peshwa on the 4th September, with the letter from the Governor-General.¹⁰

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (144).

² Ibid.

³ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (26).

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (28).

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (29).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (30).

⁸ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (31).

⁹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (27).

¹⁰ Sec. Cons. 1815, 7 Oct. (71).

In this note to the Peshwa, Elphinstone expressed his 'surprise and affliction' at the Peshwa's conduct and demanded Trimbakji's immediate arrest. In case the Peshwa failed to do so, it would be considered as a 'decided negative' to the Resident's proposal and the Resident would be compelled to summon troops to Poona.¹ The Peshwa and his chiefs sat all night pondering over the course that should be adopted, and in the morning Sadashiv Mankeshwar was sent to Elphinstone with a proposal that the Peshwa should arrest Trimbakji, provided his life would be spared.² But Elphinstone refused to come to any terms unless Trimbakji was confined.³ On the night of the 5th, the Peshwa settled his plans and sent Trimbakji to Vasantgarh under pretence of arrest.⁴ Elphinstone was not deceived by the trick, and he insisted that Trimbakji must be actually delivered to the British Government.⁵ On the 7th, Sadashiv again made an attempt to conciliate Elphinstone. He said that he had pledged himself that Elphinstone would not persist in his demands if Trimbakji were arrested by the Peshwa, but if the English demands were to be continued, he had no other means of escape from his difficulties but to take poison.⁶ This threat of suicide did not move Elphinstone, and the minister's appeal lost its force when next day three persons from the Peshwa saw the Resident's munshi and reported that Trimbakji was imprisoned by the Peshwa's desire and not at the minister's persuasion.⁷ On the 9th September, Sadashiv sent a message to Elphinstone protesting against the arrival of a part of Colonel Smith's force at Poona and declaring that this fact, coupled with the British Resident's demands, 'had caused great doubts in the

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 7 Oct. (71).

² Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Oct. (26), 7 Oct. (73).

⁷ *Ibid.*

Paishwa's mind regarding the ultimate designs of the British Government'.¹ Elphinstone replied that the Peshwa should apprehend 'no hidden designs' and advised him 'not to call in troops which would only lead to disputes, but above all . . . not to quit Poona'.² In fact, the Peshwa was for some time wavering between peace and war, and the Resident had some information that the Peshwa had intended to fly to Wai, where he would be joined by Appa Dessai.³

But before Elphinstone's note reached the Peshwa, the Peshwa had resolved to submit. Captain Ford was called to the Peshwa's palace, where he had a consultation with Chimnaji Narayan and Moro Dikshit as to the means of re-establishing harmony and good faith between the two Governments. It was pointed out by Ford that nothing short of the unconditional surrender of Trimbakji would satisfy the British Government, and the Peshwa after some discussion consented.⁴ Accordingly Captain Hicks of the Peshwa's Brigade started for Vasantgarh with 500 men and, on the 19th September, took Trimbakji into custody.⁵ Elphinstone had already written to the Bombay Government that Trimbakji should be imprisoned at Thana or Bombay,⁶ and the Government of Bombay therefore prepared the fort of Thana for that purpose. The garrison of Thana was reinforced and the commandant of the fort received strict orders to prevent any letters from reaching Trimbakji.⁷

While Elphinstone was pursuing these measures against Trimbakji, he was also seeking the imprisonment of other suspected persons. Bhagwant Rao Gaekwar and

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Oct. (26), 7 Oct. (73).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 27 Sept., p. 4555. Prinsep gives the number of Hicks's troops as 850 (op. cit., p. 97).

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (28).

⁷ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 4 Oct., p. 4566.

Govind Rao Bandhuji were arrested.¹ But the arrest of the third, Sitaram, did not prove easy. In August he was still living under personal restraint at Baroda,² but his agent, Bapu Raghunath, encamped with a body of 200 horse in a village about fifty miles distant.³ Sitaram had been advised by Bandhuji that as the 'business' at Poona was 'completed', he should 'without fail repair to the palace . . . and commence the duties of Diwan'.⁴ In September, Carnac, the Resident at Baroda, informed Fateh Singh Gaekwar that the Bombay Government desired Sitaram to be removed from Baroda and imprisoned in the castle of Surat.⁵ But Fateh Singh showed great reluctance to hand him over to the English and proposed that Sitaram be kept a prisoner in any fort under the Gaekwar's Government.⁶ Carnac did not agree to Fateh Singh's suggestion and it was determined that until an arrangement was finally settled, care should be taken for the security of Sitaram's person, and that a number of Company's troops and Fateh Singh's bodyguards should be placed to keep watch over Sitaram's house.⁷ This agreement was resented by a considerable section of the Gaekwar's court, and on the night of the 16th September, scenes of unusual agitation were witnessed in the city.⁸ Early in the night, the Resident received information that armed bodies of men had occupied the road from the Residency to Sitaram's house, horsemen had been patrolling in the vicinity of the fort, and powder and ball had been freely distributed in the city. The excitement continued all through the night, but nothing came of it. Next morning, the Resident demanded an explanation from Fateh Singh, who protested that he knew nothing of it.⁹ Sitaram could not hold out successfully, and

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 4 Oct., p. 4564.

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 13 Oct. (2).

³ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Oct. (13).

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Oct. (2).

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1815, 3 Nov. (2).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

before any harm could be done he was taken into British custody and sent to Navsari.¹

In view of Sitaram's persistent misconduct and intrigues, one cannot help thinking that the attitude of the British as well as of the Gaekwar's Government towards him was not only unduly lenient, but almost scandalous. On the 21st March 1816, a sanad was granted to Sitaram by which, in consideration of his father's 'zeal and fidelity' and the 'respectability of the family', he was given an allowance of 20,000 rupees in addition to his former allowance of 40,000 rupees.² Wallace has blamed the Gaekwar for being 'weak enough' to grant this emolument to Sitaram,³ but why should the British Government have been so weak as to agree to the Gaekwar's most unreasonable measure in the face of the impoverished condition of the Baroda treasury? The period of Sitaram's banishment was very short. In 1819, when Sayaji Rao came to the throne, he asked the British Government to permit Sitaram's return to Baroda.⁴ The permission was granted, and Sitaram returned and lived in Baroda until his death in 1823.⁵ In 1820, an attempt was made to remove the Gaekwar's Diwan, Dhakji Dadaji, in favour of Sitaram. But it was unsuccessful on account of Elphinstone's opposition. Sitaram never again secured any official position in the State, but his son was given the post of the 'Siccanavis', or the holder of the royal seal.⁶

With the arrests of Trimbakji and Sitaram, the episode of the Shastri's murder may be regarded as closed. It only remains to consider who brought the murder about. The criminality of Baji Rao and Trimbakji is generally taken for granted, but if the evidence against the former is analysed, it does not appear so strong as some writers would have us believe. It is difficult to

¹ Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 478.

² *Id.*, p. 479.

³ *Id.*, p. 480.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Id.*, p. 481.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 480.

ascribe any motive to the Peshwa for the murder of the Shastri. The failure of the marriage between the Shastri's son and the Peshwa's sister-in-law, and the Shastri's refusal to allow his wife to visit the Peshwa's palace, were believed by Grant Duff to have offended the Peshwa to such an extent that 'Bajee Rao never forgave' him.¹ But the explanation seems hollow and insufficient as the real cause of the Shastri's murder. Moreover, if we are to believe with Grant Duff that the Peshwa's offer of marriage between his sister-in-law and the Shastri's son originated in wholly political reasons and was only a part of his plan to assail the Shastri 'on the side of his vanity',² it is difficult to understand why the failure of this marriage should mean such a personal insult to the Peshwa as Grant Duff supposes. Persons placed in a position like that of Baji Rao are not likely to take recourse to dangerous measures merely for personal reasons, unless there are other motives to justify the risk. The Peshwa was undoubtedly on cordial terms with Govind Rao Bandhuji and Bhagwant Rao Gaekwar, but that was due to the fact that they belonged to the anti-British party at Baroda. Bhagwant Rao, moreover, was the brother of the Regent, and in spite of the objections of the Resident, he expected some sort of recognition from the Peshwa on account of his situation in life. He carried with him letters from the Gaekwar,³ and in spite of Fatch Singh's denial that he had anything to do with those documents, it was suspected that the seals of the Government had been affixed to them by Anand Rao Gaekwar himself.⁴

The idea of fixing the guilt on the Peshwa originated with Grant Duff, and has been popularized by other writers. Grant Duff says that on the night of the Shastri's murder, the Peshwa was present 'seated on the

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 440.

² Ibid.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 19 Feb., p. 683.

⁴ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 22 March, p. 1258.

upper veranda of the temple, and that on that occasion treated him with particular condescension'.¹ We do not know whence Grant Duff got the information. No contemporary account substantiates the story, and it is unlikely that had such an event taken place it would have been omitted from Bapu Mairal's narrative. On the other hand, the following passage from Bapu Mairal's account seems contrary to Grant Duff's story. 'Shortly after,' Bapu Mairal writes, 'Trimbakji sent a second messenger to acquaint the Shastri that the Peshwa was to go to the temple next morning, and that he (the Shastri) ought to take advantage of the circumstances.'² From this message sent to the Shastri just before he came to the temple, it is almost certain that the Peshwa was not present in the temple when Gangadhar Shastri paid a visit to it. It seems that while writing the history of the period, Grant Duff relied to a great extent on Balaji Pant Natu's account of his own times. Balaji Pant Natu, to whom I shall have occasion to refer in the next chapter, was a notorious character, and it is not safe to place much reliance on his statements, although Grant Duff considered the history which Natu wrote at his 'particular request . . . very correct and voluminous'.³ It should be noticed that Elphinstone himself never regarded the Peshwa as responsible for the murder. In a private letter to England, he referred to the murder, and said that he 'suspected Trimbakji immediately'.⁴ Later on, during the enquiry, he considered any investigation into the Peshwa's conduct as 'superfluous' if not 'imprudent',⁵ and moreover, as Elphinstone said, in spite of the unfortunate circumstance, 'there is nothing like the direct proof that exists against Danglia and the murder of a Brahmin and of a person whose death was likely to be revenged, is so inconsistent with his (the Peshwa's) character that I cannot believe him guilty'.⁶

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 441.² Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 139.³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 470.⁴ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 310.⁵ Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Sept. (36).⁶ Ibid.

What Elphinstone called here 'direct proof' against Trimbakji he described elsewhere as 'incontrovertible circumstantial evidence'.¹ It is true that Trimbakji decidedly had a share in the crime, though it is difficult to agree with Elphinstone that he was 'the principal instigator of the atrocity'.² His secret interviews with the emissaries from Baroda, and his suspicious conduct on the night of the Shastri's murder, suggest that at any rate he knew of the existence of the plot and most likely contributed to the success of it. But there is no reason for believing that he was the principal criminal, and there is no evidence to show that 'Trimbakji Danglia hired the assassins'.³ The two points on which Elphinstone generally based Trimbakji's criminality are his 'solicitude so disproportionate on the occasion about the Shastri's coming to the temple and the proof that he was expected by the murderers', and secondly, the 'want of enquiry after the crime was committed'.⁴ As regards the second point, it is sufficient to say that even if it is admitted that Trimbakji purposely avoided the enquiry, it does not prove his direct participation in the crime. Like his master, he was in sympathy with the anti-British party at Baroda and would have been reluctant to give up its agents. As regards the first point, it cannot be denied that Trimbakji showed considerable anxiety for the Shastri's coming to the temple, but it should also be pointed out that the Shastri's visit to the temple was a part of his daily routine. From the memorandum kept by Gangadhar Shastri's 'karkun', it appears that out of the eight days, the Shastri stayed at Pandharpur, he visited the temple on seven, and nearly every time was 'invited by Trimbakji with whom he had frequent conferences'.⁵

Elphinstone's conduct has usually been assumed by historians to be a virtual proof of Trimbakji's having

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Sept. (22).

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Sept. (37).

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 441.

⁴ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 142.

⁵ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 9 Aug., p. 3906.

played a principal part in the crime. It should be observed, however, that the Resident at Baroda and the Bombay Government suspected the Gaekwar's court itself. On the 27th August 1815, the Resident wrote to the Bombay Government that he had been informed by Fatch Singh that he suspected Anand Rao Gaekwar of treachery and that 'Seetaram's restoration to power by any means was an object which had been so assiduously pursued at Poona by Bundoji, for the consummation of it there is reason to believe that the Shastry had been murdered'.¹ On the 10th September, the Resident informed the Gaekwar's Diwan, Vithal Rao Bhau, that there was a 'reasonable presumption' of Sitaram 'being implicated in the detestable assassination of Gungadhar Shastry through the medium of his servant Bundojee'.² The Bombay Government wrote to the Resident at Baroda on the 19th August that 'under the views which that Government has taken of the proceedings of Seetaram, it would hardly be a matter of surprise, if circumstances should be discovered which might tend to implicate him in the assassination of the Shastry'.³ On the 11th September again, the Bombay Government informed the Governor-General that they were 'impressed with the conviction that so long as the Raja Anand Rao is allowed to exercise authority of this description (meaning correspondence between Anand Rao and Bandhuji) without the knowledge of Fateh Singh, it will be impossible for His Highness to carry on the duties of the State or to preserve its relations with the British Government'.⁴ So the Bombay Government adopted measures to stop all communications between Anand Rao Gaekwar and Sitaram or Bhagwant Rao or Bandhuji, and asked the Governor-General 'his opinion of the necessity of placing the Rajah under positive restraint, and of preventing

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 13 Oct. (2).³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1815, 21 Aug., p. 4023.² Sec. Cons. 1815, 3 Nov. (2).⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20th Oct. (20).

Tucktabai and those by whom his recent proceedings have been influenced from approaching him'.¹

There is, therefore, reason for thinking that Gangadhar Shastri's murder originated not at Poona, but at the Gaekwar's court. There was a strong anti-British party at the court, which was acting in union with the disaffected ex-minister, Sitaram, and his faction. The murder of the Shastri was a great blow to the growing English control of the State, and must have appealed to both the groups. Among the prominent members of the anti-British party were included the ladies of the royal palace. It was Bandhuji whom the British Resident at Poona found responsible for the mutiny among Bapu Mairal's guards. The insurrection at Baroda on the night of the 16th September, and Fateh Singh's reluctance to arrest Sitaram and send him a prisoner to Surat were also significant. The conduct of Anand Rao Gaekwar had always been extremely suspicious and his complicity in the crime is strongly suggested by a letter written in his own hand to Bandhuji at Poona on Ramyan 21st 1230 (27 August 1815). 'Bandojee,' it runs, 'you are faithful to the Sircar, you are acquainted with the state of affairs here, and reliance is placed on you.' Referring to the Shastri's murder, it says, 'I heard different kinds of news from Mairal Bhow's party, but you were there in time and did what was very right, of this your heart and mine are witnesses. Write an answer to this very privately.'² It seems that Bandhuji wanted something more substantial than a mere recognition of his service, and the Gaekwar was not in a position to comply with his desire. The Gaekwar goes on to plead his inability, for 'we are very poor at present', but he declared that 'when you come everything will be settled'.

