

THE
HISTORY OF HYDER SHAH,

ALIAS

HYDER ALI KHAN BAHADUR :

AND OF HIS SON,

TIPPOO SULTAUN.

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THE ONLY SURVIVING SON OF TIPPOO SULTAUN.

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THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THOUGH it is not usual to write the history of a living prince, the great distance which, in the present instance, permits the historian to speak with freedom, will serve as an excuse for the infringement of so just a rule, in the eyes of those who may read the following sheets without prejudice. The writer has adhered to the strictest impartiality, in relating the exploits of the most famous conqueror India has beheld since the time of Thamas Kouli Khan; a prince very much superior to that usurper, as well for the extent of his genius as for the propriety of his conduct, which far exceeds that of the other Indian sovereigns.

It will be easily perceived that the Author has neither endeavoured to flatter nor to calumniate. If the English should find that they are not spared, it will not be in their power to reproach him with having invented any untruth: and there are very many individuals of that nation, who know that he could

speak much more effectually to the disadvantage of the English administration in India, if he thought it necessary to reveal such particulars as he himself has seen.

Whether the tyranny which these men have exercised in India be a crime of their nation, or purely their own, is of no importance to the Author in his capacity as an Historian, since he has not made any reflections on the subject in the ensuing pages.

The Generals Coote, Smith, and Goddard, are spoken of with the justice they deserve; which circumstance ought to be of weight to vindicate his impartiality from the reproaches that interested and prejudiced readers will doubtless be ready to make.

If any of his recitals should be contrary to the ideas of certain persons acquainted with the same events, he begs they will please to make a distinction between the facts he himself has been witness to, and those he could only learn from the information of others.

The persons cited in the course of the history, and who may be now in Europe, are appealed to with confidence to assert the truth of what is here attributed to them. With regard to other facts, it is requested that they will believe this narration in preference to what may have been written to them by men who have not been in the same confidential situation as the Author, and have likewise reasons for disguising the truth, that can have no influence upon him.

The true dignity and importance of history is placed in truth. It has not therefore been in his power to spare such of his countrymen as have behaved unworthily: but, out of consideration for

their respectable families, he has been careful to omit mentioning their names; which is the only tenderness he has indulged himself in. The following work is not strictly confined to the actions of Hyder Ali Khan; but is likewise intended to give an accurate idea of the revolutions that have taken place in India, previous to the aggrandizement of that great prince: for the purpose of satisfying the reader on this head, it is thought proper to prefix an Historical Introduction, that will render him acquainted with the genius and character of the personages spoken of.

The account of particular circumstances relating to the Life of Hyder Ali Khan, that follows the Introduction, gives an idea of his person, considered as a man, a general, and a soldier. The Author hopes that it will serve to make the private character of the Prince better known than those of most European sovereigns. A perfect acquaintance with the men that surround a king, will often give the most accurate knowledge of his own manners and inclinations. With this intention, the portraits of some of the relations as well as of the intimate friends of Hyder are given.

There has not yet appeared any work that explains the principles of government of the princes now reigning in Hindostan: it is therefore hoped that the Public will receive with pleasure the detail here given of the establishment's laws, customs, and forms of government that prevail in Hyder's dominions. The English have lately published the laws and customs of the Hindoos: but Hindostan has been so long governed by Mahomedan princes, that this code of the ancient Hindoo laws instructs us in the present government of India, nearly as much as the laws of the ancient

Druids are capable of explaining the administration and government of the present French nation.

The author can with justice indulge the hope that these Memoirs will not be confounded with those rhapsodies that have appeared within the last three or four years, under the title of *Essais sur la Vie*, and *Abregès de l'Histoire d'Hyder Ali*, which were evidently fabricated by people who have not only been totally unacquainted with Hyder, but even entirely without any memoirs, except those tales that have occasionally appeared in the public papers. From these materials, copied with servility, they have formed compositions which they have had the assurance to offer as original to the Public, under a variety of pompous titles. It was from a view of these inaccurate and fictitious compilations, that the Author was induced to write the History he now presents to the world. As an eye-witness of his conquests, and of the glory that surrounds him, he thought it a kind of duty incumbent on him to make this sovereign known, at an instant in which he has become so interesting to Europe, and to France in particular.



Engraved on Steel by C. Morrish

HYDER SHAH

ALIAS

HYDER ALI KHAN BAHADUR.

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HISTORY OF HYDER SHAH,
ALIAS
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I. N T R O D U C T I O N.

BEFORE we enter upon the History of Hyder Shah, alias Hyder Ali Khan, it is necessary to give an account of part of those revolutions, which the invasion of India by Nadir Shah, king of Persia, commonly called Thamas Kouli Khan, occasioned in that extensive empire; and more especially in those provinces that were the theatre of the various scenes we are about to relate.

Nadir Shah, previous to his quitting Delhi for the purpose of returning to his own states, concluded a treaty with Mohumed Shah, emperor of the Mogols, in which it was ordained that the charge of Grand Vizier, and all the Subaships or viceroalties,* then

* The title, power, and prerogatives of a Suba cannot be better defined than by translating the word into the terms Vicar-general of

nine in number, should be hereditary in the families at that time in possession of them. This article was doubtless a stroke of politics in the Persian conqueror, to divide the force of an empire, whose strength was sufficiently exhibited in the army of 1,200,000 men assembled to oppose him; and which, under an emperor of another disposition, might revenge the insult sustained by Mohamed Shah. But it is likewise to be presumed, that he had previously settled this point; and in putting it in execution, he only forwarded the ambitious views of Nizam El Moulouc, Grand Vizier and Suba of Decan, who, in revenge for an affront put upon him by Mohamed Shah, had invited the king of Persia into the empire, and had been the means of preserving him from the probable effects of so rash an undertaking.

The Subaship of Decan, then in possession of Nizam El Moulouc, constituted at least a third part of the Mogol empire. All the country that extends from the gulf of Cambaya to Bengal, formed part of this Subaship, whose chief cities were Aurungabad and Hyderabad; and it extended to all the coasts of the hither peninsula, from Cambaya to the gulf of Bengal.

This vast government was divided into many others. Among these were many kingdoms governed by their own kings and particular laws, being no more than tributaries to the empire; except that they were obliged to furnish a certain number of troops to the army of the Suba, which the kings themselves very often esteemed it an honour to lead in person. The principal of these kingdoms were those of the Marattas, of Canara, and of Mysore.

the Empire. For this charge bestows a supremacy over the kings and vassals of the empire, which the Suba exercises in the same manner as the emperor himself. Similar to this would be the power of a vicar-general of the empire in Italy, if this dignity were at present possessed of activity and energy.

Many of these kingdoms and states were scarcely in subjection; and among them Canara, a country difficult of access from its numerous forests and mountains. The Marattas were no otherwise subjected, than by means of the treaty with the Suba, respecting the payment of the Chauth, or fourth part of the revenue of Decan, which the emperor Aurengzebe had granted them; and the great population of their country furnished them with numerous and powerful armies, especially of cavalry, whose incursions were not easily checked: and lastly there were states, which, though comprised in the Subaship of Decan, were not yet subjected. Such were the small kingdom of Calicut, or of the Samorins, and the other states of the black princes on the coast of Malabar; into which the armies of the Mogols were unable to penetrate, by reason of the narrow and difficult entrances through forests and mountains.

Besides the kingdoms and other tributary countries, the Subaship of Decan comprehended several governments, of greater or less magnitude, which were not hereditary, but in the gift of the Suba; whose nomination, however, required to be confirmed by the emperor.

When the Subaships became hereditary, the Subas pretended to the right of irrevocably nominating those governors, which the Europeans call Nabobs, without the necessity of any confirmation from the court of Dehli.