Elphinstone always suspected Trimbakji's political objects and regarded the murder as affording an

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20th Oct. (20)

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Oct. (22).

opportunity of removing him from his position as chief adviser to the Peshwa. In March 1815, he mentioned to the Governor-General Trimbakji's rise to power as a deplorable fact and expressed his apprehension that from then the British Government 'must meet with more active endeavours to realize the Peshwa's pretensions, and more unreasonable resistance' to British advice.¹ In a letter to the Governor-General dated the 16th August, he made it clear that the demand for Trimbakji's punishment was 'as consistent with our immediate interests as it is essential to our permanent honour and prosperity'.² In that paper, Elphinstone gave a list of the high-handed measures of Trimbakji, and his attempts to enhance the Peshwa's power and revive the old Maratha policy, observing that the British 'connexion with the Peshwa could not long continue while he had such a minister'. 'It follows, therefore,' Elphinstone concluded, 'that we must soon have demanded this man's dismissal, and that we could not have entered on any war or on any serious enterprise as long as he was in power'. Another letter to the Governor-General, dated the 18th August, speaks of the Peshwa's infatuation for Trimbakji and the 'prospect of power and aggrandisement' which Trimbakji had held out to his master, including the 'hopes of reducing Gujerat to a dependent province, of cajoling the British Government, of intimidating the Nizam, and perhaps in due time restoring the old Maratha confederacy with His Highness at its head'.³ On the 23rd August, referring to the strained relations between the Peshwa's Government and the English, Elphinstone declared that he was 'convinced from Trimbakji's measures and conduct that the present crisis must equally have taken place if the Shastry's murder had been passed over'.⁴

¹ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, pp. 293-4.

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Sept. (36).

³ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (133).

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 20 Sept. (139).

These despatches indicate Elphinstone's dislike of Trimbakji's political influence and explain Elphinstone's attitude towards him. There were good reasons why Elphinstone should have desired Trimbakji's imprisonment and believed in his complicity in the Shastri's murder. But that is no reason why the historian should ignore the probability that the originators of this plot were to be found not at the Peshwa's but at the Gaekwar's court.

CHAPTER VII

EVENTS LEADING TO THE WAR

IN the previous chapter the course of events has been traced till the end of the year 1815. By this time, other important incidents were also taking place in different parts of India. In October 1813, the Marquis of Hastings, then Lord Moira, succeeded Lord Minto as Governor-General of India. His administration saw the war with Nepal which ended with the Treaty of Sagauli in March 1816. In May of the same year, a treaty was also signed by the British Government and Mudhoji Bhonsla, better known as Appa Saheb of Nagpur, by which Appa Saheb was recognized as the Regent of the State and entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British Government. In September, the scene of interest again shifted to the south and fresh troubles began between the British Government and the Peshwa.

It has already been said that Trimbakji Danglia had been imprisoned in the fort of Thana at Salsette, close to Bombay. The Peshwa had more than once applied to the Bombay Government to release Trimbakji. In August 1816, Elphinstone learnt that the Peshwa was planning to send one Ramchandra Pant Barve as a wakil to Calcutta to secure the liberation of Trimbakji.¹ The latter's imprisonment, however, did not last long. On the 12th September 1816, he escaped from the fort and, crossing the narrow inlet of the sea, entered the Maratha country. It was believed that he was helped by a Maratha groom, who conveyed to him the arrangements made for his escape by means of a song. As it was in Marathi, the English guards of the fort did not understand its meaning. This song was heard by Bishop

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 14 Sept. (24).

Heber, in the course of his well-known tour, and a translation of it has been recorded in his *Journal*. It reads as follows :—

‘ Behind the bush, the bowmen hide
The horse beneath the tree ;
Where shall I find a knight will ride
The jungle paths with me ?
There are five and fifty coursers there,
And four and fifty men ;
When the fifty-fifth shall mount his steed
The Deckan thrives again.’¹

The findings of the Court of Enquiry held after Trimbakji's escape proved less romantic. It transpired that Trimbakji escaped from the lavatory into a stable, and taking out a bar from the window, managed to get out. Then he either climbed down the fort wall or walked out of the wicket gate ; and as he threw off his own dress, the sentry at the gate took him for a common labourer.² The escape of the prisoner was discovered soon after his flight, and a horse-keeper in the service of Major Eldridge, the commandant of the fort, was also found missing.³ An alarm was given, and a reward of one thousand rupees for Trimbakji's apprehension was offered on the same night.⁴ But in spite of all precautions to prevent any person leaving the island of Salsette during the night,⁵ no trace of Trimbakji could be found. The Governor-General laid the blame of Trimbakji's escape on Major Eldridge, who in his opinion was guilty of ‘ culpable negligence ’, ‘ there appearing to have been a want of those commonplace precautions which the ordinary course of military

¹ Heber, op. cit., ii, p. 335.

² Bom. Sec. Pro. 1816, 18 Sept., p. 673 ; and Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 12 Oct. (4).

³ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1816, 18 Sept., p. 678.

⁴ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1816, 18 Sept., p. 681.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 12 Oct. (4).

service' enjoined.¹ Major Eldridge was removed from the command of the fort as 'a public mark of dissatisfaction of the Government'.²

The evidence before the Court of Enquiry gives one a fair idea of how Trimbakji escaped, though one would like the elucidation of a few more points. Recently, however, a letter apparently written by Trimbakji has been published, giving a very different version of the story.³ In view of the importance of this document, nearly the whole of it is translated. 'Trimbakji Danglia to Harba Aba, after salutations. Holkar had killed an important person of the English. So, in order to hang me, they put me into a palankeen and, with twenty-five "gardis", brought me to the seashore. When they were going to hang me, I said to the guards, "Do not kill me, take me to Poona alive, I will do you good." Then the guards said, "Give us sixteen thousand rupees, fifteen thousand in gold, and one thousand in cash. If you give us a surety that you will pay the whole amount, sixteen thousand rupees, when you arrive at Poona, we will take you there"—so they said. Meanwhile Apa Joshi came there. At my entreaty, he consented to be the guarantor, and asked them to take me to Poona alive. "When I arrive at Poona, I shall myself give you sixteen thousand rupees, as agreed; no other person has anything to do with it"—and with these words Joshi stood surety. After the surety was arranged, I left Thana and, travelling day and night, arrived at Poona on the evening of the sixth day. So, if without anybody knowing, the whole amount, as stated in the letter, reaches the guards through Joshi, within one "prahar" of night, my life is saved. Otherwise, Joshi and I will die. Go to Joshi with the money. As he says, so you will do. Do not make a fuss. Do as you are told. This is a matter of life and death. . . .'

¹ Bom. Sec. Pro. 1816, 31 Dec., p. 1133. ² Ibid. ³ Peshwa Daftar, 41, 91.

It is difficult to believe with Mr Sardesai that the letter 'solves the mystery of Trimbakji's escape'.¹ In fact it creates new ones. Every statement in the letter is opposed to what we know from other sources. The statement that the Shastri had been murdered by Holkar cannot for a moment be accepted. It is too thin a story even to be a bad excuse, and would not have been believed at the time when the letter was written. The story of Trimbakji going to be hanged is also anything but true. Trimbakji was not a British subject, and the British Government would not have sentenced him to death without having previously consulted the Peshwa, and, in any case, there must have been some indication of it in the Company's records. The story of twenty-five 'gardis', the apparent absence of an English officer while Trimbakji was being 'hanged' and the statement that Trimbakji was carried out of the fort and the arrival of Apa Joshi at the right moment—all help to make the story more improbable. It should also be remembered that the 'guard over Trimbakji . . . was composed entirely of Europeans' as a special precaution against his escape.² Even if it is granted that Trimbakji had been sentenced to death, it is most unlikely that he would be taken out of the fort to the sea-shore to be 'hanged'. It is also not a little surprising that the story of the bribery, or the absence of the guards, who are said to have accompanied Trimbakji to Poona, never came before the Court of Enquiry, nor were they mentioned by the reports of the spies employed by the British Government to secure information about Trimbakji. The only part of the letter which might be true is the statement of Trimbakji's arrival at Poona. It was believed by many at that time that Trimbakji was hiding in Poona; and an entry in Elphinstone's private Journal, dated the 28th September, reads:—'All quiet, though Trimbakji is thought to be in Poona'.³

¹ Peshwa Daftar, 41, p. 93.

³ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, i, p. 350.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 442; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

The above observation naturally tempts one to the conclusion that either the letter is not genuine or, granting that it was really written by Trimbakji, it contained statements which are incorrect and meant to be so. The first presumption, that the letter could not have been written by Trimbakji, is supported by an observation made by Elphinstone to the Governor-General in March 1815, that Trimbakji 'is so absolutely illiterate as not to have learned to read'.¹ Curiously enough, Elphinstone's information was wrong. It is unlikely that an illiterate person should be appointed the Sirsubadar of the Karnatak² or succeed in obtaining the position of the real minister of the State. Moreover, numerous letters have been discovered in the Poona Alienation Office, which are believed on good authority to be written by Trimbakji's own hand. Consequently, we are driven to the other alternative that the letter, though written by Trimbakji himself, was deliberately false, but it is difficult to see what purpose it could have served except to procure a supply of money. This is, no doubt, an unsatisfactory conclusion ; but it is the only one possible.³

However, Trimbakji succeeded in making good his escape. The Resident at Poona suspected that he was assisted by a relation of his own, with whom he fled up to Pupri Ghat towards the country south of Nasik and was probably joined by Trimbak Rao Khardekar, a notorious adventurer, who had been seen hovering near Kalyan with twenty-five horse.⁴ Towards the end of September, Trimbakji was reported to be at his own village, Nimgaon.⁵ In the beginning of the next year,

¹ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 293.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 426.

³ In an article recently published in the Sardesai Commemoration volume, p. 87, Mr. V. S. Vakaskar questions this letter and calls it spurious. Mr. Vakaskar, however, has not seen the English records.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 19 Oct. (6). I wonder whether this had any connexion with the story of the 25 gardis in the letter.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 26 Oct. (11).

he was at Phaltan, and it was rumoured that he was collecting men.¹ This was confirmed by the news-writer at Narsinghpur, who reported towards the end of January that a band of 1,800 men had gathered round Trimbakji and had been distributed near Natepota and Burrud, Mahadeo, Mahimangarh and Phaltan.² The assembling of insurgents continued throughout February, and on the 25th Elphinstone received information that Trimbakji had collected 3,000 horse and 300 infantry and was in communication with the Peshwa.³

The conduct of Baji Rao during the previous months remains to be noticed. When Trimbakji escaped from Thana, the Peshwa was suspected of assisting him in his flight.⁴ At that time Baji Rao was staying at Mahuli,⁵ and there is nothing to show that he knew anything about the incident. But once Trimbakji escaped from prison, Baji Rao began to take an interest in his proceedings. A contemporary Marathi chronicler tells us that by his escape from Thana, Trimbakji performed a feat which was considered to be impossible, and the Peshwa regarded it as an 'act of God'.⁶ He no doubt promised to co-operate with the British Government for Trimbakji's arrest, and undertook to keep watch over his relations at Poona.⁷ But it can hardly be believed that he was sincere. The Peshwa's Government denied the reports of the insurrection,⁸ and later on when a detachment was sent under Bapu Gokhale against the rebels, it quietly settled at Natepota and reported that there was no disturbance.⁹ In the beginning of March, Elphinstone received intelligence that a sum of 2,13,000 rupees had been sent by the Peshwa's Government to

¹ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 145.

² Ibid.

³ Id., p. 148.

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 12 Oct. (9).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 12 Oct. (3).

⁶ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 173.

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 12 Oct. (9), 2 Nov. (4).

⁸ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 165.

⁹ Id., pp. 144, 148.

Trimbakji.¹ Elphinstone had also heard the information that Baji Rao had seen and spoken with Trimbakji.²

By the middle of February, Elphinstone had opened a negotiation with the Peshwa regarding Trimbakji. On the 12th February, the Resident asked the Peshwa to 'act vigorously', 'to seize his family and adherents, and set a price on his head'.³ On the 24th, Elphinstone wrote to Baji Rao that he had heard 'strong and repeated accounts of Trimbakji being at the head of the rebels', but that he could not believe that the Peshwa was 'countenancing anyone in taking up arms against his allies'; if, however, Trimbakji 'excites a rebellion, His Highness must be held responsible for it'.⁴ On the 2nd March, Elphinstone expressed his astonishment at the Peshwa's denial of the existence of the rebellion. 'It would be an insult to His Highness's understanding,' he wrote to the Peshwa, 'to suppose that he will endeavour to evade an answer by denying a fact so universally known as the existence of an insurrection within twenty-five kosses of his capital, unless he is determined to avoid all open and friendly discussion with the British Government.'⁵ But as Baji Rao would do nothing and pretended to have no knowledge of Trimbakji, Elphinstone's letters gradually became more pointed. 'I do entreat His Highness', he wrote on the 7th March, 'to consider where it will end. To screen Trimbakji and his gang is to attack us, and can His Highness suppose that he [we?] will pass over an attack without resenting it?'⁶ At the same time, in case the Peshwa should still refuse to take effective measures against the rebels, Elphinstone determined to send a British force against them. With this object, he asked Colonel Smith to move two regiments of light cavalry near Parenda, and the light battalion near Ahmadnagar.⁷

¹ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 148.

² Id., p. 151.

³ Id., p. 164.

⁴ Id., pp. 164-5.

⁵ Id., p. 166.

⁶ Id., p. 168.

⁷ Id., p. 163.

He also advised the Resident at Hyderabad to send Major McDowell with a detachment to the neighbourhood of Tuljapur.¹

If Elphinstone thought that his note would influence the Peshwa, he was mistaken. Throughout the month of March, frequent reports of hostile preparations reached him. The Peshwa was recruiting troops and the principal chiefs were directed to levy their quota. Bapu Gokhale was expected to collect 5,000 men, the number of Aba Purandhare, Vinchurkar and Rastia was 500 each. Chintaman Rao's troops were called to Poona and even Appa Dessai, with whom the Peshwa was on no friendly terms, was summoned.² The Peshwa was said to have provisioned his hill forts and sent treasure and jewels out of Poona. On the 25th March, Elphinstone received the information that a sum of 9,40,000 rupees had been sent to various hill forts.³ The Peshwa also sent away his personal wardrobe from Poona. He compelled the shopkeepers at Poona to purchase some of his clothes, and some he burnt for the sake of the gold and silver with which they were embroidered.⁴ During the month of April, the Peshwa's collection of troops continued in the country; at Poona, he manifested obvious signs of anxiety. He placed pickets around the city and employed additional guards for his palace and that of his brother, Chimnaji Appa, although he disbanded 400 to 500 of his new recruits.⁵ Elphinstone was led to think that so long as the British Government did not interfere in his relations with Trimbakji, the Peshwa would probably keep quiet.⁶ On the 21st April, Elphinstone informed Baji Rao that he would call in one division of the subsidiary troops to Poona, 'to act against the rebels'.

¹ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 163.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 19 April (3), (4).

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 19 April (5).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 19 April (3).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 10 May (25).

⁶ Ibid.