The Nabobship of Arcot* held the first rank among all those

* This History of the Nabobship of Arcot is very different from that given by the Editor of the Memoirs ascribed to General Lawrence. It is necessary, in that work, to distinguish the reports of the Author himself from the account of the expeditions of General Lawrence. The latter is generally true, excepting that the French forces are magnified in number, and the English diminished; so as frequently to produce contradictions. As to the Editor of those Memoirs, it will be sufficient to form a judgment of him, if we recollect that he affirms,

governments comprised in the Subaship of Decan, as well for its extent as for its riches and population. For it contains all the country, known by the name of Coromandel, that lies between the mountains and the sea coast, from Cape Comorin to Kisna, a river which, after running over a course of more than five hundred leagues, all within the Subaship of Decan, falls into the sea near Mazulipatam.

This government, though held only at the pleasure of the Suba, had been very long in possession of the same family, a branch of the Syuds, or descendants of Mohumed, by Ali his cousin and Fatima his daughter. The princes of this illustrious family were adored by their subjects, for having rendered the country rich and populous by the mildness and moderation of their government.

Several lords of the same family, as the Nabobs* of Valore, Vandevachi, &c., possessed small tracts of country, which they had received *en appanage*;† but they acknowledged the Nabob of Arcot as their superior, and the chief of their family. This Nabobship of

that, previous to the time in which M. Bussi followed Mouzaferjung, the Europeans were ignorant of what passed at the court of the Indian princes, their nearest neighbours. He affirms, likewise, in his introduction, that his work is designed to exhibit or make known the rights of Mohumed Ali Khan. With this intention, he is careful to avoid every thing that can serve to render him odious, as well as his father Unvurudeen Khan. To shew, from an incontestable fact, that this Editor was not in possession of accurate information, we need only observe, that he gives Nizam El Moulouc no more than four sons, though he left six. The two that are omitted by him are still living. The one is named Bazaletjung, and the other Mirs Mogol.

* The signification of the word Nabob will be hereafter explained.

† Lands are given *en appanage*, when they are in lieu of the future right of succession to the whole, of which they are a part.

Arcot comprehended also several less states, as that of the Rajah of Tanjore, of the Naies of Madura, and of Mazara, &c., who were tributaries, and obliged to furnish a quota of troops to the Nabob's army.

In the year 1740, the Marattas made an incursion into the Subaship of Decan, in the absence of Nizam El Moulouc, Grand Vizier and Suba; and, spreading like a torrent, they arrived at the country of Arcot, under the conduct of Ragogi their general.

The Nabob of Arcot* having collected his forces, which were by no means equal to those of the Marattas, marched against them, and lost both the victory and his life.

This unfortunate Nabob left an only son,† who succeeded him in his government. The rest of his family sought an asylum at Pondicherry, where the Sieur Dumas, then governor, received and promised to protect them, in return for the repeated advantages the French had received from the Nabobs of Arcot, since their first establishment in India.

Ragogi laid siege to Pondicherry, whose fortifications were in a very indifferent state. He demanded the governor to deliver up to him the family of the Nabob, and to pay him tribute. The spirited answer of the governor is well known. He replied, that *the dominions of the King of France had always been the asylum of unfortunate Princes; and that the French had no other tribute to give than bullets and balls.* A piece of gallantry made to the mistress of the Maratta general, contributed, together with the activity of the besieged, to induce Ragogi to raise the siege.

The same general, in the following year, besieged Trichnapoli, a strong place on the river Caveri. It surrendered for want of provision; and Chanda Saeb, the Nabob of the country, became prisoner, and was carried to Sattara. Nizam El Moulouc, being

* Dost Ali Khan.

† Suffder Ali Khan.

informed of the irruption of the Marattas and the death of the Nabob of Arcot, who was assassinated, nominated Unvurudeen Khan, one of his best generals, a man of address and of consummate knowledge in politics and the science of government, regent and administrator of the government of Arcot, during the minority of the young prince, Syud Mohumed Khan, grandson of Dost Ali Khan. Unvurudeen Khan, who then (in 1742) commanded the forces of the Suba of Decan to the northward of Masulipatam, very soon arrived at Arcot. On the other side, Nizam El Moulouc advancing by forced marches to the relief of his dominions, Ragogi abandoned the country of Arcot, and retired into the country of the Marattas.