If the Peshwa would refrain from resisting this, all would be well. But any show of hostility on his part would lead to immediate attack by the British troops, and 'the door will be closed on any amicable arrangements that may be intended by the Governor-General'.¹

On the 1st May, Elphinstone received news that the Peshwa's fort of Prachitgarh had been captured by the insurgents in collusion with the Peshwa's officers.² The instructions which he was expecting from the Governor-General were delayed owing to a disturbance in Cuttack.³ But Elphinstone received a private letter from the Governor-General's secretary, Adams, dated the 7th April, from which he learnt that the surrender of Trimbakji was to be considered the preliminary to all negotiations with the Peshwa.⁴ As it seemed that, in case of hostilities, the Peshwa would take shelter at Raigarh in the Konkan, where the coming monsoon would make all operations impossible,⁵ Elphinstone decided to act immediately. On the 6th May, he had a conference with the Peshwa, and dwelt on the necessity of Trimbakji's arrest and the suppression of the rebels. Baji Rao's reply was, as usual, friendly but evasive. He said that 'his State was full of his enemies', who had invented a story that he was protecting the insurgents. He promised to make every effort to secure the person of Trimbakji, but 'if he failed, he hoped it would not be concluded that he was insincere'.⁶ Next morning, Elphinstone sent his ultimatum to the Peshwa. He insisted 'on the immediate surrender of Trimbakji Danglia within the period of one month'. As it would be 'impossible . . . to allow the season to pass away without some solid proof of the Peshwa's sincerity', Elphinstone demanded 'to

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 17 May (46).

² *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 99.

³ *Id.*, p. 98.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Id.*, p. 101.

be put in possession ' of three hill forts, Sinhagarh, Purandhar and Raigarh. He expected Sinhagarh ' to be delivered up in the course of tomorrow, Purandhar in the course of the next day, and the other fort immediately on arrival of the force before it '. If these demands were not complied with, or should the Peshwa attempt to quit the city, hostilities would ensue without delay. In the event of the Peshwa complying with these points, the Resident would enter into further negotiations regarding the satisfaction to be demanded of him for his breach of faith.¹ At night, Prabhakar Pandit and Bapu Kaurikar saw the Resident and asked for four days to consider his demands, but Elphinstone refused to grant further time.² Early in the morning of the 8th, the British troops moved from their station and shortly after daybreak completely surrounded the city.³ It was then that the Peshwa submitted. He sent two karkuns to hand over Sinhagarh and Purandhar to the English, and the karkun for Raigarh arrived in the afternoon.⁴ The British troops were withdrawn, and Colonel Smith moved to a position about four miles from the city.⁵

After some hesitation,⁶ the Peshwa at last issued orders for the arrest of Trimbakji. By a proclamation dated the 4th Rujab, corresponding to the 21st May 1817, he promised the sum of two lakhs of rupees and a village with an income of one thousand rupees a year to any person who would ' discover ' Trimbakji and ' bring him alive or dead to the sirkar '. A sum of five thousand rupees and a ' chahur ' (120 sq. bighas) of land were offered for any ' positive and satisfactory information ' about Trimbakji's whereabouts ; twelve persons were declared his adherents in rebellion and their lands and possessions were confiscated.⁷

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 104.

² *Id.*, p. 105.

³ *Id.*, p. 160.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Id.*, p. 106.

⁷ *Id.*, p. 108.

The despatch of the Governor-General arrived at Poona on the 10th May.¹ In this despatch, the Governor-General directed the Resident to demand the arrest of Trimbakji within the period of one month. Should the Peshwa refuse, Colonel Smith was 'to attack and disperse His Highness's troops and to occupy the country in the name of the British Government'. The Peshwa's person was to be seized and, if possible, Trimbakji was also to be placed under arrest. But if the Peshwa would agree to the British demands, he was to be informed of the terms of a new treaty which would provide fresh safeguards for the British Government and render the Peshwa incapable of creating trouble in future.²

Accordingly, a new treaty was drawn up. By it, the Peshwa declared Trimbakji to be the murderer of Gangadhar Shastri and promised to arrest him and deliver him to the English. Until his delivery, Trimbakji's relations were to remain as hostages with the British Government (Article 1). All articles of the Treaty of Bassein which were not contrary to the present treaty were confirmed (Article 2). The Peshwa engaged not to admit into his territory any subject of a European or an American power without the previous consent of the British Government (Article 3). The Peshwa recognized 'the dissolution in form and substance of the Maratha confederacy', and renounced 'all connexion whatsoever' with other Maratha powers. He promised neither to maintain agents at the courts of any foreign power nor to permit the residence of any agent of a foreign power at his own court (Article 4). All future demands on Baroda were renounced and all past claims were relinquished on condition of the annual payment of four lakhs of rupees by the Gaekwar (Article 5). The Peshwa agreed to let the farm of Ahmadabad to the Gaekwar for the sum of four lakhs and a half of

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 448.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 7 April (10).

rupees annually (Article 15). The Peshwa gave up in perpetuity to the East India Company the fort of Ahmadnagar (Article 12), his rights and interest over Bundelkhand (Article 13), his rights and territories in Malwa and all rights and pretensions to the north of the river Narbada (except those he possessed in Gujarat); and engaged 'nevermore to interfere in the affairs of Hindostan' (Article 14). The Peshwa undertook to withdraw his troops from the fort and territory of Mailghar, which he had occupied without the consent of the British Government, and renounced all claims and pretensions to it (Article 17). The Peshwa confirmed the treaty he had made with the southern jagirdars in 1812, and declared it to be binding on both parties (Article 16). The article in the Treaty of Bassein regarding the Peshwa's obligation to send a contingent to act with the subsidiary force was annulled, but, instead, the Peshwa agreed to place 'at the disposal of the British Government, sufficient funds for the payment of a force of 5,000 cavalry and 3,000 infantry', with sufficient ordnance and military stores (Article 6). For this purpose the Peshwa ceded in perpetuity a territory yielding thirty-four lakhs of rupees per annum.¹

It should be noted that certain articles of the Treaty of Poona in 1817 followed from the Treaty of Bassein. The third article of the Treaty of Poona, by which the Peshwa promised not to admit any European or American in his territory without the permission of the British Government, was but a step farther than the eleventh article of the Treaty of Bassein, by which the Peshwa undertook to discharge any European in his service belonging to a nation at war with the English. The Peshwa's promises in the fourth article of the new treaty neither to receive foreign agents at his court nor to send his vakils to foreign courts, had its origin in Article 17 of the Treaty of Bassein, by which the

¹ Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vi, pp. 64-70.

Peshwa promised not to have any negotiations with a foreign power without the consent of the British Government. By Supplementary Article 4 of the Treaty of Bassein, the Peshwa agreed to furnish 5,000 cavalry and 3,000 infantry in time of war to act with the British subsidiary force. This article was annulled by the sixth article of the new treaty, the Peshwa being only required to place sufficient funds at the disposal of the British Government for the maintenance of the force.

The Peshwa had been informed of the details of the Governor-General's demands on the 28th May.¹ He opened negotiations with the Resident through Moro Dikshit and Baloba Vinchurkar,² and showed great reluctance to make 'so many sacrifices'. The Resident also heard that Baji Rao was anxious to send a vakil to Calcutta, to secure direct communication with the Governor-General.³ The Peshwa protested to Major Ford that the new treaty 'exposed him to future peril by making out so narrow a path for him that it was scarcely possible for him to keep it without swerving'.⁴ At last the treaty was signed by the Peshwa on the 13th June,⁵ and ratified by the Governor-General on the 5th July.⁶ On the 25th July, the Governor-General addressed a letter to the Peshwa deploring the 'interruption' in the friendly relations of the two Governments, and trusting that 'all possible cause of future differences' had been removed, and the Peshwa's 'confidence in the moderation, justice and magnanimity of the British Government' had been augmented.⁷

The Peshwa no doubt considered that he had had to pay an enormous price for the continuation of the Company's alliance. What appeared to him as the harshest measure was the fourth article which declared

¹ Sec. Cons. 1817, 5 July (12).

² Sec. Cons. 1817, 5 July (13), (14), (15).

³ Sec. Cons. 1817, 7 July (2).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Aitchison, op. cit., vi.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Sec. Cons. 1817, 15 Aug. (3).

the dissolution of the Maratha confederacy, and consequently ended his claims to the leadership of the Maratha powers. Henceforward he was to have no relations whatsoever with any foreign power, to renounce all rights beyond the rivers Tungabhadra and Narbada, and to cede territories yielding 34,00,000 rupees for the maintenance of an army over which he could exercise no control.

The Treaty of Poona conferred great advantages on the British Government. It gave considerable territorial possessions to the Company and assured a stricter control over the Peshwa's Government. But a treaty like this could hardly last. The unwilling Peshwa had been forced into submission ; his resistance had been overcome with threats, but it had not been broken. The new terms made the British control more difficult to resist, but more irksome to bear. Though the Governor-General assured the Court of Directors that the treaty was 'framed exclusively on the basis of providing security for the future, and has exacted no sacrifice or concession from His Highness except what was distinctly incumbent on us to require for that purpose or for the vindication of national honour',¹ it was unlikely that the Peshwa would also hold the same opinion about the treaty. Even after the treaty, the Governor-General looked upon the Peshwa as 'a subjugated and irreconcilable enemy',² and what the treaty achieved was not a re-establishment of friendship but a temporary postponement of hostilities. However annoyed the Governor-General might have been at what he called the Peshwa's 'persevering perfidy',³ the Peshwa looked upon the British Government as a hated foreign power, which had seized a considerable part of India, and was even then threatening his own territory. His indignation would have been

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 110.

² *Id.*, p. 44.

³ *Ibid.*

much greater had he known that the Governor-General had considered the expediency of deposing him in favour of his brother. But he gave up the plan in consideration of the 'entire ignorance which prevailed regarding the character of Chimnaji Appa, his inexperience of public affairs, and the want of any individual of any weight, talent and character' who could act as his minister, and 'supply the personal defects of the Prince, and the great probability that Chimnaji would not be found to be exempt from many of the characteristic views of his family and nation'.¹

After the signing of the treaty, the Peshwa went on his annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur. Though all the business in connexion with the treaty was not yet finished, Elphinstone did not object, for he considered that it might 'contribute to produce the appearances and even in some measure the reality of a reconciliation'.² On the 5th August, Sir John Malcolm, who had been appointed the political agent to the Governor-General, arrived at Poona.³ The Peshwa, who had been staying at Mahuli, near Satara, invited him there. Malcolm reached Mahuli in the evening of the 8th,⁴ and next morning saw a 'careworn' Peshwa with whom he had a conference for three hours and a half.⁵ Baji Rao said to Malcolm that his chief object was 'to clear his reputation', that he was quite innocent of Gangadhar Shastri's murder, and the recent rebellions; that his character and conduct had been misrepresented and he had been forced to a treaty founded on the admission of his own guilt.⁶ To his pleadings Malcolm gave a soothing reply and returned fully convinced of the Peshwa's sincerity. Malcolm wrote about the interview to his wife, 'What passed is secret and political, but the result was satisfactory.' To William Elphinstone,

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 17 May (3).

² Sec. Cons. 1817, 7 July (2).

³ Sec. Cons. 1817, 12 Sept. (2).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Kaye, *Life of Malcolm*, ii, p. 170.

a member of the Court of Directors, he described the Peshwa as 'a dupe of his own pretensions and a wicked favourite', who 'has suffered his punishment and appears, from his conduct, to be sensible of his error, and desirous of retrieving it'.¹

If anybody was completely deceived by the flattering tongue of Baji Rao, it was Malcolm. There are indications to show that as early as the beginning of 1814, the Peshwa and other Maratha powers had already grown restive of British control. In February 1814, Jenkins, the Resident at Nagpur, informed the Governor-General that the Bhonsla 'entertained some undefined expectations from running a closer connexion with the Peshwah'.² In the same letter, the Resident mentioned that 'there is a considerable and perhaps a natural bias in the mind of the Maratha chiefs still to look up to the Poona State as their head, and to attribute [to] it a degree of weight and authority and even independence in its connexion with the British Government, which enables them to consider it as their rallying point in case of a future arrival of a better prospect'. In the month of February 1815, Baji Rao was maintaining an agent in the court of Ranjit Singh of Lahore, for what was believed to be an attempted union of the Indian Powers against the British Government.³ In September 1815, the Resident at Nagpur received information that Bhonsla had sent a person named Raoji Parashuram to Hyderabad on a secret mission.⁴ The Resident also learnt that a letter had been written by Trimbakji Danglia to Bhonsla calling upon him to join a confederacy with Holkar and Sindhia against the British Power.⁵ But Bhonsla was too cautious to commit himself and wanted some definite proof of the Peshwa's support of the whole scheme.⁶ About the same time, a similar letter was also received by Sindhia's brother-in-law,

¹ Kaye, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 168.

² Sec. Cons. 1814, 11 Feb. (15).

³ Peshwa Daftar, 41, 81.

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1815, 27 Oct. (21).

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

Hindu Rao Ghatge.¹ Hindu Rao replied in the form of a banker's letter and referred to the Peshwa as Vithoba, a god of the Marathas, and Sindhia as Maruti, the type of a faithful servant in Hindu mythology. Evidently Sindhia's court also desired to have the instructions from Poona written by the Peshwa's own hand. 'The banking house', Hindu Rao replied, 'is the Naik's own ; while your house is in want of cash, you must submit to the importunity of your creditors. The Naik ought therefore to go about for some time on pretence of pilgrimage and let him write a bill on this place in his own hand, and after that wherever money is required, thither it shall be sent without delay.'² Baloji Kunjar, who had been formerly the Peshwa's minister and was living in Sindhia's territory after the Treaty of Bassein, began a tour of the Maratha States. Elphinstone regarded his movements with distrust and suspected that he was intriguing against the British Government.³ Elphinstone had good grounds for suspicion, for he knew that Baloji Kunjar had seen Chitu at Nemawar and planned to unite the Pindaris in an attack against the British Government.⁴

Towards the end of 1816, secret negotiations among the Maratha States were again reported.⁵ In May 1817, the Resident at Nagpur learnt that a message had been sent by Baji Rao to Appa Saheb, calling on all the 'puggreebunds' (wearers of turbans) to promise him military assistance and himself promising help in return.⁶ The Peshwa also wrote a letter to Sindhia, asking him to 'keep openly on good terms with the dwellers on the waters', but in secret to consider his

¹ Sec. Cons. 1815, 10 Nov. (10).

² Sec. Cons. 1815, 10 Nov. (11) ; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

³ Sec. Cons. 1815, 8 Dec. (10).

⁴ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 118. Baloji Kunjar was staying in Sindhia's territory after the Treaty of Bassein. About this time he wanted to return to his own country and the British Government, after some hesitation, consented. Baloji Kunjar died at Pandharpur in May 1817 (Peshwa Daftar, 41, 102 and Riyasat, p. 476).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 18 Jan. (3).

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1817, 21 June (2).