Unvurudeen Khan restored tranquillity and good order to the country entrusted to his charge, and made his government beloved both by the people and the army. He seemed at first to be exceedingly attached to the young prince, and was very attentive to the care of his education. But this insidious politician, whose desires tended solely to the acquisition of his pupil's territories, was careful to inspire the young prince with a degree of haughtiness and avidity capable of rendering him odious, at the same time that he was himself courting every day more and more the affection of the people and the army.

When the young prince became of an age proper to marry, he advised him to espouse the daughter of the Nabob of Valore, one of his near relations. This Nabob having accepted the alliance with joy, proposed to give superb entertainments on the occasion of the marriage, according to the ordinary custom of the Indians, who are much attached to pomp and ceremony in circumstances of this nature.

During the time of the preparation for the nuptials, at the beginning of the year 1744, Unvurudeen Khan inspired the young prince, who had the highest confidence in his tutor, with the absurd idea of profiting by the tumult of the occasion, to get possession of Valore, and rob his future father-in-law of the fortress, which was

the strongest in all the country, and contained, as it was said, a great mass of treasure. The young Nabob, whose heart was already corrupted, approved highly of this advice, and resolved to put it in execution. He repaired to Valore, where it was concerted that Unvurudeen Khan should cause soldiers to come as simple spectators, who, joining at once with the prince's retinue and those who accompanied Unvurudeen Khan, should put the garrison of Valore to the sword, and take possession of the place, according to the orders of the young prince. But the perfidious tutor, who had devised this conspiracy with no other intention than that of betraying his pupil into destruction, sent but a small number of soldiers; and caused the Nabob of Valore to be advised secretly of the design of his nephew, the evening before he had appointed to come himself to the place. His hope was, that the Nabob, enraged at the perfidy of his future son-in-law, would put him to death. In this, however, he was disappointed; for the Nabob contented himself with reproaching the young man publicly with his crime; and caused him to leave the place immediately, with all his followers.

The event of this contrivance having turned out contrary to the expectations of Unvurudeen Khan, he soon after formed another plot, which succeeded in accomplishing the destruction of the young Nabob.

Nizam El Moulouc being desirous of possessing an army, which, though composed of different Indian nations becomes effeminate by a long peace, should nevertheless be fit for the purposes of war, had with that intention invited into his dominions a great number of Patans, or inhabitants of Candahar, the remains of those Affgans who had conquered Persia, and whom Nadir Shah, after having chased them out of that fertile kingdom, had pursued even to their own mountains. He had even bestowed among the chiefs of them Nabobships, or fiefs of the empire; whence arose the Patan Nabobs of Carpa, Canour, and Sanour,—a numerous corps of these Patans, who composed part of the Nabob of Arcot's army, and to whom, at

that time, considerable sums were due for pay. These people are courageous; but ferocious, cruel, and perfidious, when they believe themselves ill-treated. Unvurudeen Khan assembled these Patans at Arcot, under the pretence of causing them to pass in review before their prince; and, by his secret agents, excited them to demand the arrears of pay due to them. He did not fail to advise the young Nabob, that the method to enforce respect from his troops, was to threaten them with the chastisement due to their insolence. The prince, who was but too much inclined to speak with haughtiness and contempt, treated them in the severest manner. A revolt was the consequence; and, in their fury, they did not spare even the Nabob himself, but put him to the sword. This event happened early in the year 1745.

Unvurudeen Khan, arrived at the height of his desires, affected to be oppressed with the utmost despair and sorrow. He continued for some time to deplore the loss of his pupil; but at length becoming gradually more moderate, and the Patans appearing to be concerned for the effects of their ferocity, he persuaded them that he would refer the affair to the decision of Nizam. But in the mean time he secretly assembled the chiefs of all the other corps of the army, and represented to them, that, since the Grand Vizier would confound them all with the criminals, there was but one way of justifying themselves, namely, to extirpate the Patans. The insolent ferocity of those soldiers had rendered them odious to all the other Indians; and the advice of Unvurudeen Khan was, therefore, universally approved of. The effect of their deliberation was kept a profound secret; and they seized an opportunity so favourable to their purpose, that all the Patans, to the number of 3000, were massacred, the women and children only being spared.*

* As these anecdotes are differently related elsewhere, it may happen that many, who think themselves intimately acquainted with

Unvurudeen Khan, having at length finished this horrible carnage, wrote to Nizam El Moulouc the history of the catastrophe of the young Nabob of Arcot, and the punishment he had caused to be inflicted on the Patans; arranging the whole account to his own advantage. The Grand Vizier, Suba of Decan, concluded that he could not do better than to bestow the Nabobship on Unvurudeen Khan; as the family of the ancient Nabobs was extinct, and Chanda Saeb, who by right of his wife might pretend to it, was prisoner among the Marattas.

At the end of the year 1745, Unvurudeen Khan was established Nabob of Arcot, but did not succeed in procuring the same respect for his government as had attended his regency. He had several children. Maffous Khan, his eldest son, was designed for his successor; but his predilection was in favour of a son whom the law

the history of India, may demand, how the Writer of these Memoirs could acquire his knowledge of them? To anticipate this question, it is answered, that they cannot but know that the court and army of Hyder are filled with the relations and servants of the ancient family of the Nabobs of Arcot. Such are Razasaeb, the Nabob of Vandevachi, the son-in-law and nephew of the Nabob of Valore; Assinsaeb, an old man of great merit, formerly grand-treasurer of the Nabobs of Arcot, and exercising the same office under Hyder Ali Khan. In the same army are likewise Baoud Khan and Savay Khan, brothers, and chiefs of the Patans, strongly attached to the French; and, by reason of their youth, spared in the massacre caused by Unvurudeen Khan. The Author of this work being desirous of informing himself in the history of India, cultivated the friendship of all these persons; who took a pleasure in relating the history of the misfortunes of their family, their nation, and their ancient masters. It is from them that he has learned the facts he relates in this place.

excluded from the succession, as being born out of the house, and by a Bayadere, or woman reputed common. He gave Trichnopoly, a strong place on the Caveri, with a considerable territory, to this son, who was named Mohumed Ali Khan.

Unvurudeen Khan was in quiet possession of the fruit of his crimes, when Providence raised up an avenger of the family of the Nabobs of Arcot. This man was the famous Dupleix, whom the French King and East India Company, in 1746, called from the employment of director and commandant of Chandernagore, and appointed governor of Pondicherry.

This great man, after having acquired much glory by his brave defence of Pondicherry against Admiral Boscawen, whom he forced to raise the siege, received the news of the peace between France and England in the year 1747. In this juncture he thought it necessary, for the honour and advantage of his nation, to punish Unvurudeen Khan for the assistance he had afforded the English during the siege, by furnishing them with troops on that occasion: being likewise well assured, that this new family would always oppose the interests of the French, who had shown so strong an attachment to the family of Syud. His first step was to procure an antagonist to Unvurudeen Khan, by his negotiations with the Marattas; who were by that means induced to set at liberty Chanda Saeb, Nabob of Trichnopoly, who had espoused the sister of the last Nabob of Arcot, and whose wife and son had taken refuge at Pondicherry.

Chanda Saeb being thus restored to his liberty, repaired immediately to the court of Naserjung, who succeeded his father Nizam El Moulouc in the Subaship of Decan in 1748. It was in vain that he solicited this young prince to re-establish him in the Nabobship of Arcot, as the inheritance of his wife, or at least in his town and fortress of Trichnopoly: the intrigues and the money of Unvurudeen Khan prevented his success with the Suba. But he was

more fortunate in his application to Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan, king of the little state of Adonis, and nephew of Naserjung. This young prince, the son of an elder brother of the Suba, had been designed by Nizam El Moulouc as his successor; but that Vizier perceiving himself at the point of death, and his grandson very young, nominated and caused his son Naserjung to be acknowledged his successor.