‘own interests and the way to promote them’.¹ In June, Mir Khan wrote a letter to the Peshwa’s wakil, Ganesh Pant, expressing his concern at the ‘wicked attempts to afflict the Paishwa’ and urging him to ‘devote’ himself ‘to the sirkar’.² In July, Jenkins from Nagpur reported secret meetings between Appa Saheb, Sindhia’s wakil and the wakil from Poona,³ and similar news of secret interviews began to reach the English Resident from the camps of Sindhia, Holkar and Mir Khan.⁴ In September, two persons named Golab and Paramanand were arrested on suspicion at Bilhur, when it was discovered that they were carrying Sindhia’s seals and some letters addressed to influential people in Nepal, concealed in the pages of a book.⁵

These facts fully warrant the belief that an attempt was being made to build up a confederacy of the Indian States against the British Power. But the negotiations could not be carried on without the knowledge of the British Government. The Peshwa’s communications were carried on by messengers who travelled on camels or on foot and carried small javelins painted in a particular fashion which served as emblems.⁶ The British Government always kept strict watch over foreign agents who passed their postal stations and those whom the Peshwa sent out from his capital.⁷ At Poona, Elphinstone maintained a well organized Secret Service department which kept the Resident informed about the movements of the Peshwa. The person who rendered most valuable service to Elphinstone in procuring secret intelligence from the Peshwa’s court was a Maratha Brahmin named Balaji Pant Natu. The very reason for which Grant Duff considered him ‘well

¹ Sec. Cons. 1817, 7 July (8).

² Sec. Cons. 1817, 7 July (9). Probably this person was Amir Khan. But he is always mentioned as Mir Khan in Sec. Cons.

³ Sec. Cons. 1817, 5 Sept. (18).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 14 Nov. (59).

⁶ Briggs, *Memoirs*, p. 48.

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1817, 22 Aug. (23).

⁷ *Id.*, p. 49.

entitled to the munificent reward which was conferred on him¹ gave his name a bad odour among his countrymen. In the Maratha country he is placed in the same category as Jagat Seth or Amichand in Bengal, the only difference between Jagat Seth and Natu being that the former had better reasons for his grievance against the Nawab than the latter had against the Peshwa. Balaji Pant Natu was originally an inhabitant of the village of Panchwad, near Wai.² The earliest reference to him is found in a letter believed to be written in 1792, when he was recommended for employment in the Peshwa's service.³ Balaji Pant Natu became a karkun of Khande Rao Rastia,⁴ and after Khande Rao's death was appointed one of the guardians of his infant son.⁵ When Elphinstone held the enquiry into Gangadhar Shastri's murder, he was one of the witnesses who gave evidence against Trimbakji.⁶ The Peshwa regarded Natu's friendship with Elphinstone with suspicion, and in order to win him over, offered him a post on a monthly pay of 500 rupees. Natu acquainted the Resident of the Peshwa's offer, and Elphinstone at once took him into his employment to procure secret intelligence from the Peshwa's court.⁷ He was given the same pay as proposed by the Peshwa—an extraordinarily high amount for an informer in those days. But evidently Elphinstone knew his man, for, as he wrote to the Governor-General, 'his services are well worth the money he is to receive . . .'.⁸ Balaji Pant Natu also acted as a mediator between the British Government and the Peshwa's officers. In October 1815, he was

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 420 (footnote).

² Riyasat, p. 481.

³ Peshwa Daftar, 41, 1.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 470 (footnote).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 6 Jan. (19). On his death-bed, Khande Rao placed his son under the protection of Colonel Close, who was then the Resident at Poona.

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1815, 7 Oct. (94).

⁷ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 6 Jan. (19).

⁸ Ibid.

paid 3,000 rupees with which he bought over some of the Peshwa's clerks and obtained 'access to the secret daftar of the Poona Government'.¹

Besides Balaji Pant Natu, the accounts of the secret intelligence department of the Poona Residency contained other interesting names. One Ganesh Pant who accompanied the Peshwa to Nasik and Pandharpur was paid 400 rupees on the 2nd July 1816.² Ganesh Pant's usual salary was 50 rupees a month,³ and the previous amount probably included some extra expenses incurred in connexion with this service. Other notable persons in the pay of the Resident were the Angria's Diwan, Bapu Bhat, the Chitnavis of Satara, the Peshwa's karkun at Nasik, and Prabhakar Ballal, the former wakil of Amrit Rao. Bapu Bhat received 500 rupees in April 1817,⁴ and 'khilats' of the same value were given to the Chitnavis of Satara and the Peshwa's karkun at Nasik.⁵ The names of the people of less importance do not appear in the accounts. They were paid through Captain Briggs or his agents. In this way, a number of the Peshwa's officers had been bought off. One can understand the indignation of a contemporary Maratha chronicler, when he stated that there was hardly any chief in the Peshwa's service who had not been won over by British money.⁶

During Baji Rao's stay at Mahuli, definite plans for hostilities with the English began to take shape. The group of the Peshwa's advisers had undergone some changes in recent years, and certain new figures had appeared. But they, too, were divided as to

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 20 April (19).

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1816, 9 Nov. (6).

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 22 March (4), 7 June (17). This Ganesh Pant was probably Ganesh Krishna Pendse. In some of the accounts there is no mention of Ganesh Pant but of one Ganesh Rao drawing the same salary. Ganesh Krishna Pendse was also known as Raoji. He was a clerk in the Peshwa's daftar. After Baji Rao's overthrow, he accepted service under the British Government. In 1846 he was a pensioner (Peshwa Daftar, 41, 322).

⁴ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 7 June (17).

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 7 June (18).

⁶ Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 186.

the advisability of war with the English. Sadashiv Mankeshwar, who had become the Peshwa's chief minister in 1803, was no longer in favour. Though not free from intrigue, he was a person of a much quieter disposition than Trimbakji Danglia. Trimbakji gradually ousted him from power and, until Gangadhar Shastri's murder, was the real power in the State. In November 1815, Elphinstone wrote to the Governor-General that the 'ostensible Prime Minister', Sadashiv Mankeshwar, was likely to be supplanted by Moro Pant or Chimnaji Narayan, who were then holding subordinate positions in the State.¹ Sadashiv retained his office until May 1817, when he was succeeded by Moro Dikshit.² Moro Dikshit had definite pro-English views, but he was a man of little ability and of 'an obstinate and petulant temper' and never acquired 'any great ascendancy over his master'.³ Govind Rao Kale, a Maratha chief who came into prominence in the early years of Baji Rao's administration, was consulted. But Kale regarded a war in the near future as premature. He advised the Peshwa to gather strength for some years and then to begin war in a foreign territory, never to commence hostilities near his capital.⁴ On the other hand, Bapu Gokhale fed the Peshwa's hopes of destroying the British power by a confederacy of the Indian States, and impressed him with his plan of reviving the old system of Maratha warfare. He planned to destroy the English army by cutting off all supplies, devastating the territories through which it would pass, and harassing it by incessant raids.⁵ His plan was at last accepted.

Bapu Gokhale was paid one crore of rupees for his preparations and was given a written authority to give orders in the Peshwa's name.⁶ Under the pretence of

¹ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1815, 30 Dec. (19).

² Colebrooke, *op. cit.* i, p. 360.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 21 Nov. (36).

⁴ Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 187.

⁵ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 177.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 188 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 468.

helping the British Government in suppressing the Pindaris, as Malcolm had indeed advised him, the Peshwa recruited a large army.¹ His forts were repaired ;² his naval commander Dhulap was instructed to reorganize the fleet³ (though nothing seems to have come of it) ; and every attempt was made to win over to his cause old chiefs like Govind Rao Kale, Anyaba Mehedalc, Dada Gadre and Raghupant Thate.⁴ An emissary was sent to Mir Khan,⁵ and a robe of honour was secretly sent to Appa Saheb at Nagpur.⁶ The Peshwa revealed his plan to the Raja of Satara and sent him with his mother to the hill fort of Vasota.⁷ He also ordered Damaji Pratap Rao, a notorious freebooter, to collect men, and paid him some money.⁸

One of the Peshwa's foremost objects was the corruption of the Company's sepoys and, if possible, Europeans as well. The task of dealing with the sepoys was left to Vinayak Nana Srauti, Vamanbhat Karve and Shekharacharya Svami,⁹ and the work of corrupting the English was entrusted to Yashwant Rao Ghorpade.¹⁰ Yashwant Rao was originally an inhabitant of Sondur and was then staying at Poona as a pensioner of the British Government.¹¹ About the middle of October, Baji Rao sent for him and promised that ' whatever gold could purchase he was ready to give in aid of this design ', and gave him 50,000 rupees with which to carry on his project.¹² Yashwant Rao accepted the money, but ' in considerable agitation ' saw Grant Duff, who was then an assistant in the Residency, and asked

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 468.

² Peshwaichi Akher, p. 188.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. ; also Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 187 ; also Sec. Pro. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁸ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁹ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 195.

¹⁰ Grant Duff, ii, p. 469.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57) and Grant Duff, ii, p. 469.

him to inform the Resident that 'the Peshwa' meditated something immediately and entreated that he would be prepared.¹ Yashwant Rao, however, did not inform Elphinstone of his acceptance of the money,² but Elphinstone was apprised of the circumstances of the interview between the Peshwa and Yashwant Rao from another source.³ Yashwant Rao also brought a person named Janoba Maheshwar to Elphinstone, who gave the details of the Peshwa's intrigues with the sepoys and named in this connexion a fakir, two subadars and a Mohammedan named Mirza belonging to the topkhana, as persons concerned.⁴ Yashwant Rao's son, Daulat Rao Ghorpade, was an employee of the Company, and he also acted as an informer to the English Resident.⁵

The Peshwa's attempts to cause desertion among the sepoys met with little success. The body which suffered most from desertion was the 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment, where Subadar Lakshman Singh was one of the Peshwa's agents.⁶ A small number also left from the 2nd Battalion, 6th Regiment, of which 'two or three were uncommon fine lads'.⁷ But except in Ford's battalions, the sepoys on the whole stood loyal to the British Government.⁸ Special mention should be made of Hari Bhai, a private of the 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment, who pretended to be won over by Bapu Gokhale's agent and acted as a British spy.⁹ Jemadar Shekh Hossain of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Regiment, also resisted tempting pecuniary offers which the Peshwa made to him in

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 469.

³ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁴ Ibid. and Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61). I believe this person is the same as Mir Saheb of the same document. 'Gokla desired Meer Saheb to set fire to the magazine, but this he declared would be impracticable.'—Sec. Pro. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁵ Peshwa Daftar, 41, 274.

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

⁷ Ibid. Lieutenant Billamore's description of his own men.

⁸ 'In Major Ford's battalions there was a larger proportion of Mahrattas, and it was natural enough that they should be won over . . .'.—Prinsep, op. cit., p. 239. The proportion of Marathas in Ford's battalion was 1 to 3 of the whole strength.

⁹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57).

person as a price for deserting the British side with his men at the outbreak of hostilities.¹

Baji Rao returned to Poona at the end of September.² The plans for corrupting the troops were not yet known to the British Government, and Elphinstone still considered that there was no likelihood of an immediate outbreak of hostilities. On the 14th October, he had a meeting with the Peshwa which was destined to be the last. The Peshwa made his usual professions of friendship and promised to send his troops to assist the British Government against the Pindaris, after Dussara.³ This interview confirmed Elphinstone in his belief that the probability of a war was still remote. On the 6th October, he had already written in his Journal that the Peshwa was 'evidently disaffected, yet he will surely wait till some ill success of ours gives him a good opportunity ; and with his character, it will be long before an opportunity arrives'.⁴ On the 15th he wrote to the Governor-General that, though the Peshwa would take advantage of 'any opportunity to revenge his degradation and to recover his possessions', his 'timidity will lead him to wait for some decided advantage before he appears as an open enemy'.⁵

But although Elphinstone correctly read the Peshwa's mind, he did not take into consideration the influence exercised by Bapu Gokhale on his master. On Dussara day, the 19th October, it became apparent that the Peshwa would no longer hesitate to commit himself to hostilities. On that occasion, at the usual military parade in the presence of the Peshwa, the Resident was treated with studied neglect. Naro Vishnu Apte, an officer of the Peshwa, threateningly brushed past the

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 16 Jan. (57) and Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61). The cases of Hari Bhai and Shekh Hossain were mentioned in the *Calcutta Gazette*, Thursday, 26th February 1818, as 'gratifying instances of incorruptible fidelity in our sepoys' (Seton-Karr, *Selections from Calcutta Gazettes*, v, p. 246).

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 468.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 21 Nov. (36).

⁴ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 368.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 21 Nov. (36).

Company's battalions with his men,¹ and before the usual salute to the Peshwa could be fired by the English troops, the Peshwa left, and sent a message that he was unable to remain.²

After that, all attempts to veil the Peshwa's plans were discarded and his attack was only a question of time.³ The Resident had been left at Poona with only three battalions of sepoys, while the greater part of the subsidiary force under General Smith had left for service in the north. Major Wilson was advancing from Bombay with the Bombay European Regiment, but he was not expected before the 2nd November.⁴ At Poona, the Peshwa grew bolder. On the night of the 27th, he sent 50,000 rupees and some dresses of honour to the British Cantonment at Garpir.⁵ His troops, which had overcrowded the city, began to press near the Cantonment and tried to encamp in 'dangerous proximity of the magazine'.⁶

Grant Duff gave a graphic description of one of those nights when at every hour an attack from the Peshwa's troops was apprehended. 'On the 28th October, their guns were yoked, their horses saddled and their infantry in readiness. This intelligence was brought to Mr Elphinstone a little before midnight of the 28th, and for a moment it became a question whether self-defence under all circumstances did not require that the attack should be anticipated. It was an hour of anxiety, the British Cantonment and the Residency were perfectly still . . . but in the Peshwa's camp, south of the

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 471 and Peshwaichi Akher, p. 196.

² Peshwaichi Akher, p. 196.

³ 'It was the Peshwa's wish, previous to the commencement of hostilities, to invite Mr Elphinstone to a conference and murder him; but this plan was opposed by Gokla. . . . Baji Rao proposed to assassinate the Resident as he rode out; or should that fail, to get Trimbakji with a body of Bhils to endeavour to surprise the Residency by night, whilst a simultaneous attack should be made on the Cantonment . . .' (Grant Duff, ii, p. 470). This account does not seem improbable.

⁴ Prinsep, op. cit., p. 239.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61).

⁶ Ibid.; Grant Duff, ii, p. 471; and Peshwaichi Akher, p. 196.

town, all was noise and uproar. . . . To have sent to the Cantonment at that hour would have occasioned considerable stir ; and in the meantime, by the reports of the spies, the Peshwa was evidently deliberating ; the din in the city was dying away ; the night was passing. . . .¹ On the 31st October, Elphinstone entered in his Journal, 'Knowing what the Peshwa could do, and not what he would, I had an anxious time till the 29th, when I put the troops on the alert and hastened in the Bombay Regiment. Our preparations produced similar ones on the Peshwa's part and hourly expectations of attack all night.'²

On the 29th, Elphinstone sent Captain Ford to the Peshwa with a request that the Maratha troops be withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the Cantonment. The Peshwa's Durbar showed evident displeasure at the request, and Bapu Gokhale observed that the Peshwa was at liberty to keep such number of troops in his capital as he pleased.³ Next day, the Resident's position was improved by the arrival of the European Regiment from Bombay,⁴ and on the 1st November the Company's troops left their old Cantonment at Garpir and encamped at the village of Khadki, about four miles from Poona.⁵

It was believed at Poona that the departure of the Company's troops from Garpir had been caused by fright.⁶ In a private letter, Elphinstone wrote to Colonel Close that 'the impression made in town and diligently encouraged by Gokla was that the Feringees had fled before the invincible arms of the Sreemant and would soon be clear out of the country'.⁷ Consequently, the Peshwa's men behaved with 'utmost

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 472.

² Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 379.

³ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61) ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 473.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 473.

⁵ Id., p. 474.

⁶ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 197.

⁷ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 382.

exultation and insolence'. The day the Cantonment was removed, Lieutenant Shaw was wounded with a spear near Ganeskhand by Visram Singh, a trooper of the Peshwa.¹ A party of 1,500 horse belonging to Vinchurkar approached the Residency and another body of horse from Bapu Gokhale's cavalry 'came to the riverside within the pistol-shot of the Residency and remained there for upwards of half an hour coolly examining the place'.²

Meanwhile General Smith, who apprehended an attack by the Peshwa, had been concentrating his force near Fultumba.³ On the 3rd November, Elphinstone ordered the light battalion and 1,000 auxiliary horse at Sirur to fall back on Poona.⁴ For days the Peshwa had been meditating an attack, and as the news of the march of the English troops reached him, he decided to delay no longer. He sent instructions to suspend the 'dak' arrangements and close the roads to Bombay. On the night of the 4th November, Moro Dikshit warned Captain Ford about the Peshwa's attack, and offered to save his life provided he would stand neutral. Captain Ford refusing, he asked him to look after his family in case he died in battle, and himself undertook to look after Captain Ford's family if the latter were killed.⁵

In the morning of the 5th November, Elphinstone was informed that the Peshwa's army was preparing to attack. On enquiry, the Peshwa's wakil replied that as the Company's troops were already under arms, the Peshwa was only making a 'corresponding preparation'.⁶ Afterwards an ultimatum was sent by the Peshwa through Vithoji Naik, who demanded the departure of the European Regiments, the reduction of

¹ Peshwaichi Akher, p. 197; Colebrooke, i, p. 330; *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 120.

² Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61).

³ Grant Duff, ii, p. 475; Prinsep, p. 241.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 475; Prinsep, p. 242.

⁵ Beng. Sec. Pol. Cons. 1817, 26 Dec. (61); Grant Duff, ii, p. 474.

⁶ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 120.

the brigade to its normal strength, and the removal of the Cantonment to a place recommended by the Peshwa—failing which there would be an end of all friendly relations.¹ The Resident replied that the Peshwa was not entitled to demand the withdrawal of the troops and it was not within the Resident's power to satisfy his demands. The Resident had no intention of commencing hostilities, but if the Peshwa's troops approached towards the British lines, he would not hesitate to attack.² Soon after the message, Maratha horsemen were seen moving towards the Residency. Elphinstone had hardly the time to escape. He retreated towards the British line, pursued by the Maratha horsemen under 'a little firing but no real fighting'. The Residency was set on fire and completely burnt. Next day, when Elphinstone made his report to the Governor of Bombay, he begged to be excused for 'this scrawl', for all 'my writing implements, with everything I have except the clothes on my back, form part of the blaze of the Residency, which is now smoking in sight'.³

In the meantime, the Peshwa's troops were assembling, and Grant Duff saw 'endless streams of horsemen pouring from every avenue'.⁴ It was towards the afternoon of a very sultry day; there was a dead calm and no sound was heard except the rushing, the trampling, and the neighing of the horses and the rumbling of the gun wheels'.⁵ The advancing army of the Peshwa looked like the 'Bore in the Gulf of Cambay'.⁶ On the English side, the brigade under Colonel Burr joined with Ford's battalion and moved towards the Maratha army. Just before the battle the Peshwa lost heart and

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 120; Colebrooke, op. cit., i, pp. 381, 383; Peshwaichi Akher, p. 199.

² *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 120-1.

³ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 241.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 477.

⁵ Ibid. (footnote).

⁶ Ibid.

sent a person to Bapu Gokhale ordering him not to fire the first shot. But Bapu Gokhale, who knew the Peshwa well, anticipated the nature of his orders as soon as he saw the messenger, and at once ordered his artillery to open fire.¹ Before the Peshwa's message reached him, the Maratha War had begun.

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 478.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WAR

BEFORE the battle commenced, Baji Rao moved to the Parvati Hill with 5,000 horse and 2,000 infantry¹ while the rest of his army took the field. It is not possible to form the exact estimate of the Maratha troops engaged in the battle. Grant Duff thought that the 'Mahratta army on the field consisted of 18,000 horse and 8,000 foot with 14 guns'.² Colonel Burr, who directed the English force, considered the Maratha cavalry to amount to about 15,000.³ Blacker's estimate is widely different. He gave the number of the Peshwa's army as 28,000 horse, 13,600 foot and 37 guns, exclusive of the garrison in his different hill forts.⁴ Blacker included in his list the force contributed by Trimbakji Danglia. Trimbakji, however, did not join the Peshwa until some time after the battle of Khadki. But even if we leave out Trimbakji's quota, it only makes a reduction of 1,000 horse and 500 foot, which means very little different. An estimate was made of the Peshwa's army at Loni on the 1st March 1818, when the total strength of his army was supposed to be between 36,000 and 47,000.⁵ This number included the troops of Chintaman Rao Patwardhan and Trimbakji Danglia who joined him later. On the other hand, the number of the British troops, including Ford's battalion, was 2,000 sepoy and 800 Europeans.⁶

The battle began at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. As Colonel Burr's line advanced, the Marathas began a

¹ Grant Duff, ii, p. 480 (footnote).

² Id., p. 480.

³ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 182 ; *Burr's Appeal to Hastings*, p. 2.

⁴ Blacker, *Mahratta War*, p. 16.

⁵ *Burr's Appeal to Hastings*, p. 81.

⁶ Grant Duff, ii, p. 479.

cannonade and the Maratha cavalry tried to get into the rear of the British army. The 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment, experienced some awkward moments when attacked by a body of Ghokale's regular infantry. Referring to this attack, Elphinstone wrote in a private letter, 'I own I thought there was a good chance of our losing the battle.'¹ But the Marathas were driven back by constant artillery fire and with the assistance of a part of the Bombay Regiment. In the meantime, Major Ford's battalion arrived from Dapuri and joined the English line. The Marathas did not renew their attack, but only sent out skirmishers to harass the English troops. As it became dark, the British troops returned to camp and the Marathas also retreated.² On the English side the number of the killed and wounded amounted to 86 persons and included Lieutenant Falconer, who was fatally wounded.³ On the Peshwa's side, the loss was considerably heavier, and was supposed to be 500.⁴ The Peshwa's minister, Moro Dikshit, was killed in an early charge, being shot in the mouth.⁵

After the battle of Khadki, for more than a week there was no fighting. On the 14th November, Elphinstone wrote to Captain Close, ' . . . We have been almost as quiet as if encamped on the Retee [Ridge?] at Delhi. . . . Our life here is delightful : no plots and cares, but idling, looking through spy-glasses and expecting another field day.'⁶

The battle of Khadki did not turn out as Baji Rao expected. He sent one Hareshwar Bhai, a banker at

¹ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 384.

² For the description of the battle see Burr's report in Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 181 (also printed in *Burr's Appeal to Hastings*, p. 1) ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 477 ; Elphinstone's letter to Close in Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 382 ; Elphinstone's report to Hastings in *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 119.

³ Burr's return of the dead and wounded in Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 186 ; also Grant Duff, ii, p. 479.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 480. On the day of battle, Burr estimated it to be not less than 300-400.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 480.

⁶ Colebrooke, op. cit., i, p. 385.

Poona, to the Resident, lamenting the outbreak of hostilities, throwing all blame on his advisers and offering to build a new Residency.¹ He was also about to leave Poona for Purandhar ;² but he was prevailed on to stay by Bapu Gokhale³ and preparations were made for another battle. The Peshwa paid for the horses killed in the battle and distributed presents and distinctions to those who had been wounded in action.⁴ He had already ordered the roads to Bombay to be shut up and had considerable success in stopping the dak and cutting off the convoys.⁵ Reports were circulated of the Peshwa's success and the defeat of the English. A circular found in the temple of Mahadeo at Bassein on the night of the 20th November was probably a specimen. It read as follows :—‘ Be it known to all that the English and the Sirkars having quarrelled at Poona, a battle has ensued. The English being defeated, some of the principal white people have been taken prisoners. . . . Some people have escaped from the field of battle, but they are surrounded. They will soon be seized. In like manner battles have been fought in four or five other places, and the English have been defeated, as they will be in time to come. No person must engage in the service of the English. But if notwithstanding any one should continue, he will be fined to the utmost possible extent and be punished.’⁶ At Poona, Bapu Gokhale offered an asylum to all those who would desert the English side before a certain period.⁷

As soon as the hostilities with the Peshwa broke out, certain outrages were committed in different parts of the country. Cornets Hunter and Morrison were arrested

¹ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 188.

² *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 122.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 189.

⁶ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1817, 3 Dec., p. 4373.

⁷ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 188.

near Poona and sent to the fort of Kongori in the Konkan and afterwards transferred to Vasota.¹ Captain Vaughan and his brother were seized on their way to Bombay and put to death.² Lieutenant Ennis of the Bombay Engineers was killed while employed in the work of survey.³ It should not, however, be supposed that these deeds were committed by the Peshwa's order, and fortunately there is another side of the picture. No harm was done to members of Ford's battalion who were engaged in defending some stores near the Residency.⁴ The Resident's munshi, Mahammud Harif, was allowed to leave the city unmolested.⁵ General Briggs recorded a story of how during the battle of Khadki, his wife and children and two other English ladies were surrounded by the Maratha horsemen on the way to the British line, but let off when they were 'satisfied by the screams' that there were only women and children inside the palankeen.⁶

General Smith set out for Poona as soon as his communication was interrupted. On the way he was repeatedly harassed by the Maratha cavalry and had some skirmishes with them in which the Marathas suffered some loss.⁷ He arrived at Poona on the evening of the 13th, and planned an attack next day on the Maratha army, on the other side of the Muta-Mula.⁸ But the attempt was postponed owing to the difficulty of fording the river. The attempt to ford the river was made on the evening of the 16th. The division under Lieutenant-Colonel Milnes, which was engaged in the fording, met a strong resistance from the Peshwa's Arab

¹ Blacker, *op. cit.*, p. 71 ; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 247 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 481 ; Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 248.

² Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, pp. 248-9 ; Blacker, *op. cit.*, p. 71 ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 480.

³ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

⁴ Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 249.

⁵ Grant Duff, ii, p. 481 ; Forrest, *Elphinstone's Writings*, p. 248.

⁶ Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁷ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 126 ; Blacker, *op. cit.*, p. 72 ; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁸ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 126.

infantry and cavalry. But the Maratha troops were repulsed. At about two o'clock in the morning Baji Rao left his camp and fled to the south. Bapu Gokhale and some other chiefs waited till the morning. But as the British troops advanced, the Marathas hurriedly retreated, leaving their camp standing.¹

This incident, known as the battle of Yerveda, left the British masters of Poona. General Smith, as soon as he crossed the river, occupied a position for bombarding the city.² But Poona submitted without a struggle. Hareshwar Bhai, a banker, saw the English, and asked for protection on behalf of the bankers and merchants.³ In the evening, Balaji Pant Natu came from the British camp with 200 British soldiers and himself set up the British flag on the Peshwa's palace. Guards were placed at the public offices, the Arabs whom the Peshwa left in the city were disbanded and the administration of the city was entrusted to one, Robinson.⁴ The British troops captured forty-six guns at Poona, and on the 18th November a British detachment took fifteen guns near Sinhagarh, where the Peshwa had left them.⁵

In the meantime, the Peshwa had fled southward. At Mahuli, he was joined by Appa Dessai Nipanikar with 1,000 Arabs and 200 cavalry.⁶ From Mahuli, Baji Rao sent Naro Vishnu Apte to Satara for bringing the Raja of Satara and his family to his own camp.⁷

General Smith left Poona on the 22nd November and commenced the pursuit of the Peshwa. The Peshwa

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 126 ; Sec. Cons. 1818, 9 Jan. (49) ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 482.

² *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 127.

³ Colebrooke, op. cit., ii, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid. ; Riyasat, p. 491 ; Peshwa Daftar, 41 (129) ; Peswaichi Akher, p. 200. There appears to be no indication as to who this person really was. He is very often mentioned in Marathi accounts. I believe he was the same person as Robertson, who was placed in charge of the city of Poona. Robinson was the name of the Chaplain at Poona. Possibly the two names were confused.

⁵ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 129.

⁶ Blacker, op. cit., p. 176.

⁷ Peshwa Daftar, 41 (145) ; *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 208.

always marched ahead with the main division of the army, while Bapu Gokhale guarded his rear with a number of horse. On the 25th November, the Maratha cavalry began to appear near the British line and occasional skirmishes followed.¹ As the British army advanced, the Peshwa retreated to Pusesavli, where he stayed on the 27th and 28th November,² and then proceeded eastward to Pandharpur. He then turned north-west and was joined at Talegaon by the Raja of Satara. Baji Rao then passed Poona and, arriving on the north of Juner, proceeded towards Nasik. Here he was joined by Trimbakji Danglia. Finding his march to Nasik likely to be intercepted by General Smith who was advancing from Sangamner, he fled to the south.

The news of Baji Rao's advance near Poona caused great consternation in the city. It was believed to be the Peshwa's object to capture Poona. Colonel Burr, who had been left for the protection of the city, had with him 2,000 sepoys, 200 Europeans and 300 irregular horse. On the 28th December, Lieutenant-Colonel Cunningham arrived at Poona with 1,700 irregular horse, to have his troops mustered and paid.³ On the 30th December, Burr learnt that the van of the Peshwa's army had arrived at Chakan, eighteen miles from Poona.⁴ At midnight he applied to Sirur for the assistance of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Regiment, and any cavalry that could be spared.⁵

Accordingly, a detachment consisting of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Regiment, about 500 strong, with four officers and an assistant surgeon, twenty-five of the Madras artillery with one officer and one assistant surgeon and 300 auxiliary horse, the whole under Captain Staunton, left Sirur on the evening of the 31st

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 130, 208.

² Blacker, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁴ *Id.*, p. 34.

³ *Burr's Appeal to Hastings*, pp. 29, 33.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 35.

December.¹ On the next morning the British troops were suddenly confronted by the whole of the Peshwa's army on the other side of the river Bhima. Captain Staunton took cover in the village of Koregaon, but the Peshwa's Arabs and a body of horse forded the river and entered the village. The fighting continued throughout the day. Tired after a long march, and cut off from the river, the Company's sepoy fought with admirable gallantry. In the evening their position became desperate. But luckily the Peshwa feared General Smith's approach and retreated. By nine o'clock the firing ceased. On the English side the number of killed and wounded in the battalion and the artillery was 175 men and four officers. In the auxiliary horse the loss was 96 men and one officer killed or wounded.