Chanda Saeb persuaded the young prince of Adonis, that it was proper for him to request the Nabobship of Arcot of his uncle; the extent and value of this last being much more considerable than the territory of Adonis. The nephew consequently made his request, which met with a refusal from his uncle, whose jealousy made him averse to a step that tended to increase the power of his nephew. Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan, urged on by Chanda Saeb and M. Dupleix, raised an army of 60,000 men, with which, accompanied by Chanda Saeb, he arrived in the country of Arcot in July 1749, where he was joined by the French, to the number of 600 men and 2,000 Sepoys, commanded by the Comte D'Autcuil. This army marched against Unvurudeen Khan, who had assembled all his force, and encamped near Ambour. After having repulsed his antagonist for two successive days, his entrenchments were forced by the French on the third; and he lost the victory and his life at the age of eighty-two years. His two sons, Maffous Khan and Mohumed Ali Khan, were present at this battle. The first was made prisoner, and the other fled to the fortress of Trichnopoly. Every other part of the country acknowledged the grandson of Nizam El Moulouc, as Nabob of Arcot.

Naserjung, jealous of the accession of power that Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan had acquired, contrary to his orders assembled his army, and marched into the country of Arcot against him, Chanda Saeb, and the French who had assisted him in his undertaking. And in the month of February 1750, he arrived within six leagues of Pondicherry, with an innumerable army.

The ancient ministers and courtiers of Nizam El Moulouc, shocked to behold this dissension, attempted to reconcile the uncle and the nephew. They concerted among themselves, that the nephew should repair to his uncle's camp, and make his submission; and that the uncle should invest him with the authority of Nabob of Arcot. Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan, on the assurances of the lords who had offered themselves as mediators, repaired to the camp of Naserjung; who, instead of giving him the appointment of Nabob, caused him to be arrested.

This treachery of the Suba of Decan occasioned a general disgust in his whole army. The lords conspired his destruction, and corresponded with the governor Dupleix, who caused the French army, consisting of 800 French and 4,000 Sepoys, under M. de la Touche, to march against the army of Naserjung, consisting of more than 300,000 fighting men. But this handful of French, aided by the conspirators, were sufficient to decide the fate of so powerful a prince, who was slain on his elephant by the Patan Nabob of Curpa, one of the conspirators. His nephew Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan succeeded to his government, as Suba, in the month of December, in the same year.

It is at this æra that the history of Hyder Ali Khan commences in these Memoirs. He was then at the head of a quota of troops in Naserjung's army. It would be difficult to trace his actions from a more remote period; because, no person has taken the pains to collect the facts that relate to his infancy. They were far from beholding the avenger of India, in the soldier of Naserjung; or the scourge of the English, in the army that then fought against the French.

Hedaet Mohyoddeen Khan, who assumed the name of Mouzaferjung, expressed his gratitude to M. Dupleix and all the French, and gave the Nabobship of Arcot to Chanda Saeb. In his return to Hyderabad, his capital, he was accompanied by M. de Bussi, at

the head of a body of French troops; but he was not fortunate enough to arrive at the end of his voyage, the Patans having slain him in a sedition. At the beginning of 1751, his uncle Salabutjung, brother of Naserjung, succeeded him, and had the same affection for the French as his nephew. Mr. Lally having recalled M. Bussi, in 1758, from the court and army of Salabutjung, this prince, whose disposition was good, though his abilities were not great, was assassinated by his brother Nizam Ali Khan, who is at present Suba of Decan, and will frequently be mentioned in the course of the following History.

The English having always supported the family of Unvurudeen Khan, preferred Mohumed Ali Khan to his eldest brother; and caused him to be acknowledged Nabob of Arcot in the treaty of Fontainebleau, after having assisted him to impoverish all the princes of the ancient family of the Nabobs of Arcot. Chanda Saeb had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the English, who were cruel enough to deliver him to Menagi, general of the troops at Tanjore, who caused him to be beheaded in the month of June 1752. This crime, though yet unrevenged, will not pass unpunished; for Hyder Ali has promised the dominions of the Raja of Tanjore to Raza Saeb, son of Chanda Saeb.

This succinct account of the revolutions in India, is sufficient to serve as an introduction to the History of Hyder Ali Khan.

Note.—The coss is an Indian measure of distance, which answers nearly to 2,500 toises, or a few yards more than an English league.