From Koregaon the Peshwa fled towards the Karnatak and was pursued by General Pritzler. He then moved southwards and arrived near Miraj on the 11th January and, proceeding farther south, arrived at Gokak on the other side of the river Ghatprabha. Finding further progress impossible on account of General Munro, he crossed the Krishna at Gulgula and arrived at Miraj. Then he moved eastward and, pursued by General Smith and Colonel Boles, reached Pandharpur and afterwards proceeded to Sholapur.

It was about three months since the Peshwa had declared war with the British Government, and during this period there had been outbreaks of hostilities in different parts of the Maratha country. But most of the Indian powers did not consider it prudent to break the friendly relations with the British Government, and where the hostilities occurred they did not result according to the Peshwa's expectations. The news of the Peshwa's hostilities at Poona created little interest at

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 156, 180; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 313; Grant Duff, ii, pp. 483-4; Blacker, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

Hyderabad, and the reports that were circulated of the Peshwa's success were 'rather hoped than believed to be true'.¹ Of the Maratha powers, the Gaekwar was completely under the control of the British. On the same day that the battle of Khadki was fought, Sindhia signed a treaty by which he acknowledged the British control over his army and promised to have no further relation with the Pindaris. Only in the territories of Bhonsla and Holkar there had been sudden outbursts of hostilities, none of which ended to the Marathas' advantage. After an attack on the Residency at Nagpur, the Maratha force was defeated at the battle of Sitabaldi on the 26th November 1817. Appa Saheb was restored; but in March 1818, on account of his fresh intrigues against the British Government, he was placed under arrest. He, however, managed to escape and, after a short resistance to the British army, fled to the Punjab. Holkar's Government was at that time torn by faction. The Mohammedan officers who were opposed to the idea of friendship with the English put the Regent Tulsibai to death. But Holkar's force was defeated at the battle of Mahidpur on the 21st December. On the 6th January 1818, a treaty was made between Holkar's Government and the English by which Holkar lost a considerable part of his territory and sank into the position of a vassal of the British Government.

After the outbreak of the war with the Peshwa, the Governor-General had sent his instructions to the Resident at Poona to put an end to the Peshwa's title and annex his dominions to the British territory. On the 22nd November, Elphinstone had addressed a letter to the Governor-General's secretary stating the terms which should be imposed on Baji Rao in the case of his restoration. They included the execution of the murderers of Captain Vaughan and his brother, the cession of the southern Konkan, and the territories 'south of

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 30 Jan. (71).

a line through Badaomy and Belgaum', the relinquishment of all claims on the Nizam and the Gaekwar. The Peshwa was to make a payment to the British troops 'for the property spared in Poona' and an indemnity was to be paid to all individuals who had suffered by his action. Till the end of the Pindari War the Peshwa was to stay at Poona, limit his force, and admit a British garrison in the city and his palace. He was also to give up four hill forts to be held by the British Government till the end of the war.¹ But the Governor-General's reply, dated the 15th December, was opposed to the restoration of Baji Rao. He considered that Baji Rao's conduct had been 'such as entirely to preclude his restoration to the Government of Poona on any terms'. The fundamental principles which the Governor-General laid down for the guidance of the Resident were as follows :---

- (1) The occupation and annexation of the Peshwa's territory.
- (2) The perpetual exclusion of Baji Rao and his house from all sovereign authority.
- (3) The expulsion of Baji Rao from the south, or his arrest and detention in the custody of the British Government in such degree of restraint as necessary.
- (4) The jagirdars who did not take part in the war against the British Government or who would speedily submit were to be taken under British protection.
- (5) The lands of Bapu Gokhale and other jagirdars who did not come under the previous class were to be annexed or otherwise disposed of according to the pleasure of the Government.
- (6) Persons responsible for the murder of Captain Vaughan and his brother or any other English officers were to be publicly executed.

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 2 Jan. (2) ; Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

- (7) The persons of Bapu Gokhale and other chiefs who took active part in the hostilities against the English were to be seized and detained in custody.
- (8) Provision in land was to be made for the Raja of Satara.
- (9) Provision also to be made for Chimnaji Appa and other members of the Peshwa's family who were not seriously implicated in the war.

In this dispatch, the Governor-General expressed his doubt of the expediency of establishing Amrit Rao in a jagir or any part of the conquered territory and asked for the Resident's opinion. He appointed Elphinstone the sole Commissioner and instructed him to set up the revenue and police administration in the conquered territory.¹ These instructions had arrived at Poona in the beginning of January. But Elphinstone considered that the Governor-General's plan 'ought to be kept as secret as possible' till the British Government should obtain a firmer hold on the country and there would not be any likelihood of a strong resistance against the British power.²

On the 10th February, the division under General Smith arrived before Satara. The garrison consisted of only 400 'sebandis', 'little disposed to use their arms', and the fort submitted without a struggle. On the 11th, the British flag was hoisted. It was then pulled down and the Raja's flag was set up 'under a royal salute'.³ Next day, Elphinstone assembled the Raja's relations and officers, and the principal citizens, and declared the intention of the British Government to free the Raja of Satara from the Peshwa's control and establish him in a kingdom of his own, suitable for his comfort and dignity.⁴ A proclamation was issued

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 2 Jan. (3).

² Sec. Cons. 1818, 31 July (74).

³ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 223-4; Colebrooke, op. cit., ii, pp. 25-7.

⁴ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 216.

on the 11th February, stating the British case against the Peshwa. It referred to Baji Rao's expulsion from Poona in 1802, and his subsequent hostilities with the English. 'By these acts of perfidy and violence,' the proclamation stated, 'Baji Rao has compelled the British Government to drive him from his masnad and to conquer his dominions.' It also dwelt on the military measures taken against the Peshwa and the intended restoration of the Raja of Satara. It was declared that all *watans* and *inams* and all religious and charitable establishments would be protected; all religious sects would be tolerated and their customs respected so far as was just and reasonable. All persons were forbidden to pay any revenue to Baji Rao and his adherents. 'Watandars' and other holders of land were required to desert Baji Rao and return to their village within two months.¹

Soon after the Satara proclamation was issued, events happened which were of great advantage to the British cause. On the 6th December, Elphinstone had written to General Smith that 'for the speedy conclusion of the war it appeared more effective to act against His Highness's person than to take his forts, reduce his country or detach his sirdars by separate operations. If the Peshwa can be taken or so pressed as to be induced to submit, we shall be able to dictate our terms. . . .'² But the Governor-General's attitude necessitated a change in the campaign against the Peshwa, and on the 17th January Elphinstone wrote to the Governor-General's Secretary, Adam, that the Peshwa's 'submission is no longer desirable and our plans can only be accomplished by the occupation of the country'. The pursuit of the Peshwa would be necessary only 'to prevent his refreshing or recruiting his army, as well as to keep up the impression of his being a fugitive and

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 245-7; *Peshwaichi Akher*, pp. 203-6.

² Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 6.

an adventurer . . .'.¹ In the south, Munro had already begun the occupation of the country in the name of the British Government. He had no regular army with him, but he had been ably assisted by a number of sebandis and the inhabitants of the country.² When in January 1818 Baji Rao crossed the river Ghatprabha, he found the country already under British control. In the month of February, the army in the field was reorganized. General Smith was entrusted with the pursuit of the Peshwa, while a second division took upon itself the capture of the Peshwa's hill forts and the occupation of his territory. General Pritzler took possession of the hill forts between Poona and Satara. Leaving Satara on the 14th February, he appeared before Sinhagarh on the 20th, which capitulated on the 2nd March. Purandhar was next captured, and by the end of the month ten hill forts, including Vajragarh, Chandan, Wandon and Viratgarh, submitted to the British army.³ About this time Colonel Deacon advanced from Ahmadnagar, drove the Peshwa's garrison from Nevasa and reduced Chakan.⁴ A third detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Prothers reduced Lohoghar on the 5th March. Some of the hill forts then surrendered without fighting, while the rest submitted after short resistance, so that before the end of March the operations above the Ghats came to an end.⁵

While the Peshwa's territory was being gradually occupied by the British troops, he was wandering in the neighbourhood of Sholapur. General Smith resumed his pursuit from Satara on the 13th February, and arrived at Yelapur on the 19th. There he received the information that the Peshwa had left Sholapur and

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 31 July (74).

² Gleig, *Sir Thomas Munro*, i, p. 480.

³ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 238, 258, 259; Blacker, op. cit., pp. 239-42.

⁴ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 243-4; Blacker, op. cit., pp. 244, 245.

⁵ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 244; Blacker, op. cit., pp. 247-8.

taken a westerly direction. The English troops made a nightly march and crossed the Bhima at Kerauli. General Smith then learnt that the Peshwa had on the preceding night encamped near Ashti. So he marched in that direction and on the next morning (20th February) he 'had the satisfaction of distinctly hearing their nagaras beating below a hill . . .'.¹

The Maratha army was nearly surprised. Baji Rao had only the time to leave his palankeen and take to horse. His wives put on male attire and galloped off with him.² But Bapu Gokhale waited with his cavalry and risked an action. In the beginning the Maratha cavalry behaved with great spirit. Bapu Gokhale charged with 300 horse and, getting in the rear of the 7th Regiment, Madras Cavalry, caused great confusion. General Smith was wounded, but Major Dawes of the 22nd Dragoons came to the rescue, and in the heat of the battle Gokhale was killed. The death of the leader dispirited the Maratha force, and the Maratha cavalry broke and fled. The main body of the Marathas did not take any part in the battle and retreated. The British cavalry pursued them for five miles and dispersed them.³

The Maratha army left some of their baggage on the field, and the British troops captured two elephants, fifty-seven camels, several palankeens and afitabgars and several horses.⁴ Two Maratha chiefs, Govind Rao Ghorpade and Anand Rao Babar, were killed in the battle.⁵ But the greatest loss suffered by the Peshwa was the death of Bapu Gokhale. Bapu Gokhale was the only capable general in his service and perhaps the only one he trusted. Up to the last he had served the

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 219; Blacker, op. cit., p. 249; Grant Duff, ii, p. 484; Prinsep, op. cit., p. 327.

² Peshwa Daftar, 41 (189).

³ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, pp. 219-21; Blacker, op. cit., pp. 249-50; Prinsep, op. cit., pp. 327-30; Grant Duff, ii, pp. 491-2.

⁴ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 220.

⁵ *Ibid.*: Grant Duff, ii, p. 492.

Peshwa with unflinching courage and loyalty. It was not without reason that Baji Rao called him the 'Sword of the Empire'.¹ When, immediately after the battle, General Smith reported his success to Elphinstone, he commented that Gokhale 'really fought like a soldier'.²

The chief political advantage of the battle of Ashti was the capture of the Raja of Satara and his family. The Raja was not a little glad at his deliverance from the Peshwa.³ General Smith found the 'Raja's family . . . rather a nuisance', as they insisted on accompanying him.⁴ Elphinstone arrived at General Smith's camp at Bailsur on the 4th March and paid his respects to the young Raja.⁵ The Raja was a young man of about twenty, 'good-humoured and frank and not destitute of intelligence', his brothers were 'still more prepossessing in their appearance' and his mother was 'a woman of some talent and address'.⁶ General Smith set out in pursuit of the Peshwa while Elphinstone accompanied the Raja. On the 9th March, General Pritzler took charge of the Raja,⁷ and towards the end of the same month he left for Satara, in procession 'with the pomp of a prince and the delight of a schoolboy'.⁸ On the 10th April, a proclamation was issued in his name from Satara. It declared that Baji Rao 'had placed ourselves and families under restraint' and 'according to information received from his Kamdar (Public Officer), he had it in contemplation to put us to death'. But 'a regard for a condition of the late Maharaj prompted them (the English) to release us from the custody of Bajec Rao, and replace us on the

¹ Blacker, op. cit., p. 253.

² Colebrooke, op. cit., ii, p. 28.

³ Ibid. : *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 220.

⁴ Colebrooke, op. cit., ii, p. 28.

⁵ Ibid. : *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 238.

⁶ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 238.

⁷ Id., p. 239.

⁸ Colebrooke, op. cit., ii, p. 31.

throne, with every demonstration of consideration'. Consequently, an alliance had been formed between Satara Government and the Company.¹

After the battle of Ashti, Baji Rao's cause was regarded as desperate, and some of the chiefs deserted him. Before the proclamation was generally circulated, many of the Patwardhans had left him, and Gopal Rao promised to withdraw soon.² After the proclamation was issued, the Pratinidhi and the Pant Sachiv sent their submission.³ Anyaba Rahatekar offered to surrender the fort of Shivner and four other places near by.⁴ Among those who deserted the Peshwa about this time was the Raja of Akalkot.⁵ Esaji Pant Gokhale, a relation of Bapu Gokhale, also opened negotiations with the English.⁶ Baji Rao, however, was joined by some of Holkar's infantry under Ramdin at Kopargaon, and fled to the north.⁷ Near Purinda, two messengers arrived from Appa Saheb with news of the events at Nagpur and asked for the Peshwa's aid.⁸ Soon after, two more messengers arrived from Nagpur with a letter to the Peshwa written in Appa Saheb's own hand. It bore the cryptic message: 'To Gungana Dobeya Summana Meer—Assist me in any way you can.'⁹ On the 2nd March, Baji Rao sent back the messengers with a reply probably assuring Appa Saheb of his help.¹⁰ At the same time a plan was suggested that the Peshwa would help Ganpat Rao with money. Ganpat Rao would collect reinforcements in the neighbourhood and in a suitable moment would be joined by Appa Saheb.¹¹ The Peshwa for a time hovered near Chandore, undetermined. But hearing of Sir Thomas Hislop's approach,

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 277.

² *Id.*, p. 245.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 332; Grant Duff, ii, p. 493.

⁸ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

⁹ *Ibid.*; Sec. Cons. 1818, 10 July (27).

¹⁰ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 364; Sec. Cons. 1818, 10 July (27).

¹¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 436; Sec. Cons. 1818, 10 July (25).

he crossed the Godavari and returned to Kopargaon. He then moved farther south and, to avoid General Smith, proceeded eastward and sent Ganpat Rao to Bhonsla's territory. But Appa Saheb was arrested and Ganpat Rao was driven back from the banks of the Wardha. In the beginning of April, Baji Rao approached the river Wardha and for some time waited between Pandharkwada and Wun on the west bank of the river. Meanwhile, Colonel Adams and General Doveton were closing upon him. On the 17th April, Colonel Adams arrived at Pipulkot and marched south-west to Seoni in the hope of overtaking the Peshwa. Baji Rao, who had been advancing southward, learnt of the approach of General Doveton and at once hastened to the north. Thus, to avoid General Doveton's division from the south, he ran into Colonel Adams from the north. The advanced part of the Maratha army was ignorant of Adam's approach and completely surprised. Colonel Adams pursued them and came upon the main body of the army near Seoni. The Maratha army hardly attempted any resistance. The Peshwa galloped off, and his army broke and fled before the artillery fire. They left behind them four brass guns with some ammunition, three elephants, about two hundred camels and some treasures. It was not a battle. It was a complete rout.¹

The defeat at Seoni was the signal of further break-up in the army of the Peshwa, and his ranks became thinned by daily desertions. Fragments of what was once his great army began to come back under different chiefs and offer their submission. The horses were so worn out that they could scarcely move, and the men were in rags. They were so dispirited that they would hardly plunder a village 'even for their subsistence, but many of them being dismounted and disarmed by the

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 271 ; Prinsep, op. cit., pp. 371-3 ; Blacker, op. cit., pp. 274-5.

common villagers'.¹ The Peshwa's brother Chimnaji Appa, Appa Dessai and Naro Pant Apte, crossed the Godavari with about 2,500 horse and submitted to Captain Davies.² Chimnaji Appa had suffered terribly from fatigue and alarm, so that it was at first suspected that 'his misfortune had disordered his understanding'.³ Chimnaji Appa went to Phulsahar, near Poona, and stayed there pending further arrangements. Kashi Pandit, a person in Vinchurkar's service, came to Poona and tendered his submission.⁴ The other persons who left Baji Rao included Narsaji Belary, Hindu Rao Ghatge, and Sakharam Thorat.⁵ The only notable chiefs remaining with him were Trimbakji, Ramdin, Baloba Vinchurkar and Aba Purandhare. With the remnant of his army Baji Rao moved north and hoped to enter Sindhia's territory. He looked upon Sindhia as his last resort, with whose help he might attempt to make a stand against the English, or who might act as the mediator between him and the British Government.⁶

On the 5th May, Baji Rao crossed the Tapti and arrived at Chopda, where he learnt that the road to the north had been closed against him. Finding there was no prospect of getting into the north, he retreated to the east at Dhulcot, near Sindhia's fort Asirgarh. Yashwant Rao, the killadar of the fort, met him, and some of the Sindhia's sirdars in the neighbourhood sent the Peshwa presents and provisions. The killadar of Asirgarh was friendly to Baji Rao, and it was suspected that he intended to leave his family in the fort.⁷ But Baji Rao had given up all hopes of escape. He was being hemmed in from all sides. General Malcolm closed his way to the north, General Doveton was

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 339.

² *Id.*, pp. 275, 339.

³ *Id.*, p. 340.

⁴ *Id.*, p. 341.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 274.

⁶ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

⁷ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 285.

marching from the south, while Sir David Ochterlony was instructed by the Governor-General to prevent Baji Rao's escape to Gwalior.¹

Baji Rao at last decided to surrender. He sent two agents named Anand Rao Yashwant and Anand Rao Visvanath to Malcolm, who arrived at his camp on the night of the 17th May.² They carried a letter from Baji Rao in which he referred to the friendship between the Company and his house, and prayed that 'this friendship shall continue and increase henceforward'. He also asked Malcolm to come to his camp, where he would be 'acquainted with the details of the whole business'.³ Malcolm explained to the vakils that there could not be any chance of Baji Rao being restored 'even to nominal sovereignty' and that the wisest thing he could do was to make an immediate submission.⁴ Malcolm himself did not proceed to Baji Rao's camp, as 'it would have shown a solicitude for his satisfaction',⁵ but he sent his assistants, Lieutenants Low and Macdonald, to the Maratha camp.⁶ They were instructed to ascertain how far Baji Rao was sincere and to prevail on him to leave his present position and move to Mandleshwar.⁷ The preliminary points to which Baji Rao must conform were as follows: Baji Rao would not be restored to sovereignty; he would not be allowed to stay in the Deccan; he would give up Trimbakji Danglia and the murderers of Captain Vaughan and his brother. Baji Rao would then proceed to Malcolm's

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 454; Prinsep, op. cit., pp. 388-9.

² Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (16). In this letter from Malcolm to Adam dated the 18th May, Baji Rao's agents are said to have 'arrived last night in my camp'. But all contemporary authors, including Grant Duff (ii, p. 512) and Blacker (op. cit., p. 389) give the date as 16th. Prinsep mentions that the Peshwa's agent arrived 'late in the night of the 16th May' (op. cit., p. 389), and the author of *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender* gives the date as 'late at night on the 16th of May' (p. ccxi).

³ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (17). This letter is dated the 1st May. So Baji Rao must have decided to surrender before he crossed the Tapti on the 4th.

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (16).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.; Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (18).

⁷ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (19).

camp, who would arrange a settlement between him and the British Government on the following principles. First, Baji Rao's safety was to be guaranteed ; he should be treated with respect, and should enjoy personal liberty and should be ' allowed as much latitude in the choice of place of future residence as . . . compatible with the general peace of India '. Secondly, Baji Rao must separate himself from Ganpat Rao, Ramdin and the Pindaris. He should bring with him his family, ' those military chiefs who are his legitimate adherents, his ministers, public officers and personal domestics ', and the British Government would consider the cases of these men, ' whose allegiance and attachment to their prince ' had been ' the cause of their misfortune ' .¹

Lieutenant Low arrived at Baji Rao's camp on the 29th May and found Baji Rao ' in a state of great alarm ' .² Baji Rao requested Lieutenant Low that during his proposed meeting with Malcolm the English troops be withdrawn to a distance, and that he might be granted cessation of hostilities for seven days if he did not come to an agreement.³ Lieutenant Low refused to agree to either of them. Baji Rao at last agreed to come to a village named Khairi for a conference with Malcolm. It was agreed that he would bring with him 2,000 men while Malcolm would have his force at Metwal and come with a small escort. After the meeting, Baji Rao should be allowed to return to his camp.⁴

On the 2nd June, Malcolm visited Baji Rao at the village of Khairi. After the ceremonies of the visit were over, Malcolm moved to a small tent and had a long conference with Baji Rao. Baji Rao was willing to surrender. But the condition involving his ' resigning even the name of power, and being banished for ever

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (19).

² Sec. Cons. 1818, 24 July (456) ; *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender*, p. ccxv.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

from the home of his fathers ' seemed particularly hard to him. He wanted more time before coming to a decision, and asked for another meeting next day. Malcolm refused to grant further time, and pointed out that no hope should be entertained by Baji Rao for obtaining any change in the terms offered to him. He also advised him to arrest Trimbakji and deliver him over to the English. Baji Rao pointed out that Trimbakji had encamped separately and he had no power to seize him. After Baji Rao had left him, Malcolm sent him the following proposition for his signature :—

- (1) Baji Rao must resign.
- (2) Baji Rao should come with his family and a small retinue to Malcolm's camp, who would send him to Benares or any other sacred place in the north, as the Governor-General would arrange at his request.
- (3) Baji Rao must proceed to Hindusthan without one day's delay.
- (4) Baji Rao should receive a liberal pension from the British Government. The amount of the pension was to be settled by the Governor-General, but Malcolm promised that it should not be less than eight lakhs of rupees per annum.
- (5) Baji Rao's ' requests in favour of principal jaggeerdars and old adherents who have been ruined by their attachment to him ' would receive the ' liberal attention ' of the Government ; and his representation in favour of Brahmins and religious establishments would be treated with regard.
- (6) Baji Rao must come to Malcolm's camp within twenty-four hours ; otherwise hostilities would commence and no further negotiations would be entered into with him.¹

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 352 ; Sec. Cons. 1818, 26 June (75), (76) ; *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender*, pp. ccxvii-ccxviii.

These terms are practically the same as previously proposed by Lieutenant Low to Baji Rao. Only the conditions regarding Trimbakji were deleted as Baji Rao was deemed unable to exercise any effective control over him. Even after the propositions were sent to him, Baji Rao was anxious 'for another day's delay, as the 3rd of June was . . . an unlucky day, and he had religious ceremonies to perform'.¹ Malcolm 'affected' to be very indignant at Baji Rao's conduct and informed his agent that 'it would prove a most unlucky day for his master if he did not come in'.² Soon after this message, Baji Rao began his march and about 11 o'clock in the morning arrived near the British camp.³

Malcolm then began his march to the north with Baji Rao and his men. On the 8th June, he was 'twelve miles nearer Malwah', and 'daily getting rid of Badgee Rao's followers'.⁴ When Baji Rao joined Malcolm he was accompanied by 8,000 people, of whom about 1,200 were Arabs. Some more Arabs soon joined him, and about this time their number was nearly 2,000.⁵ On the 8th, Malcolm apprehended some trouble among the Arabs for arrears of pay, and the next day he learnt that the Arabs and the Rohillas had joined in a mutiny and had forced Baji Rao and his family to remain within their camp. Malcolm kept his men ready in order to attack the mutineers, and recalled his troops who had left in advance. At the same time, he opened a negotiation with the Arabs. On the 10th, a settlement was arrived at, and the Arabs left Baji Rao's encampment and marched off.⁶ From this time onwards, there was no further trouble. On the 12th June, Baji Rao crossed the

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 358.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

⁵ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 399; *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender*, p. ccxiv.

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1818, 10 July (23); *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender*, pp. ccxxiv-ccxxvii.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Narbada.⁷ His followers gradually left him, and before he entered northern India more than 8,000 of his people were granted passports by the British Government.¹

While the terms of surrender were being discussed with the Peshwa, Trimbakji also opened a negotiation with Malcolm. On the 1st June, he sent a vakil with a letter to Malcolm's camp offering to submit. He stated that he was not responsible for the Shastri's murder, that he was ready to turn a *Gosain* and give Daulat Rao Sindhia and Yashwant Rao Lar, the killadar of Asirgarh, as security for his future conduct, provided he was allowed to dismiss his troops and leave unmolested.² Malcolm replied that he could not enter into any terms with Trimbakji, but he would advise him to come to his camp and surrender himself. He would then be placed under arrest, but 'his life would be spared . . . and when tranquillity was restored, his crimes might be forgotten, and the good resulting from his unconditional surrender remembered'.³ The idea of the 'unconditional surrender' did not appeal to Trimbakji, and on the 3rd June General Doveton sent a party to attack Trimbakji. But Yashwant Rao Lar of Asirgarh opened fire on the English troops, and Trimbakji made his escape.⁴ He was believed to have fled towards Khandesh.⁵ On the 24th June, Henry Pottinger issued a *Cowl* (proclamation) addressed to Trimbakji calling upon him to see Elphinstone at Ahmadnagar, 'without fear and . . . without any apprehension for your life', and it was promised that he would be permitted to visit his family.⁶ But Elphinstone was opposed to any stipulation regarding Trimbakji's family to be introduced in the *Cowl*. So it was

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 10 July (23); *Narrative of Badgerow's Surrender*, pp. ccxxiv-ccxxvii.

² *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 361.

³ *Ibid.*

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1818, 31 July (428).

⁴ Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

⁶ Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (4).

withdrawn.¹ Trimbakji, however, was soon arrested. On the 28th June, Jayaji Patel of Ahirgaon in Wun Parganna informed Captain Briggs, who was then the political agent in Khandesh, that Trimbakji was hiding in the village.² Briggs sent Captain Swanson with a body of 800 auxiliary horse to Ahirgaon, and on the morning of the 29th Trimbakji was captured.³ He had with him a sum of about 60,000 rupees, which was brought to Chandore and distributed among the English troops.⁴ His life was spared by the British Government, and Elphinstone wrote to the Governor-General that it would be 'inconsistent to punish Trimbuckjee capitally for the death of the Shastry, when Bajee Rao, the principal in murder, remains at large'.⁵ Trimbakji was at last brought to Thana, his old prison, and then sent to Chunar, where he died a prisoner. In 1824, he was visited by Bishop Heber.⁶

The terms offered to Baji Rao had been the subject of much controversy. The Governor-General complained that they were 'much more favourable than he contemplated'.⁷ When Malcolm was negotiating with Baji Rao he had 'no specific instructions', but he acted on what he believed to be the spirit of the Governor-General's letter to Elphinstone dated the 15th December and the proclamation issued afterwards.⁸ As soon as the report of Baji Rao's negotiations reached the Governor-General, he sent his instructions to Malcolm. He was advised that the choice of Baji Rao's future residence should be left at the discretion of the Government and the amount of his allowance should be 'either reserved in the same measures, or restricted to

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (8), (9).

² Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (24).

³ Ibid. and (27).

⁴ Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (24); Briggs, op. cit., p. 72.

⁵ Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (28). This is the only instance where I have found Elphinstone laying the blame of the Shastri's murder on Baji Rao.

⁶ Heber, op. cit., i, pp. 405-7. Trimbakji died in 1829.

⁷ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 457.

⁸ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (12).

such a sum as shall suffice for his maintenance with his family and domestics in comfort and respectability . . .'.¹ The Governor-General made a distinction between Amrit Rao's case and that of Baji Rao, and described the latter as being an 'exile and a vanquished enemy of the British Government, compelled to throw himself on its bounty', and considered that 'an annual stipend of two lacs of rupees' would 'constitute as ample a provision as can with safety be made to him'.² These instructions were dispatched from Gorakhpur on the 30th May, and by the time they reached Malcolm, the settlement with the Peshwa had already been made. On the 19th June, Malcolm replied to the Governor-General and explained the reasons for his conduct.³ He pointed out that Baji Rao was still at the head of 8,000 men, with the help of whom he could carry on predatory warfare for some time and keep a considerable part of India unsettled. The killadar of Asirgarh was 'not only willing, but eager to give him' refuge in the fort, and the siege could not be undertaken till after the rains.⁴ It was further stated that the stipend of nine lakhs was the smallest sum that could be proposed to Baji Rao. The same amount fixed for Amrit Rao (eight lakhs) would have been considered by Baji Rao as a 'degradation'. The amount of nine lakhs would not appear so enormous a sum when it should be considered that it was to last during his lifetime only, and that no separate provision had been made for his family and future dependants.⁵ But the Governor-General did not agree with the views put forward by Malcolm, and in a dispatch dated the 8th July Malcolm was informed that 'after much useful and accurate examination, the Governor-General has not discovered any ground for materially altering' his view. His objections to Baji Rao's allowance were 'not founded

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 12 June (20A).⁴ Ibid.² Ibid.⁵ Ibid.³ Sec. Cons. 1818, 24 July (22).

on a mere financial view of the question'. He apprehended that the allowance granted to Baji Rao would 'encourage a belief that he was in a condition to make favourable terms', and it would afford him 'the means of employing money for purposes if not dangerous, at least embarrassing to the Government'.¹

It should be noted that although Hastings was not pleased with the proposition made to Baji Rao, Malcolm's colleagues had no hesitation in accepting Malcolm's point of view. In a letter dated the 18th June 1818, Elphinstone congratulated Malcolm on his 'success with Baji Rao' and also commented that he considered 'eight laks . . . a very reasonable provision'.² On the 3rd July, Elphinstone wrote to the Governor-General's Secretary that the sum granted to Baji Rao appeared to him 'well bestowed in obtaining the end in view'.³ As to the Governor-General's apprehension that the allowance would be utilized by Baji Rao in intrigues against the British Government, Elphinstone was of opinion that it might be prevented by 'fixing his residence at some place remote from all intercourse with his former subjects, and by closely observing his proceedings'.⁴ A similar letter was written by Sir Thomas Munro to Malcolm congratulating him on his 'having caught Sreemunt by the leg', and stating that had the Peshwa fallen into his hands he would 'have offered him ten in place of eight laks'.⁵ In a second letter to Malcolm dated the 7th July, he wrote, 'I have heard that the allowance of eight lakhs has been deemed too large, as the use of such a sum might be converted to dangerous purposes. There can be no difficulty, surely, in preventing his intriguing with the money' by the appointment of an officer 'to disburse the cash. . . . When men's minds begin to cool a little, and Baji Rao's treachery to be forgotten,

¹ Sec. Cons. 1818, 24 July (24).

² Quoted in Malcolm, *Political History of India*, i, p. 527.

³ Sec. Cons. 1818, 7 Aug. (18).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Gleig, *op. cit.*, iii, p. 261.

they will not think eight lacs of rupees too much for the fallen head of the Mahratta Empire.'¹ To Elphinstone, Munro expressed the same opinion. In a letter dated the 28th June, he wrote, 'I do not think that eight lacs will be thought too great a sacrifice for Baji Rao when a little time has passed away, and his treachery and the danger to which it exposed us is less fresh in our memory. . . . We may say of the allowance to Baji Rao . . . it may be too much for Baji Rao to receive, but not for John Company Bahadur to give.'² Jenkins, the Resident at Nagpur, also considered that 'the sacrifice made to obtain the object' was 'trifling'.³ After four years, the Governor-General wrote to the Court of Directors that though he found no reasons for supposing that his original view was erroneous, yet he was 'happy to state that none of the ill consequences I apprehended from the very favourable terms offered by Sir John have taken place; except that a larger actual expense has been incurred than would have sufficed to put him down'.⁴

However the Governor-General might be displeased at what he considered the too lenient conduct of Malcolm, the importance of Baji Rao's surrender can hardly be exaggerated. It put an end to the power of the acknowledged head of the Maratha confederacy and destroyed the bond of union under which a combined resistance would have been possible. The attempts made by the last Peshwa for the destruction of the British power gave less trouble to the British Government than might be expected. The Maratha troops were far behind the English as regards science of warfare, and in the long run they certainly would have been beaten. But what is also to be noted is that Baji Rao's army suffered not only from inferior implements of war and

¹ Gleig, op. cit., iii, p. 267.

² Id., p. 262.

³ Malcolm, op. cit., i, p. 527.

⁴ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 457.

lack of good generalship, but also from a want of combined action. From the detailed accounts of the Battle of Khadki, it is apparent that the whole army of Baji Rao did not take part in the action. This becomes more surprising if we consider that Baji Rao and his advisers relied on the complete destruction of the English force at the Battle of Khadki. If Baji Rao had been successful at Khadki, he would have landed the British Government into considerable difficulties, enhanced his own prestige and probably urged the other Maratha powers into a combined and more vigorous action. But the result of the battle completely destroyed his expectations. The city of Poona had no natural or artificial fortification and could not be defended against the British artillery. So, after the Battle of Yerveda, he had no option but to leave his capital to his enemy and take to flight, in the hope of a better turn of affairs. The policy adopted by Bapu Gokhale of harassing the English force and keeping them at bay was undoubtedly an attempt to return to the old Maratha warfare. It had certain advantages, but it had certain limitations also. This kind of warfare can be best carried out in the enemy's country by a light body of troops. But the march of the whole army of the State, with the fugitive Peshwa at its head and a body of cavalry at the rear trying to cover his retreat, was something quite different. The Peshwa could not hang on indefinitely in his own territory. To march with a large army often meant the plunder of his own territories, and unless his army was made to fight with the pursuing enemy, it was difficult to preserve the morale of his troops. So long as Bapu Gokhale was alive, he maintained some spirit in the army; but after his death, the march of the Peshwa's army meant a flight, and a meeting with the English force meant a rout. The whole affair presents a spectacle of indifferent attempts made by many of the Maratha chiefs to help the Peshwa's cause. The

little enthusiasm they had gradually died out by complete lack of success and after the affair at Ashti, they were only too glad to give up their arms, and desert what they considered, not without reason, a desperate cause.

CHAPTER IX

BAJI RAO AT BITHUR

THE surrender of the Peshwa in June 1818 put an end to the war in the Deccan. The British Government at the beginning of the year had already begun the work of reorganizing the province lately in the Peshwa's possession. In December 1817, Elphinstone had been appointed the sole Commissioner for the settlement of the territories conquered from the Peshwa,¹ and in April 1818, he nominated Grant Duff as the political agent to the Raja of Satara, and Balaji Pant Natu as his 'principal native agent'.² Grant Duff had charge of the Raja's territory, which extended from the river Nira in the north to the Warna and the Krishna in the south, and from Pandharpur in the east to the Ghats in the west.³ The city of Poona, with the tract between the rivers Nira and Bhima, was left in the charge of Captain Robertson.⁴ The region between the Bhima and the Chandor hills was made over to Captain Pottinger.⁵ Captain Briggs was in charge of Khandesh,⁶ while the territories above the Ghats were entrusted to Chaplin of the Madras Covenanted Service.⁷

At the same time, arrangements were being made for Baji Rao's departure to Hindusthan. On the 12th June, Baji Rao and Malcolm crossed the Narbada.⁸ Baji Rao was then escorted by Colonel Skinner to the north, pending further arrangements by Sir David

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 267.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1818, 26 May, p. 3134.

³ Ibid. ; Grant Duff, ii, p. 521 ; *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 458.

⁴ Grant Duff, ii, p. 521.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Grant Duff, ii, p. 520.

⁸ Kaye, op. cit., ii, p. 272.

Ochterlony.¹ According to Baji Rao's wish, Captain Low also was permitted to accompany him.² Baji Rao at first proceeded to Mathura, where he stayed for a few months, and then went to Bithur, near Cawnpore, which was settled as his permanent residence.³ A few of his sirdars chose to accompany him to Bithur, and one of them, Ramchandra Vyankotesh, acted as his Diwan.⁴ Captain John Low was the first Commissioner with the ex-Peshwa at Bithur, and held this office till 1825.⁵ Captain Bacon worked until 1829,⁶ when he was succeeded by Major Monson.⁷ Major Monson's period of office was longest, extending for twenty years from 1830 to 1850. He was succeeded by Major Mallard, who acted until Baji Rao's death.⁸

At Bithur, Baji Rao passed more than thirty years of his life and, in comparison with his earlier days, the most uneventful period. Very little is known about his life in retirement; and though after 1818 his life ceased to have any political interest, one would have liked to have had a picture of the ex-Peshwa at Bithur from Captain Low or one of his successors. It seems that it took Baji Rao some time to settle down to the changed circumstances. Writing in 1822, Lord Hastings observed that though Baji Rao's conduct had been 'such as on the whole to afford great satisfaction',

¹ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1818, 26 Aug., p. 4898; Fraser, *Military Memoir of Skinner*, ii, pp. 143, 145-7.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 458.

⁴ Riyasat, p. 543.

⁵ *Itihas-Sangraha*, vi, p. 99 (Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha); Riyasat, p. 543. According to the author of the Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha and of the Maratha Riyasat (who apparently based his information on the former), Low acted from 1819 to 1825. But in a letter to the Secret Committee dated the 17th October 1822, Lord Hastings stated that 'ill health compelled him (Low) to quit the station, and his place has been supplied by Capt. St. John Blacker . . .' (*Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 458). In the *Dictionary of National Biography*, however, Low is said to have 'filled the post for six years' (xxxiv, p. 184). This apparent discrepancy may be due to the fact that Low probably retired temporarily about 1822, but rejoined afterwards, and Captain St John Blacker acted during his absence.

⁶ *Itihas-Sangraha*, vi, p. 99 (Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha); Riyasat, p. 543.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

yet he had not 'relinquished all hopes of a restoration of his affairs', and had not 'failed at times to resort to his old habits of intrigues and to endeavour to keep alive in his former territories an interest in his fate'.¹ But in the same letter, Lord Hastings also acknowledged that for 'some time past the rumours of intrigues and plots, which occasionally were current', had almost ceased.² Baji Rao's Diwan, Ramchandra Vyankotesh, successfully co-operated with the Resident in 'reconciling Baji Rao to his fate, and . . . weaning his mind from the expectation of a change in his favour'.³

In 1836, Baji Rao fell a victim to a conspiracy formed by Adam Maxwell, of Maxwell, Barnett & Company, and one Omrao Ali, who promised to restore him to Peshwaship and swindled him to the extent of 11,500 rupees.⁴ Both Maxwell and Omrao Ali were tried before the Sessions Court at Cawnpore for fraud. The former was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 1,000 rupees, in default of which a further imprisonment of three months was imposed. The latter was punished with five months' imprisonment.⁵

Baji Rao married five times at Bithur, and previous to his retirement he had married six wives. The eldest of them was Bhagirathibai, whom he married in 1786. The second wife was Satyabhamabai, married in 1793. In 1797 he married Radhabai. The fourth wife, Varanasibai, was married in 1806, Benubai (alias Kusabai) in 1808 and Saraswatibai in 1812.⁶ Of them, only Varanasibai and Saraswatibai appeared to be alive in 1818.⁷ The wives whom he married at Bithur were another Satyabhamabai, Gangabai, Mainabai,

¹ *Papers re Pindarry and Mahratta Wars*, p. 458.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Itihas-Sangraha*, vi (Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha), p. 100 ; *Riyasat*, p. 543.

⁵ 'Agra Akhbar' quoted in *Itihas-Sangraha*, vi (Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha), p. 100.

⁶ *Rajwade*, iv, pp. 180-1 ; *Riyasat*, p. 540.

⁷ *Riyasat*, p. 540.

Saibai and a daughter of the Chitle family.¹ But with all those marriages Baji Rao did not have a son who survived him. In October 1810, Varanasibai gave birth to a son.² To celebrate the occasion, a salute of guns was fired in Bombay,³ and the Peshwa spent a sum of 1,78,641 rupees in festivities.⁴ But this child, who was named Vaman Rao, had a very short life and died in March 1811.⁵ In September 1816, a son was born to the Peshwa's fifth wife, Kusabai, but survived only eleven days.⁶ In 1827, Baji Rao adopted a son of one of his relations, Dhondo Pant Nana Saheb, who was then three years old.⁷ He subsequently adopted two other children, Sadashiv Rao, a brother of Dhondo Pant, and Gangadhar Rao, his cousin.⁸

Baji Rao survived both his brothers. His elder brother, Amrit Rao, died in 1824,⁹ and Chimnaji Appa in 1830.¹⁰ Baji Rao lived to the age of seventy-seven and died on the 14th January 1851.¹¹

It is easy to understand Baji Rao's character, if it is remembered that the last Peshwa was but an ordinary man, placed in most difficult circumstances and sharing many of the virtues and vices of his surroundings. A sordid childhood was passed in prison, in an atmosphere of distrust and in company unsuitable for his young mind, and the future ruler of the Maratha Empire grew up to be a man ruled by fear and envy, seeking pleasure from the lowest company, and jealous of his own shadow. This perhaps was the real reason

¹ Rajwade, iv, p. 181 ; Riyasat, p. 541.

² Bom. Pol. Pro. 1810, 20 Oct., p. 5159 ; Riyasat, p. 541. In Bombay Proceedings, the date of the birth is given as 17th October.

³ Bom. Pol. Pro. 1810, 20 Oct., p. 5159.

⁴ Riyasat, p. 541.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. ; Bom. Pol. Pro. 1816, 25 Sept., p. 3766, 2nd Oct., p. 3977.

⁷ Riyasat, p. 542.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Rajwade, iv, p. 182 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 195 ; Heber, op. cit., i, p. 396.

¹⁰ Rajwade, iv, p. 185 ; Peshwanchi Bakhar, p. 195.

¹¹ Rajwade, iv, p. 185. The date of Baji Rao's death is given as 28th January in Aitchison, op. cit., and in Parasnis, *Poona in Bygone Days*, p. 92.

that lay at the bottom of what might appear to be the inconsistency of his character. As Elphinstone pointed out, 'if he were less deficient in courage, he would be ambitious, imperious, inflexible and persevering'. He was 'eager for power', but wanting 'the boldness necessary to acquire it', 'tenacious of authority, though too indolent to exercise it'; 'concession' encouraged him 'to persevere', and opposition only 'increased his obstinacy', unless it operated 'on his fears'. At the same time, he was 'scrupulously just in pecuniary transactions, humane when not actuated by fear or revenge, frugal but not parsimonious in his expenses, and at once cautious and dignified in his manners'.¹ Grant Duff also testified to his skill in riding and swordsmanship and his knowledge of the shastras.²

Contemporary Maratha accounts describe Baji Rao as a handsome person, a good speaker and intensely religious in temperament.³ It is interesting to note that Baji Rao made a good impression on the people whom he met for the first time. In 1802, when Elphinstone was first presented to the Peshwa, he found him to be 'a very handsome, dignified, unaffected person'.⁴ His face was 'good and dignified', though there was 'something vulgar in his mouth'.⁵ Mackintosh described Baji Rao as 'a very handsome man . . . with a perfectly gentlemanlike air and manner. . . . His appearance had more elegance than dignity; it was not what might have been expected from a Maratha chief, and it could not be called effeminate. His whole deportment had that easy, unexerting character which I never saw but in those who had a long familiarity with superior station and very seldom in any who had not hereditary claims on it. I have now been presented to three chiefs of nations, and in manner and appearance

¹ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, ii, pp. 287-9.

² Grant Duff, ii, p. 253.

³ Khare, ix, p. 4811, Nos. 3703, 3704.

⁴ Colebrooke, *op. cit.*, i, p. 46.

⁵ *Ibid.*

I must prefer the Mahratta '. The two other rulers to whom Mackintosh referred were George III and Napoleon.¹

These descriptions help to bring into relief the real character of Baji Rao. In private life not without accomplishments, his character was marked by the utter want of morality. Numerous stories are told of the dissolute life he led, and the shameless way in which he treated many of the leading families. In public life, even if his many faults are borne in mind, one cannot but feel that he was particularly unfortunate. In the early years of his career, hardly was a Peshwa more ill-served. His enmity towards Nana Fadnavis and his associates deserves the strongest condemnation, but at the same time it should be remembered that it had been Baji Rao's fate to move in an atmosphere that was politically vicious, and there was hardly any reason for his feeling grateful to his father's enemies. From this point of view, it is perhaps easy to understand why he wanted to get rid of the old chiefs, and bestowed his confidence on men like Trimbakji Danglia and Bapu Gokhale, who did not belong to the class of hereditary nobles of the State, but were at least loyal to their master.

It is usually supposed that Baji Rao ruined the empire which the genius of Shivaji and the early Peshwas had created. Such notoriety often attaches itself to the last representative of a line that once was glorious. The dissolution of the Maratha Empire had set in before Baji Rao's time, and a man of far superior qualities would have found it equally impossible to arrest the decay. His accession had been followed by a series of unfortunate but significant events, each pointing to the disruption of the Maratha power, and culminating in the Treaty of Bassein. From that time onwards, Baji Rao was like a man moving in a blind alley, from

¹ Mackintosh, *Memoirs*, i, p. 284.

which there was no escape. British power and prestige then took deep root in the country, and rapidly increased in the Peshwa's later years of rule. In 1818, when Baji Rao sought to recover the power which he had signed away, he found himself confronted by a superior enemy, and fighting a battle which had already been lost.

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